ABSTRACT

This study focuses on parental ethnotheories in Finland paying special attention to the images of a good mother and a good father produced by individuals of both genders and across three generations. Meanings attached to beliefs which had the highest frequency in these images were scrutinised. Possible sources of child-rearing beliefs are also touched upon. The role of culture is especially highlighted in the comparisons between the images of good parents held in Finland and in Estonia.

The methodological solutions are those of qualitative research and the phenomena studied are understood to be socially constructed. Statistical procedures are used in comparisons. The data are drawn from several sources: from interviews with three generations of the same family in Finland (387 informants) and in Estonia (177 informants), and the written memories of 236 Finns gathered by the National Board of Antiquities in Finland.

According to the Finnish interviewees, love was the most widely reported quality of a good mother. A mother's love was used as a common denominator of various other beliefs. Moreover, a mother's love was found to have conflicting qualities; for instance, it was expected to be uncontrollable, yet the mother should be able to use it her child-rearing. A good mother was also expected to be able to control her child's behaviour. A good mother also listened to her children, gave advice and was patient.

A good Finnish father had time for his children. A father's time was a prerequisite for several other beliefs characterising a good father. A father's love contributed to his children's sense of security. A good father controlled his children, but was not a harsh disciplinarian. He gave his children advice and listened to them.

Although, in accordance with the gender equality ideology, the informants often protested at the difficulty of producing separate images of a good mother and a good father, the mother emerged as the primary parent against whom the father was compared. The prevalence of the mother as a parent for the Finns was highlighted also in the comparisons of the images between the Estonian and the Finnish informants. Finns talked more about a mother than did the Estonians. The Estonians, besides talking more about a good father than the Finns, also produced more traditional characterisations, such as the family breadwinner. In general, the Estonian images of good parents pertained more to parents' role as spouses than parents per se.

Keywords: ethnotheory, culture, parental beliefs, images, motherhood, fatherhood

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To the memory of Katri, my mother

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CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCING "THE QUESTIONS"

The care of the next generation is a feature common to all cultures of the world. In western cultures this task is mostly carried out by parents. This is a study about parenthood and culture in which parenthood is not parental activity but parenthood as it is thought about. It is understood that one of the tasks of parents is to introduce and transmit the beliefs and ideas of previous generations to their children. Their task is also to bring up a child to be a competent member of the culture in question and in this way to promote the survival of both their children and the society in which they live. Thus parenting is a vital activity and its quality is often under scrutiny by society, by parents and non-parents.

This study approaches parenthood from the point of view of adults. Moreover, the focus is on collective constructions of what parenting means. Parenthood and parenting are understood here as undergoing continuous constructions, often following the ideas and ideologies of the dominant paradigms of the behavioural and social sciences and the professions prescribing what is good for the child (Ambert 1994).

The standards of good parenthood, and especially of good motherhood, have been described in the literature dealing with parenting. For example, Wearing (1984, 49) quoted by Wetherell (1995, 231) writes:

> There is an ideal of the 'good' mother towards which all mothers should strive. A good mother is one who is always available to her children; she gives time and attention to them where necessary. She cares for them physically by keeping them neat and clean and providing them with adequate food and clothing and emotionally by showing them love. She is calm and patient, does not scream or yell or continually smack her children.

The ingredients or characteristics of a good mother form a single entity, an image of a good mother. Mothers themselves are aware of the demands imposed on them by the image of a good mother. Dally (1982, 12) comments on western motherhood and writes that being a good mother is not easy and that the organisation of our societies poses problems for women and children. Gieve (1988, viii) reflects on her feelings of being a mother: "In a curious way, to be

worthy of the description 'mother' you must be a good mother." According to Gieve (ibid.), the situation is different for fathers – a good father is quite different from merely a 'father'. 'Goodness' seems somehow in-built in motherhood, but in a father it is something special. Thurer (1993, 519) remarks that there have always been mothers but a good mother is continually re-defined by each age and each society.

Images of good parents play a role in parental thinking. Interest in parental thinking as a topic of research in psychology has been mainly twofold: parental thinking as an example of a human cognitive process and as a part of the context in which child development takes place. Goodnow (1996, 315) adds to these two areas of interest another two: knowledge of the way parents think will help us to understand their actions and it is possible to track cultural transmission or cultural change by exploring parental ideas in different cultures and by comparing parenting beliefs in different generations. In this study images of good parents are conceptualised as forming a part of the developmental context of the child and as culturally constructed phenomena. These two aspects are combined in the concept of ethnotheory formulated by Harkness and Super (see e.g. 1996).

From the point of view of parents, providing a description of images of good parents and their possible sources renders hidden normative expectations more visible, enabling consideration of their worth and thus possibly offering assistance and understanding to parents. Parental beliefs and images can also provide parents a standard against which they can judge their 'success' as parents and against which they can decide which aspects of parenting are important for them (McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Sigel 1995, 333; Pleck & Pleck 1997, 35). The affirmation of being a good mother was noted to be a factor contributing to the working mothers' well-being (Weber 1999). Studying the images of good parents across different cultures sensitises us to see that our images are not the only or 'natural' ones. Sensitivity to issues of this kind is needed in a globalised world.

This study focusses on parental ethnotheories in Finland with special attention being paid to images of a good mother and a good father produced by different generations and genders. The meanings given to the most prevalent features in these images will be scrutinised. Moreover, the role of culture as a source of child-rearing beliefs as well as the role of other sources, like professional advice, experience as a parent, transmission of beliefs from parents to children and vice versa will be touched upon. The role of culture will be especially highlighted in comparisons between images of good parents in Finland and in Estonia.

2   CONCEPTUAL TOOLS

2.1 Beliefs, images, and ethnotheories

Parenting is guided and influenced by cultural expectations, beliefs, ideas and images, and for these reasons they have been considered worth studying (e.g., Pajares 1992; Sigel 1985; Valsiner & Litvinovic 1996). The concept 'belief' has been widely used in research in various areas; for example, Takala (1991) studied managerial beliefs concerning social responsibility, Markoczy (2000) focussed on changes in managers' beliefs, and in a more recent study Karjaluoto (2002) investigated consumer beliefs. Studies using the term belief have also been numerous in the health sciences as well as in researching teachers' cognitions (e.g. Perkkilä 2002).

Despite the popularity of these phenomena as a topic of study, different researchers have chosen to use different terms for the same phenomenon (see Hirsjärvi & Perälä-Littunen 2001; Murphey 1992). The diversity of the terms used to denote parents' thoughts about their children has also been commented on (McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Sigel 1995, 334; Sigel, McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Goodnow 1992, xiii). Terms like beliefs, thoughts, constructs, theories, ideas, attributions, perceptions and goals have often been used interchangeably.

However, researchers have also attempted to offer a definition of 'belief' (see Hirsjärvi & Perälä-Littunen 1997, 10; 2001, 88; Schacter & Scarry 2000, 4). Rokeach (1968,113), for example, proposed the following definition: "Beliefs are any simple propositions, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what person says or does, capable of being preceded by the phrase 'I believe...' ". An inclusive definition has not yet been found and some researchers suggest that such a definition should not be attempted because over strict and neat definitions cause philosophical problems. Instead, it is maintained that definitions should depend on the context in which 'belief' is used, the adequacy of the definition depending on the compatibility of the definition with its context (Westbury & Dennett 2000, 28–29). Goodnow and Collins (1990,13) note the difficulty of defining 'belief' and the vagueness in the way the term has been used in the literature, and refrain from the use of the term 'belief', thus

avoiding the 'philosophical maze' connected to this term. Instead, these researchers use the term 'idea'.

Beliefs

The concepts belief and image are used within various disciplines, including, for instance the sociology of scientific knowledge, where David Bloor (1991, 5) differentiates between knowledge and belief by stating that knowledge is what is collectively endorsed while beliefs are idiosyncratic. Several researchers (e.g. Damasio 2000, 326; Eichenbaum & Bodkin 2000, 176) see the difference between 'belief' and 'knowledge' as crucial for the definition of 'belief'. The difference is made mostly in regard to the relationship between the concept and 'truth'. According to Damasio, 'belief' refers to the truth value of a thought content. When we say that we believe something, we qualify the thought as something which can be true, false, or something in between. Moreover, Eichenbaum and Bodkin (2000, 177–179) while dealing with the relations between knowledge, belief, and memory, propose that knowledge and belief reflect distinct processing modes of the brain. Belief being less susceptible to change even in the light of new information or experiences. Damasio (2000, 327) points out that even though we sometimes consider the truth value of a belief in the light of new information, this is not the general way of doing it. The researchers suggest that the functions of knowledge, belief, and memory can interact, but mostly believing in something results in a feeling, acceptance or conviction, while knowing is based on testing and updating information. Thus the sense of a belief being true is based on feelings and emotions (Damasio 2000, 330; Nespor 1987).

Affective aspects are also present in values and attitudes. Sigel (1985, 357), as well as McGillicuddy-DeLisi and Sigel (1995, 334), differentiated beliefs from values and attitudes, which all contain a cognitive component, by pointing out that attitudes and values are not seen as facts or thruths.

Though Sigel (1985, 347, 351) proposes that beliefs are a form of knowledge, he also points out that beliefs can be nonconscious. Westbury and Dennett (2000, 24) even suggest that beliefs are mostly nonconscious. In this respect knowledge is different and a disctiction between knowledge and belief has to be made.

A feature which makes studying beliefs important is that we do not have beliefs about anything; our beliefs only concern matters important to us, including domains like moral behaviour, the political system and the state of our culture (Damasio 2000, 326). A peculiar feature in beliefs is that though our beliefs deal with important issues, we are not always aware of the beliefs we hold and we may or may not change a belief when faced with evidence counter to that belief (Goodnow & Collins 1990). However, we know that others might have different beliefs (Abelson 1979). For instance, a person may believe that a good father is the main disciplinarian in the family while acknowledging that somebody else might think that the keeping of order in the home is the task of a good mother.

What is agreed upon by several researchers is that beliefs are mental constructions, representations of reality (e.g. McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Sigel 1995, 348; Murphey 1992, 203; Sigel 1985, 351). However, 'construction' does not mean here that each person constructs his/her beliefs individually from scratch. Construction means here that beliefs are constructed in the interaction of a group of people, i.e. they are socially constructed. All people have their own personal beliefs which they have adopted from the totality of beliefs they have encountered (Katvala 2001, 94; Lightfoot & Valsiner 1992, 395). Experience can be the source of some beliefs (idiosyncratic factors), while others come from the general environment (culture[1], media, significant others) (Sigel 1985, 358). The informants in Katvala's study reflected on their own beliefs by comparing their thinking with the prevalent beliefs concerning motherhood and stating out whether they agree or disagree (ibid. 94).

To recapitulate on the points most relevant to this study, 'belief' is here seen as a construction of reality. 'Belief' is similar to knowledge in many ways, but there are also differences, for instance the holder regards a 'belief' as true even though it is not based on facts. The process of adopting a belief is not necessarily rational nor is a belief always changed in the light of contrary evidence. The holder of a belief may or may not be aware of the belief he or she espouses and may or may not act according to that belief. We have beliefs concerning matters that are important to us and our beliefs are often based on feelings and emotions.

Images

We can hold beliefs about the characteristics of social groups, such as the belief that women are emotional, nurturing, and submissive. These beliefs form entities, which are sometimes called stereotypes (e.g. Banaji & Bhaskar 2000; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh 2002). Another term used for a belief entity concerning the characteristics of a group of people is 'image', which is the term used in this study. Stereotypes and images share many features; for example they are both part of our everyday thinking (Banaji & Bhaskar 2000). However, 'stereotype' refers to an entity which is cognitively constructed, while an 'image' includes not only perceptions and mental representations but also feelings (Jahoda 1999, xv). Moreover, a stereotype creates a difference between 'us' and 'them', evokes negative connotations and is often connected to unpleasant phenomena like prejudice and injustice (see Banaji & Bhaskar 2000; Jahoda 2001). These negative connotations are absent from the concept of image.

Like 'belief', 'image' is an elusive concept and the difficulties in defining 'image' are to large extent similar to those in defining 'belief', i.e. 'image' is used in everyday language and within various disciplines denoting different things. The term 'image' has been used synonymously with the terms 'conception', 'perception', 'belief', and 'idea' (Sigel 1996, 64). Like beliefs, images

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[1] The relationship of beliefs and culture will be dealt with in section 2.2 'Culture and parenting ideologies'.

can be implicit or explicit. The images an individual espouses are fairly resistant to change, although different sociocultural groups have different images. Images also vary across historical epochs (Lamb & Hwang 1996, 3).

Images are interpretations of real objects but they are not mere reflections based on perception. An interpretation is at the same time social and cognitive (see Molinari & Emiliani 1990, 92) and it involves emotions. Interpretation originates in the belief systems of individuals, although interpretations, i.e. images, are culturally shared and they affect, along with other aspects of society, the functions of relevant institutions (Sigel 1996, 64, 66). Sigel (ibid. 66) also points out in discussing images of childhood, that "images reflect family and social aspirations and appropriate social behavior." Image in this study has a strong normative 'flavour'. The image of an ideal tells us how things should ideally be (see Dunham & Bengtson 1986, 9). However, as Jahoda (1999, xiv) states that the content of an image more often reflects the psychological needs of those describing an image than the characteristics of those described.

Various kinds of images have been studied, including the image of the child (e.g. Sigel & Kim 1996b), images of non-European others (Jahoda 1999), images of poverty (Chafel 1997), proverbs as images (Palacios 1996), and young people's images of work (Thiessen & Blasius 2002). The use of images is not restricted to the thinking of lay people; images play a role also in the thinking of researchers. For instance, Sigel and Kim (1996b) found the following features of a child shared in developmental psychology research: the child is a weak, powerless individual who is developing and when fully developed will be a functioning, independent adult (ibid. 48). Thus it seems that using images is fairly typical human trait.

Images do not just exist, instead they perform functions, play a role in the way certain groups of people are treated and thought of. The functions of images used become clearer if we consider an example of more exotic images. Jahoda (1999) maintains that the images of savages were a part of the justification of the oppression of non-western others. In the case of good mothers and fathers the use of images in justification of, for instance, social policy decisions might not be so obvious. To see the connections between contemporary justifications and images in one's own society is harder but it is reasonable to assume that such connections take parallel forms.

In this study images of a good mother and a good father are entities formed from qualitative beliefs and characteristics. Though 'image' in this study does not denote anything visual, the fact that an image is an entity makes it easy to think of it as consisting of different characterisations which together form the image. Similarly with beliefs, each person has an image of his or her own but the qualitative beliefs forming the image come from a cultural 'pool'. Moreover, 'an image of a good parent' is considered to be a reflection of the norms, especially of the expectations and obligations, prescribed for somebody occupying the role of a mother or a father in the family. Image is here conceptualised as the description the informants of the study give when they are asked 'What is a good mother and a good father like?'

Social representations and ethnotheories

There are several socio-cultural theories of mind which employ concepts like beliefs and images. One of these conceptual frameworks is social representations, which is, like ethnotheory, related to everyday thinking and culture. Next I shall present my rationale for choosing to use the term ethnotheory instead of social representations.

Both social representations and ethnotheory focus on collective systems of meaning, both also employ 'beliefs' and 'images', but 'images' within the theory of social representations seem to be very similar to metaphors (Molinari & Emiliani 1990, 92; Wagner, Duveen, Farr, Jovchelovich, Lorenzi-Cioldi, Marková and Rose 1999, 99). In the study by Molinari and Emiliani (1990) on the structure of mothers' images of the child and their influence on conversational styles, the use of 'image' comes very close to the use of 'image' in this study, especially in the way the images are seen as entities built from various characterisations.

Moscovici (1981) proposes that in industrial societies social representations have the same purpose, i.e. to explain things and events, as belief systems have in traditional societies. However, the construction of social representations, anchoring and objectification, is basically a cognitive[2] phenomenon (McKinlay, Potter, & Wetherell 1993, 135; Moscovici 1981) whereas beliefs, considered in this study to be the building blocks of images, are often based on feelings and emotions (Damasio 2000, 330; Nespor 1987). Moreover, social representations are 'knowledge' to the people espousing them (Duveen & Lloyd 1990, 3) and Moscovici sees his theory as a part of the social psychology of knowledge (Duveen 2000, 2). The nature of images in this study is different, 'good' mothers and 'good' fathers are only ideals, not thought to exist in reality.

Social representations are related to communication processes (Bauer & Gaskell 1999, 165), typically focussing on the process through which unfamiliar phenomena become included (anchored and objectified) in the social representations of a group (Marková 2000, 433; Wagner et al. 1999, 97)[3]. In this study my purpose is to describe a phenomenon which is the product of this process. Moreover, according to the social representational theory, shared representations establish a membership of a particular social group (Wagner et al. 1999, 97). McKinlay et al. (1993, 136–137) point out that when social representations are presumed to define a social group and when an empirical study, like the present study, starts with well-defined groups and ends up with the finding that the shared representations have defined the groups, the logic is totally circular. In addition, the role of culture as a factor promoting shared understanding of the various social groups within a particular culture is overlooked in the social representation approach.

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[2]   Cognitive refers here to functions of the brain/mind as separate from emotions.

[3]   I do not consider images of good parents to be stable and permanent, but my data captures images as they appeared at the time when the interviews were conducted. The process of their formation is not within the scope of this study.

Ethnotheories

Parents' beliefs are an important part of the developmental context of children. Parents hold images and beliefs about children as well as about themselves as parents (Murphey 1992, 227). The developmental context of children has been conceptualised as a *developmental niche* by Super and Harkness (1986). The concept of a developmental niche was formed by reflecting on and further developing paradigms employed in anthropological studies. According to Harkness (1996), anthropological studies on children and child-rearing started with Ruth Benedict's and Margaret Mead's descriptions of children's daily life in various cultures, and then moved on to a search of 'why' and 'how', for instance in the work of John W. M. Whiting and colleagues. The latest shift has been from the study of behaviour to the study of cognition and conceptualizing children as active participants in the formation of their environment and development.

The anthropological approaches have excessively concentrated on the 'final product' of development, i.e. adulthood, at the expense of the processes through which development takes place. The psychological approaches to development have, on the other hand, in many cases neglected the study of development as a process that always takes place within a culture. The developmental niche is a conception which aims at combining the psychological and the anthropological approaches to human development. It is "a theoretical framework for studying cultural regulation of the micro-environment of the child, and it attempts to describe this environment from the point of view of the child in order to understand processes of development and acquisition of culture."(Super & Harkness 1986, 552). The developmental niche of the child consists of three components or subsystems: 1) the physical and social settings in which the child lives; 2) culturally regulated customs of child care and child rearing; and 3) the psychology of the caretakers (ibid 552). Parental thinking, including images of good parents, covers all these aspects of the child's developmental niche, but here the focus is especially on the last two.

A theoretical construction which frames parental thinking and looks at the processes of child-rearing from the parents' point of view is ethnotheory. The concept of *parental ethnotheory* was formed and used by Harkness and Super. Parental ethnotheories are the cultural belief systems that parents hold regarding the nature of children, development, parenting, and the family (Harkness & Super 1996). Parental ethnotheory is not a theory in a scientific sense, in the sense that would, for instance, include rational theory formation and the testing of the premises of the theory. Instead, parental ethnotheories refer to parental common sense knowledge within a culture (Sigel & Kim 1996a, 114–115).

Images of good parents form part of parental ethnotheories or, in the broad sense, the world view that parents hold (Sigel & Kim 1996a). The terms 'ethnotheory' and 'cultural belief system' are used interchangeably, but the term 'ethnotheory will be used in most cases in this study because the focus here is not on beliefs but images formed by beliefs. Like Harkness and Super

(1996, 7), I also wish to acknowledge the roots of ethnotheories in anthropological research on folk theories.

The structure and nature of parental ethnotheories has been considered by several researchers (Goodnow, 1996, 323–324; Harkness & Super 1996, 9; Katvala 2001, 30, 93–94; Sigel 1985). Harkness and Super (1996, 9) maintain that the structure of parental ethnotheories is hierarchical, especially in relation to parental activities. The 'topmost' level of ethnotheories consists of general beliefs, like the belief in the importance of independence espoused by American parents. The next level is comprised of more specific beliefs which also contain scripts for action. American parents believing in independence also believe that children should sleep in their own bed at a very early age. This belief translates into action in that children are made to sleep alone. This example may suggest that the structures of ethnotheories are neat and hierarchical but this is not always the case. Harkness (2001[4]) suggests that sometimes beliefs forming an ethnotheory appear in sequences. The boundaries of an ethnotheory can be more or less permeable, which refers to the ease with which a belief or an ethnotheory is changed (Sigel & Kim 1996a, 115).

An important feature of a parental ethnotheory is that it is both individually constructed and culturally shared (e.g. Harkness & Super 1996, 6; Harkness, Super, Keefer, Raghavan & Campbell 1996, 289; Katvala 2001, 30). McGillicuddy-DeLisi and Subramanian (1996, 147) propose that parental beliefs (and ethnotheories) are constructed in the exchange of personal experiences within a culture and the culturally shared meanings of parenting. Parents also receive feedback in their everyday activities. They can compare the images of themselves as parents with the cultural images of good parents to see how well they are doing. Although individual parents can also contract out of the cultural images of good parents, they are aware of these images. In this study the focus is on culturally shared, not personal beliefs about parenting. My aim is to capture shared images of good parents.

2.2 Culture and parenting ideologies

Ethnotheories are a system of beliefs and images held by a group of people sharing a culture (e.g. Sigel & Kim 1996a, 114–115). Culture is a universal feature of human societies. Every society has a culture and parental ethnotheories are part of it. Beliefs and images are not products of a culture; rather, they are constituents of a culture (McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Sigel 1995, 335). Thus, like parenting, parental ethnotheories are a cultural invention (e.g. Ambert 1994). Culture is not something that exists only when cultures are compared; instead, it is embedded in every study dealing with human beings (Keesing & Strathern 1998, 16; Ratner 1999, 21).

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[4]   Personal communication January 16, 2001

Culture is much used and often defined concept which is found in many different disciplines. Sometimes its meaning is taken for granted, but more often scholars lament the difficulty of defining what is meant by 'culture'. Tomlinson (1999, 17) reflects on the difficulty of defining culture and writes "isn't everything in the end 'cultural', especially if we regard 'culture' as a total way of life. For the purpose of using 'culture' as a tool in research Tomlinson (ibid.) suggests that the definition has to be more specific. Below I will explore different definitions and understandings of the concept of culture as these are used in psychological, anthropological and developmental approaches to the study of humans. I have chosen these particular approaches because they have the most relevance for the concept of ethnotheory, but I am aware that there are other approaches to culture which are not dealt with here. I will also introduce a definition of 'culture' as it is understood in this study.

Culture in psychology

The research combining culture and psychology is theoretically divided into several approaches or 'brands' as Valsiner (2001, 7) calls them. For example, Greenfield (2000) and Triandis (2000) differentiate between *cultural psychology*, *cross-cultural psychology*, and *indigenous psychology*, while Valsiner (2001) does not mention indigenous psychology. Moreover, within cultural psychology there are three approaches: the symbolic approach, the individualistic approach, and activity theory (Ratner 1999). These approaches are not exclusive and it is indeed possible for the same scholar to be engaged in more than one approach. There have even been attempts to combine approaches (Helfrich 1999). This means that oversimplification is built into their description (Greenfield 2000; Triandis 2000). However, the three approaches present very different points of view on culture and psychology, and highlight the importance of theoretical considerations of what is meant by culture and what role it has in research (Valsiner 2001, 40).

The search for universal psychological features is typical of studies in cross-cultural psychology (Church & Lonner 1998), while research in cultural psychology considers the development of a theory of psychological pluralism as its main task (Shweder 1990; Shweder, Goodnow, Hatano, LeVine, Markus, & Miller 1998). For example, the cultural psychological approach to the study of personality assumes that personality is culturally constituted, not just influenced by culture (Markus & Kitayama 1998). The cross-cultural approach sees culture as an influential factor, culture causes something to happen and certain phenomena can be explained by culture (Greenfield 2000).

More important from the point of view of this study is the fact that the cross-cultural framework contains the implicit assumption that the notion of culture is synonymous with cultural differences. Although culture is a universal feature of all human communities it should not be automatically assumed that there are features shared by all cultures. All our beliefs about a good mother and a good father are part of our culture, not just those which are different from the beliefs held by some other group, for instance Estonians. Yet it is the

comparison with the other cultures that make us aware of particular features in our own culture. The comparison of Finnish and Estonian cultures undertaken here is done with the purpose of making culture visible.

The differences between cross-cultural and cultural psychologies have also been described as universalistic and relativistic approaches, respectively. Research applying the universalistic orientation looks for universal features by comparing different cultures while the rejection of psychic unity of all humans leads to cultural relativism (e.g. Kagitcibasi 2000). The distinction between nomothetic and indiographic orientation as well as between etic and emic approaches is to some extent based on similar juxtaposed ideas (e.g. Helfrich 1999; Triandis 2000). Research using an idiographic orientation emphasises unique features and the researcher with a nomothetic orientation looks for general laws (Helfrich 1999, 132). The etical approach, in turn, looks at a culture from outside and the emic approach aims at seeing the culture through the eyes of its members (Kagitcibasi 2000).

Due to the different conceptualisations of culture, the methodological solutions of each theoretical orientation are typically different. Culturally oriented researchers refrain from the use of culture as an independent variable (Valsiner & Litvinovic 1996, 57). Cross-cultural research, in turn, typically sees culture as an explanatory variable and questionnaires developed in western cultures are used in non-western cultures.

Ratner (1999) further differentiates three approaches within the cultural psychological approach. These are the symbolic approach, the activity theory, and the individualistic approach. The *symbolic approach* defines culture as shared symbols and concepts. Ratner (ibid.) criticises this approach for leaving out the role of the conditions in which people live, like the social distribution of political and economic power. Moreover, the approach fails to specify the processes which produce the symbols. Following the *activity theory* culture is practical, socially organised activity. Again Ratner (ibid.) finds flaws in this approach. He writes that the activity theory fails to analyse the way in which social characteristics comprise psychological characteristics. The *individualistic approach* emphasises mediating factors of culture. The focus is on people and the way they co-construct culture. Thus culture is an external context which the individual can use and reconstruct the way he sees appropriate. Whether the individualistic approach fits the framework of cultural psychology can be debated, as one of the basic premises of cultural psychological understanding of the relationship between an individual and culture is that culture is embedded in the psyche of the individual. The following table presents in broad outlines the different approaches to culture in psychology.

TABLE 1 Different approaches to culture in psychology

Approach	Nature of the approach	Characteristic features
Cross-cultural psychology	Etic; nomothetic; universalistic	From the outside; general, universal laws; belief in psychic unity of all humans
Cultural psychology (symbolic approach, activity theory and individualistic approach) Indigenous psychology	Emic; idiographic; relativistic	Insider's point of view; cultural relativism; culture an integral part of humans

The differences in the broad theoretical approaches to culture in psychology also pertain to developmental psychological research and research on parenting. The role of culture in these branches is worth further consideration, given the centrality of parenting in this study.

The importance of comparing child development and parenting in different cultures is pointed out by Bornstein (1991). He maintains that if children and their development are studied in a single culture there is a danger of taking events as natural, obvious and part of human nature, and for this reason they are left unaccounted for. As the purpose here is to investigate beliefs and images which are partly unconscious, the person having a particular belief or image, being unaware of his or her belief, cross-cultural comparisons can be a way of making these beliefs 'visible' for the researcher (see Bornstein ibid. 5).

Parenting is closely connected to ideas of children and especially of their development. Developmental psychology has been accused of ethnocentrism, for instance, of presuming that certain interactions between children and parents have the same meaning in every culture and that views about good parenting are similar universally (McCollum & McBride 1997). Children develop within versatile cultural contexts, not only in western, North American or European contexts. Moreover, the science of child development is culturally constructed (Woodhead, Faulkner, & Little 1998, 1). The *indigenous approach* questions the cultural relevance of research and theories established in western cultures and the assumption of homogeneity, which does not exist (e.g. Nsamenang 2000; Sta. Maria 2000). Bornstein (1991, 6) suggests that studying child development as culturally contexualised is a way of checking against ethnocentrism.

The role of culture in parenting can be rather decisive. Harkenss, Super and Keefer (1992, 164) suggest that cultural models gain prescriptive force when one becomes a parent. Andrews (1991) writes about the culture of breastfeeding as social control and suggests that ideas or beliefs are the dominant mechanisms of control.

Anthropological definitions of culture

Anthropology has been the science that has traditionally explored culture or, especially exotic cultures. However, what is meant by 'culture' has not always been the same even within the anthropological tradition. Focussing on broad trends, definitions of 'culture' have undergone changes during the last decades. The meanings given to 'culture' have shifted from 'the institutional, structural-functional' meanings towards meanings concerned with the local perceptions, interpretations, and constructions of the representatives of the culture in question, that is with negotiated understandings (Hammel 1990, 456). Thus the anthropological approaches to culture seem more emic than etic.

In the anthropological usage 'culture', for example, refers to "learned, accumulated experience...to those socially transmitted patterns for behavior characteristic of a particular social group" (Keesing & Strathern 1998, 14). This definition includes the idea that 'culture' is socially transmitted, but the direction of transmission is not stated. In another definition formulated by Barnow (1985) it is stated that a culture consists of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours shared by a group of people which are transmitted from one generation to the next, mostly using language. In both these definitions 'culture' is defined as something shared among a group of people. Culture as an identifier of social groups is one of the senses outlined by Hammel (1990, 457). The other senses of culture described by Hammel are: a body of autonomous tradition; a set of coherently patterned behaviours; a determiner of human experience; and a set of symbols negotiated between social actors.

Variation within a culture

Culture shapes parents' images, ideas and beliefs, but at the same time parents with their experiences shape culture (McGillicuddy-DeLisi & Subramanian 1996). Conceptualizing culture in this way means that the social knowledge, i.e. beliefs, images, ideas, of the people forming a society are its culture and that an individual both gives and takes meanings from the culture (Blount 1982). In studies comparing the child-rearing beliefs of various cultural groups it has been found that within-group beliefs have greater similarity than outside-group beliefs (Hess, Kashiwagi, Azuma, Price, & Dickson, 1980; Chen & Uttal, 1988; Yang & Cobb, 1995). Moreover, Goodnow and Collins (1990, 78) observe that parents' ideas appear less self-constructed than handed-down or ready-made. The transmission of beliefs, images and ideas can not be like giving an object to some one else. The 'receiver' creates his or her own version of the image. This results in intracultural variation, which means that some groups of people within the same culture have more similar views than others, reflecting perhaps a closer transmission relationship (see e.g. Palacios & Moreno, 1996; LeVine, Miller, Richman, & LeVine, 1996; Lightfoot & Valsiner 1992, 395). It must be noted also that the sources of transmitted beliefs and images can be various, for instance the media and popularised findings of research. Likewise the direction of transmission is not necessarily from the older generations to the younger.

Pomerleau, Malcuit and Sabatier (1991, 47) suggest that the different economic and environmental conditions of various groups within a culture can also be a source of intracultural variation.

According to Harkness and Super (1996, 9), the variation within a culture can be seen as resulting from differences in contact with a cultural knowledge base, in culturally facilitated experience, or in individual interactions.

Culture–tradition and change

Cultures are not static (Tomlinson 1999). The contemporary world is characterised by change rather than stability and tradition (Helfrich 1999, 135). Tomlinson (ibid. 553) offers a list of factors contributing to change: modernisation, westernisation or acculturation, increased cultural contact, migration, the spread of communication. Yet, several definitions of culture contain, either explicitly or implicitly, the idea of tradition (see Hammel 1990). Thus both change and tradition seem to be characteristic to cultures.

Culture can be defined the means people have used in adapting to the natural environment and their sociocultural circumstances (Fertig 1996; Naylor 1996, x). This definition carries with it the idea that when the environment and sociocultural circumstances change so does the culture. Culture has also been defined as "that which needs to be known in order to operate reasonably effectively in a specific human environment" (Bloch 1991, 183). Like the previous one, this definition includes also the possibility of change, as environments are apt to change. Defining culture in this way makes it difficult to make any evaluative statements of the developmental state of a culture. According to Valsiner (2001, 16), this definition, and relativistic views of cultures in generally, does not fit the psychological theorising of culture. However, Valsiner fails to show how and why this is so. His argument relies on Vygotsky's thinking regarding the different levels of organisational development of societies and the idea that historical comparisons remain on the level of pointing out changes, not development. (ibid. 15). In fact, equalising change with development without a second thought seems often to be a problem. For instance, the evaluation of the level of development of a culture is dependent on the point of view of the evaluator.

Harkness et al. (1992, 163–164) note also that in family studies and studies on parenting focussing on culture acquisition, cultural changes have to be accounted for. As examples of cultural changes affecting parenting they mention migration and changes in the constitution of the family in western Europe.

Bjerrum Nielsen and Rudberg (1993, 44–45) discuss changes in conceptions of gender and conclude that conceptions of change often end up stating that everything is different from how it was previously or that nothing has changed, while it seems more likely that minor changes are taking place at various speeds and that as a result the 'old' and the 'new' coexist at the same time. This also fits in well with the conception of cultural change.

Boundaries of a culture or cultures and nation states

In anthropological definitions 'culture 'is often seen as a collective way of life and thought, but the question remains: if collective, then shared by whom? Are most cultures national cultures, confined within the boundaries of states? Cultures are not homogeneous, nor is it possible to show that someone is a 'pure' example of the members of a culture. Stevenson-Hinde (1998, 700) observes that cultural homogeneity in a country cannot be assumed.

According to Chaudhary (1999, 158), a person's membership of a culture should not be taken for granted. It is not enough to say, for example, that a Japanese person is a member of the Japanese culture, as, in fact, the personal culture of Japanese persons in a globalised world can be very western. It must be noted, however, that the existence of 'pure', homogeneous cultures is highly unlikely and that the point in cultural studies is not the informants' established membership of a culture but the realisation that there is something in the context of the everyday life which we, to large extent, share with those living contemporaneously with us and partly with previous generations. This something can be called 'culture'.

The question of the boundaries of a culture is a very crucial one for this study. Are Estonians and Finns, for example, representatives of different cultures? They share many things, even their languages belong to the same Finno-Ugric language group. This question is also addressed by Harwood, Schölmerich and Schultze (2000) in connection with homogeneity and heterogeneity in cultural belief systems. They come to the conclusion that as people can be members of several cultural groups simultaneously, we should not focus on the boundaries between cultures nor the definition of a culture but "what we can learn about the level of shared discourse and practice among those we have chosen to include as members of the same cultural community" (ibid. 44).

Culture in this study

In this study the theoretical approach to culture is that of cultural psychology. Culture is regarded as forming an integral part of all humans. However, it is not 'planted' but humans construct their personal cultures by choosing from the pool of cultural possibilities shared by the members of their communities and they can also add to this pool. Culture is not a variable which affects the way people think and act (Lightfoot & Valsiner 1992, 395). Cross-cultural comparison makes cultures visible. Culture is one of the concepts used to categorise the images produced by the people in communities. Defining culture as way of adapting to one's sociocultural environment enables the consideration of, with respect to this study, Estonian and Finnish as different cultures.

Parenting ideologies

The normative aspects of images bring them close to ideology. Ideology in the sense of the total of the various images shaping our life, forming the lenses through which we see ourselves, others and everyday life. Images and ideology are powerful because they act as constraints making it difficult for us to "imagine and bring into being alternative ways of life" (Muncie & Wetherell 1995, 69). Thus ideologies play a subtle but very important role in defining what is considered normal and desirable (Wetherell 1995). Moreover, powerful ideologies combine their 'force' with cultural beliefs (Quinn & Holland 1987, 13).

Geertz (1973, 196) does not find the evaluative aspect of the concept of ideology necessary. He even hints at that the term 'ideology' might better be left to its non-scientific, polemic use (ibid. 200). In similar vein, Muncie and Wetherell (1995) note that a conception of ideology which highlights falsity and distortion is problematic when applied to the family. However, the problems with ideology as a concept seem mostly to be connected to its use for political purposes.

Some definitions of ideology lack the evaluative, normative aspect. The definition of ideology offered by Nakano Glenn (1994, 9) comes very close to the definition of culture and ethnotheories: "An ideology is the conceptual system by which a group makes sense of and thinks about the world. It is collective rather an individual product." However, normativity seems to be a part of the very essence of an ideology (Gubrium & Holstein 1990).

Similarly to belief systems and ethnotheories, an ideology is a collective conceptual system rather than the product of an individual (Nakano Glenn 1994, 9). Though ideologies are a collective product this does not mean that the existence of only one ideology is the usual state of affairs. Different cultural groups can have their own ideologies, but, as ideologies are normative and thus connected to power they are also usable as tools of oppression and inequality (Nakano Glenn 1994). Gubrium and Holstein (1990, 132) discuss the role of "contemporary family ideology as normative control". According to them, the image of the family is a monolithic, ethical or normative prescription, although the forms of family life are varied. Jokinen (1996, 13) states in her dissertation that motherhood is one of tightest social roles prescribed in society and that variation in acting in this role is quite restricted. Likewise, the image of a good parent presents something that ought to be, while reflecting what actually exists.

The ideology of gender equality is the most important parenting ideology in the Nordic countries. Welles-Nyström (1996, 192) remarks that it is "the thread that binds together the cultural fabric of Swedish policies, health care, and child status, and it is a key element of parental ethnotheories for infant and child health and development." In addition to equality between genders, the idea of equality is extended to parent-child interaction and relations between social classes (ibid. 193). Gender equality is promoted in Nordic countries by

officially supporting shared parenting and fathers' taking parental leave (Magnusson 2001).

Parvikko (1992) scrutinizes the concept of gender equality. She points out that, according to the classical liberalistic conception, equality between the genders can be and has been understood to mean that there are no differences between men and women which leads to the adoption of maleness as the baseline. Parvikko (1992) suggests that instead of claiming that men and women are similar (or that mothers and fathers are similar) we should revert to biological differences while realising that 'the notion of sexual differences does not abandon the level of formal equality' (ibid. 108)

The ideologies dealing with motherhood affect the lives of women to a greater extent than the ideologies of fatherhood do for men (Wetherell 1995, 215). A woman is faced with maternity whether she is a mother or not, whereas a man often needs to consider fatherhood only when he has become a father. Besides, for some women, ideologies can suggest that they should not become mothers or that they are not ideal material to be mothers. For example, Wetherell (ibid. 234) remarks that women with disabilities are often regarded as unfit to become mothers.

Even political ideologies often prescribe what is desirable and normal parenting. For example, in Nazi Germany 'fatherhood' was rewarded by family subsidies and it was glorified as the 'nature' and the duty of a man. According to Nazi ideology, motherhood should not be rewarded, as this would make mothers calculate the returns on motherhood and thus a mother "would cease to be good mother", as a male leader of the party's welfare organization pointed out (Bock 1991, 244).

The ideology of good parenthood is also present in family policy (Phoenix & Woollett 1991b, 14). For example, it is reflected in the ways child care is arranged or whether family leave is possible in a particular country (see e.g. Kurtz 1997). Finland has an extensive antenatal and child health care centre system which also gives advice on child-rearing as well as matters concerning the health of the child and the mother. Since the 1960s fathers have also officially been designated as a target of child-rearing education, and they are expected to participate in parenting and regular visits to the child health care centre (Kuronen 1999, 67).

2.3   Gender and generation

Research differentiates between groups of people on various grounds. In this study differentiations are based on culture, gender, and generation. Both gender and generation (age) are often regarded as 'natural' and self-explanatory categories (e.g. Rantamaa 2001, 50). However, both categories can be and have been given several definitions in research and everyday usage (see Marin 2001, 40–41). In the following, I will deal with conceptions of gender and generation as they have been used in research as well as present the conceptions

of gender and generation in this study. Gender is included in this study in two ways: as forming a part of motherhood and fatherhood, and as a way of differentiating between groups of informants. The rationale behind the differentiation of the informants according to gender and generation is the assumption that, by focussing on the possible differences between the groups, we can indentify the factors that play a role in the formation of those differences.

Gender

The use and conceptualisation of 'gender' resembling that of 'class' is typical of Anglophone research. However, in Nordic studies 'gender' is often understood more broadly as including not just gender-specific behaviour but also the wider social context. Holter (2003) calls these different approaches to gender 'gender class' and 'historical gender relations' views, respectively. The Nordic 'historical gender relations' view is, according to Holter (ibid. 35), brought about by three conditions prevailing in the Nordic countries. These are gender equality, welfare society, and democracy. Holter points out that in the Nordic countries these three conditions are parts of informal everyday processes as well as political decisions. The Nordic understanding of gender as historical gender relations, argues Holter (ibid. 36), is more apt to account for changes in views on gender. In this study gender is understood to be a class and a category of people.

It is also understood that motherhood and fatherhood are important in the construction of gender. It has even been suggested that for women motherhood can be the most gender-enforcing experience (Fox 2001, 374). Understanding gender only as a class, defined by biology (see Holter ibid. 44), limits our understanding of gender. However, in studying the images of a good mother and a good father, motherhood and fatherhood are here not approached from the point of view of how they construct gender.

Gender is understood in this study to be a social construction built around the perceived differences between the sexes (e.g. Nakano Glenn 1994, 3). According to Connell (1995, 71), gender determines the everyday practices on the reproductive arena, part of which are childbirth and infant care. While dealing with parenthood, Connell (2000) writes that parenthood is prescribed by symbolic gender order, including the written norms of parental rights and responsibilities, the ways in which these norms are formulated, presented, and how they are understood by parents. These written and unwritten norms define what is expected of parents, what they can and cannot do in certain situations and contexts. (see also Lammi-Taskula 2003, 88).

Focussing on the way gender is constructed, Ridgeway (2000) writes about the role of cultural beliefs in establishing socially significant categories of people, gender being one of them. Ridgeway calls these beliefs social difference codes. According to the code, a person is recognised as a man or a woman by certain attributes. Once gender has been classified, the code tells us that we can expect this person to have certain distinguishing traits and to act accordingly.

The code choses certain features out of the infinite, continuous range of human diversity. (Ridgeway 2000). Following Ridgeway's ideas, the beliefs comprising the image of a good mother and a good father can be seen as representing parts of the social difference codes signalling the categories of 'mother', 'father', 'man', and 'woman'.

Gender, motherhood and fatherhood are closely intertwined (e.g. Nakano Glenn 1994, 3). However, the effect of gender on the life of a man is different from its effect on a woman. The difference is especially highlighted in understandings of parenthood. As several researchers point out, a woman is faced with maternity regardless of whether she is or is not, whether she wishes or does not wish to become, a mother. Motherhood seems somehow inbuilt in femininity (e.g. Kopytoff 1990; Phoenix & Woollett 1991b, 13; Wetherell 1995). According to Kopytoff (1990), motherhood is intrinsic in the concept of a 'young woman', i.e. a young woman cannot escape being associated with the idea of motherhood. Whereas for men masculinity is more tied to a man's ability to work (Kugelberg 1999, 269). Kugelberg (ibid. 269) concludes that the association of a young woman with motherhood reflects a biological and psychological interpretation of women's behaviour and supports the traditional view of the differences between men and women.

In this study the perception of a person's gender (and generation) prescribes whether this person is classified as a son, daughter, mother, father, grandfather, or grandmother, and it is asked whether the membership of a particular group in the study will affect the way the person describes a good mother or a good father. Moreover, a good mother is differentiated from a good father on the basis of gender, and thus descriptions of a good father and good mother are part of the social difference codes (see Ridgeway 2000) and the norms of the symbolic gender order (see Connell 2000).

Generation

A generation can be defined in several ways. For example, demographers use 'generation' as a means of measuring population replacement, i.e. the rate at which a population produces children. According to the Mannheimian conception, a generation refers to a group of people who in their formative years, especially in their youth, encounter the same historical, cultural, or political events and movements (e.g. Alanen 2001, 102–109; Mayall 2001, 3). For Mannheim it is important to separate biological generation from social generation formed by shared experiences (e.g. Virtanen 1999, 81). Alanen (2001) argues for the study of childhood as a generational phenomenon. Likewise, I consider parenthood and grandparenthood generational phenomena, but, differently from Alanen (ibid. 109–110), generation will here be used as an 'independent' factor shedding light on the differences, as the focus is not on generations and their formation and experiences as such.

In empirical studies as well as everyday thinking uses 'age' often as a criterion for a 'generation'. 'Age' meaning the number of years a person has lived. However, in this study age as such was regarded as inadequate for the

purpose (Phoenix 1996, 189). Aapola (1999) suggests that 'age' is a social construction and in the formation of 'age' the chronological age of a person is not the only criterion used. In fact chronological age can be regarded as abstract and fairly meaningless (Jyrkämä 2001, 138). Other types of criteria listed by Aapola (ibid. 230) include the position of a person in the family (see also Rantamaa 2001). Marin (2001, 41, 253–254) calls this type of generational construction a family generation. For example, grandparents form a generation irrespective of their personal chronological age (ibid. 254). In this study a generation is a family generation and the term 'generation' is thus used in its genealogical sense (see Kertzer 1983).

Though generation is here defined within the family context, it does not mean that the shared experiences of a historical generation would not be seen as affecting the thinking of those belonging to that generation (Marin 2001, 37). The experiences of wartime generations will certainly, to some extent, be similarly coloured by the harsh times they have lived through. Likewise, the social generations since World War II have been the target of expert advice from child health care centres to an extent that was impossible before the war.

Family generations are, to some extent, connected to the chronological age of those belonging to them (Marin 2001, 27). However, it seems likely that the connection between family generations and the chronological age of a person is loosening (Marin 2001, 21; Rantamaa 2001, 70). According to Paajanen (2002, 80) the most frequently expressed reason for postponing having children in the age group 'under 30' was the wish to finish studies first. This means that those who study long will have their children older while those who start working earlier will have their children younger, thereby increasing the variation in the ages of the persons having their first child.

Intergenerational transmission of parental thinking?

The purpose of the following is to outline and summarise the various sources of parental thinking presented in the literature. The studies on parental thinking reviewed also include studies on attitudes and values, as well as beliefs, images and ideas, as my aim here is to shed some light not only on the 'product', for instance the nature of a belief, but also on the 'process', i.e. how and where parents get their ideas and images. The 'processes' of forming an attitude or a belief are regarded here as similar. I start with a brief review of the intergenerational transmission studies because the transmission of beliefs and ideas from parents to their children seems to be widely presumed and studied as well as implicitly and explicitly included in various theoretical formulations, such as socialisation theory.

Literature deals with intergenerational transmission of beliefs and ideas on two levels: the phenomenon can be investigated on the level of individuals (e.g. socialisation and developmental theory) and on the level of societies and cultures (cultural reproduction) (Goodnow 1992, 293). Though the differentiation of these two levels is theoretically and conceptually simple, the distinction becomes less simple when specific studies are concerned. Is the

captured phenomenon best explained on the cultural level or on the level of individuals engaged in parent-child dyads? Moreover, researchers also describe the phenomenon in several ways: besides stating that they are studying intergenerational transmission (e.g. Acock & Bengtson 1980; Okagaki & Bevis 1999; Simons, Beaman, Conger & Chao 1992; Vollebergh, Iedema & Raaijmakers 2001), they also write about correspondence or similarities between the beliefs of parents and their children (e.g. Goodnow 1992; Miller & Glass 1989).

The studies focussing on the level of individuals, mostly psychological, tend to find the transmission of culture and thinking from parents to their children important and see the socialisation of children as one of the basic tasks of parents. The studies focussing on the level of culture and society, mostly sociological, often reveal changes towards 'more modern' ideas in the younger generations, stating even that cultural forgetting is vital for the development and survival of a community as well as for its adjustment to new circumstances (Virtanen 1999,83).

On the basis of the results so far it would be tempting to conclude that parents simply transmit their views to their children while rearing them (Kemppainen 2001; Simons et al 1992; Vollebergh et al. 2001). Some researchers even suggest that similarity of beliefs and values between parents and their children contributes to stability and continuity in society (Miller & Glass 1989, 991). In this way the possible transmission of beliefs from parents to children is seen as a factor which maintains the culture in question. Vollebergh et al. (2001) noted in their study that in any case parents had a larger impact on the thinking of their children than vice versa. However, the issue seems to be more complicated. In his study Taris (2000) hypothesised that those mothers whose quality of interaction with their children was good would transmit their sexual attitudes to their children, and that the direction of transmission would be from the mothers to their children. Neither of the hypotheses gained support. The researcher suggests that this is the result of several factors: mothers are important socialising agents at some points of the child's development but not all the time, and that for some sets of values peers may be more important socialising agents than parents. Sexual attitudes could be an area where peers have a strong effect. Vollebergh et al. (2001, 1185) point out that the process of intergenerational transmission is a more complex phenomenon and that similarities between the thinking of parents and their children may be the result of other factors, for instance the effects of advice coming from outside the family.

Several theories presumed to explain the transmissions of parenting activities and thinking from parents to their children have been tested. Focussing on the level of individuals, Miller and Glass (1989) investigated changes in parent-child attitude similarity in a study using longitudinal data. The aim of the study was to test socialisation theory and developmental theory. According to Erik H. Erikson (e.g. 1950/1982), one of the developmental tasks of adolescents is to differentiate themselves from their parents. Thus, the better the adolescent is able to differentiate from his parents, the more different his beliefs should be. However, the socialisation theory predicts the opposite, the

more successful the parents are in socialising their offspring, the more similar their beliefs should be. The results of Miller and Glass (1989) were contradictory and neither of the theories gained total support. The researchers concluded that the search for the transhistorical developmental pattern of parent-child similarity is not easy to capture empirically as the micro-level processes of personality and family development always interact with changing macro-level sociopolitical realities (ibid. 996). The socialisation theory has been criticised for not taking into account the effects children have on their parents and the role of interpretations and evaluations made by both parents and children (Grusec, Goodnow & Kuczynski 2000) Children, for example, compare the ways their parents treat them and their siblings with the ways their peers are treated by their parents (Dunn & Plomin 1990). The underlying images of the child as somebody developing, becoming an adult, has had a strong influence on the ways in which parent-child interactions and their 'results' are viewed (James et al 1998). The child is seen as moulded by its parents and the possibility of the child affecting its parents is left unstudied.

It has been suggested that the transmission of thinking is based on the attachment between parents and their children. In the studies by Taris and Semin (1997; 1998) and Taris, Semin and Bok (1998) it was hypothesised that when the relationship between a mother and an adolescent is good, the mother transmits her values on sexual permissiveness (Taris, Semin & Bok 1998) and moral values (Taris & Semin 1997) and, through influencing her child's locus of control, will affect the child's sexual efficacy and experience (Taris & Semin 1998). In all these studies it was noted that a good relationship between a mother and an adolescent resulted in more similar thinking. However, it is possible to interpret the findings as resulting from the child and the mother co-constructing the thinking.

It has also been suggested that parents transmit their attachment style to their children. According to the attachment theory by Bowlby, attachment or bonding between the child and its parent, usually the mother, is seen as crucial for the child's future well-being. When the child is securely attached to its mother, the child will learn how to attach and be able in turn to transmit this skill to its children (e.g. van Ijzendoorn 1992, 79). A considerably large body of research exists on the intergenerational transmission of attachment In a review article of studies on transmission of parenting, van Ijzendoorn (1992) noted several shortcomings in the study designs. For example, the use of cohort samples caused problems. Moreover, the results could be interpreted in several ways. For instance, the child's influence on its parent was not considered. However, van Ijzendoor (ibid. 96) concludes that, although the designs of the studies are flawed, it seems plausible that adult and child attachment are related, i.e. the nature of attachment is transmitted from parents to their children.

The routes of possible transmission seem to be many. Besides actually teaching, telling what to do and what not to do as well as giving advice, parents are models for their children. For instance, there is a link between the paternal use of corporal punishment and cruelty to animals in boys (Flynn 1999).

Parental modelling has been studied, especially in connection with intergenerational transmission of harsh parenting (e.g. Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Wu 1991), but it has also been hypothesised in studying intergenerational transmission of constructive parenting (Chen & Kaplan 2001). Moreover it is also one of the social learning theory's premises that behaviour can be acquired by observing others (Bandura 1973). According to Bloch (1991), much culturally transmitted knowledge is in fact passed on non-linguistically. He refers to concept acquisition studies which have concluded, for instance, that the first concepts a child acquires are non-linguistic. Thus it is possible that research so far has not been able to capture cultural transmission as most studies, like the present one, have been based on linguistic data. However, it is difficult to imagine ways of studying thinking, especially phenomena like images and beliefs, via observation.

It seems reasonable to presume that the ease and efficiency of transmission depends on the nature of the beliefs in question. All beliefs are not easily deduced from parental behaviour, which makes their transmission less likely (Goodnow 1992, 295). Some beliefs may be transmitted more easily owing to their direct connection to parenting activities. In Kemppainen's (2001) study it was concluded that the use of corporal punishment and condoning its use were preceded by childhood memories of being the target of corporal punishment. Similarly, in the study by Simons et al. (1992) boys' discipline beliefs were related to their parents' use of corporal punishment. Yet the transmission of overt parenting practices, like corporal punishment, may or may not include the transmission of corresponding beliefs.

In a study using panel data and focussing on gender role ideology and work role identities of women, Moen, Erickson and Dempster-McClain (1997) found that daughters' gender role ideology reflected their mothers' gender role ideology but that work role identity was associated with the daughters' own personal experiences. In addition, it was noted that, regardless of age, women's gender role ideology had changed during the second half of the 20th century. The researchers conclude: "Our results show that the intergenerational associations with ideology and identities may be very different. Mothers' attitudes are associated with daughters' generalized beliefs, but the daughters' own personal experiences are associated with the daughters' identities" (ibid. 291). Mother's gender role ideology is perhaps more visible to the daughter than mother's ideas of work identity.

One factor thought to affect the transmission of a belief is agreement between parents. When the parents agree over a belief the message to their children is clearer and the children perceive the belief more accurately. However, accurate perception does not mean acceptance. Children also reject accurately perceived beliefs. (Goodnow & Collins 1990, 81). Cashmore and Goodnow (1985) introduced a 'two-process model' based on separation of the perception of a belief and its acceptance or rejection. Goodnow (1992) later developed the model further by adding more subtle differentiations to both 'processes'. For instance, on the level of perception Goodnow suggests that children also pay attention to the significance of the belief to the parent.

Goodnow (1992, 315) proposes that the model, with the added refinements could also be used in investigating parents' perceptions and acceptance of beliefs.

Researchers have explored the effect of children on parents, and especially reciprocal influences (see e.g. Bell 1979), on a more general level. Lerner (1993) studied the effect of the child's temperament on parents and Ambert (1992) dealt with all kinds of effects children have on their parents, including the impact of working children on the welfare of an agrarian family. There are few studies explicitly stating that they pay attention to the possibility that children also affect their parents' thinking. However, following Margaret Mead, Åström (1993, 20) suggests that the traditional vertical transfer of culture has changed direction so that the older generations are increasingly adopting the thinking of the younger. This suggestion is based on Mead's distinction between three kinds of culture: *postfigurative*, *cofigurative*, and *prefigurative*. In the postfigurative culture children adopt the thinking of their parents, in the cofigurative culture the source for both parents and their children are peers, and in the prefigurative culture the parents learn also from their children. The prefigurative culture, according to Mead, is brought about by the fact that the future is understood to be unknown, which makes the teachings and knowledge of older generations futile and causes the 'generation gap' (Mead 1970). During the time after Mead wrote about the three kinds of culture the term 'generation gap' became widely known outside the academy.

Methodological problems in transmission studies

One of the reasons for the controversial results discussed above is that the studies themselves are often methodologically problematic (e.g. Goodnow 1992, 293; van Ijzendoor 1992). Studies on transmission often use retrospective data from cohort generations, which means that the parenting beliefs of the grandparent generation are collected at the time when they are already grandparents (Vermulst, de Brock & van Zutphen 1991; Kemppainen 2001). Moreover, as Olsen, Martin and Halverson (1999) point out, in some studies the parenting of the oldest generation is retrospectively described by only one person. In these studies the researchers get only the 'product'; the process which resulted in this 'product' can only be speculated about. We cannot assume that parenting beliefs do not change. Parents do learn and adopt new beliefs and ideas. Moreover, the position of a grandparent in a generation chain is very different from that of a parent. A grandparent looks at parenting from a very different perspective.

The cohort design in these studies also brings to foreground the effects of remembering (Simons et al., 1991). Our memories are always a product of the present, i.e. the time when they are recounted (Schacter 1996). More problems for research designs are created by the fact that, according to our everyday thinking, we see ourselves as coping our parents and thus also their ways of rearing children and thinking about child-rearing. It is very likely that this belief is reflected in the informants' accounts.

People themselves often think that their parents are a source of their beliefs and child-rearing activities (Antila-Räfsbäck 1999; Kemppainen 2001, Vermulst, de Brock, & Zutphen 1991). For instance, one of the interviewers in the present study (family 78) reflected on the issue like this: "Each person adopts something from his/her own parents, if not purposefully then instinctively without thinking about the matter; some things are inherited from one's parents, particularly from mothers to their children." The belief that one adopts beliefs and activities from one's parents has possibly affected the results of these studies because they are partly based on retrospective memories of childhood. Leffers (1993, 68) writes in discussing different levels of maternal moral reasoning: "I think that because I had her (her mother) for a model, I was eventually able to take on these same dominant attitudes, expectations, and beliefs."

However, in a study by Acock and Bengtson (1980) focussing on the similarity of opinions on nine political and religious questions between parents and their adolescents, the researchers noted that when the adolescents' believed in the 'generation gap', they perceived their parents' opinions as more conservative than they actually were. Moreover, when researchers use retrospective data they seem in some cases to be more prepared to think that beliefs and images are transmitted only from parents to children and not vice versa. Kugelberg (1999, 20) criticises the idea of the developmental niche by Super and Harkness (e.g. 1986) for following the ideas of old-fashioned socialisation theory, which sees only the child as the target of socialisation.

Other sources of parental thinking

Previous research has suggested other sources of parental thinking besides intergenerational transmission. Experience with children has been seen as a factor affecting the parenting beliefs of a parent. Research does not, however, fully support this. For example, Ninio (1988) has shown that attributions of cognitive competence to infants are little affected by the experience of parenthood. Ninio proposes that these attributions may be the result of preparenthood socialisation. Likewise, Palacios and Moreno (1996) conclude that experience as parent was not the main source of ideas on children. Holden and Ritchie (1988), quoted by Goodnow and Collins (1990, 75), suggest that although parents make use of experience in problem solving or decision making contexts, their beliefs, ideas and images of child-rearing are not necessarily affected by these experiences. In any case experience can not be the only source because people have these ideas whether they have or have not children of their own or any actual contact with children. As far as the image of a good parent is concerned, most of us have experiences and memories of our own parents, a fact which complicates the matter.

The fact that images are culture-specific suggests that these beliefs might be transmitted from one generation to another. There are, however, other possible explanations. Parents are not the only source of beliefs: beliefs can also be adopted from other sources. Lightfoot and Valsiner (1992, 408), for example,

point out that parental beliefs are products of the cultural communication processes. They suggest that personal beliefs are co-constructed with the cultural world of the individual (ibid. 395). One source, besides the mass media, friends and neighbours as well as the education the individual receives, is advice from experts. Molinari and Emiliani (1987) maintain that knowledge of this kind comes partly from transforming scientific knowledge. Within the social representational tradition especially, scientific knowledge is seen as part of the culture, a source of ideas for everyday thinking (Farr 1993, 16). Moreover, it is probable that the advice coming from experts is not 'pure' scientific knowledge, instead, it is a construction consisting of, for instance, the expert's everyday experience, transmitted beliefs from his or her parents, and knowledge gained during his or her education. Besides, as Lightfoot and Valsiner (1992, 402) note, "experts are driven less by the latest empirical advances than the culturally defined fashion of the times." Parallel views of experts and parents have also been noted in research (Super, Harkness, van Tijen, van der Vlugt, Fintelman & Dijkstra 1996). For instance, in the study on ethnotheories dealing with infant arousal, the researchers found striking similarities in the ethnotheories held by middle-class American parents in the study and the beliefs on infant arousal in the scientific literature. These similarities are not a coincidence; instead, the researchers suggest that they point to the relationship between ethnotheories and scientific models of development (ibid. 462).

Lightfoot and Valsiner (1992, 401–412) are at pains to point out the inconsistent and conflicting expert advice given to parents in various historical periods. However, the advice coming from experts is symbolically marked by the status of experts to be taken seriously by parents. According to Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995, 109), this advice first reaches the education-conscious middle-class woman and then via television and magazines nearly everyone. One reason why parents take such advice seriously is suggested by Haavind (1973, 41) who writes, reflecting perhaps the thoughts of many parents: "But the little baby is such a complicated and multifaceted creature and it can be difficult to know what is best for the baby. Perhaps for this reason many are prepared to listen to what psychologists have to say."["Men det lilla barnet är ett komplicerat och mångfacetterat väsen och det kan vara svårt att veta vad som är best för det. Därför är kanske många beredda att lysna på vad psykologerna har att säga." (Haavind 1973, 41)]

3 TERRITORIES OF PARENTHOOD EXPLORED

There exists a large body of parenting research in which the 'good parent' question is implicitly present but studies where conceptions of a good mother and a good father are asked directly about are fewer, and the focus in these studies has mostly been on mothers. Research on parenthood often presents ideas of good parenthood either in the form of advice to parents or in descriptions of consequences to the child of parents' child-rearing activities. In the following I will turn first to those parenting studies which seem to form the core of much parental advice or which have been popularised and thus are possibly reflected in the everyday thinking of parents. Moreover, I will review research explicitly addressing the ideas of a good mother and a good father as expressed by lay persons.

3.1 "Good mothers"

3.1.1 Images and ideologies of a good mother present in the academic and child-rearing literatures

Descriptions of a good mother and good mothering are plentiful in the research literature. Below I will review studies in which a good mother is defined indirectly. These studies have been selected from the point of view of the advice offered to parents and in this way are considered to present parents with image of a good mother. The views of each approach presented here are not exclusive and often represent thinking no longer prevalent today, but they are views that reoccur in the literature dealing with motherhood. Because images and ideologies are very close to each other, this brief review of the literature contains also some ideological notions of good mothering.

The role of advice in mothering

According to Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995, 108–109), the demands made on parents and parenthood have turned it into a very serious business with enormous responsibilities. Expert advice, often in the form of child-care manuals, act as a source of requirements parents, and especially mothers, listen to (Burman 1994, 57–58; Hays 1996, 73; Woodward 1997, 241). Moreover, contemporary parents, again especially mothers, listen to the advice of experts more than their parents did (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 1995, 117). Listening to expert advice and rejecting the advice coming from other mothers is even included in the image of a good mother given in child-care manuals (e.g. Marshall 1991, 73).

According to Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995, 128), the advice offered by experts turned into obligations in the 1950s and 1960s. The future of the child began to appear as depending on the mother's activities. To ignore the child's needs might mean ruining the child's chances of getting on in life. Hays (1996, 72) maintains that American mothers are heavily exposed to the prevailing ideology of child-rearing. Almost all the mothers in Hays' study recognised this ideology and responded to it either by accepting it or by rejecting it. Hays continues by suggesting that the sources of this dominant model of child-rearing, which she calls intensive mothering, are child-care manuals.

One of the forces behind the highlighted role of scientific research and the advice it offers to parents are images of a child. The images of a good mother and the images of a child are interconnected (Ambert 1994, 529; Lamb & Hwang 1996, 5). In the European context, starting with the ideas of Rousseau, the image of a child has changed from one of being an economic asset in the form of labour to an object to be loved (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 1995, 104; 2002; Giddens 2002; Hays 1996; Schütze 1987, 45). However, the Rousseauistic ideals of the value of the child paradoxically also resulted in discipline-oriented child-rearing in the nineteenth century (Schütze 1987, 49). The child was perceived as valuable and thus its education should be carried out properly following the advice of physicians. The scientific advice offered by physicians in those days resulted in child-rearing recommendations, for instance the 'cold-water cure', which to a mother of today sound more like a torture. The good mother was the one who was punctual, strict and able to control her upsurges of gentleness. The child was not assumed to need tenderness. (Schütze 1987, 51–51). The strict schedules suggested that mothers use in childcare at that time may be one of the sources of the fears of overindulgence still expressed by mothers today.

Since those days, the advice given to mothers has changed many times (Lambert 1996; James, Jenks & Prout 1998) but the image of the child needing its mother has remained. The mother is regarded as the person who should know what her child needs (Evergingham 1994, 73). Changes in the advice to mothers have often occurred as a result of changes in ideas about what a child needs or what is good for a child. Ambert (1994, 530) pointedly argues that ideas about what is 'best for a child' and what is 'good parenting' get to be constructed by

the dominant scientific paradigms and professions. For example, in his study on educational ideas and norms in child-rearing Tähtinen (1992) identified three periods between 1850–1989 in Finland. These were the period of religious morality, the period of medical educational morality, and the period of psychological educational morality, each named according to the dominant scientific paradigm. Likewise, Woodhead (1997) shows provocatively how children's needs are a cultural construction. Children's needs are a projection of professional thinking, Woodhead argues, not a product of children themselves. Children 'need' what, from the adults' value-position, professionals suggest they should need. According to Hays (1996, 154), the reason most often given for why parents want to give their children what they need is that they love their children. Out of love they seek professional advice on their children's needs and out of love they strive to fulfil those needs.

Once the child was seen as valuable and in need of guidance, parenting, and especially mothering, also gained new importance. On the one hand, questions were asked about the competence of mothers, which led to a search for ways of educating mothers for their task. On the other hand, mothering was idealised and mothers became the persons responsible for making society better by bringing up better children (Singer 1998, 66). The mothers in Hays' (1996, 186–171) study make it clear, that by being good mothers, loving and unselfish, they promote these qualities in their children and make the world a better place. The mothers see themselves as opposing the 'logic of the rationalized marketplace' which, according to the contemporary mothers in Hays's study, is the prevailing logic of economy and politics.

Mothers have often been idealised as morally and ethically superior to the rest of humankind. During the first years of the nation Finnish feminists presented the higher morals of women, and especially mothers, as the reason why women should be given more power in society. Mothers were regarded as the guardians of the morals of the whole nation. The high moral of mothers was attributed to their unselfish caring work. (Helén 1997).

Alasuutari (2003, 17–18) offers a summary of Finnish child-rearing professionals' image of a good mother: A good mother is a member of a nuclear family. Motherhood means the fulfilment of a woman's life and a mother's love comes naturally. Negative emotions are easily interpreted as unnatural. The good mother focuses on her child and is present in the life of her child. She is responsive and creates a safe emotional environment for her child. The good mother attends to her child's development and is able to offer the child activities that support his or her growth. The good mother gives up her personal wishes and other identities. The good of the child becomes the good of the mother.

Advice based on psychoanalytical and developmental psychological approaches

Both the psychoanalytical and the developmental psychology approaches as well as combinations of these have been used as a foundation for the advice

given to parents (Vuori 2001). In many cases these two approaches appear in blended form or as mutually influential. According to Vuori (ibid. 35), a combination of psychoanalytical and developmental psychology, which Vuori calls psychosocial discourse, has been the main source of advice offered to parents in expert texts. Phoenix and Woollett (1991b, 20) suggest in addition that scientific research often takes commonsense ideas for granted without paying attention to their ideological underpinnings. Moreover, they point out that the good mother constructed in the scientific psychosocial discourse only reflects the social reality of some mothers (ibid. 25; see also Haavind 1974).

In general, in studies applying the developmental psychology approach a good mother and good mothering are defined as those promoting the development of the child (Burman 1994, 3). The idea of a developing child, the child as becoming something, is connected to the idea of a good mother fostering this development, not so much for the love of a child but for the sake of the child's development, or fostering the child's development out of love (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 1995). Interestingly, however, the focus in these studies is more often on the nature of the attachment between the mother and her child than on the mother's activities aimed at promoting the child's development. In the mother-child dyad, the mother has no needs of her own, instead, she is totally at the service of her child (e.g. Hays 1996; Kaplan 1992, 5).

Another point worth noting is that most mainstream studies of developmental psychology focussing on child development seem to pay little attention to the fact that 'child development' is a cultural construction and that the body of theoretical knowledge and research descriptions are based on studies in the North American and European cultural contexts (e.g. Woodhead et al. 1998, 1).

The role of a mother in child-rearing is also stressed in the psychoanalytical approach. Dally (1982, 192–193), who is a trained psychiatrist and a mother of eight children, includes in her list of requirements of a good mother, for example, the following: the mother must be sensitive to the child's needs and aware of her own needs and capacity; the loving feelings she feels towards the child are not contingent on the child's behaviour; the mother must be honest to her child yet she knows how to present the world in a way appropriate for each age of the child; the mother also gives continuity, reliability and a sense of confidence. Dally concludes her description with a remark that "no mother can be a totally good mother and that all mothers make errors and have periods of being less good". However, Dally's list is not entirely typical of psychoanalytically based thinking; instead, it is a combination borrowing ideas from developmental psychology.

In general, the psychoanalytic approach of today sees the consequences of mothering as crucial to the sense of self, later object relationships, and adjustment of the child (e.g. Chodorow 1978; Thurer 1993, 519). However, in Freud's early thinking, according to Thurer, the inner drives were more important than the external world, including the mother. In Freud's later thinking, especially in connection with the Oedipus complex, the role of the mother became more important. However, it was not until after Freud's death,

following a blending with Bowlby's maternal attachment theory (e.g. Bowlby 1969), that the mother became the superwoman responsible for nearly everything in the child's life. The early weeks of an infant's life especially were seen as highly important. Blaming the mother became a fashion both in psychotherapy and the media (Thurer 1993, 527). Choosing to remain childless offered no escape from this blame as the psychoanalytical literature also regarded motherhood as essential and normal for a woman, and women not wishing to become mothers rejected their femininity (Nakano Glenn 1994, 9).

Bowlby highlighted the relationship between the mother and the infant and maintained that a warm, intimate, continuous relationship was vital to the child's mental health. Soon after Bowlby's ideas of the importance of the mother to the child had spread, a new theme appeared in more or less psychoanalytically oriented childcare studies: though the mother should form an attachment with her child, she should not love her child too much, be overprotective or suffocating, and she should not hinder her child's growth into a separate individual (Grant 1998, 210–211; Thurer 1993).

The task of mothering began resembling walking on a razor's edge: the good mother should form a secure attachment with her child, yet not become overprotective. The idea of mothering as a demanding job was further strengthened by manuals from experts like Benjamin Spock[5]. Spock's books stress the importance of the relationship between the child and his/her parents (Thurer 1993). Dr. Spock's manuals represent a period which Hays (1996) calls the permissive era. The permissive era meant that the previous advice on, for instance, rigid feeding schedules recommended by behaviorists was outdated. Instead, Dr. Spock advised mothers to follow their maternal instinct. Loving mothers should trust themselves, let the child express its needs and enjoy child-rearing; however, experts, especially paediatricians, know what is best for the child (Hays 1996, 48–49). Dr. Spock's advice was eagerly followed by white middle-class American mothers, who in the post World War II period had lost their everyday contact with their mothers' advice. However, African-American mothers did not listen to Spock's advice, explaining that "Spock is for rich kids" (Grant 1998, 226).

All the requirements for good mothering resulted in immense feelings of guilt among mothers (Grant 1998, 229–230). 'Relief' was offered by D. W. Winnicott, writing after World War II, who stated that the 'ordinary devoted mother' was capable of 'good-enough mothering' (Thurer 1993, 533). However, Winnicott also provided mothers with a list of the qualitites of a good-enough mother. For example, the good mother "must be responsive, must provide a nonintrusive mirroring environment, must collude with her child in respecting its transitional objects, and must survive and not retaliate against her baby's 'usage' of her". (Thurer 1993, 534). Moreover, a good-enough mother does not lose her temper because the "mother has to be able to tolerate hating her baby

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5   Spock's books have been translated into Finnish and are well known in Finland. In the town library of Jyväskylä there are (spring 2003) eight books by Dr Spock translated into Finnish. Two entries have the titles like *Järkevää lastenhoitoa* (1972 & 2003) and *Tervettä järkeä lastenhoitoon* (1969), respectively.

without doing anything about it. She cannot express it to him[6]; if, for fear of what she may do, she cannot hate appropriately, when hurt by her child, she must fall back on masochism" (Winnicott 1947, 202 quoted by First 1994, 147). The need to control one's hate and aggression towards the child is also expressed in the stories by Finnish mothers in Nykyri's (1998) study. If and when the mothers were not able to do that, they felt guilty. Nykyri (1998, 144) suggests that feelings of guilt appear when hate and aggression are directed towards some one who is perceived as weaker, whereas shame is experienced when the target of these negative feelings is stronger than oneself.

The child-rearing principles of authoritative parenting and sensitive mothering are also worth reviewing here. The advice based on these ideas is implicitly targeted at mothers despite the fact that the advice concerns 'parenting' (Woollett & Phoenix 1991c, 29). The good authoritative mother is firm, loving, demanding, and understanding (Baumrind 1967, 83) and her authoritative child-rearing style promotes the child's social and intellectual development (Woollett & Phoenix 1991c, 31). Sensitive mothering has also been labelled child-centredness or responsiveness. A good, sensitive mother provides a stimulating and sensitive environment for her child. This requires close involvement in day-to-day activities with the child. To accomplish this, the mother should stay at home (Woollett & Phoenix 1991c, 35). Qualitites of a good sensitive mother include, for instance the following: patience to hold one' s own feelings in check, recognising the child's developmental needs, and the endurance and commitment to invest energy in the parenting role (Belsky, Robins & Gamble[7] 1984, 259).

Women's movements and good mothering

The main aim of the feminist movement in the English speaking world in the 19th century was to improve the participation of women in public life. Feminists demanded equal access to education and employment as well as the right to vote. However, no one questioned the differences between what was thought natural for women and what was thought natural for men. Women were assumed to have a maternal instinct which made them capable of mothering. Accordingly, the feminine virtues, like the ability to care, should also be developed and practised in public life and not just in homes. However, a woman's role as a wife was considered more important than her role as a mother. (Richardson 1993).

It was not until after World War II that feminism turned against the idea that motherhood is the natural way of being a woman and began a critique of the traditional role of women in child-care. Instead of seeing motherhood as the fulfilment of femininity, motherhood began to be seen as the reason for the

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[6]   Winnicott offers here an instance of sexist thinking and language use by always using the pronoun 'he' when referring to the child. (see Burman 1994, 5 & 86). In this study, I use both pronouns 'she' and 'he' equally, when referring to children.

[7]   It should be noted that Belsky et al. (1984, 251) especially point out that they are addressing parenting in a particular context: American middle-class society.

oppression of women in society. (Richardson 1993; Vuori 1999). The goal of the main feminist movement in the 1960s and early 1970s was equality and personal autonomy for women. Motherhood was regarded as an obstacle preventing the attainment of this goal (Everingham 1994, 3).

The power of a mother was highlighted in the feminist literature at the turn of the decade. This thinking differentiated between the experience of motherhood and the institution of motherhood, and gave rise to research focussing on women's experiences and giving voice to women themselves. As a result of these studies the homogeneity of the experience of mothering as well as the beliefs in 'natural' aspects of mothering came into question (Vuori 1999).

Although, as Parvikko (1992, 89) suggests, Finland may have a reputation as a backwater of feminism, feminist ideas have had an effect on Finnish thinking. It may well be that the more radical feminist movements have not been visible in Finnish society and that individual women are hesitant to proclaim themselves feminists but, for example, the promotion of gender equality has been built into the Finnish welfare system, and the welfare system is, at least partly, the result of the activities of women (see e.g. Julkunen 1994; Rantalaiho 1994). The building of the Finnish women-friendly welfare system was in part promted by women espousing maternalistic feminism (Nätkin 1997, 18).

Nätkin (1997, 164) sees two distinct stands in the feminist criticism connected to parenting and fatherhood. She regards the Scandinavian invention of shared parenting as developed on the foundation of gender equality thinking, while the English-speaking world considers the mothers and children as a unit. For instance, Scottish health care workers considered the female relatives of the mother as those best fitted to helping the mother with her child, whereas in the Finnish context the child's father was expected to help (Kuronen 1999, 185). However, the ideology of shared parenting can equally well be regarded as a rising out of the loosely psychoanalytical thinking which sees the father's involvement with child-care and upbringing as important for the child's development after the child has turned three years old (see e.g. Chodorow 1978). The school of thought which considers the mother and her children as a unit fits well into the idea of motherhood as the power source of femininity.

Finnish ideologies and good mothers

In the Finnish context the power of mothers in the form of seeing mothers as those who mould the future generations was raised as a topic of debated back at the time when the Finnish nation and nationality were being constructed. J. V. Snellman and Z. Topelius[8], for example, strongly believed that virtuous mothers were the key persons in raising decent citizen with high moral standards for the benefit of the nation (Helén 1997, 137–144; Nätkin 1997, 183).

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[8]   The ideas of both Snellman (1806–1881) and Topelius (1818–1898) became widely known even among the lower classes. Topelius wrote fairy tales and school textbooks.

According to the prevailing ideology in those days, men and women were very different by nature and thus their callings differed. Women, and especially mothers, were morally superior to men. However, women needed to be educated to accomplish their important work. With the rise in the importance of mothering, that of the family also rose and vice versa. This ideological framework, idealizing motherhood and the family, was typical in Europe in the 19th century (Häggman1994; Schütze 1987).

Mothers were thus seen as the key to the welfare of the whole nation and their education became crucial. Women gained access to the professions, like teaching and nursing, which were seen as suited to their motherly nature (Vuori 1999). Women in these female professions as well as in the various organisations of women (e.g. The Martha Organization, see Ollila 1993) and women in the higher social classes started to educate the not-so-educated women. Midwives spread ideas of hygiene and proper infant nutrition, although these enlightened views were not accepted by all women at once (Helsti 2000). Women were also active in political matters, with the best of Finnish home as their goal. This kind of activism has been called maternalistic politics (Vuori 1999).

The maternalistic ideology saw mothering as the main task in a woman's life and the strength and power of women was seen to lie in motherhood. At the societal level the aim was to promote the welfare of mothers, and the route to attaining this goal was an increase in the political power of women (Nätkin 1997). Women were thus allowed to work, especially if they had no children, but motherhood was regarded as the most important task of a woman.

Since the 1960s the number of women working outside their homes has increased. In the early 1990s 75% of Finnish mothers had jobs (Kartovaara 2000, 119). The mothers of the nation had become working mothers who, in one way or another, had to solve the question of their children's day care. The welfare state went to their aid. (Vuori 1999). The Finnish welfare system has been described as 'woman-friendly state' referring to the facts that women as mothers are financially supported by the state, and that women work in large numbers in public services sector (Kuronen 1999, 18). Thus the roots of the woman-friendly welfare lie in maternalism (Bock & Thane 1991; Nätkin 1997).

In Finland today, being in paid employment is considered a norm also for mothers (e.g. Julkunen 1995, 88). In 2002, about 67% of women aged 15–64 years worked full-time and 17% worked part-time, bringing the total of working women up to 84% (Eurostat news release 27/2003). In 1995, the year the data for this study was gathered, 70% mothers with a child aged 3–6 worked (Haataja & Nurmi 2000, 38). To defend themselves against the cultural norm of every adult supporting herself or himself, the unemployed mothers of Böök's (2001) study resorted to the discourse of the virtuous mother and described themselves more or less in the terms of traditional stay-at-home mothers. In this way the mothers were both able to avoid the label of deviancy, and to fulfil some of their cultural expectations and 'survive'. The virtuous mothers were self-sacrificing, hardworking (at home) and tolerant towards their husbands.

On the ideological level the idea of the nuclear family with a wage-earning husband and a stay-at-home mother existed in Finland, for instance, in the family ideologies expressed in a popular Finnish family magazine, Kotiliesi, in which in 1947, the role of a housewife was presented as the ideal for a woman (Heikkilä 1998, 338). However, this ideal was never achieved by many (Nätkin 1997). For instance, interwar working-class women sorely needed the money they could earn outside the home. Socialist women had been demanding the right to stay at home at the beginning of the 20th century. In the 1930s this demand changed into the right of women to work (Lähteenmäki 1995, 343). Eventually, thirty-forty years ago, the stay-at-home mother ideology was replaced by the ideal of both parents working (Nousiainen 2000, 9). Though the ideology of gender equality required that women were to receive equal treatment in the labour market, women have continued to remain responsible for household and child-care work (Nätkin 1997; Reuna 1998.)

The good mother's work – in the home or outside the home?

The issue of whether a good mother works or not seems to be a central one in the Anglo-American literature (see Hays 1996, Raddon 2002). In her book on the cultural models of mothering Hays (1996) analysed the contemporary American ideology of mothering. According to Hays, the focal point of the ideology is the model of intensive mothering. The intensive mothering described by Hays (1996) is based on the image of the child as innocent and priceless, and on the idea that the mother should provide everything the child needs. To be able to do this the mother should preferably stay at home. According to Kaplan (1992, 2), on some level in the cultural imagination the image of an American mother has also changed from that of a housewife to that of a Superwoman who is capable of both taking care of her children and household work and working outside the home. But to be a good working mother means never letting work or career take precedence in her life (e.g. Lewis 1991, 196).

Katvala (2001)[9] explored motherhood by looking into the mother's place. She analysed her with reference to the questions: Where is the mother? Where should the mother be? Katvala (2001, 111) concluded: "a (good) mother's place is at home, taking care of and raising children." The women in the data emphasised caring whereas the men focussed on the mother's power and her work at home.

Myths and contradictory expectations

Motherhood is strongly prescribed and restricted by expectations, norms and ideals. Moreover, the impossibility of any one being a good mother as well as

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[9] The present study and Katvala's study share some data. In this study the data are the answers the informants, Finnish parents and their children, gave to the question: What is a good mother like?" While Katvala assembled her 'motherhood data' by extracting everything these same informants said about mothers or mothering, as well as informants' stories and memories.

the contradictory nature of cultural expectations has been recorded in several studies (Dally 1982; Hays 1996; Julkunen 1995; Raddon 2002). In yet other studies the authors rebel against the expectations and descriptions of 'good mother' (Hays 1996; Haavind 1974). A kind of early Scandinavian mothers' manifest against myths and norms was 1973 publication of the book 'Myten om den gode mor' composed of contributions by several Norwegian writers (Berg Slagnes, Haavind, Grennes, Nørve et al. 1974). In it, Berg Slagnes describes a mythical 'good mother' who is by nature created to give birth and care for children. The mythical good mother loves her child endlessly and is willing to sacrifice herself for her children and her husband, and this sacrifice makes her happy. The abilities of the mythical good mother are due to instinct and for this instinct the mythical good mother can not be anything else but a mother (ibid.25). According to Haavind (1974, 36), a good mother gives us warmth and security, she is able to satisfy all our needs and her abilities in this respect are unlimited. She understands, comforts and accepts. She never lets us down and she forms the foundation on which we stand. No mortal mother is able to match to the mythical good mother and this causes feelings of insufficiency and guilt. Although the roots of the mythical good mother are ancient, some authors have maintained that the re-birth of the mythical mother after World War II was the result of Bowlby's research and the attachment theory (Dally 1983; Richardson 1993.) Haavind (1974, 45–46) maintains that psychological research, especially interpretation of the results, is intertwined with culture. Accordingly, the mythical good mother and Bowlby's attachment theory rest heavily on Western middle-class ideals of family life (Haavind 1974, 60).

Several feminist authors objected to the idealized or even mythical image of mother. Idealizing motherhood has been seen as a way of controlling and dis-empowering mothers. In seeking to fulfil the demands imposed on them, mothers set aside their personal needs, including even the basic need for sleep (Tardy 2000, 444). Moreover, Woollett and Phoenix (1991c, 38) point out that, in view of the complex nature of mothering, any simplistic model of mothering is problematic. An interesting question asked by Tardy (2000) is why mothers need to be good while it seems to be enough for fathers just to be there.

3.1.2 Explicit descriptions of a good mother in previous research

In studies reviewed in this section, first mothers with infants provided their views of what makes a good mother. Second, in Magen's (1994) study adolescents and their parents describe good parents. Third studies on the question of whether a good mother can or can not work outside the home are reviewed. Finally, the contours of a good mother in relation to health issues and an American good mother are drawn.

Welles-Nyström, New, and Richman (1994) compared the mothers' conceptualizations of a good mother in three modern industrialized countries, Italy, Sweden, and the USA, focussing on maternal behaviour and goals. The study was executed during the first year of the child's life. The data collection for the study was carried out in the early 1980s. In their ethnographic study the

researchers observed twenty mothers interacting with their child in the home, and interviewed the mothers, the mothers filled in a questionnaire and the researchers observed community and family life. The mothers in these countries all held different views of what constitutes a good mother and the researchers point out that, indeed, the definition of a good mother is culture-specific. They also note that in studies of mother-child interaction some conception of what constitutes good mothering is implicitly present and that this conception should be understood in context of the culture in question.

To Italian mothers, all mothers were good mothers and motherhood was closely connected with 'the essence of being a woman'. The Italian mothers took constant care of their child protecting their child from dirt and accidents, thus often eliminating opportunities for play and exploration. Italian mothers were also concerned about the proper feeding of their baby. The mother was the person responsible for the baby's care, but at the same time infant and mother were surrounded by the family, relatives, friends and neighbours.

To Swedish mothers a good mother was somebody who had other interests as well, motherhood forming only a part of her definition of being a woman. The Swedish mothers considered the infant's emotional well-being important, especially during the first year of life. In their opinion, fulfilling the infant's psychological needs required the father's participation in the care of the infant. The baby was mainly cared for by its mother and father during the first year, and later, when the mother and the father returned to work, the infant was taken care of by professional carers. The infant was given opportunities to explore the environment both indoors and outdoors, and safe environments were created to allow the baby to perform these activities. Play and exploration were regarded as important for the infant's cognitive development as well as its independence.

To American mothers, a good mother takes the principal responsibility for her child. To be able to accomplish this she must in most cases be a housewife. The American good mother encourages social interactive behaviour and independence in her child. At times the parental insistence on independence creates problems, like various bedtime routines which the child needs to be able to sleep alone in her/his own room. The strong wish for the child's autonomous behaviour and the high demands that the mother places on her role as a primary caregiver caused feelings of ambivalence in the American good mother.

In a study by Brown and Small (1997) the descriptions of a 'good mother' produced in an interview by 45 Australian mothers suffering from postnatal depression were compared with those provided by 45 non-depressed Australian mothers. The mothers in this study were asked: "How would you describe a good mother?" as a part of a larger semi-structured interview. The study was a follow-up of a survey focussing on post-natal depression and took place when the children were about two years old in 1992. The descriptions of the depressed mothers did not differ from those of the non-depressed. The ten most often produced qualities were divided into attributes and tasks. This division seems slightly artificial. In most cases the question is probably more

about the wording than actual differences in thinking. For example, it may be more a matter of chance than choice whether the interviewees says "a good mother is caring and loving" or "a good mother cares and loves". The three most often mentioned attributes were the following:

Caring and loving (mentioned by 38% of the mothers)

Patience (25%)

Being calm and relaxed (11%).

The respective tasks were:

Spends time with children (26%)

Fosters children's emotional development (16%),

Does the basic/attends to feeding, hygiene (11%).

In the studies reviewed above all the informants were mothers.

Motherhood and child-rearing in general have been regarded as issues women have something to say about. Thus studies have relied heavily on data gathered from female informants, even when the researchers state that they are studying parental beliefs (Hirsjärvi & Perälä-Littunen 2001; Woollett & Phoenix 1991c, 29). An exception to this 'all female informants' rule is the study by Magen (1994).

In a series of studies conducted in Israel by Magen (1994) comparisons were made between the images of a good parent held by children at various ages, adolescents and their parents, children in a city and children living in a kibbutz. The researcher expected that the parents' images of parents would vary according to the developmental needs of the child and the children's images of parents according to the developmental stage of the child. The informants, 280 children, 25 fathers and 26 mothers were asked: "What is a good parent, in your opinion?" The answers were analysed by content analysis, resulting in a list of nine content areas:

1) expresses feelings;

2) educates, authority, serves as model or example;

3) understands, supports; 4) buys, provides;

5) spends leisure time together with the child;

6) acts as friend;

7) respects, democratic;

8) allows privacy, autonomy;

9) takes responsibility for schooling.

The researchers state that the ideal image of a parent varies according to the age of the child. For example, the adolescents in the study (aged 14–15) said more often than their parents that a good parent understands and is supportive, respectful, and enables independence. In comparison, the youngest group of children expected their parents to show warm feelings. Only slight differences were found between the images of good parents provided by adolescents living in a kibbutz and adolescents from a city, suggesting the existence of a more widely shared image.

Comparison of the results of Magen's study with the results of the present study is difficult because Magen's study dealt with parenthood and did not separate motherhood and fatherhood. The reason for which the researchers

chose not to differentiate motherhood and fatherhood could be a belief that for older children mothers and fathers are equally important, whereas for infants mothers are the primary caretakers. In addition, the informants in Magen's study were younger than in the present study (in this study the mean age is 22 years in the youngest generation).

Though the results of the studies presented above suggest that the ideal mother for an adolescent is different from the ideal mother for an infant, there are also similarities pointing to existence of a core of ideal qualities irrespective of the child's age. The various similarities in the findings of the studies quoted above show that some characterizations are shared in all these countries. However, there are also differences which suggest that different Western cultures emphasise and select different qualities from the common pool of good mother features.

In a recent discourse analytical study Raddon (2002) focussed on the ways academic mothers position themselves and are positioned within the discourses of 'the successful academic' and 'the good mother'. In the study, Raddon analysed the biographical narrative produced in an in-depth interview by Susan, an academic mother. The researcher identified several discourses but she discusses only the most dominant and powerful discourses of the' good mother' and the 'successful academic', the discourse of the 'good mother' being the most relevant for this study. The discourse of the 'good mother' appears in the narrative as the talk described by expressions: "selfless; subordinate; caring; mothering; giving; emotional; able to cope; cooking 'proper' meals; concentrating on home and family: it's okay to have a 'nice little job', but it can't take precedence." Susan experiences a tension between her wish to be a 'good mother' and a 'successful academic'. For instance, she refers to herself as 'selfish' in describing her guilt at investing in and enjoying her academic career, instead of giving precedence for her child. However, Susan resists the selflessness of the position of a 'good mother' by finding her sense of self in her work.

Similar themes connected to work and home appeared in a Dutch study by Ex and Janssens (2000) focussing on the images of motherhood held by young females (age 15–22). The researchers conducted two studies. Firstly, the aim was to discover the main conceptual dimensions along which the informants perceived motherhood. Secondly, they analysed how the informants (N=64) thought of themselves as future mothers, including their perceptions of an ideal mother, with regard to the dimensions found in the first study. In the first study the conceptual dimensions found were the following: traditional orientation, child-centeredness, self-assertive attitude in life, and open and social attitude (ibid. 872). In the second study the researchers used 30 constructs of motherhood mentioned by at least 20% of the informants in the first study. The informants (N=165) in the second study expressed their ideas concerning these constructs by indicating how they would in the future function as mothers, to what extent they thought an ideal mother possessed these qualitites, and how they perceived their own mother in respect of these qualitites. As a result of factor analyses the researchers found two conceptual dimensions: 1) a

self-assertive and relational orientation, and 2) a traditional orientation toward motherhood. The researchers comment that these two dimensions refer to the tension between attachment and autonomy perceived by contemporary mothers (ibid. 884). Attachment means commitment to home and child-care, while autonomy reflects the mother's interests in her career and work as well as the well-being of her family (ibid. 886 Appendix).

Ex and Janssens (2000, 880) also compared the constructions of motherhood by older and younger females and took the level of education of the informants into account. It was noted that the younger females with a lower educational level described a more traditional ideal mother that the older and more educated informants. Although Ex and Janssens do not report the descriptions of an ideal mother, I will use their list of constructs of motherhood which resulted from the first study when investigating the images of a Finnish good mother.

Tardy (2000) did not ask her informants to describe a good mother, instead, the descriptions emerged from the talk of an informal group of women focussing on family health. The contours of a good mother especially appeared when the women were dealing with taboo issues judged to hinder the fulfilment of the idealized image of motherhood (ibid. 446). In relation to health issues, the good mother was the one who did her utmost to ensure that her children were healthy, including protection from accidents. Among the taboo topics were sex, abnormal development of the child, abortion, stillbirth and miscarriage. During pregnancy the good mother was expected to suffer in silence and not to use medication which might harm her child (ibid. 463).

In a study by Kaplan (1992), twelve mothers were interviewed on their thoughts, feelings, and desires. Part I of the study was a structured interview which contained questions on the mothers' images of a good and a bad mother. An interesting finding in this study, and a finding pertaining to the transfer of images from mothers to their daughters, is that most women presented their mothers negatively and their descriptions of a good mother listed the qualities these women saw their mothers as lacking (ibid. 189). In the study by Ex and Janssens (2000, 881, 885), a strong correlation was found between daughters' images of motherhood and their image of their own mother as well as their image of an ideal mother. However, daughters' images of motherhood were more modern, suggesting that changes also take place. Mothers are thus not irrelevant to their daughters' conceptions of motherhood.

In addition to the personal descriptions of a good mother, the interviewees in Kaplan's (1992) study also shared a cultural image of a good mother. This mother is "psychologically available" to her child, "effective and capable of being used by her child when needed", and a good mother could work outside the home and still be used by her child (ibid. 189). These qualities highlight the importance perceived by mothers to be responsive to the child's needs. Kaplan explains that the shared image represents a move away from the traditional qualities of a good mother being all-giving and ever-present. It must be noted, however, that these interviews were carried out in the late 1980s and thus

represent an interim stage between the traditional image of a good mother and the image held by today's American women.

A more contemporary image of good mothering is offered in Hays's (1996) study, which was based on interviews with mothers and textual analysis of child-rearing manuals. Hays argues that the cultural model in present-day USA is that of intensive mothering. The ideology of intensive mothering implies that, although most mothers work outside the home, they spend huge amounts of energy, time and money in taking care of their children. Mothering, according to Hays, is contradictory to the prevailing current logic of self-interest. Thus it seems that American mothers are juggling between the traditional conception of good mothering and the demands of present-day life.

The following table presents the findings of the studies reviewed above. Several shared themes, like promoting the child's development and caring as well as focussing on the child's needs, appear. There are, however, also characterisations of a good mother specific to a culture. The Italian good mother, for instance, protects her child from dirt. Likewise, there seem to be age-specific qualitites, for instance in the study by Brown and Small (1997) the good mother of a toddler attends to the child's feeding while the good mother of an adolescent in Magen's (1994) study allows privacy.

TABLE 2   Summary of the findings in previous studies directly focussing on a good mother

Study	Culture and informants	"The good mother"
Welles-Nyström et al. 1994	Swedish mothers with infants	Infant's emotional well-being important; shared parenting during the first year of life, later professional cares; arranged play and exploration for the child
Welles-Nyström et al. 1994	Italian mothers with infants	Motherhood 'the essence of being a woman'; protects the child from dirt and accidents; concerned with the proper feeding of the baby; responsible for the baby but with relatives, friends and neighbours.
Welles-Nyström et al. 1994	U.S. mothers with infants	Responsible for the child, must be a housewife; encourages social interactive behaviour and independence; ambivalent position: primary caregiver vs support for child's independence.
Brown & Small 1997	Australian mothers with 2-year-old children	Caring and loving; patient; calm and relaxed; spends time with children; fosters children's emotional development; does the basic/attends to feeding, hygiene.
Magen 1994	Israeli parents and adolescents	NB! Good parents. Varies according to the age of the child; expresses feelings; educates, has authority, serves as a model or example; understands, supports; buys, provides; spends leisure time together with the child; acts as friend; respects child, democratic; allows privacy, autonomy; takes responsibility for schooling.

(Continues)

TABLE 2 (Continues)

Raddon 2002	A British academic mother	Selfless; subordinate; caring; mothering; giving; emotional; able to cope; cookes 'proper' meals; concentrates on home and family; it's okay to have a 'nice' little job, but it can't take precedence.
Ex & Janssens 2000	Young Dutch females	Tension between traditional orientation, and assertive and relational orientation
Tardy 2000	U.S. mothers discussing health issues	Does utmost to ensure that her children are healthy; during pregnancy does not take medication which might harm her child.
Kaplan 1992	12 U.S. mothers interviewed in 1980s	Psychologically available; effective and capable of being used by her child when needed.
Hays 1996	U.S. mothers	'Intensive mothering'; spends huge amounts of time, energy and money in taking care of the child; mothering against the prevaling logic of self-interest.

3.2 "Good fathers"

In the following section, I will review the research on fatherhood and good fathering, with the aim of capturing the images found threrein and in the recommendations of the child-care manuals. Developmental psychological and psychoanalytical approaches are central in shaping what is considered normal and a norm (Lupton & Barclay 1997, 41) in the fatherhood domain, but ethical and religious issues are more prominent than in defining good mothering, especially within the new approaches to fathering coming from the USA. What is described as normal is taken to mean 'good' in this review. Like Gerson (1993, 16), and in the research more generally, I found it difficult to separate explanations and descriptions of how fathers behave from considerations of how they should behave. Moreover, recent fatherhood studies also include clearly normative approaches. For example, in studies on 'generative' fathering, 'generativity' is stated to mean 'good fathering' (e.g. Snarey 1993, 1).

Fatherhood has been the target of many studies but the 'good fathers' to be found in the research literature are mostly expressed implicitly or are productions by authors of child-care manuals. However, as Ruddick (1992, 177) comments, fathers are a necessary ingredient of both childhood and good-enough mothering because lone motherhood is regarded as problematic. As the research on motherhood clearly dominates the field of parenting research, I will occasionally refer also to studies on motherhood and compare the findings and the prevailing approaches of fatherhood studies to those of motherhood studies.

The dominance of motherhood

The dominance of motherhood is explained by the ideology of nuclear family, which assignes different responsibilities to mothers and fathers, together with the rise of industrialisation and the market economy, which separated the spheres of work and the home. Moreover, it was affected by the change in the conception of the child as somebody needing special attention and care. Mothers became the main caregivers of children, while fathers turned into breadwinners who spent much of their time outside the home (Grant 1998, 3, 15–16). The dominance of motherhood in parenting is seen, for instance, in the fact that mothering is taken as the parenting norm and fathering is compared against that norm (Ambert 1994). In Alasuutari's (2003, 16–18, 160) study on parents' interpretations of the division of child-rearing responsibility between parents and child-rearing experts the interviewed parents as well as experts regarded the mother as the primary parent.

Although the goodness of fathers has not been widely considered in research literature, informant mothers in several autobiographical studies have engaged in lengthy evaluations of the good father. In May's (2001) study on lone motherhood the younger narrators, born in 1940s–1960s, reflected on their child's father's ability to be a good father. For the older narrators, it was enough if the father provided for his child while the younger narrators evaluated the father's performance as a caring parent and his relationship with the child. Nätkin (1997, 233) made similar findings. Mothers in both studies were prepared to suffer, remain even in violent relationships as long as keeping the family together was judged to be the best for the children. Thus, in several cases, as long as the mothers saw their husbands as good or at least good-enough fathers, they continued in the relationship. But if the father presented a threat to his children it was considered an adequate reason for ending the relationship (May 2001, 264).

If the relationship between the mother and the father of a child ends, a decision has to be made about who will become the child's custodian. These decisions over time and in different cultures reflect the prevailing idea about who is considered the primary parent, or if the father is regarded as a good enough parent for the child. In the western world granting the custody of children was earlier connected to the principle of fault. For instance, in England after 1839 mothers of children under the age of 7 could be given custody if they had not committed adultery (Burman 1994, 74). According to Kurki-Suonio (1999, 564) a mother could be given full custodial rights after a divorce in Sweden after 1915, in England after 1925, in Finland after 1930, and in (West) Germany after 1959. Earlier the father was regarded as the sole custodian of his children and the head of the family also in relation to his wife (Häggman 1994, 136–137) and divorce was extremely rare, if not impossible. The change was brought about by idealising motherhood and focussing on the best interest of the child as the principle guiding custodial arrangements in divorce.

The definition of the best interest of the child turned out to be difficult. In some countries the principle of the best interest of the child was officially

interpreted in gender-free ways, highlighting the importance of continuity in child care. In practice the person who had taken care of the child was the mother and thus she was granted custody. When the idea of the importance of a father as a carer for his children, and not only as a breadwinner, started to be acknowledged, the best interest of the child turned out to be to maintain a relationship with both parents, and thus joint custody became the ideal. (Kurki-Suonio 1999). In 1997 35% of children whose parents were divorced lived in the custody of their mother, while more than a half of children in divorced families were in a joint custody, though mostly living with their mothers (Kartovaara 2000, 71). Thus what is expected from good fathers even in law seems to be changing from mere cash to more care (Hobson & Morgan 2002, 2).

The ideology of gender equality, modern ideas from developmental psychology, feminist thinking and psychoanalytical approaches have brought about the ideal of shared parenting, which seems to dominate parenting ideals at least in Scandinavia. In her study Vuori (2001) uncovered two discourses dealing with the division of parenting in her data consisting of texts written by family experts. She named the discourses 'exclusive mothering' and 'shared parenting'. The discourse of 'shared parenting' suggests that fathers should take more responsibility for childcare (ibid 127–128). However, mothers are made responsible for this sharing both in expert texts and by mothers themselves (Sevón & Huttunen 2002, 89; Vuori 2001, 359). Not all mothers seem to be willing to share the work of running the household, traditionally claimed to be wholly theirs. Some mothers may experience ambivalence when faced with the demand of giving up their own sense of control and parts of a role that historically and culturally is central in maternal and female identities. Mothers may also suspect the competence of fathers. In the research literature these mothers are called gatekeepers (Allen & Hawkins 1999; De Luccie 1995; Parke 1996, 98).

Variability in the conceptions of fathering and fatherhood

The conceptions of a good father in research and expert thinking, as well as the everyday idea of what is good or normal for a father have changed over time. Likewise, cultural variation in the conception of a good father is great. In some cultures the father is the disciplinarian in the family, and in others the father is his children's playmate (Harkness & Super 1992).

The duties of a mother and a father have changed many times during known history. In general outline in the western world it seems that the father was first considered to be the primary parent. Later he lost most of his duties to the mother (Laqueur 1992, 155). Currently fathers are regaining their importance parents.

Pleck and Pleck (1997, 35) differentiated four general historical changes in the conception of a good father in the USA: the *stern patriarch* of the colonial period; the *breadwinner* of the period 1830–1900; the *genial dad* and the role model of the period 1900–1970; and *the co-parent* sharing child-care equally with

his wife. Traces of these periods can be seen in all western cultures, including the Finnish culture.

The colonial stern patriarch protected his family from dangers, provided his children with religious education and when his son was about three years old, became more responsible than the mother for his upbringing. In general, the father was regarded as the parent with more reason and theological understanding as well as a moral character and thus more suited to good child-rearing than the mother, who was governed by her passions (Frank 1992, 5; Griswold 1997, 72; Pleck & Pleck 1997, 35). The father of the family was expected to be like God, i.e. loving and just (LaRossa 1997, 25), whereas a mother's love was not considered to be necessary for child-rearing (Pleck & Pleck 1997, 36). Fathers were the disciplinarians in the family, a child was never to be punished in anger. This notion was also found in Kemppainen's (2001, 94–95) study in which the Finnish parents and their children talked about their child-rearing methods and the ways they had been reared when they were children. Similarly, the idea is to be found in a Finnish childcare manual first published in 1915 by Vilho Reima. The reason for these similarities possibly lies in a shared Protestant background. According to Tähtinen (1992, 116–117), Reimas's books belong to the period of religion-based educational moralities. It should also be noted that Vilho Reima was most probably aware of American ideals of that time as he wrote a book (Reima 1916) about Finnish immigrants in America.

The breadwinner father appeared with industrialisation, and mothers, with their assumed special ability to love, became the primary parents. The breadwinner father was still assumed to be responsible for the moral standards of the family, to administer serious punishments as well as to be the protector of the family. (Gerson 1993, 19; Pleck & Pleck 1997, 38). Fathers also exercised authority over the education of their children (Frank 1992). Even though the father was considered the more rational and not so loving parent, it was fathers who travelled to see their wounded sons during the American Civil War (Frank 1992). Frank points out that although war without doubt heightens emotional bonds, these bonds must have existed before the war.

In the 20th century the ideal of a genial dad and a role model appeared in America (LaRossa 1997, 39; Pleck & Pleck 1997, 40–41). The dad was expected to participate in childcare because this was considered to be in the best interests of the child. In particular, fathers were seen as important in the education of their sons, for whom the father provided a gender model (Griswold 1997, 79; Lamb 1986, 5). Boys who were raised by mothers alone could turn unmanly. Due to increased leisure time and general prosperity, the new dad could spend more time at home and with his children. (Pleck & Pleck 1997, 40–41). LaRossa (1997, 197) suggests that the culture of 'daddyhood' of the child-care manuals in the 1920s and 1930s presented a warm and friendly dad, while casting fathers away from child-care and into the role of a playmate. However, LaRossa maintains that the actual fathering in the period was different: fathers participated in child-care more than had been thought when research was focussed on data obtained from mothers and child-care manuals. Present-day research has,

according to LaRossa (1997, 5), suffered from other-izing yesterday's fathers, while it has enabled for today's fathers to feel better about themselves. The idea of good fathering by nurturing, affectionate, and playful dads was also considered a remedy against authoritarian tendencies exemplified by fascism and communism as well as a protection against homosexuality (Pleck & Pleck 1997, 43).

According to Pleck and Pleck (1997), the latest new father came on the stage in the 1970s as a result of the feminist movement promoting an egalitarian relationship between wives and husbands. The father was expected to share parenting with the mother, not just to appear as children's playmate. The new ideal American father, according to Pleck and Pleck (1997, 34), is the father who changes diapers, schedules medical appointments, and knows the name of his child's teacher. The fatherhood of the new ideal father did not stop with a divorce; the new father shared the custody of his children. A father's participation in the care of his son was now thought to promote less gender-stereotyped more nurturant men, who would benefit from the experiences of fathering themselves. In America the idea of shared parenting or co-parenting was strengthened by the increasing numbers of working mothers. (Pleck & Pleck 1997, 45–46).

Being the family breadwinner has traditionally been an important part of being a good father. Work has been considered to be more closely connected to a man's identity than to a woman's (e.g. Pleck & Pleck 1997). Thus unemployment has been regarded as more problematic for men than to women. In Böök's (2001, 76–77) study, unemployed women described unemployed men as victims, and thus expressed their pity. Fathers seem to react to unemployment in several ways. In the USA at the time of the Great Depression many fathers became unemployed and lost their breadwinner role. The loss of breadwinner status sometimes resulted in the loss of authority over children and wife (Grant 1998, 164). Some fathers, who believed in their role as a breadwinner, deserted their families when no longer able to provide for the family. Others used this time with their children and found their meaning in life within the family (Grant 1998, 163). Likewise in Böök's study (2001), interviewed unemployed Finnish fathers in the late 20th century felt ambivalent about their situation. On the one hand they were happy about the time they could spend with their child(ren); on the other hand they worried about their breadwinner status and especially over the role model they presented to their sons (ibid. 72–73). Using interview data and data from contemporary family magazines focussing on unemployed men, Böök was able to detect two hegemonic discourses of fatherhood: 'gender equality' and 'new father'. The discourse of 'gender equality focussed on equal sharing of household tasks constructing fathers more as spouses, while the 'new father' discourse reflected new fathering ideologies of an involved father who could look after the children as a house husband (ibid.117–118, 134–135).

The role of experts on fathering

In the everyday construction of what is normal and ideal for a father, the role of experts is of major importance (e.g. Lupton & Barclay 1997, 35). Most expert advice is, however, targeted at mothers, prescribing what it is to be a good mother (e.g. Laqueur 1992, 155). According to Vuori (2001, 43), from the 1960s onwards, fathers began to feature as the target of family expert advice in Finland. Today, advice is especially directed at fathers, while mothers are regarded as naturally disposed to listen to the advice of experts (Vuori 2003, 55). In Alasuutari's (2003, 161) study parents believed child-rearing experts to consider single motherhood problematic. The problem does not seem to be the fact that the father is absent but the fact he does not live with the mother and child. In America, according to Grant's study (1998, 144) mothers who had been the target of expert advice acted as teachers to their husbands, educating them in the scientific way, behaviouristic at the time, of raising a child. Parenting education has been and still is a way through which expert advice reaches parents.

In the Finnish context, educating parents mostly takes place during visits to child healthcare centres (e.g. Kuronen 1999).The personnel at the child health care centre advise families on the physical health of their children as well as child-rearing, with an emphasis on the psychological aspects of parenting (Kuronen 1999). In their discourse they also coconstructed with the mothers a norm for good child care and good parenting. Fathers are to a large extent excluded from this discourse (Kuronen 1993). However, 'family support' is emphasised by the health professionals, and in Finland this support is expected to come from the child's father (Kuronen 1999). The basic criterion for 'goodness' in the Finnish child care centres is that parents, especially mothers, attend the centre regularly and keep their appointments (Kuronen 1993, 49). More generally parental 'goodness' is to be seen in the physical growth and psychological development of the child. One crucial point in fulfilling the expectations expressed by the child care expert is whether the father is willing to participate in the birth of the child. I suspect that it is the advice dispensed in the child health care centres which reaches the father-in-the-street more than, for instance, advice delivered in family and women's magazines.

Once childrearing had become the task of mothers, it was realised that mothers needed to be educated for this important task. However, at least in the American context, there was no public agreement about the capability of mothers to be educated. It was suggested that fathers would be more suitable, being already more educated, for this role. It was also thought that leaving the raising of children wholly to mothers would be unjust. (Grant 1998, 18).

Grant (1998, 49–51) reports on the women's study groups of the 1910s, which were the forerunners of parenting education in the USA. Her study offers us a glimpse of what women thought of fathering at that time. In one study group meeting it was concluded that the father's role in the raising of the child was nonexistent. In discussing eugenics, the group agreed that the father's importance lay in the ancestry he brought along. A little later, however, when

parenting classes together with home economics were offered to women only, some home economists warned against the exclusion of men from these classes and pointed out that parenting was the responsibility of both the father and the mother (ibid. 129–130). Fathers in America began to receive parenting education, but to a lesser degree than mothers. In a survey conducted in1930, it was found that 13.2 % of the interviewed fathers had attended some kind of a parenting course as against 45.8% of mothers (Grant 1998, 173). However, LaRossa (1997, 8–9) points out that modernism in the 1920s and 1930s in America brought with it a strong belief in science and technology as the basis for truth, replacing, for instance, practical experience and theological dogma. Thus modernism was one of the forces resulting in the proliferation of child-rearing manuals written by experts.

One important task of fathers in child-rearing in America in the 1930s was to provide a gender role model for their sons. According to the contemporary theory of gender development, it was maintained that healthy women were feminine and healthy men were masculine, i.e. the concept of psychological 'masculinity-femininity' was developed. Thus a father was needed to raise a boy into a man. This development, asides from its connections with theories of developmental psychology, has been attributed to the need to establish manhood in ways other than holding a job, which, especially at the time of the Great Depression, was unsure (Pleck & Pleck 1997, 42).

In a recent study Morris, Dollahite and Hawkins (1999) analysed six family-life education websites focussing on the advice given to fathers. The researchers stated that as the purpose of family-life education is to encourage good parenting, the standards of 'good parenting 'or 'good fathering' used on the site should be specified. However, only a few sites offered a definition of good fathering. On one site the researchers found articles listing some of the characteristics of a good father, among them, for instance, awareness, being a good listener, and being involved.

Developmental psychological approach

Russell (1983) points out that fatherhood was a neglected domain in family research. The father was a piece of background information, often the decisive factor in establishing the socioeconomic status of the family but his interaction with the children was not seen as important. Likewise, Parke (1996) points out that fatherhood was also a neglected area in psychological studies focussing on child development. Studies in developmental psychology mostly focussed on the mother and her child (e.g. Burman 1994, 94). It was assumed that father had little impact on his child's development (e.g. Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb 2000). The role of father in the research based; for example, on the ideas by John Bowlby and D. W. Winnicott was totally insignificant, what mattered was the goodness of the mother (Vuori 2001, 43). In studies of the attachment approach fathers were in the 'stranger' category when the child's reactions and attachment to the mother were studied (Burman 1994, 95). Stressing the uniqueness and exclusivity of the mother-child relationship

excluded men from childcare and separated the roles of breadwinner and child-carer (ibid. 82).

Though the father was excluded from the intimate dyad of the mother and her child, he was given a role in the development of the child as the person who would introduce the child to the 'hard, cold world' outside the mother-child dyad. Insensitivity, which was regarded as a sign of bad mothering, was seen in fathers as beneficial, promoting independence, and offering the child experiences of how to interact with persons who were less sensitive (Burman 1994, 84; Woollett & Phoenix 1991c, 35).

Once it began to be seen that the father had an impact on the development of his child research started to focus on the problems caused by absent fathers and father-child relationships. This line of research was typical of the 1970s in the USA (Lupton & Barclay 1997, 44). Absent fathers were either preoccupied by their work or totally absent from their child's life. Boys seemed to suffer more if they grew up without a father (Lupton & Barclay 1997, 44). Although it was no longer thought that fatherless sons were in danger of becoming homosexuals, these boys were found to exhibit all kinds of difficulties and problematic behaviours, like problems with gender identity, bad school performance, and lack of self-control (Cabrera et al. 2000, 128).

In general, developmental psychological studies on fathering dealt with themes similar to those previously treated in studies on mothering. In other words fathering was treated as a variety of mothering (Burman 1994, 97; Lupton & Barclay 1997). The research produced a model of parenting in which mother and father roles are complementary: fathers, for instance, teach their children self-control while mothers are more nurturing. The underlying conceptions of masculinity and femininity are permanent and given on biological differences (Lupton & Barclay 1997, 45–46).

Present-day studies in developmental psychology acknowledge to some degree the currently changing nature of the family. In spite of this, the assumed normal family is still the nuclear family, where the father is the breadwinner and the mother the principal child rearer. Thus the family unit studied is often the mother and her child, leaving out the father and possible siblings in the family. (Burman 1994, 69). Moreover, as in studies on mothering, fathers are seen as factors which have an influence on their children while their experiences of fathering are left unexamined (Lupton & Barclay 1997, 47).

Psychoanalytical approach

The role of fathers in parenting within the psychoanalytical approach has been given several, even contradictory, interpretations. In general, the father has been thought to be important for the child's gender development. In her discourse analytical study on texts produced by parenting experts Vuori (2001, 70) found that every third text focussing on gender (9/29) was based on psychoanalytical thinking and that seven of them dealt with fathering. Vuori remarks that the decade from 1985 to 1995 was a time when fathering received

especial attention in the Finnish parenting literature. Becoming a father was closely connected to growing to be a man.

Shared parenting has been seen as problematic in some forms of psychoanalytical thinking. The problem with shared parenting, according to an American psychiatrist Erna Furman (1993, 58) is that the child gets a double satisfaction which hinders the child-parent separation. Moreover, when both parents are nurturing, the child gets no experience of a non-parenting person. Juntumaa (1994) defends shared parenting against psychoanalytical criticism in a brief essay. He maintains that a child is able to differentiate between her parents, establish a relationship with them and use them both as helpers in his/her growth.

A combination of feminist thinking and the psychoanalytical approach led to consideration of the role of fathers in child-rearing. The omnipotent mother was seen as a danger to the child and the father's task was to help the child to become a separate person aware of his or her own gender. To accomplish this objective, the father was to participate in child-rearing and share in parenting (Vuori 1999, 175).

Myths of fatherhood

In the Christian tradition fatherhood is a religious symbol. God is imagined as a father and the image of a good father acquires features from the image of God. Today this God to man transfer is seen most clearly in religious communities. (Furrow 1998). Historically, too, fathers have been symbolised as representatives of God on earth. According to the Lutheran doctrine, the man was the head of the family in the same way as the priest was the head of the parish and the king the head of the state (Häggman 1994, 136). All these 'sovereigns' were benign and had a moral responsibility to look after the welfare of their 'subjects' (ibid. 138). Ethical and religious considerations together with some developmental psychological thinking are evident in the latest ideologies of good fathering, at least in the American context (see Marks & Dollahite 2001).

However, not all mythical fathers are benign. Garbarino (2000, 14) comments on the biblical story of Abraham as representing the myths of Judeo-Christian culture. Abraham was ready to sacrifice his own child, Isaac, out of loyalty to God. His faith and obedience became the model of faith for Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The story of Abraham has shaped the realities of those living within cultures influenced by the aforementioned religions (Delaney 1999). Abraham's willingness can be interpreted as showing that the main task of the father is to maintain the connection between the family and the world outside the family. Thus the father represents the 'outside-family' world for the family, and thus his duties are elsewhere (Garbarino 2000, 14). Delaney (1999), in dealing with the same mythical story, raises another, perhaps a more intriguing point: what allowed Abraham to assume that the child was his to sacrifice? Delaney answers this question by reference to the mythical, metaphorical theory of procreation according to which the child belongs to its

father because the child is a product of his seed. The mother only provides the nurturing medium in which the seed, i.e. the child, grows, and thus the story of Abraham and his son Isaac exemplifies the hierarchical structure of authority in the family. Moreover, Delaney maintains that this myth has many social implications pertaining to how children in our present society are treated, for example why children are abused by their fathers.

The mythical connection between fatherhood and the father's seed could be the reason why women in past agrarian Finland were not usually allowed to sow the fields. Women in general were used as a reserve workforce and were allowed to do most other jobs on the farm (although not bear hunting). (Helsti 2000, 100).

In addition to the metaphor of the father providing the seed for the child and the mother being the nurturing medium there excists another, perhaps older, metaphorical way of describing the relation between a father and his child. That is to say that the child is born of the father's blood. This idea appears in Greek mythology and in western literature in general. This metaphor of sharing the same blood explains why it is important for the father to know that the child is really his, a feature of the western cultures which has astonished members of non-western cultures. (Laqueur 1990, 159). Other metaphors of the relationship between the father and his child represent fatherhood as the victory of mind over matter, or compare the father's relation to his child to that of a poet to his verse (ibid. 160).

The latest approaches to good fathering

Marsiglio, Amato, Day and Lamb (2000) remark on the recent willingness to incorporate value-sensitive positions into social analysis. This willingness seems to be approaching an ideology in the way it allows defining what is good and desirable fathering and proposes ways of promoting this kind of fathering. These new approaches to fatherhood explicitly state what the norms and ideals of fathering are. Thus these approaches, for instance, with the talk of involved fathering (Gerson 1993), 'responsible fathering' (Doherty, Kouneski & Erickson 1998) and 'generative fathering' (Hawkins & Dollahite 1997[10]) offer, not only new approaches, but also new ideals to be fulfilled. Research in general seems to be suggesting that ways of fathering in today's western societies are becoming more and more versatile (Peterson & Steinmetz 2000). Writing within the Finnish context, Huttunen (2001) has described several types of fathers, for instance, non-resident fathers [etä-isät], conceivers [siitäjä-isät], thinly fathers [ohuelti-isät], neglecful family fathers [laiminlyövät perhe-isät], helping fathers [avustavia-isiä] and participating fathers [osallistuvia isiä]. Some of these are good fathers others not so good. The versatility of fathering may give rise to considerations about the quality of fathering. More men, as Snarey (1997) points out, are nowadays prepared to ask themselves: "Am I a good father?" and

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[10] The works of Doherty et al. (1998) and Hawkins and Dollahite (1997) are written with the aim of promoting the ideas of responsible and generative fathering, respectively, while Gerson (1993) reports on an empirical study on men.

research is providing them with standards against which to evaluate their fathering.

In the American context the new approaches seem to have 'religious roots'. According to several studies, being personally responsible (accountable) for one's activities as a father is a Judeo-Christian belief (Marks & Dollahite 2001, 627; for a discussion in the historical Finnish context see Tähtinen 1992, 92). In general the new approaches have many features in common. They all promote the involvement of fathers in family life, mostly in the form of participation in taking care of the child.

One of the new approaches is generative fathering. Dollahite and Hawkins (1998) define generative fathering as active, responsive involvement with the child in which the father works to meet the child's varied needs. The definition seems to focus on the needs of the child in the same way as was seen in the developmental psychological views of good mothering. Fathering is regarded as generative work, not as a social role. The care of the next generation is an ethical responsibility of fathers. The term generative was originally used by Erik H. Erikson (e.g. 1982) to describe the seventh of the stages in adult development. During this stage the adult aims at finding a balance of creativity, productivity, and procreation against stagnation and self-absorption. Parenting is not the only expression of generativity but it is the most common. Generative fathering not only benefits the next generation, but also promotes growth in the person involved in this work, termed fatherwork by Dollahite and Hawkins (1998, 112).

Responsible fathering and generative fathering share several features. They both aim at getting the father more involved in family life, justifying their position by reference to the needs of the children, i.e. a good responsible, generative father focusses on the needs of his children. The main difference between these two approaches is that responsible fathering is broader conception than generative fathering. The conceptual framework of responsible fathering also takes into consideration factors outside the family context. Doherty et al. (1998, 277) point out that fathering, more than mothering, is influenced by contextual factors in the family and in the community. Being responsible also means taking explicit responsibility for the child's financial support while also being involved in the daily care of the child. The conception of responsible fathering also covers the pre-natal period: before becoming a father a man should wait until he is financially and emotionally prepared for the responsibility. After the baby is born the responsible father establishes his legal paternity. (Doherty et al. 1998).

In her study on American men, Gerson (1993, xi), differentiated three types of commitment to family and work on the basis of two dimensions: economic contribution to the family and participation in domestic work. A man with a breadwinner orientation ranked high on commitment to work and low on commitment to the family. A man who ranked high on both work and family had an autonomous orientation. An involved man ranked high on commitment to domestic work and child care. Though the involved fathers were committed to the family and found unexpected pleasure in parenting, they resisted full

equality, only 40 % of Gerson's informants in the involved father category were equal or even primary parents, the rest were 'mother's helpers' (ibid. 215). The mother's helpers distinguished between housework and childcare and resisted responsibility for domestic arrangements, and thus their involvement was selective (ibid. 225). Involved fathers were flexible and did not differentiate fathering from mothering; however, they regarded paid carers as substitutes for their wives, not substitutes for themselves. Work provided a source of conflict for the involved fathers when they had to divide their time between their children and their career. A fourth possible type, a father who was committed neither to economic contribution nor domestic work was missing from the study.[11]

The Nordic countries, which espousing the ideology of gender equality have perhaps the longest history in the idea of shared parenting and promoting fathers' involvement in child care. Shared parenting was first introduced as a way of increasing gender equality between parents but later it gained importance for the sake of the father's and the child's development (Kugelberg 1999, 94–95). Becoming a good involved father and sharing parenting is not simple even in the Nordic context, where child-care experts and official advice delivered from the child health care centres promote the new fatherhood. The new characteristics of a good father as someone who takes care of the weak and vulnerable, and not as someone absorbed in the world outside the home striving for success in working life and aiming at being a good provider has caused problems for the conception of a man. It has been asked if the new good fathers in fact are real men (Sandqvist 1993). A probable answer to this question is that along ideas about good fathering ideas about manliness are also changing.

Work is an important part of male identity. It is through hard work that Finnish men have traditionally proved their manliness (Kuosmanen 2001). Juggling between the work and family is probably one of the main problems to be faced by contemporary good fathers. Even in the Nordic context new involved fathers have faced resistance in the work place. However, Kugelberg (1999) noted in her study that fathers continuously negotiated ways of combing their work and their role as fathers in order to bring benefits to their children and their families (ibid. 259)

This opposition between the traditional fathering ideal of the family breadwinner and the current ideals of shared parenting and involved, responsible fathering is highlighted in the working arrangements legislated for fathers. Within the European Union since 1996 fathers are entitled to fourteen weeks' parental leave. However, most European fathers, with the exception of those in Nordic countires, do not take up their parental leave entitlement (Hobson & Morgan 2002, 4). The specific arrangements regarding the length of paid parental leave and who is entitled to leave differ between countries (Huttunen 2001, 196). Most of the reasons for not taking parental leave, according to Hobson and Morgan (ibid.), are connected to work, i.e. loss of

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[11]   This was pointed out by Professor Laurinen during discussions on October, 1st, 2003

income during leave, fear of losing one's job if one takes leave, and loyalty to one's employer. Lammi-Taskula (2003, 91) suggests that one of the reason why mothers utilizise most of the parental leave entitlement which could be divided between both parents, may also lie in the prevailing conceptions of a good mothering, including official recommendations regarding, for instance, breastfeeding.

Work is not only an 'enemy' to family life. In the study by Brandt and Kvande (1998) it was concluded that men who had a secure work identity, together with a secure masculine identity were able to act as new fathers and take paternity leave. Plantin (2001) however, did not find any close connection between fatherhood, work identity and secure masculine identity. The Swedish fathers in Plantin's study described fatherhood as becoming 'a more complete person, more secure and confident.' Research has also found parenthood to foster adult development (Palkovitz 2002, ix). The confidence gained via fatherhood also generated confidence in other domains of life.

Although it seems that the image of the good father as breadwinner and provider has lost much of its importance, some researchers point out that the provider role continues to be seen as one of the tasks of a good father. Christiansen and Palkovitz (2001) maintain that providing for the family is one of the indirect contributions fathers make to their families. Moreover, they suggest that providing is a form of paternal involvement and a way of caring for the needs of children. It is in fact contained in the definitions of generative fathering and responsible fathering, but if it is taken to mean that a husband provides also for his wife, and not only for his children, it runs contradictory to the ideology of gender equality. Plantin (2001) noted that the men in his study expressed no signs of conflict between the traditional ideal of a breadwinner father and the contemporary ideal of a care-giving father. Some of the men in Plantin's study also reported emotional closeness to their own fathers irrespective of their father's bread-winning role. Thus not all breadwinner fathers were uninvolved in care-giving.

It has been asked whether the new cultural image of the more involved father matches everyday reality (Parke 1996). Gerson (1993, 224) suggests that despite the difficulties in measuring accurately the proportion of couples who share child-care equallyt, the evidence point to the fact that the proportion of couples in this category, at least in America, is rising. In Seppälä's Finnish study (2000, 16), which focussed on how parents think child-rearing responsibilities should be divided, the majority of respondents supported the idea of equal sharing. However, when it came to specific parenting tasks, the respondents divided these into mother's responsibility (e.g. taking care of a sick child) and father's responsibility (e.g. teaching the child how to use a PC).

Researchers have variously attempted to measure father's involvement. Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine (1987) propose for analytical purposes that paternal involvement with the child could be divided into three categories based on its intensity. The most intensive type of activity of the father is called *interaction or engagement*, and it occurs when the father is in direct contact with his child in care-giving and shared activities. The father can also be potentially

available for interaction, by being present or accessible to the child whether or not interaction is actually taking place. The least intensive and the most covert type of involvement is labelled *responsibility*. A father who is being responsible is one who makes sure that the child is taken care of and arranges for resources to be available for the child. Time spent being responsible is the most difficult to measure. Parke (2000) notes the necessity of defining father involvement in ways which move beyond the mere recognition of father presence and absence or assuming that face-to-face contact is the only way of being involved. Parke's (ibid.) definition is very much like that of Lamb et al., with some differences. The responsibility type of involvement is labelled managerial function. Parke (ibid. 47–48) suggests that studying father involvement would benefit from taking a developmental perspective including, for instance, the age of the child, and the father's age at the time of entry into parenthood. Being a good involved father of an adolescent may be different from being a good involved father of an infant.

Methodological problems in fatherhood studies

Marsiglio et al. (2000) point out that research on fatherhood has suffered from methodological deficiencies. One of the failures has been that the 'voice' of fathers themselves is not heard in these studies. In several American surveys, for instance, questions on the whole household have been answered by one person. In most cases this person has been the mother (Goodnow & Collins 1990, 157; Hirsjärvi & Perälä-Littunen 2001). Moreover, non-resident fathers have often not been reached by these surveys (Marsiglio et al. 2000). In anthropological studies the mother has also often acted as an informant in studies dealing with fatherhood. In North American studies the effects of ethnicity and social class appear intertwined, resulting, for instance, in descriptions of 'invisible' black fathers who do not seem to be interested in their children (Tripp-Reimer & Wilson 1991, 3).

Many studies on fatherhood have approached fatherhood as a deficit form of mothering (see Hawkins & Dollahite 1997; Pedersen 1987). These studies resemble those of the early studies on motherhood - the aim has been to describe the impact of fathers on the development of their children (Cooksey & Fondell 1996; Huttunen 1992). Another topic in researching fatherhood is to explore fathers' participation in child-rearing (Russell 1983) and the experiences of the fathers themselves (Huttunen 1996). Nevertheless, it appears that the increasing participation of fathers in child-rearing and new conceptions of fatherhood that are emerging (O'Brien 1992; Brandth & Kvande 1998) mean that exploration of fathers' conceptions and child-rearing ideas as well as conceptions concerning fathers are beginning to look worth studying.

However, how fathers themselves experience fathering remains a rarely addressed topic (Parke 1996, 14). There are some exceptions, such as the study by Frank (1992). The data used by Frank comprise letters exchanged between soldiers on the battlefield during the American Civil War and their families. In these letters Frank found the 'voices' of fathers and their children, which cast a

new light on the father-child relations of those days. These father-child relations seem to be based on mutual affection, the fathers at the front worrying over the lives of their children. This picture is very different from that of distant breadwinner father which was supposedly the ideal of the period. Frank suggests that this failure to hear men's own 'voices' has resulted in a considerable historiographical ambiguity (ibid. 5). Likewise, on the basis of their study of letters written by fathers to a American educator, Angelo Patri (1876–1965), who gave child-rearing advice in a family magazine to parents in the 1920s and in the 1930s, LaRossa and Reitzes (1995) suggest that the division of parenting was more equally shared than has been thought. Moreover, the researchers suggest that this bias has been caused by disregarding data based on fathers' perceptions (ibid. 229).

Fathers on good fathering

There are a few instances where the informants of a study have been asked to describe their 'ideal father'. In a study by Brandth and Kvande (1998), Norwegian fathers discussed their images of a good father. The study focussed on fathers' use of parental leave in 1987. The researchers point out that these fathers broke with common convention and represent a minority of highly involved fathers. In describing their ideal father, the fathers did not emphasise the breadwinner role but, nevertheless, a good father represented material security. They reported that they lacked role models as, according to modern ideals, fathers are expected to participate in child-care activities, unlike their own fathers. The main ideal of fathering for these informants was to establish a close relationship with their children; they aimed at becoming the child's friends, and in this way promoting the child's independence, as opposed to maternal intimacy. The researchers note that this ideal of the father has many elements in common with the ideal of the mother.

In a very recent study, Henwood and Procter (2003) addressed the issue of how first-time fathers in the UK at the turn of the twentieth century view their role as fathers. The study was based on interviews of thirty first-time fathers. These fathers were interviewed on several occasions, and the semi-structured interview procedure consisted discussions on several topics. Among the topics were the father's expectations and experiences of fatherhood along with their views on what it meant to be a good father. According to these fathers, a good father is expected to be present in the home and involved in his children's lives, to keep in contact with his children and be sensitive to their needs, and to value time spent with his family over work and leisure. Moreover, a good father is caring, nurturing, understanding, approachable and supportive. The good contemporary British father participates in domestic life, shares responsibilities and cooperates with his partner (ibid. 343). None of these fathers mentioned financial provising as the task of an ideal father; however, it was an important topic and was discussed mainly from the point of view of the difficulties in combining work outside the home with the ideal of the new involved father. The tension arising out of the effort to combine work and family life makes the

theme 'time' salient for fathers as they see family time as the more important while most of their time is taken up by work (ibid. 352).

Lupton and Barclay (1997) interviewed 16 Australian fathers on several occasions before and after their child was born. Some of of the interviews dealt with the father's conception of a good father, and the researchers report the descriptions of four men. Experience as a father seems to change men's conceptions of a good father. For one of the informants the role of provider lost importance when the informant began to see a good father as someone who is able to learn, take advice, and eventually make his own judgements. This informant, like some of the others, also emphasised the importance of spending time with the child and watching him grow. One of the fathers said that a good father supports the mother. He explained his conception by pointing out that he could not breastfeed and describing his frustration of not being able to help when the child was hungry. A common feature in the descriptions of how these fathers intended to parent was that they aimed to be different from their fathers.

4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study focuses on two important aspects of parental ethnotheories in Finland. These aspects concern images of a good mother and a good father. The two phases of this study approach these topics from different angles. In phase I, my focus is on the descriptions of a good mother and a good father produced by different groups of informants, while in phase II, I consider the contents of what was said in more detail. Thus the focus moves from 'who said what' to 'what was said'. The specific research questions are presented below.

Phase I Images of a good mother and a good father described, compared, and discussed

There are two research questions in phase I. The first question asks*: How do people describe a good mother and a good father?* The second question specifically explores the contribution of culture, gender, and generation to the contents of the images produced in response to the first question. Here 'explore' means discussing the possible role of these factors. Hence the second question is: *What is the role of culture, gender and generation in people's images of a good mother and a good father?* These issues are focussed when I compare the images across generations (children/parents/grandparents), genders (male/female), and culture (Estonian vs Finnish).

Phase II Meanings given to the most frequent beliefs characterising a good mother and a good father

In the theoretical framework of ethnotheories, researchers have found "all purpose" general beliefs which function as common denominators for several other beliefs (e.g. Harkness et al. 1992). For example, many Americans believe that a child should become independent as soon as possible and Dutch parents think that it is important for the child to become a socially capable person (Harkness, Super, & van Tijen 2000). Yet, on the level of the individual the meanings given to these general beliefs vary (e.g. Super et al. 1996). Likewise, Geertz (1975/1992) writes about common sense and points out how people

from different cultures refer to it, although their meaning varies from one culture to another. Common sense seems to be an "all purpose" explanation for various things, but its meaning is culture-bound. Similarly, in this study the most frequently expressed qualities of a good mother and a good father were considered to represent a range of more subtle meanings. Hence the third research question: *What kind of meanings can be found within the most frequent beliefs characterising a good mother and a good father?*

5   METHODOLOGY

Several metaphors have been used to describe qualitative research. Kvale (1996, 3–5) compares the work of a qualitative interviewer to that of a miner or a traveller. Alasuutari (1995, 2) as well as Denzin and Lincoln (1994, 2; 2000b, 31) use the metaphor of a bricoleur. Hammersley (1999) criticises the bricoleur metaphor on the grounds that a bricoleur uses whatever resources are available. According to Hammersley (1999), the metaphor of a boatbuilder is better suited for the purpose of describing qualitative, and especially ethnographic, study. Both metaphors, bricolage and boat building, contain the idea of mixing various materials. While a bricoleur uses everything that comes handy, a boatbuilder makes sure that the various parts of the boat fit together and the boat is seaworthy.

In the following sections my aim is to describe the intellectual structure of this 'boat' and how the various parts were put together to make the boat 'seaworthy'. In other words, I shall introduce the methodology used in this study, starting with the theoretical premises followed by a discussion of the method chosen and ending with the more practical matters of introducing the informants and describing the data collection and the analyses of the data.

5.1 Method and premises of the study

Below I describe the epistemological, ontological, and methodological premises of this study, including the choice of methods. These premises reflect my thinking concerning the nature of the phenomena focused in this study, i.e. images, beliefs, and ethnotheories as well as how knowledge on these phenomena can be gained.

This is a study of phenomena we encounter in everyday life. The reality of everyday life is an intersubjective world shared with others (Berger & Luckman 1979, 66). The intersubjectivity of the everyday world is accomplished in most cases via language (ibid. 51). To be able to comprehend language, interpretation is needed. Thus the social construction of the world requires interpretation on

behalf of the participants. Likewise, the researcher, in co-creating knowledge with the informants, is interpreting the interpretation of the world offered by the informants (Geertz 1973). Thus the focus in social constructionist research is on the interpretation and negotiation of the meaning of the social world (Kvale 1996, 41).

One of the basic beliefs framing this study is that language is considered most appropriate level on which phenomena like beliefs and images can be studied. This does not, however, mean believing that thinking necessarily requires a language or that a culture is inseparable from language (see Bloch 1991). Rather, it means that studying images or beliefs is only possible if the images and beliefs are verbalised. Moreover, phenomena expressed via language lend themselves most readily to constructionist analysis (Madill, Jordan & Shirley 2000, 14).

The constructivist paradigm assumes that there are multiple realitites (relativist ontology) (Denzin & Lincoln 2000a, 21). For instance, Berger and Luckman (1979) differentiate between subjective reality and objective reality. Subjective reality is the 'within' individual reality while objective reality is the 'outside' reality. Although one of the premises of constructionism is that knowledge is constructed in the interaction between the knower and the known, it is not implied that the 'real world' does not exist independently of our knowledge (Knapp 2002, 1040). In other words, there are multiple, socially constructed realities which can be captured by research and these realities are the target of studies within the social sciences.

Because we present what we believe as true via language, the relationship between language and reality becomes important. This relationship has several interpretations even within the social constructionist framework (Edley 2001). Edwards (1997) and Edley (2001) suggest that social constructionist thinking can be divided on this issue into ontological and epistemic schools of thought of social constructionism. The former sees mind as socially constructed in the real world, while constructionism in the epistemic sense maintains that we cannot describe reality without the rules of discourse, i.e. reality is constructed by language. This study focuses on socially constructed realities expressed through language, i.e. I am relying on social constructionist thinking in the ontological sense.

In line with the constructionist approach is the idea espoused by cultural psychology that there exists no universal human nature to be discovered by research (Shweder, Goodnow, & al 1998; Shweder 1990; Markus & Kitayama 1998). Instead, for instance, personality is constructed through participation in the meanings offered by a cultural context (Markus & Kitayama 1998).

An issue often discussed is whether it is possible to establish causal relations in qualitative studies. Some researchers reject this possibility and point out that people are not billiard balls; others, like Huberman and Miles (1994, 434) consider qualitative research especially well suited to establishing causal relationships. However, I do not take the view that beliefs and images are caused by something but, as is frequently done in qualitative studies, I shall try to establish associations between certain beliefs and, for instance, ideas

promoted by childcare experts. Moreover, in accordance with constructionist thinking, the aim of this study is not to predict but to explain, i.e. provide an understanding of the phenomena studied (Madill & al 2000, 14).

The choice of methods of the present study is based on ideas from pragmatic philosophy, which is one of the philosophical opponents of positivism (Howe 1988, 13). A crucial point for this study is the question of the nature of knowledge and its relationship to reality. For example, Rorty, who is one of the 'founding fathers' of pragmatism, sees knowledge as something which makes getting along with reality possible, not as something with the help of which we get reality right (Rorty 1991, 1; Toiskallio 1993, 70). The relationship between knowledge claims and reality comes down to the question of the nature of the truth. Rorty writes (1989, 5): "The world is out there, but the descriptions of the world are not. Only descriptions can be true or false. The world on its own...cannot." For pragmatists 'truth,' when we attempt to define the true nature of things, is a normative concept not a theory of definition. 'Truth' is what works when dealing with the world. (Howe 1988, 15). Thus there is no single 'truth', and all truths are partial and incomplete (Denzin & Lincoln 2000c, 162).

The role of the researcher

Research using the social constructionist framework sees the relationship between the researcher and the researched as crucial because it is within this relationship that the knowledge gained through the research is produced. The co-creation of knowledge takes place via language, and thus language is the most appropriate level on which phenomena like people's images of good parents can be approached. Extracting meaning from language requires interpretation[12]. The 'findings' or the 'results' qualitative researchers report are always interpretations of the interpretations of the informants (Geertz 1973). In fact, interpretation is a shared feature in qualitative approaches and it is especially used to describe the analytical process (e.g. Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000, 7; Denzin & Lincoln 2000a, 6). In interpretation the role of the researcher is central.

The human 'self' of the researcher can be seen either as an asset or a defect depending on the epistemological stance of the evaluator (Madill, et al. 2000), or the research paradigm adopted (Denzin & Lincoln 2000a). Traditionally, and within the positivist research paradigm, subjectivity by the researcher has been seen as endangering objectivity in the study (see e.g. Madill, et al. 2000) and as posing a threat to the scientific quality of the research. In particular, subjectivity has been seen as affecting qualitative analysis, but it has also been shown to be present in theory formation (Daly 1997). For example, Huberman and Miles (1994, 433) write about how different researchers arrived at utterly different theories using the same data. In the case described by Huberman and Miles the

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[12]   As distinct from Kvale (1996, 188 & 201–203) the terms *interpreting* and *analysing* are used interchangeably throughout the study.

researchers saw each other's theories as ideologically biased, i.e. subjective. I do not see the quantifying of data as a way of making a study more objective, because, often, even the choice of what to study is based on subjectivity or the researcher's own personal interests (Dupuis 1999; Ratner 2002).

Though subjectivity has been said to make objective knowledge of the social world impossible and objectivity has been regarded as something which deplores the researcher's agency, subjectivity and objectivity are not seen as opposites by all. For instance, according to Ratner (2002), objectivity includes subjectivity. Moreover, objectivity can be seen as depending on subjectivity, traditional objectivity being detached and emotionless subjectivity (Madill et al. 2000, 13). Moreover, within the constructionist framework objectivity is seen as the researcher's critical "self-reflection and open, active dialogue with alternative viewpoints" (Knapp 2002, 1043). Thus objectivity consists of being aware of one's subjectivity.

Subjectivity stemming from the researcher's personal experiences is an essential feature of research (Daly 1992, 9; Lupton & Barclay 1997, 95). Moreover, it has been suggested that in the social sciences, including family studies, personal experience is a valuable source of knowledge (Doherty, Boss, LaRossa, Schumm, & Steinmetz 1993, 23, Dupuis 1999, 46). Within the constructivist approach the humanity of both the researcher and the informant as well as their common cultural understanding can be seen as a valuable analytic resource (Madill & al. 2000, 10). However, it is necessary for the researcher to separate subjective knowledge stemming from personal experiences from the knowledge gained during the research process. Preservation of the interviewees' meanings is a challenge for a researcher, and to accomplish this it is necessary to monitor one's own personal meanings and to make the reseracher's position in the study visible (Daly 1992, 9; Finlay 2002; Lincoln & Guba 2000, 183). This monitoring has been called reflexivity (e.g. Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000[13]; Lincoln & Guba 2000, 183)

In this study my personal experiences and beliefs as a mother are present, especially in the analyses. My subjective understanding is a mixture of my cultural knowledge and lived experiences as an 'insider' in the Finnish culture. Being a Finnish mother I am very much aware of the expectations included in the cultural image of a good mother. My image of a good mother is formed of collective beliefs prevailing in the Finnish culture and my personal beliefs (see Katvala 2001, 30). Moreover, as my children were born in the 1980s I received the advice given to mothers by health and child care professionals at that time and, as a mother, read several child-care manuals. I also became acquainted with the findings of developmental psychology already as a mother and have 'tested' these findings in rearing my children. My experience with children was fairly limited before the arrival of my first born, and my thoughts at that time could best be described as "there should have been a manual delivered with the

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[13]   Alvesson and Sköldberg (2000) differentiate between *reflective* and *reflexive*, the former meaning "the interpretation of interpretation and the launching of self-critical exploration of one's own interpretations of empirical material" (p. 6), and the latter refering to being reflective on several research interpretive levels (p. 247–251).

baby." In other words I approached the tasks of rearing my children as an academic expecting to find advice in books and to be able to rely on expert knowledge.

The choice of methods

The methodological solutions of this study are those of qualitative research and the phenomena studied are understood to be socially constructed. However, the choice of methods is influenced by the idea espoused by pragmatists that the research questions are more fundamental than the paradigm. This means in this study that both qualitative and quantitative methods are used, though the approach is basically qualitative. Pragmatists refer to the use of different methods and methodologies in a study as mixed methods or mixed methodologies (Patton 1990). Newman and Benz (1998, 3) write about question-driven research when referring to the use of several methods in seeking answers to the research questions.

In this study qualitative methods are used in describing the phenomena focussed on, first to identify the images of a good mother and a good father and later to probe deeper into the meanings of the some of the characterising beliefs comprising the images. Quantitative, statistical procedures enable the comparisons of images produced accross generation, gender and culture. Because the differences between the images are mostly expressed as differences in the frequencies with which each group mentions a particular belief, the statistical procedures used are those most suitable for these comparisons.

The use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the same study has been seen as problematic. The problems seem to lie in whether the mixing is done only by mixing methods, i.e. on the level of 'techniques and procedures' or if deeper epistemological levels, for instance, the 'logic of justification' are involved (Howe 1988, 12). Others question whether it is possible to separate the level of techniques and procedures from the epistemological levels (e.g. Siljander 1992, 20–21). However, as Denzin and Lincoln (2000a, 6) point out, doing qualitative research does not mean that one is bound to use certain methods or rely on certain methodologies. Likewise, Lincoln and Guba (2000, 174) give a cautious 'yes' to the question of whether they see it valid to blend elements from one paradigm with elements of another. Their answer is given on the condition that the blending takes into consideration the axioms of each paradigm.

Some researchers question the methodological differences between quantitative and qualitative (Datta 1994; Eskola & Suoranta 1999, 69; Howe 1988, Reichardt & Rallies 1994). Newman and Bentz (1998, 13) reject the idea of qualitative and quantitative approaches as polar opposites; instead, we should conceptualise these approaches as an interactive continuum. Howe (1988, 10) points out that the differences in qualitative and quantitative approaches lie mainly in research interests and the ways in which answers are pursued.

Despite the disagreement concerning the mixing of methods, it has been done fairly frequently (Datta 1994). Some writers have even concluded that this

is a very efficient way of finding answers to the research questions, if it is done 'with a clear-headed understanding of the paradigms (Morgan 1998).

Using various methods within one study has been justified also by the possibility to cross-validate the results, in other words by showing that the same results can be obtained with different methods (Morgan 1998). This way of thinking differs slightly from the pragmatically oriented way. The research questions are not seen as guiding the process; instead, the results are seen as produced by the method and thus the focus is on the method and results obtained with it and their validity. The use of mixed methods in this study does not aim at increasing the validity of the results. The rationale behind mixing methods here is that finding answers to the questions was judged to be best accomplished with different methods.

The use of various methods in one study has also been called triangulation (Denzin 1978). The aim of triangulation is not to confirm the results and the aim will differ according to the epistemological framework of the study (Madill & al. 2000). Within a constructionist epistemology the aim is completeness not convergence. Completeness is achieved by investigating the phenomena in question from many angles, thus presenting a multi-faceted 'view'. The many-sidedness of triangulation is highlighted in Richardson's (2000, 934) suggestion that instead of using the term 'triangulation' we should write about 'crystallization', which better captures the idea of approaching the studied phenomena from several angles.

In this study completeness is aimed at when the focus of the analysis turns from the descriptions of the images supplied by the informants to finding differences and similarities in the images described by different groups of informants. Likewise, the use of several data basis serves this purpose. Thus the choice of methods, grounded on pragmatic philosophy and the idea of the decisiveness of the research questions, also contains features from triangulation or crystallisation.

5.2 Data collection and informants

The data for this study came from several sources. Firstly, students of Education in the Open University of Jyväskylä, Finland, interviewed three members of the same family each from a different generation (129 families). Altogether the Finnish interview data comprise 387 interviews. These data are included in the data of the project "Tradition and change in parenting and parental beliefs–an intergenerational and cross-cultural study"[14]. Secondly, similar interviews were carried out in Estonia in the University of Tartu, resulting in 177 interviews (59 families). Thirdly, data gathered by the National Board of Antiquities in Finland were used. These data consist of memories

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[14]   The project was funded by the Finnish Academy of Sciences and headed by Professor Sirkka Hirsjärvi and Professor Leena Laurinen

written down by Finnish citizens. Altogether 689 persons wrote about how they were reared in their childhood homes and how they as parents reared their children. The National Board of Antiquities filed their answers in respondent alphabetical order and for the purpose of my study I chose every third answer (the answers of 236 persons).

TABLE 3   Sources of data and informants

Source	Number of informants	Female/ Male	Chronological age	Note
Interviews by Open University students in Finland	387	325 / 62	18–89	Informants divided into six groups according to gender and position in the generational chain (child - parent - grandparent).
Interviews by students of Education in Tartu, Estonia	177	138/39	15–94	Informants divided into six groups according to gender and position in the generational chain (child - parent - grandparent).
Biographies from the Finnish National Board of Antiquities	236	192 / 42	31–94	Written autobiographical descriptions of the informants' childhood and the way they raised their children.

Interviews in Finland and Estonia

In Finland the collection of the interview data was carried out by students of education in the Open University of Jyväskylä. During the academic year 1994–1995 it was possible for the students to take a distance education course culminating in doing the interview. The students chose the families and persons they wanted to interview and it was permissible for them to choose their own family and express first their own opinion in writing (about half of the interviewers were also informants). In the introduction to the interview task the students were told that the interview would focus on beliefs and proverbs and their transmission from one generation to another. The students were provided with detailed instructions of how to proceed, for example, they were asked to transcribe the interviews word-by-word preserving the dialect used. In the instructions the students were also informed that their interviews would be

archived, used for research purposes, and that the anonymity of the informants would be ensured (see Appendix 3). The length of the transcribed interviews varied from about four to fifteen pages due to the various ways the students had written down their transcripts. Some of the students had produced handwritten transcriptions, others had used a computer or a type-writer. Also the margins and the spacing of the texts varied.

In studies employing qualitative methods the sampling is often based on specific theoretical criteria and the focus is on selecting 'key informants' in the area of interest (Brannen 1992, 9; Miles & Huberman 1994, 27; Jackson & Mead Niblo 1999). The sampling in this study can be described as something between the sampling often used in ethnographical studies aiming at finding 'key informants' and convenience sampling which makes use of cases ready at hand (Punch 1998, 193). In this study the ideas governing the sampling were the following: Firstly, it was thought that the students conducting the interviews would, in most cases, choose interviewees they considered would have something to say about child-rearing. In this way access to the 'key informants' was gained. Secondly, as about half of the interviews took place within a family, the interviews resembled in many respects everyday family discussions during which parenting beliefs, images and ideas could be transmitted from one generation to another. This is in line with the idea that everyday phenomena should be studied in contexts close to everyday living. Moreover, in this way some information was received from within the protected boundaries of families, entity to which is often perceived as problematic by researchers (Daly 1992, 4–5). In the remaining cases the students seem to have chosen to interview persons close to them, like the family of a friend, a neighbour etc. For instance, one of the interviewers wrote: "I decided to interview my own grandmother, my aunt and my cousin" (Finnish interviews, family 44)[15].

The majority, 84%, (325 women vs. 62 men) of the interviewed persons were female. The youngest generation was 18–35 years of age (mean: 22 years, mode: 19 years), the middle- aged generation was 38–64 (mean: 45 years, mode: 44 years), and the oldest generation 58–89 (mean: 74 years, mode: 70 years). However, the age of the interviewee was not used as a criterion for placing them in a particular generation because age as such was regarded as inadequate for this purpose (Phoenix 1996, 189) Following Aapola (1999, 223–230), I consider 'age' a social construction and in which chronological age is not the sole criterion. Thus 'generation' here refers to a person's position in the chain of generations, for instance, in the chain of grandmother, mother and daughter. Moreover, position in a particular generation means here less the actual experience of acting as a parent, but more an adopted point of view – the persons were answering as fathers, grandmothers, sons etc. The interviewees were assigned to these particular positions in the generational chain by the interviewers. The interviewees consisted of six groups: 115 grandmothers

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[15]   The family interviews were numbered in the order they were reached by the researchers.

(including 3 great aunts), 110 mothers and 100 daughters plus 29 sons, 19 fathers, and 14 grandfathers.

In an interview the participants co-construct the meaning, both the interviewer and the interviewee being active in this process (Alasuutari 1995; Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 23, 49; Holstein & Gubrium 1995). This means that the interviewee's answers are always given to a certain person, the interviewer, in a certain situation. In this study the interview very often took place inside a family which gave it a rather intimate quality. The intimacy of the interview situation is reflected, for instance, in the way one interviewing granddaughter persuades her grandmother to tell her about how she reared her children:

> Grandmother (Finnish interviews, family 4, aged 84): "I remember only my own childhood, oh dear. You want to know about our children? Well, Marjatta (her daughter) can tell you about that, what needs to be told."
> Granddaughter: "Well, you can tell me, mother might tell me the same things."

In those cases where the interview took place inside the same family the context was sometimes intimate enough to bring to surface contradictions and quarrels between parent and child as, for example, between the mother and daughter of family 20, where the mother is the interviewer. The daughter said "Don't ask me now, I'm in such a bad mood. A good mother, well she doesn't nag all the time and keep interfering with my life." And her mother said:" A year ago I knew exactly what a good mother was like … I am not a good mother." I regard such incidents as parts of the process through which the image of a good mother is formed. The mother of family 20 described a good mother, although she claimed not to be one herself, in other words she 'knew' what a good mother is supposed to be like in her culture and it is precisely this 'knowledge' that I was aiming at in this study. Obviously there may be taboo topics within families which are not discussed with other family members; however, the request to describe a good mother and a good father was not made for the purpose of measuring anybody's personal goodness.

Who did the interviewees have in mind when they were asked about a good mother and a good father? Although I am unable to give a thorough answer to this question it is worth considering as people clearly have different beliefs and images, depending on whom they regard as the focus of an image (see Hirsjärvi & Perälä-Littunen 2001, 111). Some informants, especially in the oldest and in the youngest generation, seemed to be thinking of their own parents. For example, a 75-years-old grandmother (Finnish interviews, family 55) replied when asked about a good father: "Well, I had a good father, a very good father indeed he was and, well, I don't know." When the interviewer (her grandchild) continues by asking: "Any similarities with a good mother?" She goes on: "Well, yes they both were good child-rearers." Also in the youngest generation there were informants who, like the 27-years-old daughter in family 43, begin their answer by saying: "Like our mother…" Those informants who themselves were present-day parents were more apt to weigh their own goodness, like the mother of family 20 quoted above.

Though many informants seemed to think about their own parents when answering, the questions were aimed at these images on a more general level. This objective seems to be acknowledged by the informants, but obviously 'general' and the 'personal' images mingle. This reflects the fact that personal beliefs are mixtures of cultural beliefs and beliefs an individual encounters during her or his lifetime (Harkenss & Super 1996, 9; Katvala 2001, 30, 94).

To begin with, the informants were asked: How would you describe a good mother and a good father? Besides the characteristics of a good mother/father, the interviewees were asked whether they thought that their child-rearing practices were different from those of their parents, whether there were any general principles they followed while bringing up their children, and whether they remembered any proverbs concerning child-rearing. The answers to questions about a good mother and a good father in the Finnish data form the data for the images of good parents. However, in some cases the informants did not just answer the questions but occasionally produced longer descriptions of their childhood[16] In searching for the various meanings given to a mother's love and a father's time I used everything the informants had produced.

In Estonia the interviews were conducted along the same lines to the Finnish interviews (see Appendix 4). The informants came from 59 families. Again the vast majority of the interviewees were female: 78% (138 women and 39 men). The youngest generation was 15–43 years old (mean 24 years), the middle-aged generation was 35–67 (mean 49 years), and the oldest generation 59–94 (mean 75 years) (Kaimre 1999, 39). In Estonia Professor Inger Kraav and Edda Kaimre organised the interviews and Edda Kaimre carried out the analysis in Estonia. All the Estonian informants were Estonian-born and had Estonian as their mother tongue. The results of the Estonian analysis are used in the comparisons of a good mother and a good father in Estonia and Finland.

In both countries the interviewees were divided into six groups according to gender and generation. The number of informants in each group is presented in table 4.

TABLE 4 The number of informants in Estonia and in Finland

Groups	Number of informants in Estonia	Number of informants in Finland
Daughters	43	100
Sons	16	29
Mothers	48	110
Fathers	11	19
Grandmothers	47	115
Grandfathers	12	14
Total	177	387

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[16]   Katvala (2001) used these descriptions in her study on the mother's place, "Where is mother?".

Altogether 564 persons were interviewed, of whom 387 were Finnish and 177 Estonian.

The interviews contained no pre-established categories for answers nor boxes to tick, instead, the questions were open-ended and the informants were able to express themselves freely. The interviews were standardised and semi-structured, i.e., each informant was asked the same questions (see Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 47–48). However, as the interviewers did not especially pursue the informants' answers nor attempt to probe deeper into the given descriptions of good parents, I restorted for this purpose to the data from the National Board of Antiquities.

Data from the National Board of Antiquities in Finland

The second set of data came from the National Board of Antiquities in Finland. Following the rules governing the use of the quotes, they are marked MV: K39/ the number of the informant in question[17]. The Board has annually since 1956 collected information and memories provided by Finnish citizens. The data has been collected by sending special leaflets containing the questions to be answered to persons who have previously shown interest in these inquiries. New informants are found by announcing a data-gathering inquiry in the media, for instance in local newspapers and on the radio (Hakala 2003[18]; Korkiakangas 1996, 62). These inquires have mostly dealt with concrete matters. However, in 1994 the inquiry (No 39) dealt with child-rearing in the childhood homes of the informants and the ways they had brought up their own children (see Appendix 2). The length and the style of answering varied from brief answers (one page) and giving straight 'yes' or 'no' answers to the questions to very long autobiographical childhood memories (up to 40 handwritten pages). Most answers were written in Finnish but the sample also contains answers written in Swedish. Altogether 689 persons answered the inquiry. For my study I chose at random the answers of 236 persons. The youngest informant in the sample was born in 1963 (in 1994 the informant was 31 years old) and the oldest in 1900; however, most of the informants were born in the middle of the 1920s (modes 1922 and 1925) and thus were about the same age as the oldest generation in the Finnish interview data. Once again the majority of the informants were female: 192 women compared to 42 men.

Participants in the inquiry had the prospect of winning a reward (In 1994 1000 FIM, about 168 euros) and all those who had responded to more than three inquiries received a medal. However, for many the writing down of one's childhood memories seems to have been a reward in itself. One of the informants, for example, reported that the writing down and 'telling the tale' of her childhood was therapeutic. The informant begins her response with a

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[17]   MV= Museovirasto [the National Board of Antiquities]; K39=kysely no:39 [inquiry n:o 39]

[18]   Personal communication 10.3.2003. Ms Hakala is the person in the National Board of Antiquities responsible for organising inquiries.

dramatic description of the very first years of her life and of an operation she had when she was only five. She ends her story with the following words:

> "Please excuse me for writing this letter and telling you about my life. If you find this interesting I am pleased; in this way you get information on how operations were carried out during those days." (MV: K39/267)

The importance the informants placed on answering the inquiry can also be seen in the time and effort spent on writing. The majority of the informants are elderly and the fact that writing requires effort is clearly visible in the handwritten answers. Like the informant quoted above, many others felt that by answering they were helping to gather information and even that in this way they were contributing to the preservation of the national heritage (see Korkiakangas 1996, 62). In a study by Saarenheimo (1997, 100), by telling 'how things really were' the interviewees also hoped to establish 'their truth', the truth of those who really had experienced the life they were describing. Saarenheimo's interviewees also pointed out that younger persons occasionally nullified their memories by saying 'it could not have been like that'. I suspect that doubting and nullifying another's memories is felt to be very insulting because memories are a crucial part of our sense of ourselves and a significant way of making sense of our experience (Schacter 1996, 34, 308). Telling stories from the past is also considered a socially and culturally important task of the elder generations in many cultures (Schacter 1996, 302).

Though my aim here is not to capture 'how things really were' in the past, nor do I believe that such 'a truth' exists, it is obvious that when informants express their wish to tell the truth it means that they are taking the task seriously. The reason why I am interested in these memories is, with their help, to be able to understand the present. It does not actually matter what really happened in the past; what matters for the present is what people say they remember, how they interpret their past and what meanings they give to their past. This in fact is what 'remembering' means. When we remember something we call to mind events from our past and combine them with the present. Schacter (1996, 308) writes about autobiographical stories and points out how they consist of various ingredients: "snippets of what actually happened, thoughts of what might have happened, and beliefs that guide us as we attempt to remember." Moreover, new memories are affected by older ones and vice versa (Schacter 1996, 104). We also make use of our memories in making sense of what happens to us today. For instance, in a study by Eriksson-Stjernberg and Ahonen (1999) the childhood war memories of the informants turned into tools and resources that they used in the present.

The data from the Finnish National Board of Antiquities is in several ways different from the data gathered by the students. First, writing requires more effort and thus limits the informants to those who are willing and able to write. Writing down what one wants to say requires planning, and in cases where a clear focus on the form of the message is also sought perhaps even special skill or talent. Among of the Board of Antiquities' informants are persons who, for instance, have published their memories, or who have written text books. When

answering an inquiry approaches writing one's autobiography, general expectations of what an autobiography looks like also affect the form of the answer (see Vilkko 1994). Some of the respondents clearly wrote 'the story of their life' starting with the description of the place where they were born. These descriptions were in line with the cultural concept of biography, according to which writers of biographical texts include in the biography facts like their place of birth and other geographical locations (Habermas & Bluck 2000, 750).

Secondly, the National Board of Antiquities' respondents are writing to an institution and are not talking with their offspring over the kitchen table, as was often the case in the Finnish interview data. However, in some cases the institution appears to be personified, as in letters to Ms Hakala, the organiser, asking for more paper. To the more regular respondents Ms Hakala seems to be an old acquaintance to whom they are sending their replies. It must be noted that also in the interviews in the Finnish interview data the informants were told that their answers would be filed in an archive, and the presence of a tape recorder perhaps had an effect on the intimacy of the interview.

Pohjola (1999, 27), criticised the data from the National Board of Antiquities that she used in her study for presenting an extremely normative, 'proper' and traditional picture of the informants' lives. According to Pohjola, the informants describe life as they thought it should have been, offering a version that can be told in public. This may be partly true. However, I do not think we should expect people to reveal 'the secrets of their souls' in texts of this kind. Moreover, the focus of this study is on the 'public' and culturally shared, so the possible normativeness of the data is not a problem. Besides, the informants who answered inquiry No 39 do in fact also tell 'ugly' stories about how they were treated in their childhood.

Thirdly, the Finnish interview data and data from the National Board of Antiquities are linguistically different. The Finnish interview data consists of transcribed talk while the data from the National Board of Antiquities is written language. The transcription of the interviews was carried out by the interviewing students. Transcribing means translating from spoken language, with its rules, to written language with different rules (Kvale 1996, 165–168). In many cases the students' transcriptions, though they were given instructions to transcribe speech word for word, resemble written accounts of the interviews. For example, pauses are not marked nor are repetitions. However, for the purposes of this study the style of transcribing adopted by the students is adequate as the data is not analysed, for example, sociolinguistically or psychologically (see Kvale 1996, 171). But it must be noted that, as Hodder (2000, 704) points out, "the writing down of words allows language and meanings to be controlled more effectively". From the perspective of this study this means that the writers of the data from the National Board of Antiquities have had the chance of considering their expression and content of their message more than the interviewees.

Fourthly, many the National Board of Antiquities' informants who were familiar with the written mode of language seemed to have other aims besides just to inform the reader. Their answers resemble short stories with the aim of

amusing or surprising the reader, as well as, perhaps, impressing the reader with their writing skills.

Finally, the role of remembering is more significant in the data from the National Board of Antiquities. The respondents are writing down what they remember. However, also in the Finnish interview data the answers are affected by the informants' memories, especially when, in describing a good mother and a good father they are thinking of their own parents.

Despite these differences in data basis, the Finnish interview data and the data from the National Board of Antiquities have features in common. They both are the result of an 'interview'; somebody is asking for the information the informants supply. Moreover, the 'interviewer' introduces certain themes to be dealt with, and in this sense both data sets resemble data gathered by focussed interview (teemahaastattelu in Finnish, see Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 47–48 for discussion of different types of interviews). Korkiakangas (1996, 80) describes the data from the National Board of Antiquities as thematic writing [temaattinen kirjoittaminen] and remarks that, similarly to focussed interviews, the informant is able to emphasise topics according to his or her wishes.

Both the Finnish interview data and the data from the National Board of Antiquities can be regarded as documentary data. The transcribed interviews are stored at the University of Jyväskylä, in the Department of Education in the form of an archive, and the responses to the question leaflets are kept at the National Board of Antiquities. Moreover, with both types of data the role of the researcher is only slightly obtrusive; the researcher is not present when the data are obtained but she or he is the initiator of the data collection activity.

5.3 Analyses

The analytical part of the study was carried out in two phases and both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Qualitative analysis was carried out with the purpose of describing data and, again, at a later stage, in searching for more meanings. Quantitative analysis helped in comparing the images supplied by the different informant groups and in discussing the sources of parental images. The data analysed during the first phase consists of the interviews in Finland and in Estonia. In the second phase, the Finnish interview data and the data from the National Board of Antiquities were analysed.

In the first phase, the aim of the analyses was first to capture the images produced by the different groups of informants and, second, by comparing those images, to reflect on the role of culture, gender, and generation present in them.

In the second phase the focus changed from the groups of informants to the contents of their images of a good mother and a good father, the aim being to explore what people mean by the characterisations they used most frequently in describing the images of a good father and a good mother.

TABLE 5 Methods and data used in each phase of the study

Phase I	Data used	Methods	Questions
Describin, comparing and discussing	Finnish interview data (and Estonian interview data in comparisons between Finland and Estonia)	Categorisation of the characterisations of a good mother and a good father. Test statistics (Log-likelihood ratio=G^2) comparing the images produced by sons, daughters, fathers, mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers as well as informants in the Finnish interview data and the Estonian interview data.	What is an image of a good mother like? What is an image of a good father like? What are the differences and similarities in the images of good parents supplied by different genders and generations? What are the differences and similarities in the images of a good father and a good mother? What are the differences and similarities in the images of good parents in Finland and in Estonia?
Phase II			
Searching for more meanings	Finnish interview data and the data from the National Board of Antiquities	Identifying themes in the categories in which the frequency is the greatest.	What are the various meanings given to the most frequent characterisations of a good mother and a good father?

Analyses of phase I

Before I began to look for the answers to my research questions I read through everything the students had written relating to Finnish interview data. This included the answers to all the questions the interviewees were asked (see Appendix 3) as well as the descriptions and impressions of the interview situation given by some of the interviewers. In this way I wished to gain a more complete understanding of the nature of the data and the interview context even though the data resembled documentary material in many respects.

The descriptions of a good mother and a good father produced by the informants of the Finnish interview data were often lists of adjectives, for example: "A good mother is a trustworthy, warm and loving person" or characterisations of a good mother or father, like 'a good father is a person who cares about his family and listens to his children'. The qualitative analysis carried out here is best described as simultaneous meaning categorisation and condensation (Kvale 1996, 192-193). First, I read through the transcribed talk on the topics of 'a good mother' and 'a good father'. Then, I wrote down the characteristics mentioned by the informants, and as soon as it was possible, established categories so that every succeeding characterization of a good mother or father would not have to be given a category of its own.

In forming categories my analysis reduced and structured the descriptions by the informants. These categories were not established in advance, but I developed them from the transcribed talk of the informants (see Kvale 1996,

192). After all answers had been read through, some of the categories were combined, resulting, finally, in 21 categories for the good mother and the good father in the Finnish data. The descriptions of the categories as well as the one-word-labels identifying each category are given in Appendix 1. In Estonia Edda Kaimre carried out the categorisation of the data. She used the Finnish categories of a good mother and a good father as a baseline for her categorisation and added categories as needed in order to capture every characterization the Estonian informants expressed (Kaimre 1999, 38). I have used Kaimre's (1999) thesis "Kolme põlvkonna kasvatuslikest uskumustest", especially the English summary, and an unpublished manuscript she has written with me on the basis of the interviews. The categories are understood to represent beliefs, and the beliefs are the building blocks of images.

A qualitative analysis of the answers produced categories from the data without predetermined boundaries. Following the tradition of qualitative methods, and because the aim was to capture the everyday image of a good mother and a good father, I formed the contents of each category on the basis of cultural, everyday knowledge, and knowledge from previous research, not a dictionary definition of an expression. For instance, expressions like 'a good mother is a warm and loving person' were put together into the category of 'love'. For me, 'warmth' is a positive feature connected to physical and psychological well-being whereas for a representative of another culture 'warmth' could be related to excessive heat and be destructive. Valsiner and Litvinovic (1996, 58) wrote: "a person can explain others' psychological processes only through comparing his or her observations of others with his or her lived-through personal experiences", and I agree with them.

Finally, I counted the number of occurences in each category with an aim of finding the most prevalent beliefs. Counting the frequency of each belief within the groups was considered the best way of establishing the image for each group (Miles & Huberman 1994, 252; Silverman 1993, 162). Sometimes the informants began their answer by stating that good parents were alike and then continued with a description of a good mother. In these cases I categorised only the beliefs chararacterising a good mother as it seemed obvious that the informant had only the mother in mind. When the informants said, for instance, that both a good mother and a good father love their children, 'love' was counted in both the good mother and the good father categories. However, I also counted the frequencies of statements that good parents are similar. I shall report these frequencies when I compare the images of a good mother and a good father in Finland. The informants' talk about the similarity between a good mother and a good father is also analysed qualitatively.

I also formed summarising descriptions of the images of a good mother and a good father for the total of Finnish informants on the basis of the frequency counts for each characterisation. The characterisation which was mentioned most often begins the description and the last characterisation in the summarising description is the tenth in order of frequency. In writing the summarising descriptions I chose a representative quote for each category using the informants' original wording and translated it into English adding

some connecting expressions to make the quotes into a text. The comparison of the images of a good mother and a good father in Finland was carried out by first counting the percentage of those informants who stated that a good mother and a good father are similar. This was followed by exploring the informants' descriptions of the ways in which the good parents are different from each other.

Quantifying data enabled the use of statistical tests of goodness of fit in the comparison of the images supplied by the different groups. In most cases the log-likelihood ratio (G^2) was counted. The log-likelihood ratio (G^2) was chosen instead of the more usual chi square test of goodness of fit because the log-likelihood ratio is more additive and thus more exact (Ranta, Rita & Kouki 1997, 147). Fisher's exact test was used when the expected count in cells was less than 5 in 20% of the cells due to the small number of male interviewees (ibid. 175; Vasama & Vartia 1972, 562-563). The test was carried out to determine whether the images were in fact different for each group and whether it was possible to detect a pattern of similarities/differences. The tests focus on the support each group gives to a certain characterising belief, i.e. determines whether the differences in the frequencies a belief is mentioned by each group are statistically significant. As a first step, the tests were carried out taking into consideration generation, gender and the characterisation in question. The second step was to test the differences between two groups at a time and form new groups (e.g. sons and fathers in one group and grandfathers in another), and test to statistically significant differences in their images of a good mother or a good father. While testing the differences between the images supplied by the Estonian and Finnish informants, those categories which were found only in the Estonian data as well as categories with a frequency of five or less were excluded from the tests. The categories and frequencies for the Estonian data were produced by Edda Kaimre, but I performed the statistical tests on her data.

Analyses of phase II

As in the analyses of the first phase, I began by searching for reoccurring expressions, but this time my aim was to capture all the variations in the meanings given to the most frequent characterisations of a good mother and a good father.

In the second phase, I used both the Finnish interview data and the data from the National Board of Antiquities as follows. I began my search with the Finnish interview data. At first the data seemed to contain only the lists of adjectives describing a good mother and a good father which I had already used, but after answering the good mother and good father question some of the informants produced longer narratives telling, for instance about incidents in their childhood or about their own parenting experiences. These longer narratives together with the answers to the interview questions proper formed my data in my exploration of the most frequent characterisations of a good mother and a good father. In the analysis I identified themes within the

categories of 'a mother's love' and 'a father's time[19] (see Ryan & Bernard 2000, 780). After searching through the Finnish interview data, I then turned to the data from the National Board of Antiquities. This data also contained 'richer' narratives of child-rearing and lengthy remembrances of the writers' childhoods. I read through all the answers in both data sets, i.e. the answers of a total of 623 persons.

The criteria for establishing something as expressing a theme within the category 'a mother's love' was fairly simple - the description should contain words like 'love' (rakkaus) or 'affection' (kiintymys, läheinen suhde) or verb forms like 'to love' (rakastaa,) 'show affection' (osoittaa kiintymyksensä), or 'care about' (välittää). In some cases it was not clear if the informant was describing something a mother should have or do, as in several accounts the subject was 'we', 'parents' or the verb phrase was in the passive voice. My solution was to include everything which could be counted as culturally belonging to the domain of mothers, like cooking, or the language used was describing a good mother. (For instance, a mother aged 50 from family 116 says: "... a good mother loves her children. That is the most important thing and then love guides in the upbringing of the children"). In the data from the National Board of Antiquities, one sub-question of question number 58 was "How did you show affection to your children" (Miten olette hellinyt lapsianne?") and the answers to this were a rich source of descriptions of physical tenderness shown to children.

When analysing a father's time and how it was spent with children I searched for descriptions pertaining to these issues. As in my search for the meanings of 'a mother's love, I first used the Finnish interview data and then turned to the data from the National Board of Antiquities. Again the latter data proved much richer in this respect. In cases where the informants described their leisure time it was not easy to differentiate 'father's time' from 'family time', but I chose to include only those themes in which father's especially were mentioned. In many cases this decision meant excluding some themes, such as, family holiday trips, from the analysis.

When searching for themes both in the 'a mother's love' and 'a father's time' categories I also selected excerpts describing what would happen if a mother did not love her children or father had no time for his children. These descriptions are important, as they give the reasons why the informants considered it important that a mother loves her children and a father has time to spend with them.

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[19]   For Kvale (1996, 94–105) thematizing takes place during the interview planning stage. In this study themes are identified in the data, and thus thematizing is an integral part of the analysis.

6   PHASE I IMAGES OF A GOOD MOTHER AND FATHER DESCRIBED, COMPARED, AND DISCUSSED

6.1 The Finnish good mother

My aim in the following is to present the image of a good mother as this emerges from the descriptions given by the informants. I will first discuss the ten most frequently expressed beliefs followed by a summarising text presenting the image of a good mother. I then compare, using statistical procedures, the support given by each group of informants to the beliefs. Finally, I discuss the possible sources of the beliefs on the basis of the comparisons.

6.1.1 "The good mother loves her children"

The image is approached from the angle of the beliefs it contains, starting with the most often mentioned and ending with the tenth. Note, however, that we can not assume any order of importance on the basis of the frequency alone. Nevertheless, the most frequently expressed belief is the most prevalent and often the first one to come to mind. Moreover, it can be assumed that the association between the most frequently expressed beliefs and the image of a good mother is the strongest and that these characterising beliefs form the core of meanings that constitute the image.

1. Love[20]
The most often mentioned characterization of a good mother in all groups of interviewees was described by words: loving, takes care, trustworthy, helping, does not desert. This was said by a majority of informants (278 persons, 72 %).

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[20]   The belief categories forming the image of a good mother and a good father were given 'titles'. For instance the category "loving, takes care, trustworthy, helping, never lets the child down" was named Love.

Very often the words 'love', 'loving' or 'takes care' were the first characterisations produced by the interviewees when they began to speak about 'a good mother'. The following are translations of what the informants said. I have included the original utterances in Finnish in square brackets to give those readers who understand Finnish a glimpse of the dialectical richness of the data. The exerpts were categorised on the basis of the text in italics. The informants quoted are not in most cases related to each other.

> *A good mother loves her child* and that's how the child learns to love and one day will be able to love her/his children.
> [*Hyvä äiti rakastaa lastaan* ja näin lapsikin oppii rakastamaan myöhemmin omia lapsiaan.](Daughter, aged 19, family 45)
>
> In my opinion *a good mother is tender, gentle and loving*
> [Hyvä äiti on mun mielestä *lempiä, hellä ja rakastavaanen*.] (Mother, aged 52, family 113)
>
> *A good mother is loving.* She is not angry or mean. She *takes complete care* of her child.
> [*Hyvä äitee on rakastavaanen*. Se ei oo vihaanen eikä häijy. Se *huolehtii täyrellisesti mukulastansa*.] (Grandmother, aged 79, family 113)

Similarly to these Finnish informants, Australian mothers in the study by Brown and Small (1997) and Israeli parents and their children in Magens's (1994) study talk about loving and caring. A mother's love is regarded as something the child needs; in fact, affection for children is one of the hallmarks of the "modern" image of the child. The 19th century child-rearing reformers who modernized the image of the child even stated that love was essential for a child, that without it a child would not be a child (Cunningham 1996, 29–31). Present day child-care manuals also highlight the importance of maternal love. According to the manuals by Spock and Leach,[21] maternal love is something that comes naturally. The manuals also see child-rearing and loving the child as matters the mother is especially responsible for (Hays 1996). The advice literature suggests that though maternal love comes naturally, for bonding or attachment the mother must be active. In a Dutch study by Ex and Janssens (2000, 873), the third most frequently expressed dimension of motherhood (54% of the informants) was "(the mother) is warm and affectionate to her child." It must be noted that the informants in the Dutch study were young females aged 15–22 who were not mothers themselves. The various meanings given to a mother's love will be focussed on in the second phase of this study, "A mother's love", in section 7.1.

2. Listens
Besides 'love' the Finnish informants think that a good mother respects her child, listens to and talks to her child, creating an open relationship. Qualities of this kind were put forward by 43% (168) of the persons interviewed.

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[21]   Also translated into Finnish and available in Finnish book stores and public libraries, e.g. Leach, P. 1980. *Lapsi: hoito ja kehitys*. Helsinki: WSOY and Spock, B. 1982. *Järkevää lastenhoitoa*. Helsinki: Otava.

> A good mother respects her child's thoughts and opinions... and *generally listens to her child* when the child has something to say.
> [Hyvä äiti kunnioittaa lapsensa ajatuksia ja mielipiteitä...ja yleensäkin että kuuntelee jos lapsella on jotain sanottavaa.] (Daughter, aged 26, family 58)

> A good mother is *the kind one can trust, whom you can tell about good things and bad things*
> [Sellanen johon voi luottaa; jolle voi kertoa hyvät ja huonot asiat.] (Mother, aged 42, family 99)

> The relationship between children and parents should be so trusting that *they can openly discuss everything* and the children can freely turn to their parents...
> [Lasten ja vanhempien välillä pitää olla niin vahva luottamussuhde, että he voivat puhua avoimesti keskenään ja lapset voisivat kääntyä vanhempien puoleen niin hyvässä kuin pahassa.] (Grandmother, aged 68, family 100)

This characterisation of a good mother is in line with the importance of maternal love and the 'new image' of the child as a person with rights. (For the emergence of the child as a person see e.g. Lambert, 1996 or James et al. 1998).

As an example of the kind of child-rearing advice given in Finland, a Finnish child-rearing expert organisation, The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare[22] counsels parents on its www-pages. Among other things, The League offers Ten Golden Rules of Child-rearing[23]. The third rule urges parents to listen to their child and to appreciate her/his opinions. This rule is totally in contradiction with the older ways of rearing a child. Earlier a good child was modest, obedient and humble (Ruoppila, 1954, 25–29), and certainly did not expect to be heard. In the ABC books and elementary readers from the period between the beginning of Independence and the 1960s parents were presented as the representatives of God on earth. Although the child's relationship with the parents was to be one of trust, he could not expect to be able express his point of view or to be heard by his parents, he was capable only of obedience (Koski 2001, 30). The change in the ABC books took place in the 1960s. The parents were no longer described as the representatives of God on earth, instead, they turned into the child's best friends and were important creators of social harmony. In this role their task was to listen to the child (ibid.114–115).

The request for the good mother to listen to her child also includes shades of meaning from the the idea of sensitive mothering. One of the recommendations of sensitive mothering is that the mother should recognise the developmental needs of her child (Belsky & al. 1984, 259). The young female informants of Ex and Janssens (2000) most frequently (87%) described a dimension of motherhood which resembles the above characterisation by saying that a mother "is responsive to her child's needs, open, sensitive..." Likewise this characterisation can be connected to the request expressed, for

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[22] The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare [Mannerheimin Lastensuojeluliitto], established 1920, is a NGO and the largest child welfare organisation in Finland. On its www-page (http://www.mll.fi/in_english/) it is stated, for instance, that the League "promotes the well-being of children and of families with children..."

[23] http://www.mll.fi/kasvattajan_tietokulma/kasvatusvinkkeja/ kasvatuksen_10_kultaista_saantoa/

instance, in Kaplan's (1992) study that the good mother should be responsive to her child's needs, i.e. to listen and to attend to the child.

3. Control
According to the interviewees, bringing up a child is not just 'sunshine and love'. A good mother must also be able to control and discipline her child. This was expressed by 37% (144) of the informants.

> She is *capable of punishing the child when needed*, but isn't too strict.
> [Hän *osaa rangaista tarvittaessa*, mutta ei ole liian ankara.] (Daughter, aged 20, family 57)

> And I suppose *the mother must be kind of strict when necessary, so that the child can see the limits.*
> [Ja kyllä kai se *pitää äitin vielä kuitenkin semmonen ankaraki tarvittaessa, ettei niinku, että löytyy ne rajat sitte kuitenki missä mennään*.] (Mother, aged 44, family 2)

> *Certain rules should be taught* to children at home. A child that's obedient at home is obedient at school, too. But you shouldn't use corporal punishment.
> [*Tietyt normit pitäs lapsille kotona opettaa*. Kotona kuuliainen lapsi on myös koulusa kuuliainen. Mutta ruumiillista kuritusta ei pitäis käyttää.] (Grandmother, aged 79, family 7)

The contemporary 'mantra' of Finnish child-rearing seems to be love and control (Bardy 2002, 36; Korhonen 2002, 53). Controlling and disciplining the child, both of which should be done lovingly, are probably the oldest tasks of parents. According to Tähtinen (1992, 63), this idea appears already in the Old Testament and reflects the main premises of a period in child-rearing advice which Tähtinen calls the period of religious moralities (ibid. 82). At that time parents were considered responsible for the behaviour of their children, and if they refused to discipline their child, i.e. to use corporal punishment, they themselves were punished. It must be noted that during the period of religious moralities, the father was considered the primary parent (ibid. 91–92). Besides being asked to describe a good mother and a good father, the informants were also asked to produce proverbs and sayings which pertain to child-rearing. One of the most-often remembered and stated proverbs in the data was "Joka kuritta kasvaa, se kunniatta kuolee." [Spare the rod and spoil the child] (see Kemppainen 2001, 92–93). Thus the 'mantras' of the period of religious moralities are remembered even today. However, the use of corporal punishment has been against the law in Finland since 1984. The informants, like the 79-year-old grandmother above, seemed to be well aware of this and often point out that although controlling and setting boundaries is important, you should not use corporal punishment.

The child-rearing style of a 'good mother' is clearly what has been called 'authoritative' (firm, loving, demanding, and understanding) by developmental psychologists (Baumrind 1967; McGillicuddy-DeLisi 1992; Kettunen, Krats, & Kinnunen 1996). Raising her children authoritatively the good mother uses firm control coupled with rationales and warmth. Authoritative child-rearing is also promoted by The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare. Rule four of the Ten Golden Rules states that clear, safe rules should be agreed with the child.

Interestingly, empirical research following the tradition of developmental psychology stresses the above-mentioned qualities in studies dealing with parenting as a method of socialising children (Olsen, Martin, & Halverson 1999). These qualities in parenting have been shown to be related to academic and social outcomes in children (e.g. Pettit, Bates & Dodge 1997). At least two possible explanations can be offered for this: either the informants are aware of the findings of developmental research or developmental psychology has come to the same conclusions as 'folk psychology'.

4. Advice

Qualities of a good mother like giving advice and guiding the child, teaching the child (especially the importance of work and honesty) were mentioned by 29% (111) of the informants. This is how some of the informants referred to the 'teaching' aspect:

> The mother is the child's first teacher who teaches what's important in life, she tells the child what's right and what's wrong... A good mother teaches her children to be honest and behave well
> [Äiti on lapsen ensimmäinen opettaja, joka antaa tarvittavaa opetusta elämää varten, hän neuvoo mikä on oikein ja väärin....Hyvä äiti kasvattaa lapsiaan rehellisyyteen ja opettaa heille hyviä tapoja.] (Daughter, aged 20, family 57)

> And yes, well, a *good mother teaches the child*, especially when the child is young, with her love and tenderness. Because tenderness plays an important role in the upbringing. *And a good mother also teaches her child honesty, good manners, to take responsibility and to be responsible.*
> [Ja kyllä, tuota, *hyvä äiti opettaa lasta* varsinki sillon kun se on pieni sillä äidin rakkaudella ja hellyydellä. Sillä hellyydellä on suuri osuus siihen kasvatukseen. *Ja kyllä hyvä äiti opettaa myös rehellisyyteen, hyvään käytökseen, vastuun ottamiseen ja myöskin sen kantamiseen.*] (Father, aged 43,family 107)

> (A good mother) *teaches* honesty and respect for others. *A child must be taught* good and important values
> [*Opettaa* rehellisyyteen ja toisten kunnioittamiseen. *Lapselle täytyy opettaa* hyviä ja tärkeitä arvoja.] (Grandmother, aged 68, family 100).

Teaching children to work was, in the Finnish agrarian society, done by letting the child watch the parents work (e.g. Korkiakangas 1996, 108). Sometimes the children were told what to do and how to behave (e.g. Ruoppila 1954, 30–34) even then, but mostly the teaching of work seems to have been done by letting the child learn from a model. Aside from work the good mother must teach her child 'good and important values', as the grandmother above states.

5. Patience

The fifth most often mentioned characteristic of a good mother was described by the words: understanding, patient (often with the help of humour), not easily upset". A little less than one quarter (88 persons, 23%) of the informants talked about patience and being understanding.

> In my mind at least, *the most important thing is patience*, and always to praise the child if the child tries to do something, after all, it does not make things better if you start yelling and arguing right away, it spoils things for the whole household

[Minä ainakin aattelen, *ettei mittään muuta ko kärsivällisyyttä* ja aina kehua ku laps jotain alottaa tekehän ja yrittää, että se ei ainaka oo hyväks, jos heti karjuthan ja riirelhän niin sillon se on pilalla koko huusholli.] (Grandmother, aged 78, family 126)

A good mother is not violent and but she is responsible and *understanding*
[Hyvä äiti ei ole väkivaltainen ja räyhäävä vaan hän on vastuuntuntoinen ja *ymmärtäväinen*.].(Daughter, aged 19, family 113)

 Today a mot... a contemporary mother *needs a lot of patience*.
[...tänä päivänä äidil.. tämän *päivän äidiltä vaaditaan paljon kärsivällisyyttä*] (Mother, aged 48, family 101)

There were several informants like the grandmother quoted above, who considered 'patience' the most needed characteristic of a 'good mother'. Patience is probably closely connected with the experience of mothering, either by direct experience of acting as a mother or indirectly as an object of mothering or through observing a mother in everyday life. Already in 1981, in a study by Hirsjärvi (1981, 118), it was noted that mothers felt they had failed if they lost patience with their children. Those mothers believed that a mother should be patient.

When the image of a good child changed from one of a humble, honest, obedient and unselfish person with no rights to one of an individual with a right to be heard, it profoundly changed home life (e.g. Korhonen 2002, 60). The child could no longer be ordered; instead, parents and children started to negotiate over the rules to be followed. This change was reflected in the 1960s in the ideals presented in ABC books (Koski 2002, 71). Following this change, the child was now able to decide, for instance, whether he would to wear blue mittens or red mittens, but his mother, who knows that it is cold outside must make him wear mittens. For the mother accomplishing this, without using overt authority, means lengthy negotiations in which patience is undoubtedly needed.

6. Time
Spending time with the child, on the child's hobbies as well as arranging possibilities for the child to be active were mentioned by 19% (74) of the informants. According to Hochschild (1997, 69), time symbolises commitment. Likewise, Jallinoja (2000, 12) writes that time in family life has symbolic meaning. It is taken to symbolise what each member of the family values. Thus it is no wonder that the informants reported spending time with the child as important. Katvala (2001, 68) points out that lack of time is often the cause of mothers' feelings of inadequacy and guilt. Katvala reports grandmothers saying that in their day there was not enough time to be with one's children when they were small, while the two younger generations talked more about being too tired to spend time with their children. Moreover, adopting the symbolic meaning of time as commitment, the females in the younger generations are apt to conclude that in their grandmother's generation nobody cared for children (ibid. 69). Aukia (1984, 165) reports that at the beginning of the 20th century it was indeed considered improper for a mother to spend too much time with her children.

And then of course she would try *to be with her children* on their hobbies and at home and would do things together with her children
[Tietysti *pyrkis olemaan niitten kanssa* harrastuksissa ja kotona ja ottas niinku niinhin omiinkin puuhiinsa mukaan.] (Daughter, aged 23, family 110)

Well, it's very difficult to say, but, well, yes, a good mother *can find at least some time to* just be with her children. Time just for the child, so that she is doesn't even think other matters [No sit on kauhean vaikia sanoa, mutta tuata niin *hyvällä äitillä on ainakin joskus aikaa aivan vain lapselle aikaa*. Se on aivan sitä lapsen aikaa, ettei se ajattelekkaan mitään muuta.] (Mother, aged 45, family 83)

(A good mother is) *the one who is often at home and plays with her children ...* and then reads stories and shares in their hobbies if she has children of school age.
[*Joka on usiasti kotona ja leikkii lasten kansa...* ja sitten lukee satuja ja harrastaa jos on siinä kouluikäsiä lapsia.] (Grandmother, aged 78, family 82)

The teenaged informants in Innanen's study (2001), in describing their best moments with their mother, highlighted those moments when their mother was totally focussing on them or doing something together with them, moments when they did not have to share their mother's attention with anyone or anything else. The mother from the family 83 and the grandmother from family 82 quoted above share the same idea of a mother giving all her attention to her child and doing something with her child.

7. Support
According to 13% (51) of the informants, supporting the child's self-esteem and trusting the child were also characteristics of a good mother. This is very likely a fairly new feature in the image of a good mother. In the past the aim was to raise modest citizens and praising the child was considered to work against this aim. Praising the child would have been also against the Jante Law. This Law (formalized by a Nordic author, Axel Sandemose 1933) consists of ten 'commandments' resulting in a prescription for conformity and humility. The Law seems to capture something of the very essence of traditional child-rearing in Scandinavia and Finland (see Welles-Nyström 1996, 205). For instance, the first commandment of the Law says: "Do not think that you are anything special." and the seventh "Do not think that you are good for anything." The complete message of the Law is in total contradiction with the idea that the child's self-esteem should be supported. Likewise, the child-rearing described by Ruoppila (1954) aims at bringing up modest and humble persons. For instance, it was thought that praising the child would make him proud. Children were not allowed to sit on chairs or eat with adults (ibid. 27). Ruoppila's data were gathered in the 1930s and his focus was on the traditional folk ways of child-rearing at that time.

The present-day child-rearing advice is geared towards creating a positive self-esteem in the child in many ways. For example, the web site of The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare advices parents to plan the home so that the child can play and rest there. Parents are especially told to encourage the child and value her achievements. In general, advice based on developmental psychological research includes advice for mothers which aims at promoting

child development, and one suggested way of achieving this aim is to support the child's self-esteem.

> In my opinion *a good mother is supportive*, trustworthy and guides the child towards new experiences
> [Mielestäni *hyvä äiti on kannustava*, turvallinen ja ohjaa lasta uusiin kokemuksiin] (Daughter, aged 28, family 50)

> And then, that she lets even a young child do everything the child wants and *does not say right away, go away you just make a mess of it*,
> [Ja sitte se, että heti nuorena heti antaa lapsen tehä kaikkea mitä se haluaa *eikä aina sano, mee pois sää sotkit vaan täsä...]* (Mother, aged 55, family 19)

> Hmm a good mother. She is one who *always trusts her child.*
> [Ja että hyvä äiti. Hän on semmonen, *joka aina luottaa lapseensa*.] (Grandmother, ages 84, family 20)

8. Model

A good mother also sets her children an example. This was said by 10% (39) of the informants.

> *A good mother is a model to her daughter*
> [*Äiti toimii tyttölapselle mallina*.] (Daughter, aged 19, family 45)

> Sets *an example by her way of life to her children*, children use their parents as an example, don't they. You should give a thought to what kind of language you use. Children always imitate their parents
> [*Omilla elämäntavoillaan osoittaa esimerkkiä niille lapsille*, vanhemmistaanha lapset ottaa esimerkkiä. Pitäs vähän aatella mitä suustaan laskee. Lapsethan aina matkii vanhempiaan.] . (Mother, aged 42, family 73)

> That you *teach them by setting yourself as an example*
> [Että *opettaa omalla esimerkillään*] (Grandmother, age 79, family 22)

Being a model for one's child is often understood to be a way of teaching the child, as the grandmother above says. Teaching the child to work was considered very important in the past (see e.g. Ruoppila 1954, 75–76). According to Korkiakangas (1996, 108), a third of the informants in her study said that work was learnt by watching how adults worked. Likewise, the informants in Kemppainen's study (2001, 59), especially in the oldest generation, explain that they were taught to work by watching their parents.

The informants reported that they expected the good mother to be a model, especially to her daughter. For the older generation this means that a daughter should learn to do women's work as different jobs were clearly gendered (e.g. Kemppainen 2001, 59; Korkiakangas 1996, 124–125; Ruoppila 1954, 75–76). However, the good mother is a model in other ways as well; she has to be an exemplary woman, for instance, not one to use bad language, as the mother from family 73 says above. The belief that children turn out to be like their parents, i.e. take after their model, was also expressed in Ruoppila's (1954) study. Following a model, however, is not the only way people think children become like their parents. Another explanation has been that children behave like their parents for hereditary reason. Whether the cause of the resemblance is understood inherited as genetically or learning by observing, the belief is very

old and is also world-wide spread in the world. Old proverbs and sayings, like *a chip off the old block*, [Ei omena kauas puusta putoa], reproduce this belief in the resemblance between parents and their children.

9. Honesty
According to 8% (31) of the informants, a good mother is honest to her children; she can talk about difficult issues as they are; she apologises when there is need to do so.

> And then *to be honest to your children*, in my opinion that's an important thing, to be honest…
> [Ja *sitten olla oikeen rehellinen niitten kans*, se on minust tärkeä asia, et on rehellinen, et...] (Grandmother, aged 65, family 98)
>
> A good mother and a good father dare to *admit that they were wrong* and apologise...
> [Hyvä äiti ja isä *uskaltaa myöntää virheensä* ja pyytää anteeksi...] (Daughter 19, family 18)
>
> ... my father used to say that you must talk with children, small children. And then of course when they grow older then it's even more important *to state the facts of life as they are*... no stork stories.
> [... minun isä enen aina sano että lasten kanssa pittää puhua, pienten lasten. Ja tietysti sitten kun lapset tulloo suuremmaks se on viellä tärkeempätä ja *lapsille pittää antoo oikeeta tietoo* ei mittään ...haikarajuttuja] (Grandmother, aged 80, family 103)

The rationale behind this belief seems to be embedded in the idea of a good mother being a model. The informants seem to think that you can not ask your children to be honest nor can you teach them honesty, unless you are honest yourself.

Sexuality used to be a taboo topic (e.g. Korhonen 1999, 50; Korkiakangas 1995, 267–270; Pohjola 1999, 96; Ruoppila 1954, 94–97). Several informants from the oldest generation, like the grandmother above, connected honesty to openly discussing issues related to sexuality with the child. One of the informants in Korkiakangas's study (ibid. 270) explains how she was taught honesty and to work hard, but nobody explained where babies came from. Eventually, she says, she learnt this out of her own experience. The 80-year-old grandmother above probably has 'dangers' of this kind in mind when she maintains that you should be honest with your children.

Honesty is a quality highly valued in Finnish culture in general. Ruoppila's study (1954) highlights the many sayings and proverbs connected to honesty (ibid 131–134). The ABC books from the beginning of Independence to the 1960s analysed by Koski (2001) contained numerous stories in which 'honesty' is presented as a very important virtue (ibid. 43–44). Even the best-selling novels in Finland are expected by many readers to be 'true to life' (Jokinen 1994, 215). Being honest might well be one of the Finnish "general-purpose cultural models" which are reflected in more specific constructions within a culture (Quinn & Holland 1987, 11; S. Harkness, personal communications January 16, 2001).

10. Just

Twenty-seven of the informants (7%) said that a good mother is just and treats all her children alike, with no favourism.

> A good mother... in my opinion she is trustworthy and *just.*
> [Hyvä äiti... se on mielestäni sellainen luotettava ja *oikeudenmukainen.*] (Daughter, aged 21, family 29)

> ... and to *treat all siblings equally*, so that there are no pets or favourites.
> [...sit oltas *tasapuolisii kaikkii sisaruksii kohtaa*, ettei siel olis joitakii jota suositaan ja lellitään.] (Mother, aged 43, family 59)

> ... and then the parents[24] should be *fair*. So that they don't discriminate against a child even though that child is difficult and then treat a better behaved child as a favourite, they should be even-handed in how they treat the difficult child as well
> [... ja sitte pitäs noin vanhempien olla *sillain tasapuolinen*. Ettei yhtä lasta vaikka ois hankalakin lapsi ei syrjis ja taas sitten kiltimpää lasta ni ei suosis, ni pittäis se hankalakin lapsi pitää tasavertaisena.] (Grandmother, aged 75, family 68)

This characterising belief of a good mother is clearly related to the everyday experiences of the informants. Very often, after having first said that a good mother is just and has no favourites among her children, the informants continue by describing the opposite situation and its consequences. When it emerges that the informants themselves have been treated unjustly by their mothers, their descriptions of such incidents are very bitter. Some informants, who are also parents themselves, reflect on the difficulty of being just when one of the children is perceived as 'good' and the other one as 'bad'.

"The good mother"

The following is a description of a good mother written on the basis of the interview. Quotes from the informants' speech were formed into a coherent text. The description begins with the quality most often mentioned by the informants, followed by the second quality in the order of frequency and ending with the tenth:

"The duty of both a good mother and a good father is to love their child. A loving mother takes care of her/his child and provides the child with a safe foundation for life. A good mother shows her love by caressing her child. A mother pays attention to her child's behaviour and actions; she develops open contact with her child. The child can talk confidentially about all her/his troubles and sorrows with a mother who understands, comforts and helps when she can. A good mother lets the child manage his/her own affairs, she respects the child's thoughts and opinions.

A part of motherly love is also to control the child and set the limits for the child. In this way the child is given to understand that the mother cares about him/her. The child must not be controlled too harshly preventing him/her from developing a personality of her/his own. The child must not be shouted or yelled at, nor beaten. However, the mother's duty is to set limits and keep the control.

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[24]   When the informants talked about 'parents' the characterisation was counted for both a good mother and a good father

A mother's task is to give advice, guide and teach her child. In particular, the child must be taught the importance of work, always to tell the truth as well as to be honest and have respect for other people. The mother must also herself be always honest, explain things to her child and never lie. The mother transfers to her children 'good and important' values.

A good mother is never a violent troublemaker but she is patient, she has strength to understand her child and respond to her child with a good sense of humour, and she respects the child's own preferences. The mother is interested in her child's schooling and hobbies, and most importantly spends time in activities with the child.

A good mother encourages the child to go forward and face new experiences. She has faith in her child. As a child learns by an example, the good mother sets an example to her child, and especially acts as model of a woman for her daughter. A good mother treats all her children equally"

[Sekä hyvän äidin että hyvän isän velvollisuus on rakastaa lastaan. Lastaan rakastava äiti pitää huolta lapsesta ja tarjoaa tälle turvallisen elämän perustan. Hyvä äiti myös näyttää rakkautensa hellimällä lastaan. Äiti on kiinnostunut lastensa tekemisistä, hän luo avoimen puheyhteyden lapseensa. Lapsi uskaltaa kertoa kaikki huolensa ja murheensa äidille, joka ymmärtää, lohduttaa ja auttaa kykyjensä mukaan. Hyvä äiti ei holhoa, vaan kunnioittaa lapsensa ajatuksia ja mielipiteitä.

Äidilliseen rakkauteen kuuluu myös rajojen asettaminen. Ne tuovat turvallisuutta lapsen elämään, ja lapsi tietää, että hänestä välitetään eikä hän ole yhdentekevä. Lasta ei saa liiallisesti rajoittaa eikä estää häntä kasvamasta omaksi persoonakseen. Lapselle ei saa karjua eikä huutaa, eikä lasta myöskään saa piiskata. Äidin on kuitenkin pidettävä lapsi kurissa ja tottelevaisena.

Äidin tehtävänä on neuvoa, ohjata ja opettaa lasta. Erityisesti lapsi on opetettava tekemään työtä, puhumaan totta sekä olemaan aina rehellinen ja kunnioittamaan toisia ihmisiä. Äidin on myös kerrottava lapselle asioista, eikä lapselle saa valehdella. Äiti siirtää lapselle 'hyviä ja tärkeitä' arvoja.

Hyvä äiti ei ole väkivaltainen räyhääjä, vaan hän on kärsivällinen ja jaksaa ymmärtää lastaan ja suhtautuu lapseen huumorintajuisesti kunnioittaen tämän omia mieltymyksiä. Hän on mukana lastensa harrastuksissa, kiinnostunut heidän koulunkäynnistään ja ennen kaikkea hän käyttää aikaa lastensa kanssa olemiseen ja toimimiseen.

Hyvä äiti rohkaisee lasta yrittämään eteenpäin uusiin kokemuksiin. Hän kannustaa lasta ja luottaa lapseensa. Koska lapsi oppii myös esimerkin kautta, hyvä äiti on esimerkillinen, erityisesti hän toimii naisen mallina tyttärelleen. Hyvä äiti kohtelee lapsiaan tasapuolisesti."]

6.1.2 The "Informed" and the "Traditional"

In the following, the focus of the analysis is sifted away from beliefs and more towards the groups of informants. The method of analysis also shifts from qualitative to quantitative statistical analysis. Here the analysis is based on all the informants' expressed beliefs contributing to the image of a good mother. The results of various comparisons between the informant groups will be confined to statistically significant differences only. When the frequencies of

expressions of beliefs characterising a good mother were compared between the six groups, statistically significant differences were found only between generations. Some gender differences emerged when comparisons were made within each generation. Finally, as the outcome of the various comparisons, it was noted that the groups could in fact be divided into two on the basis of the images they had produced.

Gender differences in images of a good mother within each generation

Tests of goodness-of-fit (log-likelihood = G^2) were also carried out within each generation to find out the amount of agreement and disagreement in the image of a good mother between genders. Statistically significant gender differences were found only in the two older generations. These differences suggest that those who are mothers themselves characterize a good mother differently from those who are not.

Mothers (n=110) talked more than fathers (n=19) about a good mother spending time with the child (29% of the mothers, 0 fathers; G^2=9.35; df= 1; p=0.002) and supporting and helping the child to become confident (41% of the mothers, 0 fathers; G^2=8.14; df=1; p=0.004). As can be seen, both these beliefs were mentioned only by female informants, i.e. mothers. None of the fathers talked about a good mother as a parent who must have time for the child and be supportive.

It seems likely that the reason mothers themselves experience the lack of time as so crucially relates to the close connection of time to the experience of mothering. During the 19th century Finland gradually became a country where linear time was used and measured (Ollila, 2000). But even after society's time outside the family had become linear, family time remained cyclical and was mostly regarded as mother's time (Gills 1996, 87). In her book *The Time Bind*, Hochschild (1997, 5, 77) writes about 'child time'. Child time is time scheduled by the child. Today's mothers, especially those who work outside home, have to synchronise their activities between the different 'times'. Moreover, mothers are still regarded as the parent responsible for the "continuous coverage" of children's care (Daly 1996, 129, 132). Thus mothers might be more apt to worry about the lack of time and feel guilty (see Katvala 2001, 69–70).

In the study by Brown and Small (1997) the interviewed mothers also talked about a good mother as someone who has time for her children. For some of these mothers time was 'quality time' and used in providing guidance, for others time was connected with being patient, and for some mothers having time meant the traditional idea of being always available. Housework was reported to be the main factor preventing mothers from spending quality time with their children.

In the oldest generation, grandparents, statistically significantly gender differences emerged in the amount they spoke about a good mother being "understanding, patient, and not easily upset" (G^2=5.30; df=1; p=0.021). Twenty-five grandmothers (n=115) mentioned this belief while none of the

grandfathers (n=14) spoke about it. This suggests that these might be connected with everyday mothering and the experience of mothering.

Differences between the generations

Though no gender differences were found when all the groups of informants were compared, there were several differences in the image of a good mother between the three generations. Most of these differences were such that in the talk of the youngest and the middle-aged generations certain characterising beliefs were more frequent than in that of the oldest generation.

TABLE 6 The characterising beliefs of a good mother in the Finnish interview data - the youngest and the middle-aged generation compared with the oldest generation

Characterising belief	Youngest vs oldest %	G^2	Middle-aged vs oldest %	G^2	Oldest %
Listens to the child	57	24.60***	48	12.16***	27
Controls the child	44	10.83***	43	10.03**	25
Supports the child	17	10.83***	18	11.90***	5
Has a sense of responsibility	9	11.46***	3	-	1
Spends time with the child	26	7.17**	20	-	13
Patience	29	6.42*	20	-	16
Acts as a model	12	5.14*	15	7.83**	5
Religious upbringing	0	15.74***	1	10.16***	8

N=387, in each generation n= 129; df = 1; *p< .05.; **p< .01 ;***p<.001; G^2= log-likelihood ratio. Only statistically significant differences in frequencies are reported

The three first beliefs in table 6 were talked about by the middle-aged and the youngest generations more often than by the oldest, reflecting again the authoritative child-rearing style of the past as well as the more recent image of the child as a person with rights.

If, following Brown and Small (1997), we divide the characterisations favoured by the youngest generation into tasks and attributes, we note that most are expressed in the form of the tasks a good mother performs when interacting with her child. She listens to the child, controls the child's behaviour, helps the child to become confident, spends time with the child, and acts as a model. These tasks are clearly connected to the image of the child, especially to what is believed to be beneficial for the child.

Table 6 also shows that the number of differences in the image of a good mother between the youngest generation and the oldest generation is greater than the differences between the middle-aged generation and the oldest generation, i.e. the youngest and the oldest generation differ in seven

characterising beliefs while the oldest and the middle-aged generation differ in only four beliefs. This suggests that the image is changing.

A belief which the grandparents' generation mentioned more often than the middle-aged generation was "Takes care of the religious upbringing of the child". Grandparents also more often talked about this belief than the youngest generation. In the ABC books and elementary readers from the period between the start of Independence and the 1960s a religious upbringing was seen as an important parental task. It was a task that was included in everything parents did with their child. Parents had to bring up a child that was ready for Eternity. (Koski 2001, 53).

The decreasing number of people who mentioned a child's religious upbringing in the younger generations is a sign of the process of secularisation (Taris & Semin 1997). Central and Northern Europe have been said to be among the most secularised areas in the world (Heino 1988). Like other young people in Northern Europe, the members of the youngest generation in this study differ from their conterparts in the Mediterranean countries who report the wish to transmit their religious values to their children and who can thus be assumed to be more religious than these Finnish youngsters (Lagrée 1996, 166). Along with modernisation came secularisation, and with the latter a combination of diversity and egalitarian individualism: people began to see it as unnecessary to pass on their religious faith (Bruce 1999). This result suggests that in Finland the process of secularization has already affected the middle-aged generation.

Grandparents also talked more than the youngest generation about a good mother as a person who "gives advice, teaches the child the importance of work and honesty" (19% of the informants of the youngest generation, 32% of the informants of the oldest generation; $G^2=6.96$; df=1; p=0.008). One reason for this might be that the younger generation considers 'teaching' as something to be left to the professionals and experts. Teaching takes place in schools, and parents do not teach, they only rear. It is also possible that the youngest generation questions the teachings and advice of the previous generations. The youngest generation sees society as in a state of rapid change (Helve 1996, 173). The advice received from older generations is perhaps suspected of being out of date.

Comparison of the characterising beliefs expressed by the youngest and the middle-aged generations showed that the youngest generation spoke more about a good mother having a sense of responsibility (9% of the informants of the youngest generation, 3% of the informants of middle-aged generation, $G^2=4.45$; df=1; p=0.035). Present-day parents are often accused in the media of irresponsibility and selfishness. It is probable that this media discourse is reflected in the talk of the youngest generation while the thought of a mother being irresponsible does not even occur to the older generations.

The "Informed" and "Traditional" groups

Various combinations of groups were tested for statistically significant differences. The tests suggested that the interviewees in fact formed two groups: 1)"Informed", composed of mothers, daughters and sons; and 2)"Traditional", consisting of fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers. The differences between the two groups were statistically significant in expressing the characterising beliefs presented in table 7 below.

TABLE 7   Differences in beliefs characterising a good Finnish mother produced by the group 'Informed', i.e. sons, daughters and mothers and the group 'Traditional', i.e. fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers

Characterising belief	"Informed" %	"Traditonal" %	G^2
Listens	54	28	24.88***
Supports	19	4	20.24***
Controls	45	25	16.36***
Time	25	11	11.31***
Responsible	7	1	10.08***
Patience	27	16	6.01*
Love	76	65	5.24*
Model	13	7	3.94*
Religion	0.4	7	15.69***
Advice	25	35	4.82*

n=387; 'Informed' n=239; 'Traditional' n=148; df=1; *p< .05. **p< .01 ***p<.001; G^2= log-likelihood ratio. Only statistically significant differences in frequencies are reported.

The "Traditional" more often than "Informed" group mentioned religious upbringing of the child and giving advice, both of which seem to originate from older belief systems (see discussion above). All other characterizations were such that the "Informed" group talked about them more often.

By naming the first group "Informed", I wish to point out that many of the characterising beliefs brought up by this group seem to be in accordance with the advice offered by present-day child care manuals and Finnish child health care centre personnel. According to Hays (1996), the most widely read manuals in the USA, Spock, Leach, and Brazelton, advocate what Hays calls the ideology of intensive mothering. All these manuals have also been translated into Finnish. The child-rearing advice offered in Finland is of the 'authoritative' type (Kettunen et al. 1996). This advice is to a large extent in accordance with the model of child-rearing offered by Spock, Leach, and Brazelton. For example, a leaflet produced by the Finnish Ministry of Justice and the Finnish National Board of Social Welfare in 1984 advises parents on how to control and discipline their children. This leaflet was given out at the time when corporal punishment became illegal in Finland. The advice offered suggests that the best method of control is to negotiate the rules to be followed together with the child. Hays (1996, 29) talks about "labour-intensive techniques of ongoing psychological manipulation." For the mother, this means that she must be supportive, listen to the child, and control the child's behaviour without using coercion.

The advice disseminated by health care personnel has also been discussed in terms of surveillance of mothers and seen as defining 'good' and 'bad' mothering (e.g. Ackers & Abbott 1996,18). The surveillance aspect seems to be absent or at least covert in Finland. According to Kuronen (1993; 1999), health care personnel and mothers (excluding fathers), construct a norm for good child care and good parenting (especially 'shared parenthood'). To make this happen, the ideal relationship between mothers and health care personnel is friendly and the latter avoid offering direct rules on how to mother. Yet the standards of good mothering are understood and become visible if someone acts against them (Kuronen 1999, 188).

In her dissertation Kuronen (1999) compares the advice given in Scottish and Finnish maternity and child health care services and notes that Finnish mothers seem to be more willing to follow expert advice. She remarks that Finnish mothers consider using the health care services as a social right and elements of overt control have been removed from them. However, Kuronen points out that mothers have "a strong moral obligation to use the services and follow professional advice" (ibid. 318). She also maintains that Finnish mothers, in comparison to Scottish mothers, are expected to behave in a more uniform way.

Culturally produced and expected obedience to expert advice might be one explanation for the uniformity and conformity noted by Kuronen (1999). The historical roots of the conformity of Finnish culture have been described by Ollila (1998). At the time of moulding of Finnish identity strict conformity was required. Perhaps traces of this kind of thinking are still seen in Finnish people. Likewise, Koski (2001, 11) points out that traditionally Finnish child-rearing was based on unquestioned obedience to an authority. In the present case this authority would be invested in experts who present their advice to parents.

When Welles-Nyström (1996, 205) writes about the cultural roots of equality she refers to the Jante Law of child-rearing (The law was discussed in more detail when dealing with the category Support). The ideas expressed in the Jante Law also very well describe traditional Finnish child-rearing, which aims at creating modest, obedient and humble child (Ruoppila, 1954, 25–29). An obedient child would grow into an obedient adult who would regard conformity as a virtue.

I am not, however, claiming that the image of a good mother of the 'Informed' is in its entirety constructed on the basis of official child-rearing advice. A more plausible explanation is that the advice given by Finnish experts is in fact a mixture of findings in developmental psychology and beliefs drawn from a more traditional ethnotheory of child-rearing. The close fit between what the "experts" say and what the informants say is possibly due to blending on both sides. Advice, especially when it is delivered orally in maternity and child health care centres, is a co-construction of the health care professional and the mother (Kuronen 1999). It is a mixture of the scientific knowledge acquired during the training of the professional plus the professional's personal and perhaps more traditional images plus the beliefs and images the mother brings with her. It has also been noted that much of the "scientific" advice offered by

experts reflects changes in cultural theories of rearing children (e.g. Harkenss et al. 1996). The 'opposite', research-based knowledge becoming part of people's cultural understandings, also seems to be taking place. Rantamaa (2001, 57–58), in dealing with conceptions of the various age stages of life, comments that conceptions of different developmental stages based on developmental psychological research have become part of the everyday understanding of what is normal.

One possible route by which the expert advice reaches the youngest generation could be the following. Mothers listen closely to expert advice because it is especially directed at them and form their image of the ideal mother in accordance with it (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 1995; Burman 1994; Hays 1996; Woodward 1997). This advice emphasises a close relationship between the mother and her child, possibly in this way strengthening the transfer of images from the mother to her child. The children of these mothers form their image of a mother partly on the basis of their mothers' image of a mother and in part directly from listening to the child-rearing discourse of experts through the media. Children are interested in this advice because they see themselves as future parents.

Mothers are often seen as reproducers of the culture and transmitters of the prevailing belief systems because generally they have born and continue to bear most of the responsibility for bringing up children (Phoenix & Woollett 1991b, 17). This can lead to a close relationship between mothers and their children. For instance, Hosley and Montemayor (1997) concluded that the mother's impact on the adolescent is greater than that of the father. The relationship with their mothers reported by the adolescents emphasised closeness, self-disclosure, and affection (ibid. 174).

Some of the student interviewers in the present data reflected on the relationship with their mother. The interviewer of family 59 wrote:

> The daughter and the mother were easily able to talk about upbringing. Probably because these issues are familiar to a modern person. Earlier the children just came along and no attention was paid to their upbringing. Although the parents had certain child-rearing principles, they were not conscious of them. Even the word "upbringing" was unfamiliar. [Tytär ja äiti pystyivät helpommin puhumaan kasvatusasioista. Varmaan siksi, koska ne ovat tuttuja asioita nykyajan ihmiselle. Aikaisemmin lapset paremminkin vain 'kulkivat mukana' eikä heidän kasvatukseen kiinnitetty sen enempää huomiota. Vaikka vanhemmilla olikin kasvatusperiaatteita, niitä ei sen kummemmin tiedostettu. Kasvatus sanakin oli vieras.]

The interviewer above is in a way presenting the mother and the daughter as 'Informed'. They were able to discuss child-rearing and they were familiar with the modern discourse.

Another interviewer, a daughter aged 24 from family 122 writes after having first remarked that she and her mother share many simlar views about child-rearing:

> ...and it easy for us to discuss these matters because we have always talked about everything, like my mother has talked with her mother. I think that my grandmother thinks about child-rearing almost like me and my mother, but it is more difficult for her to express her thoughts, because she has lived through the war-time, which

means that her life or at least her childhood has been very different from mine or my mother's. [Vertaillessani meidän kaikkien tekstejä, huomaan äidilläni ja minulla paljokin yhtäläisyyksiä ja meidän on helpompaa tuoda ajatuksiamme esiin, joka taas johtuu siitä, että olemme aina puhuneet kaikesta, kuten myös äitini oman äitinsä kanssa. Luulen, että mummoni ajattelee kasvatuksesta lähes samoin kuin minä ja äitini, hänelle omien ajatusten esiintuominen on vain vaikeampaa, sillä hän on elänyt sota-aikaa, joten hänen elämänsä on pakostakin ollut ainakin hänen lapsuutensa osalta hyvinkin erilaista kuin minun ja äitini.]

Thus the writer distinguishes between the two younger, female generations and the generation of the grandmother by stating that her grandmother's life has been different from that of her mother and herself. She also notes the close relationship between herself and her mother and how it has probably contributed to the similarity of their thinking.

One more factor explaining the similarity in the images of the youngest generation and their mothers as well as within the youngest generation is that experience as a father or mother has not affected their ideals. The majority of those in the youngest generation (mean age = 22) have not yet formed an image of their own, instead they retain that of their mothers. They have not yet redefined themselves as parents nor tried to fulfil the requirements of their image of the ideal mother in reality. The shift in thinking that takes place as one enters parenthood has not yet occurred (Harkness et al. 1992, 164).

The transmission of parental childrearing ideas, images and beliefs is likely to be affected by the nature of these beliefs (Goodnow 1992, 295). Some beliefs may be transmitted more easily, like the belief in corporal punishment (e.g. Kemppainen 2001; Simons et al. 1992). Other, less visible beliefs, for instance mothers' ideas about their work identity studied by Moen et al. (1997), are not transmitted that easily. It is unlikely that the present informants had explicitly discussed their images of good parents or even stated aloud what they thought on the topic before they were expliticly asked to do so. However, mothers' views might have been concluded from their behaviour.

It is possible that the similarity between the images produced by mothers and their children is a result of the closeness of their relationship which in turn is the result of the image of a good mother that these mothers have, i.e. that a good mother is one who loves her children, listens to them, spends time with them etc. The psychological research literature talks about 'bonding' and 'attachment'. A close relationship makes the transfer of ideas and images easier. For instance, a good mother-child relationship has been noted to facilitate the transmission of moral values (Taris & Semin 1997). In another study Korhonen (1994) noted that when the mothers in her study described their mothers in positive terms, the mothering of these two generations was quite similar. Moreover, it seems likely that the nature of the ideal relationship between a mother and her children has changed with "bonding" receiving even stronger emphasis than before. For example, spending time on the child's hobbies together with the child is something that would not have occurred to the generation of Finnish grandmothers when they were mothers (Aukia 1984, 165; Korkiakangas 1996, 351). Holmila (2000, 42, 51, 109) reports how the mothers in a small rural community played a role in establishing the continuity of their

families by influencing, for instance the occupational choice of their children. They were also the educators of their children and even their husbands on matters like health, diet, and hygiene (ibid. 51).

In a comparison of Italian, Swedish and American 'good mothers' (see Welles-Nyström et al. 1994), Swedish mothers emerged as the most similar to the Finnish 'good mother'. In both these two countries the child's emotional needs (Love) and growth into an independent person were emphasized. Lack of time worried present-day parents in both Sweden (Björnberg 1992, 87) and Finland. Spending time with the children was also something British mothers in Urwin's (1985) study regarded as a difference between them and their mothers.

Potential transfer from one generation to another seems to be at its strongest between mothers and their children. However, we can not be sure that the direction of transfer is from mothers to their children. It is possible that the similarity of these images is the result of expert advice delivered via child health care centres and the mass media and adopted by both mothers and children or, indeed, that children inform their mothers. These questions remain unresolved and require further study.

6.1.3 Summary

A good Finnish mother is a loving person who listens to her children but is also able to control their behaviour. The good mother gives advice and teaches her children also by acting as a model. Moreover, she is patient and just, she has time to spend with her children and she supports their self-esteem. She is also able to discuss difficult matters honestly with her children.

Our image of a good mother is connected to the way we conceptualize children (e.g. Ambert 1994, 529). When children are seen as vulnerable, needing protection and care the image of a good mother contains characterizations like *loving, does not desert*. The research on the topic has noted several changes in the conceptualisations of children (e.g. Lambert 1996; James et al. 1998), and in the present study the differences among the groups run along similar lines. The images of a good mother of the younger generation contain an increasing number of features reflecting the image of the child as a person with rights, although traces can be seen of older images of a child as immature adult in need of protection, whose development and well being are on the mother's responsibility. Expert information about child-rearing and especially the image of the child from child developmental psychology affect both the construction of the image of the child and the image of a good mother. A good mother should be able to provide what the child needs.

The mother is described in relation to the child. This is, according to Vuori (2003, 61), the way motherhood is most often described in the current literature. Mothering as an activity is investigated and described in connecton with the developing child, what it means to the child, not in relation to the woman, the mother herself.

Generational differences were found in the statistical comparisons of the images produced by the different groups but no gender differences emerged in

the analysis as a single group. However, generational gender differences were found in those generations (middle-aged and oldest) which had parenting experiences of their own. After several comparisons using various groupings it was found that the informants could be divided into two groups: an Informed group consisting of sons, daughters and mothers, and a Traditional group formed of fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers.

The table 8 presents the beliefs characterising a good mother, the percentages of the informants who mentioned each belief, and which of the two groups, Informed and Traditional, mentioned the belief more often.

TABLE 8   The ten most often mentioned beliefs characterising a good mother by the Finnish informants.

Belief A good mother…	% of informants saying	Mentioned more by Informed/Traditional
is loving, takes care, trustworthy, helping, does not desert (LOVE)	72	Both
listens to and talks with her child, creates an open relationship, respects her child (LISTENS)	43	Informed
is able to control and discipline her child (CONTROL)	37	Informed
gives advice, guides, teaches the child (ADVICE)	29	Both
is understanding, patient, and not easily upset (PATIENCE)	23	Both
has time to spend with the child, on the child's hobbies (TIME)	19	Informed
supports the child's self-esteem and trusts the child (SUPPORT)	13	Informed
acts as an example to her child (MODEL)	10	Both
is honest to her children, able to discuss difficult topics, apologises when she is wrong (HONESTY)	8	Both
is just, does not favour any of her children (JUST)	7	Both

N=387

It is possible to suggest several reasons for the agreement between mothers and their children on the image of a good mother: Either it is mothers who transfer this image to the next generation, or it is mothers, daughters and sons who respond most readily to the advice provided by healthcare personnel and the media, and include new characteristics in their images. The latter choice is

supported by the fact that the images produced by daughters, sons and mothers are the most 'modern'. For instance, these groups most often mentioned qualities of a good mother which reflect the modern way of perceiving the child as a person with rights. The type of interaction between parents and their children in Finnish families has changed from a culture of obedience to one of discussion and negotiation (e.g. Korhonen 1999). However, on the basis of cross-sectional data it is not possible to establish the direction of the potential transfer.

6.2   The Finnish good father

As in the case of the image of a good mother I will first discuss the ten most often mentioned beliefs characterising of a good father, in order of frequency and ending with the tenth. Unlike the image of a good mother, the statistically significant differences between the groups in the frequencies of mentioning a particular characterising belief did not form 'patterns'; for instance, no new groupings of the informants could be established. For this reason the differences between the informants in expressing a particular characterising belief are discussed in the context of the respective belief. After looking at each belief separately a summarising description of the image of a good father written on the basis of the interviews will be given. Finally, on the basis of the differences in the support each group of informants offered to a particular characterising belief, I will discuss the possible source of this belief.

6.2.1   "The good father has time to spend with his children"

The informants were asked to describe both a good mother and a good father, but the image of a good mother dominates the descriptions as the informants talked more often about a good mother than about a good father. Even when the interviewees said that a good mother and a father are alike, they often continued by describing a good mother, and the good father was seldom described in detail. Of the interviewees 28 did not actually say anything about the characteristics of a good father. The majority of these informants belonged to the oldest generation who, in most cases, produced shorter descriptions and often spoke about their own parents. Altogether, a total of 1168 categorised descriptions were provided for a good mother as against only 415 for a good father. The most often mentioned characteristic of a good mother (loving, secure etc.) was mentioned by 278 persons but the corresponding feature of a good father (spends time with the child, on the child's hobbies, together with the child) was mentioned by only 68 persons. However, some characterisations were used only about a good father.

1. Time

Time is the most often mentioned feature in the characterisation of a good father. The importance of having time to spend with one's children was mentioned by 68 (18%) of the informants. The following are direct excerpts transcribed and translated from the speech of the informants.

> (A good father) is *a person who finds time to spend with his children.*
> [Jolla on aikaa olla lapsen kanssa.] (Mother, aged 53, family 11)

> (A good father) *spends time with his children* no matter how busy he is, you must always have time for your children.
> [Viettää aikaa lastensa kanssa, vaikka olisi kuinka kiireinen on aina oltava lapsille aikaa.] (Daughter, aged 20, family57)

> Also the father *spends a lot of time with his children.*
> [Myös isä viettää paljon aikaa lasten kanssa.] (Grandmother, aged 70, family17)

The image of a good mother also contained the need for the mother to have time to spend with her child. In the image of a good father the need seems to be even more urgent. Given that time symbolises the father's commitment to his family and children (Hochschild 1997, 69), and that the father's commitment to his family is in other ways less self-evident, the need to prove this commitment is more persistent.

The salience this issue of a father's time with connection to family life noted here is exactly the same finding as emerged from the study by Daly (1996). The participants in Daly's study, 32 American fathers, were asked to describe what it means to be a good father. The primary standard of a good father was that he finds time to spend with his children (ibid. 469).

Research has also shown that spending time with one's children is considered an important indicator of the father-child relationship. For instance, research focussing on the father-adolescent relationship has paid attention to the amount of time spent together as well as to the degree of satisfaction experienced by the persons involved (Hosley & Montemayor 1997). There are, however, generational differences in the number of informants who mention a father's time. In the present study sons (n=29) say more often than fathers (n=19) that a good father spends time with the child, on the child's hobbies, together with the child (38% of the sons, 10% of the fathers, G^2=4.79; df=1; p=0.029). There are at least two possible explanations for why sons take up the issue of a father's time so often. Either they would have liked their fathers to spend more time with them, or they feel that in the present-day world they live in time is a scarce commodity. Having time to spend with one's children is an idea much discussed in the media and child-rearing manuals (see e.g. Parke 1996); hence it is likely that the youngest generation is more aware of it. It is also possible that sons intend as future fathers to spend more time with their children.

One reason for the talk about time in connection with fathers could be the lack of fit between cyclical 'family time' and linear, standardized, industrial time laid down by the imperatives of the modern economy (Gillis 1996, 81; Hareven 1982; Ollila 2000, 133). Mothers and fathers, who work outside the

family, have to commute between two types of time, which might cause problems. A contradiction between the need to provide financially and fathers' wish to have more time to spend at home was also reported by Henwood and Procter (2003).

In American studies it has been noted that the amount of time a father spends with his children is connected to the work schedules of both parents. The likelihood that a father cared for his preschool-aged child while the mother was working increased during the recession of 1990–1991, which means that economic factors, especially the costs of daycare, also play a role here (Casper & O'Connell, 1998). However, long-term unemployment did not increase fathers' involvement in housework and parenting (Brines, 1994). In Böök's study (2001), the unemployed fathers were happy to have time to spend with their children, but they also worried about the role model they presented.

A father who does not have time to spend with his children is an absent father in one way or another, and according to the informants a bad father. In Innanen's study (2001, 51–52) teenagers describing tender moments with their father explained that fathers did not have time to be with their children because fathers were always working. Having time to spend with one's children and being a good breadwinner appear as contradictory requirements. However, the teenagers in Innanen's study did not lay all the blame on the father; instead, they blamed work (ibid. 53).

Work can take up much of a father's time but war seems to be a matter that takes all a father's time during its duration and has a negative effect on father-son relationships even after it ended (Kujala 2003). According to Kujala, even if the father returned from the war, he remained distant owing to the need to work hard to rebuild the country and also because their war experiences made many fathers nervous and tense as well as increased their use of alcohol.

Garbarino (1992) reports the results of a longitudinal American study and concludes that the importance children attach to a father's time increased slightly between the years 1924 and 1977. In 1924 63% of the teenaged informants said that having time to spend with his children was the most desirable attribute of a father, a while in 1977 the respective percentage was 68%. In view of the most recent ideological formulations of a generative, responsible and involved father the percentage today is likely to be even higher.

The belief that a good father should have time to spend with his children will be explored in more detail in 7.2 "A father's time and how it is spend with children.

2. Love
A good father must also love his children. This belief was expressed by 63 (16%) persons. Fatherly love often has shades of meaning relating to the breadwinner aspect of fathering, as providing security for the family seems to be part of it. The American colonial stern patriarch as well as the breadwinner father of the period of industrialisation were also protectors of the family (Pleck & Pleck 1997). The father of the family was expected to be like God, i.e. loving and just (LaRossa 1997, 25). Fatherly love is probably connected to ideas of masculinity

which do not allow a man to cry or overtly show his affection (Ekenstam 2003). Instead, a man shows his love by protecting the more vulnerable and providing them with food and shelter. Kujala (2003, 179–180) concludes on the basis of his data and his own experiences that the fathers who participated in World War II did this out of duty and because they felt that protecting the home was their responsibility. Kujala compares this 'father as security' [turva isä] to 'sacred motherhood' [pyhä äitiys] and connects it to masculinity.

> A good father *loves his children* and pays attention to them.
> [Hyvä isä rakastaa lapsiaan ja ottaa heidät huomioon.] (Daughter, aged 19, family 45)
>
> A good father is in some ways like a good mother but in other ways different. The father is the supporter of the home...*The father takes care of his family and provides security.*
> [Hyvä isä on jollainlailla sellanen kuin hyvä äiti, mutta kuitenkin erilailla hyvä. Isä on kodin tuki ja turva... Isä pitää perheestään huolta ja luo suuren osan turvallisuutta.] (Grandmother, aged 70, family 17)
>
> *A good father brings security.*
> [Hyvä isä luo turvallisuutta.] (Mother, aged 48, family 20)

Korhonen (1999, 223–225) reports in her study on an "exceptionally feminine father". This father expresses very strong feelings of love towards his children. Korhonen (ibid. 223) concludes that though this father fully participates in the care of his children, he does so out of love and not out of the wish to be 'a new, more involved father'. Moreover, the father of this man has been a similarly loving father, a fact which points to the transmission of parenting styles. Similarly, the British fathers in a recent study by Henwood and Proctor (2003, 343) include in their description of a good father qualities like nurturing and sensitivity to the child's needs, even up to putting the child's needs before their own. Not all fathers seem to be alike and express their love in the traditional ways by providing fatherly security.

3. Control

The father is also expected to control the child's behaviour, set the child limits and discipline the child. This was mentioned by 47 (12%) of the informants. The task of the disciplinarian seems to be the result of the father's role as an authority figure, also mentioned by the informants. To be able to stay in control the father is expected to discipline the child. However, disciplining the child is thought to be for the good of the child, as the 21-year-old son in the first quote below states, and not just to maintain fatherly authority. The belief that the aim of disciplining the child is promoting the child's best interest was also expressed by the sons, fathers and grandfathers in a study by Mykkänen, Hirsjärvi & Laurinen (2001, 385)

Controlling the child's behaviour is probably one of the oldest tasks of parents. Controlling the child was seen especially to be the father's task because fathers were, during the religious era, considered to be the primary parents (Tähtinen 1992, 91–92). Likewise, fathers in colonial America were the disciplinarians in the family (Pleck & Pleck 1997).

> Well, yeah, at the moment now I'm an adult I realize it, that it's one of the good characteristics of my father, that *he has been able to control* me, I mean, I don't know what I would have turned out to be like without that discipline.
> [Jaa-a no, oikeestaan tällä hetkellä aattelee, kun on päässy jo näin vanhaksi kasvaan, että isällä on ollut kuitenkin se hyvä piirre, että se on pitänyt sen kurin, että sitä ei tiedä, minkälainen ois tullu, jos ei ois minkäälaista kuria ollut.] (Son, aged 21, family 97)

> A good father ... *he must lay down the rules for children so* that they can't to do anything they like, I mean some sort of discipline.
> [Hyvä isä on semmonen ...Ja lasten kans pittää myös pittää seännöt, ettei ne soa olla niinku lysteä. Eli jonkinlaene kuri on oltava.] (Mother, aged 57, family28)

> However, *he keeps the discipline* in the family and lay down the rules.
> [Hän pitää kuiteskii tarpeellist kurii ja järjestyst.] (Grandmother, aged 78, family 57)

Sons (n=29), like the one quoted above, thought more often than daughters (n=100) that the good father should be the disciplinarian in the family (28% of the sons, 8% of the daughters, G^2=7.296; df=1; p=0.007). Though it is not clear whether it is their intention as future fathers to keep discipline or whether they feel they themselves have suffered from a lack of discipline, they evidently do not place much value on the 'Summerhill' type of child-rearing. This finding is contrary to what was expected, as it is very often presumed in media discussions in Finland that the youngest generation lacks discipline and is not interested in issues concerning the control of behaviour.

It is also possible to connect keeping discipline and being a disciplinarian to conceptions of manliness. A western man is supposed to stay in control of his emotions, and, for example, not to cry (e.g. Ekenstam 2003, 70–71). It is easy to see why a person with these qualities could be regarded as fit to keep control and discipline children. Moreover, young men are probably more disposed to exhibit manly behaviour than older men.

4. Advice

Besides laying down the rules for the children, 37 (10%) of the informants expected the good father to give advice, guide the child, and to teach the child the importance of work and honesty. Giving advice and teaching can be accomplished, not only by directly telling children what to do and how to behave, but also by setting an example.

> And when they (children) grow a little older and begin school you should be able to show interest and support, at least *to give advice* if nothing else.
> [Sitten isompana tietysti kouluaikoina jos pystyy osallistumaan ja tukemaan, ainakin neuvomaan jos ei muuta.] (Grandfather, aged 72, family 52)

> But children should be given freedom and at the same time *guidance*
> [...jotenkin vaativaakin, mutta kuitenkin vapauttakin pittää antaa lapselle, mutta kuitenkin ohjata oikeaan.] (Mother, aged 43, family 97)

> The father should well, er, er, *teach the child the basic things* in life.
> [Isän pitäs kans opettaa lapselle tuota ni, ni, elämän perusasioita ...] (Daughter, aged 25, family13)

The grandmothers and grandfathers (n=129) spoke more than the daughters and sons (n=129) about a good father as somebody who gives advice and teaches the child (5% of the informants in the youngest generation, 15% of the informants in the oldest generation, $G^2=6.375$; df=1; p=0.012). One reason for this might be that the younger generation considers 'teaching' as something best left to professionals and experts. Teaching takes place in schools, parents do not teach, their only task is to rear. It is also possible that the youngest generation questions the teachings and advice of the previous generations. The youngest generation sees society as in a state of flux (Helve 1996, 173). The advice received from older generations is perhaps suspected of being out of date.

In an agrarian society, however, the advice given by the older members of society was probably important for survival. The elders had the knowledge about when to plough and sow the seeds. However, the fathers taught all kinds of skills to their children and not all fatherly teachings had to do with promoting work or honesty. For example, one of the informants in Hoikkala's (1994, 98–99) study writes that his brother Matti was losing his money on a game of cards when their father came to rescue and taught Matti how to cheat at the game.

5. Listens

The fifth most often mentioned characteristic (35 informants, 9%) focuses on the nature of the personal relationship between the father and the child. A good father should be able to listen to his child, respect the child, create an open relationship with the child, support the child's growth into an independent person and let the child try by himself/herself.

> You *should be able to talk with your father* even if you have done something wrong. Not just to keep you mouth shut and try to figure out what the father's going say about it. [Isällekin pitäisi voida pystyä kertomaan asioitaan vaikka olisikin tullut vähän mokattua, eikä olla vain hiljaa ja miettiä kuinka isä nyt siihen suhtautuu.] (Daughter, aged 18, family 71)

> A good father is a person who cares about his family and *listens to his children wishes.* [Hyvä isä on semmonen, että se huolehtii perheestään ja ottaa lasten toivomukset osaltaan huomioon.] (Mother, aged 57, family 28)

> …and the *children are allowed to ask their father* and the father answers them, and things, and gives advice and such like.
> [...lapset saavat kysyä isältä ja isä vastaa, ja asioita, ja neuvoo ja sillälailla.] (Grandmother, aged 80, family 103)

As in the case of a good mother, the ability of a good father to listen to his child reflects the 'new image' of the child as a person with rights. (For the emergence of the child as a person see e.g. Lambert, 1996 or James et al. 1998). Besides being in need of protection and care, the child is seen as a person with the right to be heard. The image of a child as a person can be seen as contradicting the more traditional way of seeing the father as the head of the family and an authority. In general, the current advice to parents does not recommend an

authoritarian upbringing; instead, the parents are advised to negotiate with their child and not to suppress her personality.

Today's British fathers also include qualities like 'approachable' and 'understanding' in their list of the qualities of a good father (Henwood & Proctor 2003, 343).

6. Model

The good father also acts as a model for his children and sets them an example. Thirty-one (8%) of the informants talk about this quality.

> A good father is *the model of a good man for his children,* he sets an example to his sons. (Son, aged 20, family 57)
> [Hyvä isä on lapsilleen hyvä miehen malli, hän näyttää hyvää esimerkkiä pojilleen]

> And well, *a good father is often a model* for his daughter when she chooses a husband for herself in the future, I mean, very often the chosen husband resembles woman's father.
> [Ja kyllä se hyvä isä monta kertaa toimii mallina myös sitten tulevaisuudessa esimerkiksi tyttären kohdalla et hyvin usein valitsee isänsä kaltaisen miehen aviopuolisokseen.] (Mother, aged 39, family 61)

> ... and well, *his way of life provides a model* for his children.
> [... ja tuota on esimerkillinen myös omien elämäntapojensa suhteen lapsilleen.] (Grandfather, aged 71, family 63)

The generation of mothers and fathers (n=129) describe a good father as someone who is a model to his children more often than do the generation of grandparents (n=129) (13% of the informants in the middle-aged generation, 3% of the informants in the oldest generation, G^2= 9.375; df=1; p=0.002). It is possible that the middle generation has received advice based on the psychoanalytical approach to child-care in which the importance of the father as a male role model for his son is especially highlighted. In her discourse analytical study on texts produced by parenting experts Vuori (2001, 70) found that one in three of the texts focussing on gender (9/29) was based on psychoanalytical thinking and seven of these texts dealt with fathering.

The unemployed fathers in Böök's (2001) study were especially worried about presenting a bad model of a man to their sons when they were not working. Likewise, Kuosmanen (2001, 59, 221) describes fathers' of Finnish men living in Sweden who, by presenting a model of a bad father, caused their sons problems. Some of these sons were able to find another model and break free from the bad influences of their father, others did not.

7. Breadwinner

The good father is expected by 28 (7%) of the informants to be the provider for the family, to take care of the family house, car etc.

> Father *takes care of the house,* the car and us all.
> [Isä huolehtii talosta, autosta ja meistä muista.] (Daughter, aged 18, family17)

> A good father takes care of his family, *he is the breadwinner*, he protects his family. That is the main task of a good father.

[Hyvä isä huolehtii perheestään, elättää perheen, suojelee perhettä. Se on hyvän isän ensisijainen tehtävä.] (Mother, aged 50, family116)

Most of all the *father is responsible for the economic security of the family*.
[Ennen kaikkea perheen taloudellisen hyvinvoinnin turvaaminen kuuluu isälle.] (Grandfather, aged 79, family 70)

The most traditional and perhaps also culturally most widely spread characterisation of a good father describes the father as the breadwinner and the provider for the family. This is reflected even in the tradition of family research where the father's educational and occupational status is often taken as the only indicator of the family's socioeconomic status (Pedersen 1987). In a study by Barnett and Baruch (1988) men describe themselves as responsible and active because they act as breadwinners for their families. When the images of a good father provided by the youngest and the middle-aged generations were compared it was noted that daughters and sons did not expect a good father to be the provider for the family to the extent that was expected by mothers and fathers (5% of the informants in the youngest generation, 12% of the informants in the middle-aged generation, $G^2=10.473$; df=1; p=0.001). The comparison of the images provided by male generations showed that both fathers (n=19) (0 sons, 26% of the fathers, $G^2=10.17$; df=1; $p^{25}=0.007$) and grandfathers (n=14) (0 sons, 21% of the grandfathers, $G^2=7.21$; df=1; $p^{26}=0.03$) mentioned more often than sons (n=29) the role of the good father as the chief supporter of the family (breadwinner) and the person who takes care of the house, family car etc. Thus it seems that there has been a change in the amount of support for this characterising belief of a good father.

8. Authority

Twenty-two (6%) of the interviewees said the good father is the head of the family and an authority. In the Christian tradition fatherhood is a religious symbol. God is imagined as a father and the image of a good father acquires features from the image of God. Today this transfer of authority is most clearly seen in religious communities. (Furrow 1998). Historically, too, fathers have been symbolised as representatives of God on earth. According to the Lutheran doctrine popular in the 19th century, a man was the head of the family just as the priest was the head of the parish and the king the head of the state (Häggman 1994, 136).

In addition, the father's task is to protect his family, to be *the head of the family*.
[Lisäksi isän tehtävänä on olla perheen suojelija eli ns. perheenpää.] (Daughter, aged 19, family99)

On the other hand the father also should have a role as a kind of *head of the family*, though gender equality has changed thing a bit, so that both parents are responsible for the childrearing.
[Isällä pitäs olla toisaalta semmonen perheen päänki rooli, vaikka nykyisin tasa-arvo kyllä on sitä niinku silla lailla vähä muuttanu, että vanhemmat yhessä sen kasvatusvastuunki jakaa.] (Mother, aged 50, family 126)

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[25]   Fisher's exact

[26]   Fisher's exact

The father must be similar to the mother, but the father must be *pillar of strength in the family*.
[Isän tulee olla samanlainen kuin äidin, mutta isän tulee olla perheen tukipilari.]
(Mother, aged 45, family 100)

According to the youngest generation (n=129) a good father need not be the head of the family or an authority to the extent the middle-aged generation (n=129) thinks necessary (12% of the informants in the middle-aged generation, 2% of the informants in the youngest generation, G^2=4.327; df=1; p=0.038). Thus fatherly authority seems to be a belief with especial prominence among for the middle-aged generation. They maintain it even more than the oldest generation (n=129) (12% of the informants in the middle-aged generation, 1% of the informants in the oldest generation, G^2=15.510; df=1; p=0.000). Moreover, fathers (n=19) spoke more than grandfathers (n=14) about the good father as the head of the family, authority (4% of the fathers, 0 grandfathers, G^2=6.17; df=1; p=0.013). Likewise fathers (n=19) said more often than sons (n=29) that the father is the head of the family (G^2=5.57; df=1; p^{27}=0.03). Only one of the sons (3%) mentioned this characterising beliefas against five (26%) of the fathers.

Besides the historical and religious explanations, it is possible to the see the frequency with which the middle-aged generation, and especially fathers mentioned fatherly authority as brought about by experiences of raising teenage children.

9. Patience

Twenty-one of the informants (5%) said that the good father is patient, understanding, has a sense of humour, and is not easily upset.

In my opinion a good father is the head of the family and *he is patient*.
[Mun mielestä hyvä isä on perheenpää ja se on kärsivällinen.] (Daughter, aged 19, family 20)

A good father never loses his temper and yells.
[Hyvä isä ei koskaan hermostu silmittömästi, eikä huuda.] (Mother, aged 50, family 57)

The father must be patient so that he doesn't hurt anybody's feelings. To have a sense of humour and be loving.
[Isän pitää olla maltillinen niin ettei aiheuta kellekkää pahaa mieltä. Huumorintajuinen ja rakastava.] (Grandmother, aged 81, family53)

The need to be patient and not to lose one's temper are in my opinion necessary for the person considered the disciplinarian in the family. Thus the inclusion of patience as a belief in the image of a good father follows from the idea that he is the disciplinarian. Descriptions of 'bad fathers' often contain an element of the irritated father who loses his temper and even turns violent. In Korhonen's (1999) study some of the interviewees describe their fathers as unpredictable and unstable. These fathers were frightening when they were angry and the

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27   Fisher's exact

child could not trust the father because she was never able to predict his reactions. Several of Korhonen's informants explained that their fathers were unpredictable and lost their tempers easily due to their war-time experiences (ibid. 143). Likewise, some of the informants in Kujala's study (2003, 112–113) described their fathers as short-tempered. They also wondered whether their fathers had become more short-tempered as a result of the war and whether the war really had an effect. However, Kujala (ibid. 114) concludes that many men were touchy after the war and even used corporal punishment. The effects of World War II on the character of the men who participated in it, were also described by Finnish male immigrants in Sweden in Kuosmanen's (2001, 62) study. These informants blame the war for ruining the nerves of their fathers.

10. Responsible
The good father realizes that he is responsible for his family. This was said by 19 of the informants (5%). According to several studies, being personally responsible (accountable) for one's activities as a father is a part of the Judeo-Christian belief system (Marks & Dollahite 2001, 627; for the historical Finnish context see Tähtinen 1992, 92). Ethical and religious considerations together with some developmental psychological thinking are present in the latest ideologies of good fathering at least in the American context (Marks & Dollahite 2001). One of these new approaches to fathering is even called responsible fathering (see Doherty et al. 1998)

> I think that the father should be *responsible* and just.
> [Isän tulee olla mielestäni vastuuntuntoinen ja oikeudenmukainen.] (Daughter, aged 24, family 30)

> A good father is a father who takes part is every, yes *one who also feels responsible* for the children's upbringing and the family life in general.
> [Hyvä isä on sellanen, joka osallistuu kaikkiin, niin sellanen, joka kantaa oman vastuunsa kasvatuksesta ja yleensäkin koko perheen elämästä.] (Mother, aged 40, family 114)

> *A good father feels responsible* for the family and the house.
> [Hyvä isä kantaa vastuuta perheestä ja talosta.] (Grandmother, aged 70, family 17)

More results of the comparisons between the images of a good father by the groups of intervieweed

The main results of the comparisons between the generations have been reported above. No statistically significant gender differences were found when the log-likelihood ratio (G^2) was calculated for all the informants combined. However, when the ratio was calculated separately for each gender within each generation some differences between the images of a good father did emerge. In the oldest generation grandfathers and grandmothers did not differ in the number of mentioning of the ten most frequent beliefs. Likewise, the image of a good father presented by mothers and fathers did not differ. However, in the youngest generation the images of a good father differed significantly, sons (n=29) mentioning more than daughters (n=100) about the necessity of a good

father to have time to spend with his children (38% of the sons, 12% of the daughters, G^2=9.790; df=1; p=0.002).

The small number of gender differences can be interpreted to mean that the experience of being a father or the future possibility of becoming a father does not seem to affect the image of a good father. To probe deeper into this issue I formed two groups of informants by putting into one group sons, daughters, mothers, and grandmothers (n=354), and into the other fathers and grandfathers (n=33) who have experiences of fathering. The two groups differed in the mentions made about the good father as a breadwinner and a supporter of the family (24% of the fathers and the grandfathers and 6% of the others; G^2=10.646; df=1; p=0.001) and the good father as an authority (15% of the fathers and the grandfathers and 5% of the others; G^2=4.421; df=1; p=0.035). The fathers and grandfathers spoke about these characterising beliefs more than the others. The characterising belief of the good father as the breadwinner is possibly connected to the actual experiences of fathers, i.e. supporting the family is what fathers see themselves as doing. However, it is also possible that this reflects the more traditional conception of a good father as highlighting both fatherly authority and the father's role as the supporter of the family represent, on the basis of previous research, older layers in the image of a good father.

"The good father"

I formed the following description of the good father by connecting excerpts from the informants' speech into a text, beginning with the most frequent beliefand ending with the tenth:

A good father spends time with his children. No matter how busy he is, he must always have time for his children. A good father takes care of his family, shows his emotions and shows his children how important they are to him. In particular, a good father provides the family with a sense of security. A good father is also responsible for the discipline, control of the child, and setting limits. He guides the children along the right track. A good father takes notice of the opinions of other family members and the children feel free to ask him about anything. A good father sets an example of how to live and he acts as a model of a man. He supports his family and he is the head of the family. A good father does not lose his temper or yell. Like the mother he feels responsible for the upbringing of the children.

[*Hyvä isä viettää aikaa lastensa kanssa vaikka olisi kuinka kiireinen. Lapsille on oltava aikaa. Hän huolehtii perheestään ja näyttää tunteensa, osoittaa lapsilleen kuinka tärkeitä he hänelle ovat. Erityisesti hyvä isä luo perheeseen turvallisuuden tunteen. Hyvän isän tehtäviin kuuluvat myös kurinpidolliset asiat. Hän ohjaa lapsia oikealle tielle. Hyvä isä ottaa muutkin perheenjäsenet huomioon ja lapset voivat kysellä asioista häneltä. Hyvän isän tulee olla esimerkillinen myös omien elämäntapojensa suhteen. Hän on miehen malli. Hyvä isä turvaa perheen taloudellisen hyvinvoinnin ja on*

perheenpää. Hyvä isä ei koskaan hermostu silmittömästi eikä huuda. Hyvä isä kantaa
vastuuta lasten kasvatuksesta samoin kuin äitikin].

6.2.2 Summary

To sum up briefly, according to the informants of this study a good father has time to spend with his children, he loves his children and is capable of controlling their behaviour. He gives advice, listens to his children and he acts as a model to them. The good father is the breadwinner and the head of the family as well as patient and responsible.

The images produced by men and women do not differ when the comparison is done for the total of interviewees, but within generations the images differ by genders to some extent. Sons' images of a good father often differ statistically significantly from the images produced by other groups of interviewees. Although sons do not practise parenting in the way daughters do when they play with dolls, and there are no stories or poems about a boy's playing 'father' (Koski 2000, 57), sons nevertheless seem to think about fathering before they become fathers themselves. Sons are those who might become new fathers of the type admired by the grandmother in family 44:

> ...these modern fathers are very nice, they take care of their children much more than the fathers in my generation. Mind you, I am not sure what a good father would be like. I just admire the young fathers who take care of their children.
> [...että nykyajan isät on erittäin mukavia siinä, että ne huolehtii paljon enemmän kuin minun sukupolven isät. Että tuota, mää en osaa siinä mielessä sanoo mikä olis hyvä isä. Mää vaan ihannoin noita nuoria isiä, jotka tuolla hoitaa lapsiaan.] (Grandmother aged 75, family 44)

Interpretation of generational differences on the basis of cross-sectional data is difficult. The image is not 'stable' in the sense that the description given by the oldest generation is wholly something that prevailed at the time when they were young or that it is the same as that they 'received' from their parents. The oldest generation also adopts news ways of thinking. Culture shapes the parents' images, ideas and beliefs but at the same time parents, with their experiences, shape culture (McGillicuddy-De Lisi & Subramanian 1996). This means that although the image of a good father may be the same across the different generations, the routes via which the image has been formed may be different. For instance, both the older and the younger generation may say that a good father acts as a model for his son even if they have not learnt this from their own parents. For the younger generation the source of this idea may be in popularized psychological research, whereas for the older generation this idea may be based on observations of their parents at work and thus on their own experience of learning by watching a model. The images and beliefs of a younger generation are not necessarily new, nor are they exactly the same as those of their parents. Their images contain features transmitted from the past. For example, in this data these are the teaching aspect of parenting, and especially the teaching of the value of honesty. Yet the images of good parents, as they are reported, resemble proverbs to some extent, and the high level of

internal coherence found in proverbs and the images they contain (see Palacios 1996, 90) can also be seen in the descriptions of good parents presented by the interviewees.

Despite the impossibility of establishing the sources of the characterising beliefs, I will, nevertheless, discuss what they might be. The image of a good father seems more than the image of a good mother to be affected by the more general changes in ways of living and the surrounding society. However, like the image of a good mother, the image of a good father also reflects changes in the image of a child, such as that which made the child an individual to be heard and loved, instead of being an economic asset used as labour. In addition, the image of a good father contains older layers stemming from the traditional conceptions of manly virtues. A good father must be able to support his family and be an authority.

The contemporary image of the child is transmitted through the expert advice delivered, for instance, in child health care centres and other advice-offering organisations, like The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, which I use here as an example. On their web-site under the Ten Golden Rules of Child-rearing it is possible to find at least the following pieces of advice: listen to your child, set your child clear and safe limits, be a good example of how to control one's behaviour, and express your positive emotions openly.

A way of living which is affected by factors outside the home could be the source of characterising beliefs. In particular, I interpret the talk about the necessity of a good father having time for his children and giving advice to his children as stemming from the dominant way of life. Talk of a lack of time is connected to our present way of life, where time is a scarce commodity, especially for those who work outside the family. In a similar vein, giving advice to one's children, especially teaching them to work, was crucial in an agrarian society where the older generations had the knowledge gained by experience that was vital for successful farming (Hoikkala 1994; Ruoppila 1954).

The traditional manly virtues, perhaps having religion at their root, are probably factors behind the characterising beliefs of the father as family breadwinner and head of the family. These two characterisations seem to be interconnected; the other members of the family depend on the father, who brings home the bacon and thus gains the status of an authority in the family. The tenth most often mentioned feature in the image of a good father, the realising of fatherly responsibility, might have originally been connected to manly virtues but is now reappearing in the latest ideologies of good fathering, like responsible fathering (e.g. Doherty & al. 1998), generative fathering (e.g. Dollahite & Hawkins 1998) and in the Finnish context the involved, caring father [hoitava, sitoutunut isä] (Huttunen 2001).

Table 9 presents the ten most frequent characterising beliefs of a good father, the percentage of informants mentioning this belief, the group of informants which seems to especially favour the belief as well as the suggestion of the possible source of the belief.

TABLE 9 The ten most often mentioned beliefs characterising a good father by the Finnish informants

Belief A good father…	% of informants saying	Especially favoured by	Main source
has time to spend with his child (TIME)	18	Sons more often than fathers Sons more often than daughters	Contemporary way of life
loves his children (LOVE)	16	-	Expert advice
controls the child's behaviour and disciplines the child (CONTROL)	12	Sons more often than daughters	Expert advice
gives advice and teaches (ADVICE)	10	Grandparents more often than youngest generation	Agrarian way of life
listens to the child, creates an open relationship, respects the child's opinions (LISTENS)	9	-	Expert advice
acts as a model (MODEL)	8	Middle-aged generation more often than grandparents	Expert advice
is the breadwinner, takes care of the family house, car etc. (BREADWINNER)	7	Middle-aged generation more often than the youngest Fathers and grandfathers more often than sons	Traditional manly virtues
is the head of the family and an authority (AUTHORITY)	6	Middle-aged generation more often than the youngest Fathers more often than sons and grandfathers	Traditional manly virtues
is understanding, patient, and not easily upset (PATIENCE)	5	-	Expert advice
realises that he is responsible for his family (RESPONSIBLE)	5	-	Fathering ideologies or trad. manly virtues

6.3 Comparisons between the images of a Finnish good mother and good father

If one looks at the lists of beliefs comprising the image of a good mother and a good father it is clear that the images are not exactly alike. However, they are not completely different either (see table 10). There seems to be core of beliefs describing a good parent regardless of gender. The characterising belief categories comprising this core are Love, Listen, Control, Advice, Time, Patience, and Model.

TABLE 10   The ten most often mentioned beliefs characterising a good mother and a good father

Belief	A good mother % of informants mentioning	Belief	A good father % of informants mentioning
Love	72	Time	18
Listen	43	Love	16
Control	37	Control	12
Advice	29	Advice	10
Patience	23	Listen	9
Time	19	Model	8
Support	13	Breadwinner	7
Model	10	Authority	6
Honesty	7	Patience	5
Just	7	Responsible	5

In addition, my attention was caught by the uncertainty and unwillingness several informants expressed when they were asked separately to describe a good mother and a good father. Huttunen (2001, 189) also comments on this phenomenon. Huttunen asked 12-year-olds to write a description of a good parent and aimed to see if the children would make a distinction between a good father and a good mother. Most children did not differentiate between a good mother and a good father. In the present Finnish interview data, a 19-year-old daughter from family 16 says:

> I do not like to talk separately of a good mother and a good father, instead, I would talk about a good parent, because otherwise it would sound as if the father and the mother had different tasks in child-rearing. I think that child-rearing is the job of both parents, in absolutely the same way, as long as they know what each other is trying to do and they follow the same principles.
> [Mää en kauheen miellelläni puhuis erikseen hyvästä äidistä ja hyvästä isästä, vaan ihan vaan hyvästä vanhemmasta, sillä muuten se kuulostas siltä, että isällä ja äidillä olis jotenkin jaetut tehtävät lasten kasvatuksesa. Mun mielestä lasten kasvattaminen kuuluu molemmille vanhemmille ihan yhtäläisesti kunhan ne on vaan tietosia toistensa aikeista ja käyttää kasvatuksessa ns. yhtenäistä linjaa.]

This phenomenon is likely to reflect the prevailing ideology of gender equality as well as the personal attachment of the informants to their own parents. Thus

some informants did not wish to separate a good mother from a good father, but there were others who had no problems in presenting different images.

Next I investigate informants' talk in which the images of a good father and a good mother are explicitly compared. I begin by presenting the percentages of informants who reported that good parents are similar followed by excerpts from their descriptions of the differences between a good mother and a good father. The focus is on the ways in which the informants say a good mother is different from a good father.

"Do I have to separate a mother and a father or could I talk about good parents?"

A majority (61.5%) of the Finnish interviewees explicitly stated in reply to the question, that a good mother and a good father have the same characteristics or talked about 'good parents', implying that a good mother and a good father are similar. Women were slightly more in favour of the similarity between a good mother and father (63.4% of the women and 51.6% of the men). In most cases the informants were asked about a good father and a good mother in two separate questions, as interviewers were instructed to do, but in some cases the interviewer chose to formulate only one question. Whether the characteristics were asked about in one or in two separate questions did not affect the frequency with which the interviewees said that the qualities were the same.

Table 11 shows that similarity in the characteristics of a good father and mother was reported most often in the youngest generation, suggesting that this idea is a product of the present more than the past. Young females in this data especially supported the idea of similarity (77%). Reporting similarity in the images decreased as the age of the informants increased when gender of was not taken into account. However, within the oldest generation the male informants reported similarity more often than the female informants in that generation and even more often than the male informants in the youngest generation. The idea of similarity decreased with age in the group of female informants, the youngest generation being most in favour (77% - 68.2% - 47%).

TABLE 11   Frequency of mentions that the characteristics of a good mother and a good father are similar presented (percentage) by groups of informants in Finland

	Female informants % (freq./n)	Male informants % (freq./n)	Total agreement within generations % (freq./n)
Youngest generation	77 (77 /100)	55 (16 / 29)	72 (93 / 129)
Middle-aged generation	68 (75 / 110)	37 (7 / 19)	64 (82 / 129)
Oldest generation	47 (54 / 115)	64 (9 / 14)	49 (63 /129)
Total agreement within genders	63 (206 / 325)	52 (32 / 62)	61 (238 / 387)

One possible explanation of the result that men in the oldest generation reported the idea that a good mother and a good father are similar is that they were parents themselves during the Second World War when the mothers did most of the tasks previously left to fathers. Thus this generation has the experience that gender does not necessarily matter very much in parenting. However, it must be remembered that the number of interviewed men in the oldest generation is only 14.

Gender equality policy has been an official policy in Finland since the 1960s and is reflected, for instance, in the ideal of joint custody of children after divorce. (Kurki-Suonio 1999, 568; 1992, 158). Gender equality is officially fostered in the Nordic countries, for instance, by support to shared parenting and fathers' taking parental leave (Magnusson 2001). Several informants began their answer by talking about gender equality or saying that they were unable to differentiate between a good mother and a good father. For instance, a mother, aged 40, in family 114 said:

> In my opinion fatherhood and motherhood must be equal and even-handed. The parents are jointly responsible.
> [Mielestäni isyys ja äitiys on oltava tasa-arvosia ja tasapuolisia. Vanhemmat ovat yhdessä vastuussa].

Her son, aged 21, criticised even the question and asked:

> Well, I can't think of a reason why we should talk separately about a good mother and a good father.
> [No ei mulla tule ensinnäkään mieleen miks pitäs puhua hyvästä äitistä ja isästä erikseen.]

A daughter, aged 19, from family 48, started her description of a good father by pointing out that the characteristics of a good mother and a good father were the same ["Hyvään isään kuulu samat ku tohon äitiinki."] She, however, regarded a good father as responsible for teaching the children gender equality by setting a good example.["Niiten lisäks isä pitäs opettaa esimerkillään lapsilleen tasa-arvoo...] Moreover, she described how bad the situation can be without gender equality; the father lies on the couch and the mother does all the household work alone.[...,ettei kävis niin, et äiti tekee kaikki kotityöt ja isä makaa sohvalla."]

Although most of the interviewers presented two questions, starting by asking for a description of a good mother, some interviewers combined the questions and asked the informant to produce a image of a good parent. In family 39, the 18-year-old daughter is interviewing her mother (aged 48). The daughter first asked about good parents but then she said that her mother could talk about them separately ["Ja voit eritellä ne, että mimmonen on hyvä äiti ja mimmone isä?"].The mother, however, supporting gender equality, replied:

> You presented the question in just the way I see it, I mean, that I would not separate a good mother and a good father, as genders I mean, I would just describe what a good parent in my opinion is.
> [Just kysyit iha sillä tavalla niinku mä oon ajatelluki, että tuota... mä en oikeestaan erittelis hyvää äiti' ja hyvää isää elikkä näitä sukupuolisuuksia, vaan just mikä on hyvä vanhempi mun mielestä.]

Some of the informants expressed their pro gender equality view with words 'should' or 'ought to', especially in relating to a good father and his participation in parenting. For instance, a grandmother aged 80, from family 85, said: Similarily the father should take care of his child and love his children..." ["Isän pitääs kyllä samaten hoitaa lapsensa ja pitää lapsestansa...] or even more emphasised, a daughter aged 19 from family 75 said: "A modern father should not be very much different from a mother, he should participate in child-rearing similarly to the mother."["...nykyajan isän ei tulisi paljoakaan erota äidistä, vaan isän tulisi osallistua kasvatukseen samaan tapaan kuin äidin."] Thus shared parenting and gender equality seem to be perceived as the norm while the informants suspected that fathers do not behave accordingly.

The 43-year-old mother from family 98 did not explicitly compare a good father and a good mother but her slip of the tongue can be interpreted to reflect her awareness of the gender equality discourse. She said when talking about disciplining the child:

> But in some cases, however, the moth...parents, I mean, must be strict and not to give in, even if the children tell you that you are a bad mother.
> [Mutta joissakin tapauksissa kuitenkin äi.. siis vanhempien täytyy olla tiukkoja eikä antaa periksi, vaikka lapset sanois, että sä oot huono äiti.] The mother here tries to comply with the gender equality discourse and talk about 'parents', but she is unable to do this and falls back to talking about the mother.

The point several informants seemed to wish to make was that parents are equally important though not alike. A mother aged 58, from family 72, said:

> They both are warm and affectionate. I can't differentiate between them. The roles of the parents are different, but that brings role differentiation to the surface and I think it is wrong.
> [Molemmat lämpimiä ja läheisiä. En voi erotella toisistaan. Vanhempien roolit ovat erikseen, mutta silloin tulee esille roolijako ja se on minusta väärin.]

Expressions like the one above probably reflect a wish to promote gender equality even of the idealized images contain different qualities for a mother compared to father.

The fear of fathers turning into mothers is often expressed in connection with shared parenting and even gender equality (e.g. Huttunen 2001, 184–185; Sandqvist 1993). However, some informants were not troubled by the possible feminization of fathers or masculinisation of mothers, if they become more like each other. A son, aged 25, from family 103, said:

> Well I think, although it may sound silly, but I think that if fathers were a bit like mothers and mothers were more like fathers...it might be more pleasant all round.
> [Kyllä mä olisin, niin hullulta kun se kuulostaakin, mut mä olisin sitä mieltä että jos isät olis vähän enemmän äitimäisempiä ja äidit enemmän isämäisempiä ni, tollei niinkun perinteisesti ajateltuna, niin vois olla paljon mukavammat olot.]

The literature on parenting has described mothers who do not wish to share parenting with the father. These mothers are called 'gatekeepers' (e.g. Allen &

Hawkins 1999; De Luccie 1995; Parke 1996, 98). A mother aged 47 from family 102 seemed to be describing the very same phenomenon when she said:

> Of course the father should also be taken into account, so that the mother should not be totally selfish… selfish, she should allow the father to participate in child-rearing. When the child grows she would not be so dependent on the mother and so it would be wise to know how to... to know how to stand aside a little bit, so that the child has contact with other adults, you should not be so jealous over your child...
> [Tietenkin pitäs ottaa myös isä huomioon, ettei äiti ois hirveen itsekäs...itsekäs, että antaa myös isälle tilaa osallista siihen hoitoon. Kun lapsi kasvaa niin se ei ole niin riippuvainen äidistä ja sillon pitäs viisaasti osata.. Osata tota väistyö vähän syrjään, että muitakin aikuiskontakteja syntys lapselle ettei sais silleen mustasukkaisesti sitä lasta omistaa....].

Although the mother above opposed gatekeeping, she, nevertheless, seemed to regard the mother as the parent most suited to taking care of a baby. Moreover, she saw father's participation as beneficial for the child and was not considering its effects on the father. Her way of thinking about the issue follow the contours of the psychoanalytical approach where too a close relationship between the mother and her child is seen to pose a danger to the child's development and the father's task is to provide a relationship which is different from the one the mother provides (Vuori 1999, 175).

Good parents are equal but ...the mother is the primary parent

Very often when the informants started their answer they first described a good mother and then said that a good father is similar. When a good mother was described first, the father got compared to the mother and his goodness was described as features which differentiate him from the mother. For example a grandfather, aged 79, from family 70, first gave a list of qualities of a good mother and then said: "The same things (go for a father)…" ["Samat ku äidillä..."], though he finished his description by stating that "most of all securing the economic welfare of the family is the father's task" ["ennen kaikkea perheen taloudellisen hyvinvoinnin turvaaminen kuuluu isälle."]. Likewise, a mother (family 14), aged 38, said, when asked about a good mother,

> ... she does not cling to her children, and she is independent but she is still a mother and teaches her children." And the same person goes on to say about a good father: "The father must be like the mother. A strong and secure father, but, well, still an independent person.
> [...semmonen joka ei roiku lapsissa ja joka on itsenäinen, mutta on silti hyvä äiti ja kasvattaa... Isän pitää olla samanlainen. Semmonen jykevä, varma isä, mutta tuota, silti itsenäinen ihminen.]

Thus the mother is the primary parent but the father has some special tasks for which he alone is responsible.

There were also informants who gave a description of good parents in which the father was described as lacking some qualities that the mother had. For instance, a grandmother, aged 82, from family 47, said after having first described a good mother:

> Well the characteristics should be about the same but fathers are seldom, well, so totally involved as mothers. A mother is always closer to her children than a father.
> [Kyllä ne ominaisuudet jotakuinkin pitäs olla samat, mutta harvoin se isällä niin, nimittäin täysluku kuin äidillä. Äiti on aina niinku lähempänä kuin isä.]

Such talk about the mother being close and closer than the father was also noted by Katvala (2001, 64).

The description given by a 19-year-old daughter from family 51 fluctuated between the ideology of gender equality and the belief in the mother as the primary parent. She said:

> Well, a good father is similar (to a good mother). I don't think there's any difference, even though one is a mother and the other is a father. Of course the meaning of the mother in the family is greater, because the mother takes more care of the children and such like...
> [No hyvä isä on ihan samanlainen mun mielestä. Ei siis sillai niissä oo mitään eroo, toinen vaan on isä ja toinen äiti. Tietysti äitin merkitys on perheessä suurempi, koska äiti enemmän huolehtii lapsista ja sillai...]

This informant was one of the few to offer an explanation for the mother's primacy: the mother takes care of the children more than the father. The mother was also regarded as being closer to the children.

What is said above seems to contradict the comment by Parvikko (1992) that gender equality in the classical liberal conception is generally understood to mean that there are no differences between men and women, leading to the adoption of maleness as the baseline. In parenting, however, it seems that femaleness and mothering are taken as the baseline against which fathering is compared and evaluated.

The primacy of mother was also highlighted in Alasuutari's (2003, 160–161) study. Mothers were regarded as primary parents by fathers and by mothers themselves as well as by the advice literature. In the mothers' talk the bond between the mother and her child was described as an emotional umbilical cord; when the mother feels bad so does also her child. In the words of a 82-year-old grandmother from the family 47 in present study: "The mother is always closer to her children than the father."["Äiti on aina niinku lähempänä lapsia kuin isä"].

Figure 1 compares the number of time a good father is characterised compared with a good mother. The first column on the left presents the number of persons mentioning the most frequent characterisation, the second presents the second in the order of frequency and so on. From the figure it is possible to see how the informants talked more about what constitutes a good mother and that the characterising beliefs of a good father were all more equally talked about in comparison to the image of a good mother, where the first characterising belief, a mother's love, seemed to be a very salient feature in the image of a good mother. None of the characterisations of a good father were so prominent; most of them were mentioned with more or less the same frequency.
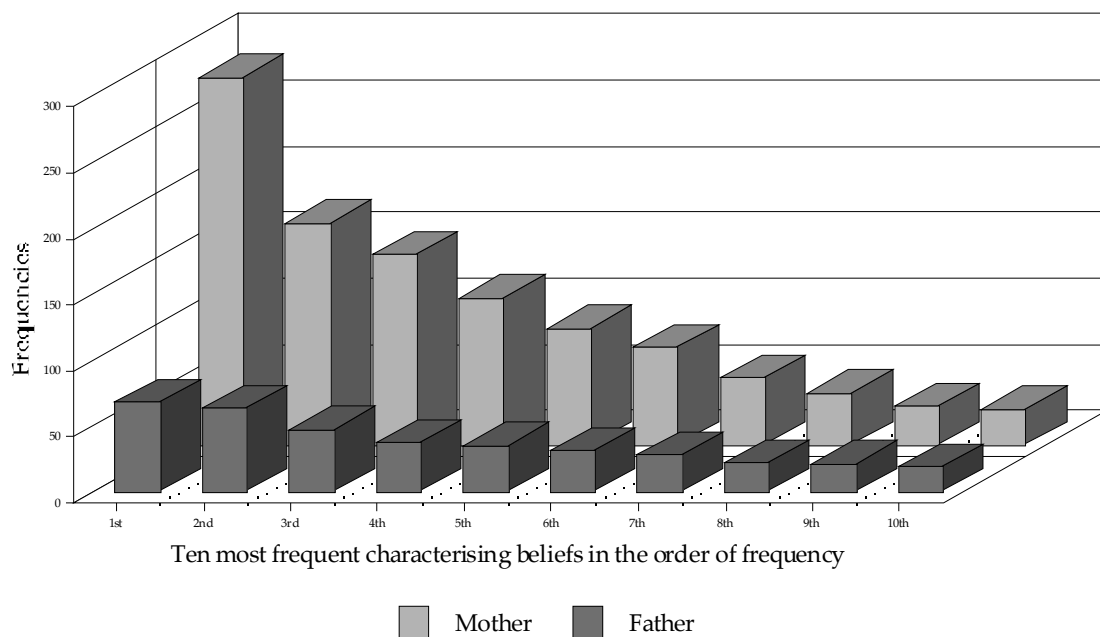
128

FIGURE 1   Comparison of the contours of the images of a good mother and a good father in Finland according to numbers of informants and the ten most frequent beliefs characterising each parent

A good father is different from a good mother

When comparing a good mother and a good father, some informants especially pointed out features of the good father which are different from the characteristics of a good mother. Often these informants first described a good mother as the primary parent or expressed support for the idea that a good mother and a good father were similar, and then added some 'manly' characterising beliefs to the father's image. A mother, aged 45, from family 100 said:

> The father should be similar to the mother, but the father must be *a pillar of strength in the family*. The father knows everything but he can also admit that he was wrong…
> [Isän tulee olla samanlainen kuin äidin, mutta isän tulee olla perheen 'tukipilari'. Isä tietää kaiken, mutta myöntää myös olevansa väärässä…].

Providing the family with economic security is also one of these manly features. For instance, the 79-year-old grandfather from family 70 already quoted above considered the role of a breadwinner to be part of the image of a good father and said: "Most of all *securing the economic welfare of the family* is the father's task" ["Ennen kaikkea perheen taloudellisen hyvinvoinnin turvaaminen kuuluu isälle."].

The good father was expected to be physically stronger and for this reason able to provide security and defend his family. Both the 19-year-old daughter and the 52-year-old mother from family 113 highlighted this belief, first stating that a good mother and a good father were similar. The daughter said:

> A good father has many features in common with a good mother, but the father is *the protector of the home* and the defender …

[Hyvä isä omaa samoja puolia kuin hyvä äitikin, mutta isä on enemmän kodin turva ja puolustaja…]

Several informants suggested that a good father should be a stricter *disciplinarian and the authority* in the family; "Well, a good father should have, in my opinion, should have kind of, in comparison to the mother, he should have more authority than the mother..." ["Hyvällä isällä saa kyllä vähä olla mum mielestä sellaasta että se olis pikkuusen niinku verrattuna äitiin, niin se olis niinku enemmän auktoriteettisempi ku äiti..."], said a mother, aged 48, from family 41. Often the mother in this context was presented as the more emotional and gentler. For instance a 19-year-old daughter from family 69 answered the question about a good father in this way:

...however, for me the father has always been the disciplinarian and the mother has been the gentler and I think it's good that way.
[... kuitenkin mulle isä on aina ollu se kuria pitävä ja äiti se hempeempi ja musta se on hyvä niin.].

A 68-year-old grandmother from family 87 tells about the situation in her family when her husband asked the children who the boss was in the house and children replied "mother". The grandmother does not seem to have been satisfied with this situation; probably she felt that this was not the 'norm', or that the manliness of her husband was at stake as she tells about how she prompted her husband to be stricter [" ...niinku meijän pennut sano jotta... Heikki (aviomies) kysy, että ketäs sitä oikein totellaan niin tuota ne sano jotta äitii. Hään tahto niinku että hään ois se viimesen sanan sanoja. Mutta silloin ku hätä ol että kuria pitäs löytyy, niin kyllä itekii sitten töytäsin, jotta sannoo... oikein sitte topakkaa."]

The gender and age of the child are reported to play a role in the expectations and characterising beliefs connected to an image of a good mother and father. The good father should act as *a manly model, especially to his sons* and the sons have a closer relationship with their father than with their mother. This was said by several informants, for example, a daughter, aged 23, from family 85 said:

Well of course the father must provide a manly model for his sons while the mother is the female model. Sons always have a warmer relationship with their father and daughters with their mother.
[No tottakai isä tarttee antaa se miäs malli niinko pojalleski taas ku äiti antaa se nais malli.... Pojilla on aina isä kans lämpimämmät suhteet ja likoilla äiti kans.]

In general, like the informant above, several persons expressed the belief that sons are close to their father and daughters to their mother. However, one father, aged 43, from family 107, had the opposite opinion:

... at around teenage girls, become closer to their father and boys on the other hand to their mother.
[...siinä murrosiäs sitten niin ne tytöt tulee kuitenkin isälle niinkun läheisemmäksi ja taas pojat äitille.].

The grandmother, aged 72, from the same family, maintained that "the father should be more responsible for the rearing of a son."["... isälle kuuluisi enemmän poijan kasvattaminen..."].

The impact of the child's gender is connected to the child's age. When the child is young the mother is thought to be more important and as the child grows older the importance of the father grows. A 43-year-old father from family 107, for instance, said:

> And like I just told you, when the child is young then the mother's role in child-rearing is kind of more prominent. When the children grow...the importance of the father's role increases.
> Ja niinku mä äsken jo sanoin, niin silloon kun lapsi on pieni niin silloon se äidin kasvatusrooli niin se on niinkun pääpainoosesti esillä. Sitten kun lapset kasvaa...niin silloin se isän rooli vahvistuu...].

This kind of thinking is in line with psychoanalytical theories, but it is possible that the belief in the father's increasing participation in the life of his child as well as the belief that he should present a role model for his son originate in the older thinking of folk psychology.

When I was a child... but today

One of the themes highlighted in the talk of many informants is the belief that things are different today, especially the idea that good fathers have changed. A 80-year-old grandmother form family 85 described the change:

> In the old days *men seldom took care* of those things. Today young fathers take better care of their children.
> [Harvemmin ne on vanahana aikana miehet sellaasihin asioohin koskenu. Nykyysin taas on, että nuoret isät pitää lapsistansa huolta paremmin.]

This talk probably reflects the ideology of gender equality, at least according to a 40-year-old mother from family 65, who said:

> ...the father had a stricter role before. Today, in my opinion, the features that define both a good mother and a good father are almost the same, there is equality in this matter, too...
> [... niin enne isällä oli ankarampi rooli nykyään mun mielestä sekä hyvän äidin että isän määrittävät asiat ovat pitkälle samoja eli tasa-arvoa tässäkin suhteessa.]

When the informants commented on the changes in the images of a good mother and a good father, *the new, more involved fathers* were praised for participating in child-rearing. The change was described as development towards better ways of leading family life. A grandmother from family 152, aged 83, gave a long description of her thoughts.

> Modern times have developed very smartly in the respect that these differences have levelled, that there are no differences. In the old days there used to be differences. The mother took care of the baby and the father in the worst case when the child was a teenager or a little younger; then the mother could say to the father would you discipline the boy, but, well, today they are responsible together. And I think it is a

very good thing that fathers and mothers are together today when in the old days we could not even dream about it the father attending the birth. But today when the mother tells her husband that, well, I think I'm pregnant, the father, well, he is involved right from that moment...

[Nykyaika on ment oikee fiksust etteepä siin suhtees ett nää erot on tasottunu, ett niitä erroi ei oikee enää oo. Ennen vanhaa oll erot. Äiti hoiti sen pienen ja isä korkeintaa sit kun tult murrosikäseks tai vähä ennen, sillo voi äiti kertoo isälle, ett piä nyt vähä komentoo toll pojalle, mutta tuota nyt on semmosta ett ne ovat siin yhess. Ja minust on hirvee hyvä asia, ett isä ja äit yhessä siin nykysin ko ennenvanhaan ei olt semmosta ei tult kuulokaa, et ois isä olt synnytykses mukana. Vaan nyt on sil vissiin ko äiti ilmottaa miehell että tuota taitaa olla niin ett mie oon pienii päin niin tuota isä on siitä hetkest asias mukana..]

6.4 Comparisons between the images of good parents in Estonia and Finland

In the following comparisons the Finnish images of a good father and a good mother are taken as the baseline. In other words, the Estonian images are compared against the Finnish images, so that, for instance, I report on the aspects which only Estonians, not Finns, talk about. The respective Finnish characterising beliefs are not discussed. This approach reflects my aim of using the foreign culture, Estonia, as a 'mirror' in making 'culture' more visible in my own culture.

In section 2.2 above 'culture' was defined as a way of adapting to an environment. Moreover, it was maintained that culture is an integral part of all human activity and that a way of making culture visible is to compare the thinking of people from different environments. Different environments are thus linked to different cultures. In this study a comparison is made between the thinking of Estonian and Finnish informants. To begin with, I will briefly review the socio-political and ideological 'environments' of the Estonian and Finnish informants, focussing on the time when the interviews for this study were carried out.

6.4.1 Estonia and Finland: differences in social policies and ideologies of parenthood

Estonia and Finland are similar in many respects; for instance, they belong to the same Baltic-Finnish group of Finno-Ugric people and speak languages which are the closest to each other of those in the group of Finno-Ugric languages. Today collaboration between the two countries is very active in various areas of daily life. Yet the political systems and ideologies were very different for about 50 years: Estonia was a part of the communist Soviet Union and Finland an independent, democratic western state. At that time, for example, the official objectives of the educational systems in the two countries were very different. Soviet education aimed at producing a Soviet citizen, in the process of which parental authority was seen only as a reflection of societal

authority. In Finland the educational system emphasized western individualistic values. (Keltikangas-Järvinen & Teräv 1996).

Political ideologies aside, there are obviously many other 'ideological' factors affecting parental thinking and ideals. Popularized ideas from developmental psychology and paediatrics certainly play a role here. In particular, it has been proposed that scientific theories affect the norm of good mothering (Urwin 1985). They do this via constructing an idea of 'normal' child development which can be accomplished by the parents' and, particularly, by the mother's behaviour with the child. In Finland large part of the activities in maternity and health care centres are geared to detecting abnormalities and in this way defining what is normal (Kuronen 1993). It has been pointed out by Waerness (1984, 75) that child-care experts do not relieve the mother from the responsibilities of child-care; instead, they provide new norms to be fulfilled. Besides directly reaching the parents, and especially the mother, advice from the centres spreads via informal talks with other parents. For instance, in Urwin's study (1985) the women interviewed seemed to find it easier to discuss their problems with a friend than with a health visitor.

The nature and quality of state support and expert advice offered to families in the two countries are different. The material support given to families in Estonia is more limited and so the mothers mostly receive mental support and advice (Hämäläinen & Kraav 1993). In Finland the whole family, including the father, is considered to be the client in maternity and health care centres. Since the 1970s Finnish fathers have also been encouraged to participate in the care of their child, to take paternity leave and to participate in childbirth (Kuronen 1993). The Estonian centres function basically in same way but only mothers with their children are expected to visit them. The focus of interest in Estonian centres is also different, concentrating on medical check-ups (Hämäläinen & Kraav 1993.) Since 1990 fathers have been assigned the right to assist at birth and take paternity leave but according to Narusk (1996), public opinion does not consider the taking of paternity leave as altogether proper. Moreover, as Narusk and Kandolin (1997) point out, paternal leave is not economically a real choice for Estonian men.

The aforementioned differences in the functions and focus of maternity and health care centres reflect differences on the more general socio-political level. The definition of what is a good parent, especially a good mother, is implicitly expressed in family policy (Phoenix & Woollett 1991 b, 14). Finnish official family policy is based on Scandinavian gender equality ideology creating a woman-friendly welfare state (e.g. Kandolin 1997; Kuronen 1999). It has been maintained that the male bread-winner 'model' never became dominant in Finland; instead, the social norm is that healthy adults support themselves (Julkunen 1995; Kandolin 1997, 4; Women in Finland... 1996). In a survey conducted in Finland 1990, it was found that 15% of men and only 9 % of women would stop working if their economic situation allowed it (Haavio-Mannila & Kelam 1996, 90). According to the researchers, this points to the fact that women prefer to work for pay. However, this does not mean that there are no problems in combining work and motherhood in Finland (e.g.

Kuronen 1999). In Estonia during the socialist period women's right to employment was recognized but, at the same time, it was the women's task to produce new citizens for the state. This resulted in a contradiction between the official policy and women's everyday life: officially the women were to be "androgynous, emancipated Soviet women" but in everyday life the norm was "a family-oriented feminine mother of several children" (Kandolin 1997, 7). The right to work outside home did not appear to be 'a right', instead, it was an obligation leaving women with no choice but to carry a 'double burden', i.e. responsibilities at home and at work outside home (Narusk 1996, 26).

Nationwide economic factors, like the needs of the labour market, have their own effects on the ideology of good parenthood (see e.g. Offen 1991; Nash 1991). For instance, a rising rate of unemployment can bring about suggestions that the mothers of young children should stop working and remain home (Leira 1992, 101; Women in Finland...1996). According to Watson (1993), in socialist countries like Estonia before 1991, the wish to stay home originated in the normative traditional gender identity in which work was seen as something preventing women from being proper wives and mothers. Moreover, the weakening of women's economic position during the transition years from a socialist state into an independent, capitalist state contributed to the acceptance of more traditional gender roles (Narusk 1996).

The sociocultural circumstances of Estonia and Finland have thus been very different, and, given that culture is a way of adapting to these circumstances, the parental thinking of Estonians and Finns is likely to differ. At the time when the interviews for this study were carried out Estonia had regained its independence and opened the door to global and especially western ideas. The consequences of this might be twofold: firstly, the uncritical adoption of the western ideas and 'modern' ways of thinking, secondly, the continuation of the division into official ways of thinking and private ways of thinking (Tulviste 1994).

6.4.2 A good mother in Estonia and in Finland

In this section I first present the five most often-expressed characterisations of a good mother in Estonia and in Finland (table 12). In table 12, the percentages of those who mention a particular characterisation that occurs in both the Finnish and Estonian interview data were calculated from the total number of interviewees in each country. In this way the opinion of the groups in which there are most informants (e.g. mothers and grandmothers) will be over-represented, but this was considered to reflect the fact that these groups, female in general, are culturally regarded as 'experts' in this field and thus the 'key informants' in the formation of the image of a good parent. I chose to use only the five most often mentioned characterising beliefs here in the interest of presenting an overall picture of the situation. Thus table 12 presents the cultural images of a good mother in the two countries. I will later compare the Estonian and the Finnish beliefs using statistical procedures and including all the belief categories, except for Estonian-only beliefs, which are, of course, different from

those that inform the Finnish image. The results of the statistical procedures used are not affected by the uneven numbers of informants in the groups. All the comments on the content of the Estonian data were written by Edda Kaimre for an unpublished manuscript produced jointly with the present author. I carried out the statistical comparisons and report the results.

TABLE 12   The five most often produced beliefs characterising a good mother in Finland and in Estonia.

A good Finnish mother	%	A good Estonian mother	%
Love	72	Love	46
Listens to the child	43	Listens to the child	42
Control	37	Advice	24
Advice	29	Control	20
Patient	23	Time	15

Finnish informants N=387, Estonian informants N=177

Both in Estonia and in Finland a good mother is loving, trustworthy and she takes care of her child (Love). Loving was also a very frequent characterisation of a good mother by Australian (Brown & Small 1997) and Israeli informants (Magen 1994). Loving is the most frequent characterisation in Estonia, though it is expressed by less than half of the informants. Secondly, a good mother is considered to be a person who listens to and respects the child, gives personal freedom or support when needed and has a good relation with the child (Listens to the child'). The third most often mentioned quality of a good mother is teaching and giving advice (Advice). Giving advice and teaching the child was connected to the idea that a good mother should prepare the child for independent life by teaching and guiding him/ her. A good Estonian mother spends time together with her child, taking part on the child's hobbies and activities (Time). The support for this characterisation is divided between the generations: it was mentioned most often by the youngest generation. Several informants said that their mothers were not interested in their activities and that they intend to do things differently with their children and devote time to the child`s hobbies. The middle-aged generation talked about spending time with the child less often. Grandfathers did not talk about these matters at all, and only 8% of grandmothers reported that spending time with the child is the task of a good mother. The oldest generation often pointed out that mothers had a lot of work to do and no spare time for children, and that children also had to start working at a very early age.

The fourth most often mentioned quality is that a good Estonian mother controls the child`s behaviour, sets limits and keeps discipline (Control). Setting limits expresses a mother's care and keeping discipline does not mean corporal punishment. Some of the sons described their own experience and reported that their sisters had quite strict limits while they enjoyed freedom. Therefore, in their opinion a good mother acts similarly with sons and daughters and sets limits to make her sons feel that they too are cared for.

Talking about lack of time is typical of the modern way of life, and presumably this is one reason why time in both countries is spoken about mostly by the youngest generation. In Estonia the youngest generation also reported their aim of doing things differently from their mothers, they intended to have time to spend with the child. The mothers themselves also talked about the matter. According to several studies (e.g. Narusk & Kandolin 1997) Estonian mothers experience greater stress than Finnish mothers in combining work and family responsibilities owing to a badly operating or non-existent daycare system and lack of sharing of the household duties between the spouses. According to Kauppinen (1996, 49), the transition to independence also brought about a more competitive work culture and a hectic work tempo which might also bring about feelings of not having enough time. However, stress is not unknown to Finnish mothers. In the study by Narusk and Kandolin (1997) Finnish mothers talk about feelings of guilt caused by being responsible for both family and work, but it seems that these feelings are not directly connected to lack of time. Katvala (2001, 68) remarks that for younger Finnish mothers time as such is not a problem, instead, these mothers often talk about being too tired to spend time with the child. Another explanation might be that the Finnish descriptions of a good mother focus on emotional issues and leave out the more 'mundane' matters of life like time.

Spending time with the children as a quality of a good mother was also spoken about by Australian mothers (Brown & Small 1997) as well as Israeli informants (Magen 1994) (NB. The informants were asked to describe a good parent). The Australian mothers connected time with patience, listening to the child and respecting the child's individuality while guiding the child. The time spend with the child should be 'quality time', i.e. time has an important purpose (Brown & Small 1997). Evidently, the interpretation of this characterisation is not simple. It is often unclear what people actually mean when they say that a mother good should have time to spend with her children. In the present study, as in the Australian study, this talk often seems to mean that the mother should show interest in the child.

Estonian sons interpret discipline as a sign of caring (Kaimre & Perälä-Littunen, unpublished manuscript). Finnish sons also saw discipline as a way of putting the child in the right track, but their intended ways of keeping discipline are often much harsher than the ways of other groups. The Finnish group of sons contained the most supporters of corporal punishment. Perhaps for them discipline is something connected to masculinity, at least in the sense that this is what a "real man" is supposed to say.

Finnish female informants reported that the good mother should be patient. Patience was also mentioned by the Australian mothers especially in connection with time. From the Estonian informants only the youngest generation talked about patience. Patience could be a quality closely connected with the everyday experience of mothering, either the direct experience of acting as a mother or the indirect of being the target of mothering and knowing that you yourself might be a mother one day. Talk about the need of having a sense of humour and patience can also be part of the modern, western discourse

and new ideas in child-rearing, as both in Finland and in Estonia this talk was produced by the youngest generation and it was also mentioned by the Australian mothers. Child-rearing practices in Finland have, as in many other countries, become more egalitarian. Corporal punishment is prohibited by the law and generally the use of coercion has become less acceptable. All this makes it necessary to negotiate with the child, which certainly is often a process where patience is needed.

Comparison of the Estonian and the Finnish characterising beliefs of a good mother

At the first sight, the descriptions of a good mother seem fairly similar. In both countries the informants mention 'loving the child', 'giving advice to the child', 'controlling the child's behaviour', and 'respecting the child's individuality' as qualities of a good mother. There appears to be gender agreement in both countries on the image of a good mother when the comparisons were conducted using the total interviewee samples. The images of a good mother by genders in the Estonian data differed only in the frequency of statements that a good mother should be a stay-at-home mother and a good mother should be feminine, dress fashionably and take care of her looks. Estonian men (n=39) talked about both these characterising beliefs statistically significantly more often than women (n=138). (Stay-at-home mother: 18% of the men, 4% of the women, $G^2=6.84$; df=1; p<.01 and femininity: 10% of the men, 1% of the women, $G^2=7.88$; df=1; p<.01). The images of a good mother by the genders in the Finnish data did not differ. However, there are generational and gender differences in the images between the Estonian and Finnish informants. In comparing the Estonian and the Finnish beliefs characterising a good mother all beliefs with a frequency of five or less were excluded from the statistical procedures. However, the Estonian-only beliefs will be discussed.

When the complete lists of beliefs produced by the total groups of informants in Estonia and in Finland were compared by using tests of goodness of fit (G^2 =Log-likelihood) several statistically significant differences emerged. The Finnish informants spoke more than the Estonian informants about several beliefs characterising a good mother.

TABLE 13 Differences between Finnish and Estonian informants in the beliefs characterising a good mother

Characterising belief	Finns%	Estonians%	G^2
Love	72	46	34. 28 ***
Control	37	20	18. 43***
Patience	23	6	26. 64***
Consistent	6	2	5. 96*
Honesty	8	3	6 27*

Finnish informants n=387; Estonian informants n=177; df=1; *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001; G^2=Log-likelihood ratio; only statistically significant differences are reported.

All the other beliefs, except the belief that a good mother is consistent belong to the group of the ten most often-expressed which form the image of a good Finnish mother. Thus there are differences in the images of a good mother between Estonian and Finns. It must be noted also that the frequencies for mentions of Love, Control and Patience are statistically significantly different from the respective Estonian frequencies. As a first step to exploring the differences further, the images of the Finnish and Estonian men and the Finnish and Estonian women were compared to see if gender affected the images of a good mother in the two samples.

Gender differences between the Estonian and Finnish data

Finnish women talked more than Estonian women about several beliefs in their image of a good mother.

TABLE 14   Differences between Finnish women and Estonian women in the beliefs characterising a good mother

Characterising belief	Finns %	Estonians %	G^2
Love	73	44	33.50***
Patience	23	6	21.31***
Control	39	20	16.03***
Consistent	7	2	5.16*
Honesty	9	4	4.08*

Finnish women n=325; Estonian women n=138; df=1; *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001; = log-likelihood ratio; only statistically significant differences are reported.

Finnish women spoke significantly more often about a mother's love, a good mother being a disciplinarian and the need of a good mother to be patient and understanding. Finnish men (n=62) talked more than Estonian men (n=39) about a good mother as a person who is patient, understanding and has a sense of humour and is not easily upset (19% of Finnish men, 5% of the Estonian men, $G^2 = 4.75$; df=1; p<.05). Thus the images of female informants differed more from each other, while the men's image of a good mother in Estonia and in Finland is fairly similar. One explanation for this could be the differences in the daily activities of a mother in the two countries. The second step in the elaboration of the differences between the images of Estonian and Finnish interviewees was to compare the images of different generations in Estonia and in Finland.

Differences between Estonian and Finnish generations in the images of a good mother

Again most of the differences in the frequencies of mentioning a particular characterising belief were such that the Finns talked about the characterisation more than the Estonians.

TABLE 15 Differences between Finnish and Estonian generations in the beliefs characterising a good mother

Characterising belief	Youngest generation			Middle-aged generation			Oldest generation		
	Fin %	Est %	G²	Fins %	Est %	G²	Fin %	Est %	G²
Love	71	51	7.30***	78	47	17.31***	65	39	11.26**
Control	44	15	16.20***	43	10	23.01***	-	-	-
Patience	29	12	7.55**	22	3	13.37***	16	3	7.62**
Consistent	-	-	-	11	2	5.88**	-	-	-
Advice	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	20	4.66*
Honesty	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	0	6.89**
Religion	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	2	3.92*

Each Estonian generation n=59; Est=Estonians; each Finnish generations n=129; Fin= Finns; df=1; *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001; G² =log-likelihood ratio; only statistically significant differences are reported.

The Estonian oldest generation (n=59) talk more than the Finnish oldest generation (n=129) of the good mother as a stay-at-home mother (13% of the oldest Estonian generation, 4% of the oldest Finnish generation; G²= 5.40*; df=1; p<.05).

The differences between the Estonian and the respective Finnish generations are at their greatest in talking about a mother's love and a good mother as a disciplinarian. All the Finnish generations talk more than the Estonian generations about a mother's love. Finns also exceed Estonians in the extent to which they talk about the need of a good mother to be patient and understanding.

A mother's love has been one of the features regarded as essential for the child in western child-rearing advice since the 19th century (Cunnigham 1996). However, a mother's love was not given any priority in the ideological communist formulations of family life. Ideological formulations and goals were norms which were maintained by authorities outside the family and were not part of the Estonian cultural tradition. This caused a conflict between the official ways of speaking and thinking and the private, within-a-family ways (e.g. Keltikangas-Järvinen & Teräv 1996). The Estonian informants, especially in the middle-aged generation who have lived most their life under Soviet system, may possibly think that talking about love is not appropriate in an interview; it is considered a wholly private matter. Moreover, although some of the interviewers in Estonia were family members, the fact that the interviewing was done for an educational institution might lead the informants to talk in an official way. It is also possible, however, that the Estonians regard a mother's love so natural and self-evident that it is not talked about.

In the Finnish thinking and ideologies a mother's love has a quite different role. Motherhood was praised especially in the dawn of Finnish independence and mothers lifted nearly to the status of saints, their self-sacrificing love being one of their virtues. Perhaps shades of this thinking still remain in the minds of Finns. At least the mother is still presented as a very special person in the

child's life in Finnish ABC books (Koski 2001, 120). Moreover, in western child-rearing advice based on attachment theory the core thinking rests on the idea that the mother has a special ability to love. Likewise, western ideologies of good mothering consider love as the motivation which makes the mother do her utmost in rearing her child (Hays 1996)

The parents' task of controlling and disciplining their child has been and still is a matter much discussed in the Finnish media. It is one of the topics taken up when maintaining that modern parents evade their parental responsibilities (Korhonen 1999, 184). The highlighting of a good mother's role in controlling her child might be part of this debate. Another reason why Finns might be especially apt to mention discipline is that when in 1984 corporal punishment was prohibited by law in Finland, it was concluded by some exchanges in the media that parents had lost the only way they could control the behaviour of their children. The official advice disseminated from offices and organisations, like child health care centres and The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, for instance, began to deliver advice to parents on how to keep control and set their children limits. All this could have contributed to discipline becoming an especially salient feature in parenting.

Perceptions regarding keeping control and setting limits could also be the source of the belief that a good mother must be patient, understanding and have a good sense of humour. All these qualities are needed when a mother is engaged in negotiations over rules with the child or when the mother is using the "labour-intensive techniques of ongoing psychological manipulation" that Hays (1996, 29) writes about (see Korhonen 2002, 60). The Finnish-Swedish informants in Antila-Räfsbäck's (1999, 50) study describe the connection between patience and setting limits without using coercion or corporal punishment by saying that they resort to corporal punishment when their patience runs out.

Various kinds of negotiations between parents and their children are typical in current Finnish child-rearing. Negotiating is recommended in the child-rearing advice and it is one of the 'home-constructing activities' described by Korvela (2003). Korvela suggests that negotiating not only takes place through language but also, for instance, in the ways in which family members co-ordinate their activities (ibid. 149–150). Thus contemporary parenting in the Finnish way requires a lot of patience and regard for others.

The beliefs characterising a good mother expressed by the youngest generations in the two countries show the most similarity and the number of differences between the Finnish and Estonian generations increases in the older generations. Perhaps through the increasing contacts between Estonia and Finland as well as through the increase in the role of global (western) ideas of child-rearing the images are becoming more alike.

Estonian-only beliefs characterising a good mother

The five most frequently expressed beliefs characterising an Estonian good mother were discussed above but there were others which were more or less

shared only by certain generations and which differ from the Finnish beliefs. The good mother was described as a person who *takes care of food and clothing* by 22% of the oldest generation (23% of grandmothers), as against only 2% and 8% in the middle-aged and the youngest generation, respectively. According to the oldest generation, a good mother is *hard-working* and also demands work from her children. This was supported by 13% of grandparents but only by females. Several interviews with grandmothers start with the idea that a good mother takes care of food and clothing and emphasises the importance of work, because it is the mother's duty to teach work and love of work (Kaimre & Perälä-Littunen, unpublished manuscript). The youngest generation, especially sons, speak about such qualities as a good mother being *fashionable, independent, feminine and taking care of herself*. One mother and one grandfather said that a good mother is the *head of the family*. The Estonian informants also reported that a good mother *raises her children to be decent human beings*.

Some of the Estonian-only characterisations of a good mother, mostly talked about by the oldest generation, focus on the daily survival of the mother and her children. During their lifetime food and clothing have probably not always been self-evidently available and the task of a good mother in this respect is pointed out and remembered. Emphasising the role of work in a mother's life suggests a way of thinking connected to the agrarian way of life where the ability to work hard was the guarantee of success (Ruoppila 1954, 182–183).

The expectation that a good mother should dress fashionably and take care of her looks highlights the mother's sexuality and femininity. It is possible to interpret this characterisation as reflecting a view of gender in which the woman is supposed to please the man.

6.4.3 A good father in Estonia and in Finland

The informants talked more about a good mother than about a good father. In Finland 28 (7%) and in Estonia 8 (4%) interviewees said nothing about the characteristics of a good father, even though they were asked to describe both a good mother and a good father. The majority of these informants belong to the oldest generation, who in most cases produced shorter descriptions and often spoke about their own parents. In Estonia several informants explained that they grew up without fathers and therefore cannot answer the question; half of these belong to the oldest generation.

Both data sets show characterisations that are used only about a good father. In Finland the categories describing the breadwinner aspect of fathering and authority only include fathers. Similarly in Estonia the role of the family breadwinner, and characterisations like 'does not punish the child thoughtlessly', 'does not drink heavily' and 'strict' are attached only to fathers.

The findings dealing with the characterisation of a good father will be presented in the same way as was done with a 'good mother'.

TABLE 16   The five most often produced beliefs characterising a good father in Finland and in Estonia.

A good Finnish father		A good Estonian father	
	%		%
Time	18	Time	33
Love	16	Love	27
Control	12	Breadwinner	25
Advice	10	Authority	17
Listens	9	Listens	16

Finnish informants N=387; Estonian informants N=177

Having time to spend with his child ('Time' in table 16) is crucial for both an Estonian and a Finnish good father. A good father also loves ('Love') his children and listens to the child ('Listens to the child'). In Finland a good father is also expected to keep discipline and control the child's behaviour ('Control'), and give advice to the child ('Advice'). In Estonia a good father is the head of the family ('Authority') and the main supporter ('Breadwinner') of the family. 'Love' is considered necessary for both Estonian and Finnish a good father. Fatherly love is often described differently from maternal love, and providing security for the family seems to be part of it.

A good Estonian father should spend time with his children (Time). As in the Finnish interviews this is expressed more by the youngest generation and especially by males. However this belief is quite widely accepted in all generations. The contemporary media discourse in Estonia share the view that fathers must participate in child-rearing. The youngest generation often mention and even accused their fathers of having less time for them, while the middle generation tries to explain why their fathers did not spend much time with them often because they were working. (Kaimre & Perälä-Littunen, unpublished manuscript). Besides spending time with children, an Estonian good father is a loving, trustworthy person who takes care of his child and thus a quality not attached to mothers only.

The third belief characterising a good father in Estonia is the traditional view of being a breadwinner; a good father supports the family, takes care of the house, family car etc. It is equally shared in all three generations. In Estonia a good father has also to be the head of the family and an authority for the child. The fifth most frequent belief concerned listening, respecting the child and supporting the child`s growth into an independent person.

Comparisons of good fathers in Estonia and in Finland

When all interviewees were taken into account the Estonian and Finnish characterisations of a good father differed in several beliefs. Only those characterising beliefs which were expressed by more than five persons in at least one of the countries were included in the statistical procedures.

Contrary to the case of the image of a good mother, the Estonian informants talked more than the Finns about several of the beliefs characterising a good father.

TABLE 17   Differences between Estonian and Finnish informants in the beliefs characterising a good father

Characterising belief	Finns %	Estonians %	G²
Breadwinner	7	25	31.29***
Parents agree	3	15	25.37***
Authority	6	17	16.98***
Time	18	33	16.09***
Love	17	26	7.00**
Listens	9	16	5.33*
Control	12	19	5.13*

Finnish informants n=387; Estonian informants n=177; df=1; *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001; G²=log-likelihood ratio; only statistically significant differences are reported.

A good father as breadwinner and authority in the family are both characterising beliefs which I suggested stem from the list of traditional manly virtues. It is also easy to see a connectedness between these two beliefs. A father who supports his family is respected and an authority.

Agreement between the spouses over child-rearing was nearly totally lacking from the Finnish list of the characterisations of a good father. The fact that Estonians talk about agreement can be interpreted as reflecting the thinking that while the father and the mother are parents they are also a man and a woman with their own ideas on child-rearing. If they wish to be good they must find agreement.

Gender differences

When the total of the Estonian interviewees was taken into account gender differences emerged only in the respect of talking about the necessity of good parents agreeing on child-rearing issues (17% of the Estonian women, n= 138; 5% of the Estonian men, n=39; G²=4.41; df=1; p<.01). Agreement on child-rearing was mentioned by Estonian women more often than by Estonian men. In the Finnish data there were no gender differences when all the women's views were compared against all the men's views.

The only gender difference between the characterisations produced by Estonian and Finnish men and by Estonian and Finnish women was that the Estonian informans made more mentions of the beliefs characterising a good father.

TABLE 18 Differences between Estonian and Finnish women in the beliefs characterising a good father

Characterising belief	Finns %	Estonians %	G²
Breadwinner	6	25	31.10***
Parents agree	3	17	28.17***
Authority	5	19	20.65***
Time	16	33	15.39***
Support	1	4	7.10**
Honesty	1	5	4.33*

Estonian women n=138; Finnish women n=326; df=1; *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001; G²=log-likelihood ratio; only statistically significant differences are reported.

The four beliefs in which the images of Estonian women differed from the respective Finnish images are the same those already appeared when the images of all the groups of informants were taken into account. This suggests that the differences between the Estonian and Finnish images are in fact differences in images by women in the two countries.

Only one aspect of a good father was found where the Estonian men (n=39) and Finnish men (n=61) differed. Estonian men talked more than the Finnish men about a good father as one who listens to his child and respects the child's individuality (23% of the Estonian men, 8% of the Finnish men, G²= 4.26; df=1; p<.05).

Differences between generations

The images of the different Estonian generations were also compared with those of the respective Finnish generations. In the comparison several differences appeared.

TABLE 19 Differences between Estonian and Finnish generations in the beliefs characterising a good father

Characterising belief	Youngest generation			Middle-aged generation			Oldest generation		
	Fin %	Est %	G²	Fin %	Est %	G²	Fin %	Est %	G²
Breadwinner	3	24	20.87***	12	27	5.56**	7	24	9.77**
Time	18	54	13.81***	18	32	4.62*	-	-	-
Love	15	39	12.98***	-	-	-	-	-	-
Listens	8	24	8.60**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Authority	5	17	7.20**	-	-	-	1	20	23.23***
Advice	5	15	4.64*	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parents agree	-	-	-	5	22	12.35**	1	12	11.47***
Control	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	32	9.84**

Each Estonian generation n=59; Est=Estonians; each Finnish generation n=129; Fin=Finns df=1; *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001; G²=log-likelihood ratio; only statistically significant differences are reported.

Looking at table 19, it is easy to see that the biggest differences are in the images of the youngest generations in Finland and in Estonia. The middle-aged generations and the oldest generations differed statistically most significantly in the amount of speaking about the need for agreement between parents over child-rearing. This aspect will be dealt with later in this section. The oldest generations also differed in the amount of talking about fatherly authority. The Estonian grandparents had a more traditional understanding, according to which the father should be the head of the family. The Finnish grandparents had a more democratic view and seemed to regard all members of the family more equal.

The images of a good father that differed most between Estonian and Finnish daughters

Due to the small number of informants in several groups the frequencies of mentioning a particular characterising belief in these groups were very low. For this reason the statistical comparisons between the images produced by these groups appeared unwise. However, because the comparison of the images by Estonian and Finnish daughters seemed interesting on the basis of the comparisons already done and because there were enough informants in both groups and consequently high enough frequencies, I compared the images of these two groups. All the other comparisons so far suggested that the images by the two groups of daughters could be the most different.

Table 20 presents the results of the comparison of the images by the two groups of daughters. The differences between these two groups add up to seven beliefs.

TABLE 20 Differences between Finnish and Estonian daughters in the beliefs charcterising a good father

Characterising belief	Finns %	Estonians %	G^2
Listens	7	19	4.45*
Love	13	42	15.25***
Advice	6	16	3.94*
Time	12	42	16.57***
Breadwinner	3	26	16.74***
Authority	5	21	8.48**

Finnish daughters n=100, Estonian daughters n=43; df=1; *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001; G^2=log-likelihood ratio; only statistically significant differences are reported.

The sons, for instance, differed only in the number of mentions of a good father as a breadwinner, which was mentioned by none of the Finnish sons and only three of the Estonian sons. One reason why the breadwinner aspect has lost its salience in Finland could be the gender equality ideology and the idea that healthy adults are expected to support themselves (Julkunen 1995; Kandolin 1997, 4; Women in Finland... 1996).

It seems that the image of a good father held by the Estonian daughters was indeed very different from that held by the Finnish daughters. In general, the Estonian image contains older characterisations of a good father, perhaps connected to manly virtues, like the breadwinner idea. Likewise, the beliefs about fatherly love with the suggestions of provision of security, and expecting the father to be the head of the family all suggest a benevolent patriarch. Perhaps, during the turmoil of Estonian's transition from a socialist part of the socialist Soviet Union to an independent capitalist state these daughters felt insecure and wished for some one they could rely on.

Estonian-only beliefs characterising a good father

An Estonian good father takes the child's level of development into account when dealing with the child. Like an Estonian good mother, he aims at rasing a decent human being. Moreover, he teaches his child to work and is a hard-working person himself. The Estonian informants also expect a good father not to drink excessively.

Parents as spouses

On the basis of the interviews, it seems that Estonian parenthood contains characterising beliefs which are more related to the fact that parents are often also spouses, men and women living together and/or in a relationship. Firstly, the Estonians see the mother more as a woman when they point out that a good mother takes care of herself and her looks, though this characterisation was mentioned by sons (3). None of the Finns mention this characterisation. Secondly, when the Estonians described a good father they talk more about the need of the parents to get along with each other (difference calculated by comparing the total of Finns and the total of Estonians $G^2= 26.39$; df=1; p<.001). The need of good parents to get along with each other was also talked about when a good mother was described. However, a relationship consists of two persons. Putting all frequencies together a good parental relationship was mentioned 28 (16%) Estonians brought up this feature, compared to 10 (3%) Finns. Moreover, this characterisation is, in the Estonian data, mentioned by both women and men, while all the ten Finns mentioning this belief were women. Thirdly, the Estonian informants and Finnish informants differed from each other statistically significantly in the amount they mentioned parental agreement on child-rearing (see table 17, Parents agree $G^2= 25.37***$). Thus characteristics of the romantic relationship between the parents were included in Estonians' images of good parents. Finnish good parents were described in relation to the child.

Concluding comments on the differences and similarities in the images of good parents - traces of a culture

In both countries the initiation to describe a good mother elicits more talk than the initiation to describe a good father. This is especially true of the descriptions produced by the Finnish informants. Goodness in a mother seems to be easier to describe than goodness in a father. Moreover, the Estonians differ from the Finns in that they talk more than the Finns about several characterising beliefs in their images of a good father. For the Finns the mother is the primary parent (see also Alasuutari 2003) and for this reason more talked about. For the Estonians the father is more of a parent than for the Finns but also more a traditional father with the characterising beliefs of a breadwinner and the authority in the family.

Good parents in Finland are characterised more psychologically than in Estonia. Most of the characterisations focus (the only exception being perhaps that the father should have time) on the nature of the relationship between the parent and the child. Both the Finnish good mother and good father should be able to love their child, respect the child's individuality, maintain the discipline and offer advice to their child. Moreover, the mother should be patient and the father should have time for the child.

Some aspects of images of good parents seem to focus on problematic areas in everyday life, on things which are not attainable by every parent and indirectly pointing to where bad parents are considered to go wrong. The basic material resources of life in Finland are to a large extent taken for granted but in Estonia the situation at the time of the interviews was often different. In Finland the child-rearing problems highlighted by the media were different, including, for example, a lot of discussion about irresponsible parenting and disciplinary problems.

The Estonian characterisations of good parents reflect gender role thinking where men and women are perceived to have specific capabilities and tasks. In Estonia good parents show more differences from each other, whereas in Finland good parents share a lot of qualities. Studies dealing with the Estonian transition to an independent, democratic, market economy nation-state have pointed out that women more than men suffered economically during the transition years (e.g. Narusk 1996; Kandolin 1996; 1997). Not even education compensates for the inequality between the incomes of men and women (Shattuck 1998; Wilder et al. 1999). Narusk (1996, 25) maintains that "although there are big differences in reactions to social changes at different times and in different cultures, the mainstream seems to follow a similar pattern: the worse the economic situation, the more traditional the gender roles." On the one hand, the characterisations of the young Estonian informants that a good mother is fashionable and takes care of herself could be interpreted as reflecting more traditional gender roles where the woman's task is to please the man. On the other hand, this is not perceived in this way by the women themselves. Kauppinen (1996, 52) concludes while describing the life of Estonian women during and after the transition years: "The women were pleased to use make-

up, to dress beautifully, and to behave in feminine ways." However, dressing beautifully and using make-up are not all there is in traditional gender roles; they may also include tolerating your husband's heavy drinking, taking care of all the domestic work, being lower paid than your male colleagues, among other things (see Narusk 1996, 27 on the Estonian popular press).

The practices of the Estonian child care experts support more traditional gender roles: for example, the fathers are not expected to visit child health care centres as they are in Finland. Experts play a role in the formation of parental beliefs, but experts are themselves also members of the culture and thus their views are mixtures of scientific thinking and cultural beliefs (e.g. Lightfoot & Valsiner 1992). Moreover, different groups of experts can have different conceptions (Dally 1982, 189). But the conceptions of professionals appear to be transmitted to everyday conceptualising.

The social-political framework of parenting plays a role in the characterisation of good parents and vice versa. The Finnish 'woman-friendly welfare state' has its roots in the Scandinavian gender equality ideology but, at the same time, 'woman-friendly' systems make it easier to share parenting, for example. In Estonia the more traditional gender roles are supported by socio-political arrangements, for instance, by the lack of daycare facilities, and, again, the lack of daycare facilities could be a reflection of traditional gender roles.

The emancipated Soviet woman never existed in the home sphere or in parenting (Kandolin 1997). It seems likely that changing gender beliefs, at least by somewhat coercive means, is not that easy. People do not accept beliefs they feel are strange or foreign, especially if they do not see any 'good' coming from their adoption. This might be the reason why the characterisations of the Estonian informants reflect more traditional gender roles. It must be noted also that during the Soviet regime the official ideology of androgyny was applied only to women (Liljeström 1995). The whole gender system was not taken into account, the men were still traditional men, which probably made the change for women difficult.

In general, the role of ideologies in changing parenting ideas is far from clear. In Magen's study (1994) the kibbutz ideology, i.e. whether the family lived in a kibbutz or in private homes, did not differentiate the descriptions of a good parent by the informants. In the case of Estonia, it is possible that 50 years is not long enough to change existing thinking, especially when the change is forced from outside the culture. Some researchers suggest that post-Soviet people themselves believe that the Soviet regime was able to change their conceptions of femininity and masculinity and that this change into un-natural (empancipated) women and men is the reason for a number of social problems. This has given rise to"a popular call for gender reform and neo-patriarchal call for harmonize man-woman relationships within the family" (Novikova 2000, 119).

7 PHASE II MEANINGS GIVEN TO THE MOST FREQUENT BELIEFS CHARACTERISING A GOOD MOTHER AND A GOOD FATHER

The construction of the images of a good mother and a good father from the characterisations expressed by the informants explores the domain of the culturally shared, i.e. a kind of surface of beliefs known to most. However, the images contain characterisations, like a mother's love and a father's time, which possibly are interesting as such and worth deeper investigation.

In the Finnish image of good mother, the most frequent characterisation was that a good mother loves her children. A mother's love was included in descriptions of a good mother also by Australian mothers (Brown and Small 1997) and by Israeli parents and their children (Magen 1994). Love is a strong emotion and a mother's love seems even to have a sacred air around it. The meaning of a mother's love began to trouble me as I came across very contradictory meanings of this quality in the literature. I knew my Kalevala and the poem of the mother of the reckless Lemminkäinen who gathers the remains of her poor son in the river of Death's Domain and is able to bring him back to life. My interpretation of the motives of Lemminkäinen's mother was that she did what she did because she loved her son. In her study, Scheper-Hughes (1990) focussed on a mother's love and child death in Northern Brazil. She concluded that severe neglect resulting in a child death can coexist with a mother's love. Such contradictory descriptions of a mother's love led me to want to explore what the informants in my data mean when they say that a good mother loves her child. My aim in the following is to examine the various shades of meaning given to a mother's love and focus on the different aspects of child rearing connected to loving.

Likewise, the description of a good father as a father who finds time to spend with his children seems to be contradictory or to containing several conflicting meanings. The request that a father must find time for his children is interpreted as posing a dilemma for fathers on the practical level as well being in contradiction with the traditional good breadwinner model. For example, a

seventy-two-year old grandmother from family 25 (Finnish interviews) explains:

> Fathers worked when I was a child. They had no time to spend with their children I hardly saw my father during the day. But he had to bring home the bacon, you know.
> [Isäthää meirän aikan töitä tek. Ei niil niin siit aikaa riittänny lapsiinkaa ollakkaa. Enhää miäkää omaa isäjäin paljoo ain päiväs keren nährä. Mut pitihää se ruakakii jostaa saara.]

Moreover, what the informants expect the father to do with his children is interesting. These themes are addressed when I explore the descriptions of how fathers spent their time with their children.

A mother's love and a father's time are the most frequently expressed beliefs characterising the images of a good mother and a good father, respectively. Moreover, they both seem to contain multiple, even contradictory meanings. All this suggests that they might be "all purpose" general beliefs (Harkness & al. 1992) in Finnish parenting, which can be used as common denominators for several other beliefs and thus are especially interesting.

7.1 A mother's love

> "Your mother died to save you. If there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand, it is love. He didn't realise that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark. Not a scar, no visible sign... to have been loved so deeply, even though who loved us is gone, will give us some protection for ever. It is in your very skin. Quirrell, full of hatred, greed and ambition, sharing his soul with Voldermort, could not touch you for this reason. It was agony to touch a person marked by something so good." p.216

> Rowling, J. K. 1997

Harry Potter's mother would have been considered a good mother by the Finnish informants. Like the mother of reckless Lemminkäinen, Harry's mother, with the power of her love, is able to save her son from death. A mother's love is described here as very powerful. Besides being a powerful emotion, a mother's love includes an element of sacrifice; Harry's mother dies in saving her child and that sacrifice is the proof of her love for Harry.

Harry Potter's mother dies in saving her child but in the Brazilian slums loving your child means letting the child die (Scheper-Hughes 1990). A mother's love seems to have various meanings but letting your child die seems to us an odd way of loving the child. Yet, within European history, in the days when child mortality was extremely common, a child's, and especially an infant's death, was not always perceived as unwelcomed. It was thought, like the Brazilian mothers in Scheper-Hughes's study did, that in this way the child was saved from the troubles and pains of life - and the parents were saved from supporting and rearing the child (Dally 1982, 29; Helsti 2000, 211–213; Magnusson 1995). What the actual emotions were that the mothers felt remains unknown. Schütze (1987, 40) points out that though the emotions of individual

mothers are unknown, the normative model of a mother's love has its history and existence irrespective of what mothers actually felt. Indifference or perceiving a child death as welcomed were cultural ways of reacting to the issue. Dally (1982, 45) argues that the mothers did react with indifference to their child's death in the days when infant mortality rates were high. But she continues that there were several reasons for this - reasons like the nature of the family life and its economic basis, traditional Christian views of the child in this way saved from worldly troubles, and ideas about the innocence of children. As a mother today can easily interpret the indifference as either a way of surviving or of giving up when faced with something perceived as inevitable.

A mother's love is often considered as something which comes naturally and is like an instinct. Rossi (1993, 193) describes the parents' feelings at the birth of a baby as 'irrational attraction and love'. Rossi goes on to strongly reject the exchange model of intimate relationships, like the relationship between a mother and her child, and concludes that this totally altruistic relationship has nothing to do with the rational-choice model of human behaviour (ibid. 194). According to Rossi, altruism is included in all our relationships with our most intimate and significant others.[28]

When a mother's love is understood to come naturally, a mother who does not love her child is regarded as bad, even pathological (e.g. Badinter 1981, 10). Loving one's child is considered a norm similar to other norms like taking the main responsibility for child-care in the western world (Woollett & Phoenix 1991c, 44). A mother's love is also a cultural phenomenon; although experienced personally, the meanings, expressions and occasions of showing love are constructed culturally (Ratner 1999, 22).

Altruistic mothering is supposed to promote moral growth (Ruddick 1983). The study by Leffers (1993) pertains to this issue. Following Gilligan (1982), Leffers (ibid. 65–67) presents three levels of maternal moral reasoning: 1)the woman cares for herself; 2); the woman cares for others and neglects herself; and 3) the woman is able to consider the needs of both self and other and to be responsible for both. Leffers (ibid. 65), remarks, however, that the idea of mothering promoting moral growth does not seem to make sense when one looks at the actual mothers. Some mothers attain a high level of moral reasoning, other stay at lower levels. The level, Leffer (ibid.68) suggests is missing from these levels is the level where the mother is prepared to also care for the children of other parents.

The mothers in Hays's (1996, 170) study point out that the altruistic love they give to their children promotes the general well being of humankind, i.e. it makes the world a better place. Moreover, they see their logic of intensive mothering based on maternal love and unselfishness as a way of opposing the logic of profit-oriented, competitive and individualistic relations in our society.

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[28]   Rossi writes totally from the point of view of a contemporary Westerner. For instance, love between spouses in not a universal phenomenon, marriages are mostly based on something other than romantic love if we take a more global view, and in fact marriages based on love are a quite recent phenomenon also in the West if we take a more historical point of view (see Häggman 1994, 97– 98).

In addition, the mothers maintain that it is the child's unconditional love for its mother that makes the mother love her child (ibid. 168–169). However, as presented above, there seem to be 'qualitative' differences in a mother's love. Dally (1982, 193), in listing the points where a mother can fail, asks if a mother's love is normal (altruistic) or is a mother's love only used for the purpose of control and as a reward the child gets when he meets the mother's expectations?

A brief history of a mother's love

The image of a good mother and the image of a child are closely intertwined. What the child needs the mother should be able to provide, and since the nineteenth century the child has been needing its mother's love (e.g. Cunningham 1996, 29-31). But love has not always been seen as important to children and mothers have not always been the persons thought to be the best for this emotional work. The changes in the image of a child are described by Aries (1996). Aries presents the process through which 'childhood' was discovered and the idea of children being different from adults and needing protection, care and education was established.

In the English speaking world one of the first writers to express the idea that a child needs love was Mary Carpenter, who, according to Cunningham (1996, 30), in her campaign against juvenile delinquency wrote that a child is not a child unless it is loved, thus including the idea of 'love' in the definition of a child.

When industrialisation and the beginning of the Victorian area differentiated the life spheres of women and men, the former staying at home and the latter earning living in the 'harsh world outside', child rearing and educating the child at home became the responsibility of the mother. Women, with their feminine qualitites were seen as especially fit for emotional work and love (Hulbert 1999; Pleck & Pleck 1997, 38–39 for a discussion in the American context). It was the mother's special ability to love that gave her more power in child-rearing, excluding the more rational father (Pleck & Pleck 1997, 39).

Tardy (2000, 438) quotes Mary Wollstonecraft (1792), who described children as delicate, sinless beings deserving their mother's sole attention in her book *Vindication of the Rights of Women*. In the Scandinavian context, one of the first books to express the idea that children should not be seen only as a workforce was Ellen Key's (1900) *Barnets århundrade*. In the book Key writes about children's emotional needs and worth.

In the Finnish context Tähtinen (1996, 99) describes, on the basis of various child-care manuals, the period of religious educational morality (1850–1889) and points out that parental love was one of the basic principles in child-rearing. It was thought that the upbringing by a loving parent was more effective because love made the children easier to handle. Loving parents would have loving children, who would be pleased to behave in the way their parents hoped. However, love was not especially a characteristic of the mother. Both parents were expected to love their children. Tähtinen suggests that the

mother became primary parent during the period of psychological educational morality (1955–1989), which also focussed more than before on the emotional needs of the child, (ibid. 228–229). Vuori (2001, 43), however, maintains that the rise of motherhood began already in the 1840s.

Due to the special ability to love, a mother also gained importance as a parent. This new importance is reflected even in the ways custody was arranged after divorce. Tardy (2000, 440) comments that in the USA the custody of young children, particularly those under the age of seven, began to be granted to women when the idea that the mother, because of her ability to love, was a special person to the child and thus the mother and her child should not be separated. In Finland, the effects of the scientific psychological literature cannot be established, nor is a mother's love directly mentioned in the legal decisions in child custody suits (Kurki-Suonio 1999).

Advice to mothers

The key ingredient in motherhood according to the child-care manuals is a mother's love (Marshall 1991, 69). Moreover, maternal love has been especially highlighted in the psychological literature since the Second World War. According to Bowlby, the mother should form a secure attachment with her child and a mother's love is as important to the child's mental health as vitamins and proteins are for physical health (Chess & Thomas 1982). If the mother fails in this task, her child will not, among other things, learn to control his emotions nor how to solve the dilemma of dependence-independence (Singer 1998, 66–68). Through secure attachment the mother is able to make the child accept her wishes as his own. In this process the mother must not make her power visible. According to Singer, attachment theory forms a culturally specific model for regulating emotions and behaviour and for internalizing moral concepts, and for this reason it is normative and can be called pedagogy. Thus the theory defines what is normal, desirable and how mothers should behave if they want their children to grow up happy and healthy (ibid. 69). Bowlby's attachment theory is not the only source of advice telling mothers to love their children. For instance, according to Pestalozzi, the child needs maternal love, which is the finest of all feelings. If the child was not loved by its mother the child would turn into a completely selfish person with the only aim of fulfilling his own needs (ibid 66). The message to mothers is an obligation to love and to make their children love them.

A mother's love, then, is regarded both as very powerful and essential for the child. Thurer (1993, 519) calls it axiomatic. Accordingly, the consequences of a lack of parental love for the child are severe. The research literature, especially in the United States, associates parental rejection, for instance, with several factors related to mental health, like psychopathology, behaviour problems, substance abuse, attachment disorders, problems in personal relationships and depression (Rohner & Britner 2002).

A mother's love has been also described as rewarding for the mother. For instance, in Heikkilä's study (1998) on the ideology of a Finnish family

magazine Kotiliesi in 1947 it was concluded that the magazine promoted the ideology of the nuclear family. Within this framework maternity was presented as the fulfilment of womanhood and maternal love was described as the 'reward' of motherhood, the reason why staying at home and sacrificing one's needs is worth doing. The magazine suggests that contradictory emotions, like hate, give rise to possessive maternal love which is harmful for the child. The mother should always control her emotions; love her child but not too much. (Heikkilä 1998).

Leira and Krips (1993, 87) tell two stories of Greek mythology on the theme of a mother's love: the story of Clytemnestra who loved her daughter but was not able to save her from death and the story of Demeter, an equally loving mother who saved her daughter from the realms of death by going on a strike. Demeter was the goddess of life and while she was on strike nothing on earth grew and Zeus was forced to save Demeter's daughter from death. Leira and Krips point out that it is impossible to draw conclusions about a mother's love on the basis of her actions. Instead, we should pay attention to the possibilities the mother has to realize her love.

Meanings of a mother's love

Below are the various meanings I was able to find in the Finnish interview data and the data from the National Board of Antiquities (MV: K39/the number of informant). Most of the meanings were expressed by women who were mothers themselves or often also grandmothers. Moreover, the women give us an insider's point of view, they talk as persons who are expected to love their children. They are commenting on something that is expected of them. The few male informants and some of the generation of daughters present a view on a mother's love of those who are expected to be loved. In many cases, it was not clear whether the informants were talking about a mother's love or parental love in general. Likewise, this was not made clear in the advice books I refer to below. However, what is expected from a parent is also expected from a mother.

Although here I do not especially focus on the differences and similarities between generations, one informant, a mother aged 54 from family 43 (Finnish interviews) points to the differences between herself and her mother in ways of showing affection and love. Her understanding, in the light of the view of the way of life at the time when the grandparents' generation were parents, seems by no means unusual. This is her answer to the question on generational differences in child-rearing:

> Perhaps I have paid more conscious attention to the children's need to feel secure and been shown affection. I think there have been more tokens of affection. But our mother does not disagree in principle on these matters. She is not by nature a person who would hug very much, like I do. In practice that is a quite big difference. Well, mother did hold us in her lap but I think I have acted differently in that respect. Also our father held us in his lap. Also I have communicated more by speaking about emotions. But I think it is clear for my mother that she loves her children and takes care of them. And that is clear also for me but perhaps I talk about my emotions more.

> [Ehkä mä olen sitten tietosesti enempi kiinnittänyt huomiota lasten tavallaan turvallisuuden tunteeseen ja hellyyden osoituksiin. Enempi on niitä ollu, Mutta ei meidän äiti ole niistä periaatteessa eri mieltä. Hän ei varmaan ole luonteeltaan semmonen, joka olis kauheen kova halailemaan niin kun minä olen. Et se on käytännössä aika suurinkin ero. Kyllä äiti sylissä piti mutta mä varmaan oon vähän niinku siinä ollu erilainen. Myöskin isä piti sylissä paljon. Myöskin sanallisesti enempi olen kommunikoinut lasten kanssa tämmösistä tunnetason asioista, että mun äidille ole vamaan selvää. Että hän lapsiaan rakastaa ja pitää niistä huolen. Se on mulleki selvää, mutta mä ehkä enempi oon sitä tuonu sitten sanallisesti esille.]

The literature presents us with a view of the grandparents' generation as people who valued work above anything else (Helsti 2000; Kemppainen 2001; Korkiakangas 1996; Ruoppila 1954). A mother who stopped work and sat down to show affection to her child would probably not have been perceived as doing the right thing. However, the informant above suggests that the difference between herself and her mother is caused by differences in their characters.

A loving mother shows her affection

Showing one's love, tenderness physically for a small child, holding a child in one's lap.

In the data from the National Board of Antiquities (MV: K39/x), answers to the sub-question of question number 58, "How did you show affection to your children" [Miten olette hellinyt lapsianne?"] turned out to be a rich source of descriptions of physical tenderness shown to children. Descriptions of physical tenderness were also the kinds of descriptions of a mother's love that appeared in the data gathered by students in the Open University, Jyväskylä. Perhaps actual, concrete, physical expressions of a mother's love were the easiest to talk and write about. A point worth noting is that most of the talk and text dealing with a mother's love in the data is produced by mothers. Perhaps they are the persons most familiar with this cultural expectation. A grandmother, aged 83, from family 152 (Finnish interviews) says, describing a good mother:

> … but more than anything else, she is kind of warm, a person who you dare to approach even if you have done something wrong, or if you had some sort of problems, you dare to go to your mother and talk about your problems and your mother understands. And then the kind of mother who shows tenderness, in my opinion you should, especially when the child is young the more you should physically show tenderness. In other words hug the child, hold the child in your lap, kiss and have physical contact and then, when the child grows older and begins to understand language and talk with you, and ask questions.
> [...mut ennen kaikkee, ett se on semmonen lämmin, jonka, semmosen äitin luo uskaltaa mennä silloin ku on töppöilly, taikka olt jotenkii, jotakii vaikeuskii, niin uskaltaa mennä sen äitin luo kertomaa asioistaa ja se äiti ymmärtää. Ja sit tuota semmonen hyvä äiti on myöskii, osoittaa sitä hellyyttä, miun mielesäni lapsell pittää pitää mitä pienemp laps on, sitä enemmän sil pittää osottaa ulkonaist hellyyttä. Tosin sanoen halat paljon, pittää sylissä, suukotella ja osottaa sellasta, sit ku se varttuu isommaks ja alkaa ymmärtää haastamist ja keskustelemista ja ossaa kysellä.]

Besides actual expressions of love and the grandmother's encouragement to readers and listeners to express their love, this excerpt also contains the

metaphor of warmth that can be interpreted as love. The good loving mother hugs and kisses her child as well as radiates the warmth of love.

One way of showing the child that she is loved is breastfeeding. In the following excerpt the mother, aged 50, from family 126 (Finnish interviews) connects breastfeeding and holding the baby to making the child feel secure. She says:

> Well a good mother makes the child feel secure and she loves her child from birth. The sense of security comes about when the mother holds the child in her arms and breastfeeds.
> [No hyvän äitin pitäs antaa lapselle turvallisuutta ja rakkautta ihan ensimmäisistä elinpäivistä lähtien. Turvallisuuden tunnehan siitä syntyy, ku äiti pitää sylissä ja imettää.]

The mother goes on by maintaining that loving an older child means setting limits, a meaning of a mother's love which I will deal with later.

> But then when the child has grown older, when things are taught to the child, then the child needs love and control.
> [Mutta sitte myöhemmin isompana, sitte ku lasta kasvatetaan, ni rakkautta ja rajat.]

Thus loving a baby means a different thing from loving an older child and, accordingly, love should be shown differently.

Some mothers maintain that physical expressions of affection are self-evident; it would be impossible to take care of a child without showing tenderness. A teacher, born in 1930 (MV: K39/627), writes:

> When the children were young they were shown affection by holding them in the lap, later by spending time together, and celebrating birthdays. I cannot imagine taking care of a child without showing affection. Affection is an everyday matter.
> [Pienenä lapsia on hellitty sylissä pitämällä, myöhemmin yhdessä olemalla, merkkipäivä muistamalla. En voi kuvitella lapsen hoitamista ilmanhellyyttä. Hellyys on jokapäiväisissä asioissa.]

The thinking of this mother is perfectly in line with the ideas expressed in leaflets disseminated by child health care centres in the 1950s at the time when this mother probably became a mother. Tähtinen (1992, 189) describes these leaflets, titled *To the mother [Äidille]*, and writes that one of the messages in them was that through physical daily care and touching the child will feel loved.

The daughter, aged 34, from family 118 (Finnish interviews) is not afraid of spoiling the child nor is she worried about the dangers of showing excessive love to your child, which expert advice warned against soon after Bowlby's attachment theory had been turned into advice for mothers. The 34-year-old daughter is probably too young to have heard the warnings against loving too much when she maintains: "You can not hug and kiss too much" ["Liian paljon ei voi halata ja suukotella."]

The belief in the importance of showing a mother's love is not held only by mothers or adults in general; children also share the same cultural belief. In a memory told by a woman, born in 1913, (MV: K39/287), her daughter shows that she knew how effective hugging can be.

Once my second born daughter whined and whined and I could not think of a way how to calm down the child. So I ask my daughter, what I should do to make you calm down. My daughter answered: Nothing, just hug me. (The children were hugged a lot in anyway, so this time was no exception). I mother took the whining child into my arms and hugged her. The child struggled for a while and then calmed down.
[Erään kerran keskimmäinen lapsista kiukutteli ja kiukutteli, eikä äiti tiennyt, millä keinoin olisi rauhoitanut tilannetta. Niinpä hän kysyi tytöltä, että mitä pitäisi tehdä, että sinusta tulisi kiltti. Tytär vastasi: Ei mitään, hali vaan minua. (Lapsia halittiin muutenkin paljon, tämä kerta ei ollut poikkeus.) Äiti otti kiukuttelevan lapsen syliinsä ja hali, Lapsi rimpuili ensin aikansa ja kohta tyyntyikin.]

All children are not or do not feel loved

According to the informants it is important for a mother to express love. This is pointed out by another grandmother, aged 74, from family 77 (Finnish interviews) who remarks that she still remembers that her mother did not show affection to her:

When the child is young (the mother should) take (the child) into her arms and caress her… Even now that I'm old I remember that I did not get love from my mother or father.
[Pienenä ottanu syliin ja pitäny hyvänä....Sitä minä vielä vanhana ihmisenä muistelen, että minä en oo saanu äidin hellyyttä ja isän.]

The generation of grandparents in Kemppainen's study (2001, 63) also express a longing for affection. The tone in the answer of another grandmother in this study is similar. A 78- year-old grandmother from family 104 (Finnish interviews) was not shown tenderness when she was a child and because of her own experiences she regards showing love and tenderness as the most important things in child-rearing. This is what she said when she was asked about the differences between the ways she was raised when she was a child and the ways in which she reared her children:

I think that I was not shown tenderness to the extent that I hoped for in my childhood home, because my mother died when I was a small child and father had no time, we children were many. I mean, the most important thing is to show your love to your child.
[Minust tuntuu että minä en saanu kotona sillä tavalla hellyyttä mitä mää olisin kaivannu, koska minun äiti oli kuollu kun mää olin pieni ja isä ei joutanu, meit oli lapsia paljo. Että siinä mielessä rakkautta minust on kaikkein tärkeintä antaa lapselle.]

One of the reasons why a child may have been left without the physical expressions of love was that there were so many children in the family that the mother just did not have time to show affection to every one of her children. A woman, born in 1933 (MV:K39/690), writes:

I often felt that I was not loved. I was one too many.
[Koin usein, ettei minua rakastettu. Olin liikaa.].

And another woman, born in 1918, (MV: K39/349) explains her situation:

Then I was the eighth child. I remember that I was never in my mother's lap, because there were two children younger than me.
[Olin siis kahdeksas lapsi. Muistan etten koskaan ollut äitini sylissä, koska minun jälkeeni oli vielä kaksi lasta.]

The scarceness of opportunities for physical expressions of love did not make the mothers happy either. A mother, born in 1925 (MV: K39/292), laments:

Showing attachment to children was something I did too little and I still have a bad conscience over it. I have often shed a tear when I have remembered incidents which I could have dealt with differently.
[Lasten helliminen jäi liian vähäiseksi, ja siitä omatuntoni soimaa. Monta kertaa on kyynel tullut silmiin, kun olen muistellut joitakin tapahtumia, joissa olisin voinut toimia toisin.]

There seems to be many ways of showing love but all of them, according to a mother born in 1934 (MV: K39/110), were not liked by all children. The sons of this mother did not like being cuddled in front of guests.

Of course we caressed them (their children) like normal parents but especially the boys they did not care for kisses. And at least if there were guests they were kind of ashamed of it.
[Tietysti hyväilimme heitä kuten normaalit vanhemmat lapsiaan mutta varsinkin pojat eivät erikoisesti suukoista välittäneet ainakin vieraiden aikana he niin kuin häpesivät hyväilyjä.]

The mother above seems especially focussed on what is normal. Parents normally love their children, show their love and boys, normally, do not like to be kissed by their mother. The belief that boys do not like to be kissed is probably connected to a larger belief complex on differences between boys and girls and to ideas that a manly man should not show his emotions, not to cry nor like being the target of expressions of his mother's love (for descriptions of a manly man see e.g. Ekenstam 2003; Kujala 2003, 26–27).

Another mother, born in 1922 (MV: K39/732), who worked as a teacher and had several children also remarks on the lack of time. She felt that expressions of love were needed and she did what she was able. However, it is not clear whether it was the children who asked to be held or her need to hold them that she is referring to.

We did not have much time to show affection, but at bedtime each child was cuddled. Also when I got home from school, I remember youngest twins especially whom I had to take into my arms for a while before I started the chores.
[Meillähän ei ollut paljon aikaa helliä, mutta nukkumaanmeno aikaan jokainen lapsi sai oman rauhoittavan hyväilynsä. Myös kun tulin koulusta, niin muistan erikoisesti nuorimmat kaksoset piti ottaa vähäksi aikaa syliin, ennen kuin aloitin kotityöt.]

A mother, born in 1927, (MV: K39/577), offers a solution to the problem of only one mother and several children needing her attention and affection. This is how she describes what she did:

I always got the smallest one to fall asleep in my arms while I was sitting in a rocking chair. In the day time when I was breastfeeding the baby in my arms and the older child was there beside me I put my arm around him/her and said, this is how

you ate when you were a baby and this is our baby and we are going to take care of him/her together. In this way there was no jealousy between them. [Pienimmän nukutin aina syliin keinutuoliin. Kun päivisin syötin vauvaa sylissäni niin edellinen oli siinä vierellä ja laitoin käteni hänen vartalonsa ympärille ja sanoin, että näin sinäkin vauvana söit ja tämä on meidän yhteinen vauvamme ja me yhdessä häntä hoidamme. Niin ei tullut mustasukkaisuutta.]

Contradiction between work and children, no time to show affection

Several informants have already pointed out that lack of time was often the reason for not showing affection. Work, either paid work outside the home or household work, took up their time. The position of daughters-in-law on Finnish farms where several generations lived at the same time has been described as having been rather difficult (e.g. Helsti 2000, 153–155). A grandmother, aged 76, from family 19 (Finnish interviews) describes the time when she was a daughter-in-law.

> ... and the child would need a lot of attention, but we had no time for that in the old days because we always had to go and work in the fields and in the cowshed. The children were cared for in the meantime, there was no time to show affection or love, no time... I can tell you, when you were a daughter-in-law in those days... you see, the daughter-in-law just had to go to do her work and leave the children, there was no time. The mother-in-law then, the grandmother, she changed them then.
> [...ja paljo seurustelua laps kaipais, mutta me ei jouettu ennen vanhaan niin paljo seurustella ku meijän piti lähteä joka paikkaan, pellolle töihin ja se navetta oli aina. Lapset hoidetiin vaan siinä sivussa, että ei niitä jouettu helliin eikä lemmiin, ei jouettu... Kato ku sillon aikaa oltiin miniänä....Kuule miniä lähti aina menehen ja lapset jättää vain sinne, ei niitä joutanu hoitaan, Vanhempi emäntä sitte, mummu, niin sitten vaihetti housut.]

The situation of the daughter-in-law above is described in a matter-of-fact manner, just stating that this was the way things were in those days. The grandmother does not express how she felt when she left her children in the care of the grandmother. A younger mother, born in 1931 (MV: K39/860), who worked as a nurse for this reason and must have been familiar with the ideas of Bowlby and his attachment theory, writes that her children suffered when their mother was not able to take care of and love them all the time.

> … because of the circumstances the children suffered from lovelessness when they were separated from their parents. And you could not leave work, you would have lost your job.
> [...että olosuhteiden pakosta lapset kärsivät rakkauden puutetta erossa vanhemmistaan. Ja työtään ei voinut jättää, olisi menettänyt virkansa.]

A stay- at-home-mother loves her child?

There are mothers who are thought to have time to show affection and love to their children. A grandmother, aged 70, from family 17 (Finnish interviews) recites a story she says she has just read in a family magazine, Kodin Kuvalehti.

> I just read in Kodin Kuvalehti a story about a family where the mother was a stay-at-home mother. She had wanted to become a stay-at-home mother after one of her children had asked her: 'Mother when will you love me so much that I won't have to

go to the daycare centre?' However I think that a child should feel that she/he is loved all the time irrespective of where she/he is at home or in the daycare.
[Luin just Kodin Kuvalehdestä perheestä jossa äiti oli kotiäiti. Hän oli halunnut kotiäidiksi sen jälkeen kun yksi hänen lapsistaan oli kysynyt että:' Millon sinä äiti rakastat minua niin paljon ettei minun tarvitse mennä tarhaan, vaan saan olla kotona sinun kanssasi?' Kuitenkin mun mielestä lapsen pitäs tuntea, että häntä rakastetaan koko ajan yhtä paljon vaikka hän olisi tarhassa tai kotona.]

The story the grandmother said she read in the magazine is very interesting. I too have heard the story though I did not read it in a magazine. This story is almost like the 'urban legend' of a female hitchhiker dressed in black who disappears during the drive. The source of this story is not so important here, but the message is. The message seems to echo the magazine Kotiliesi in 1947 (Heikkilä 1998). It tells us several things: Firstly, it suggests that working mothers who leave their children at the daycare centre do not love their children. Secondly, that the children of these working mothers suffer from the lack of a mother's love and even ask their mother to love them. It is part of the idea of a child, that the child is loved by her mother (see the discussion above). The idea of an innocent child begging for a mother's love evokes strong emotions and that I think is the aim of the stories of this kind. A mother who does not love her child is a bad mother. It must be noted that the grandmother who tells the story in the interview seems to be suspicious of the story, but she strongly agrees with the idea that a child should be loved.

A mother loves her child even if you can not always see it

A a mother's love is not always visible though all mothers love their children. A son, aged 20 from family 150 (Finnish interviews) says when asked to describe a good mother:

> Well kind of loving and caring, well like all mothers are even if you can't always see it. But she should not scold you for nothing.
> [No, se o semmone joka o niinku rakastava ja huolehtivaine, no sellane ku varmaa kaikki äidit o, vaikka ei se aina siltä tunnukkaa. Ei se kyl sais ihan turhasta mäkättääkää.]

The son seems to be saying: Whatever the mother does, it is interpreted as love. Even if his mother scolds him for nothing, he seems to imply that she must do it out of love. The ideas of a 'mother' and 'love' are so intertwined that they are inseparable.

A loving mother gives...

Loving is spending time with the child

"Showing love was that we did all kinds of things together, bought fruit, ice cream and sweets…" ["Hellimistä oli se, että teimme kaikenlaista yhdessä, ostimme hedelmiä, jäätelöä ja makeisia...] writes a woman born in 1934 (MV: K39/110). Doing things together with your children, spending time with them,

is often interpreted as a sign of affection and commitment and seems to be valued by many. A farmer's wife born in 1925 (MV: K39/406) describes several ways of showing affection and doing things with her children.

> I have shown my affection by holding them in my lap and reading and telling fairy tales and nursery rhymes. By touching their hair when I passed them by. In the evenings by saying the evening prayer. By skiing with them along the tracks they had made. By teaching them old games...
> [Lapsia olen hellinyt pitämällä sylissä ja lukemalla ja kertomalla satuja ja loruja" Silittämällä ohikulkiessa tukkaa. Iltasilla rukoilemalla iltarukouksen. Hiihtämällä heidän tekemäänsä latua heidän kanssaan, opettamalla vanhoja leikkejä...]

Showing affection by buying and not by buying things

Not all children see money and presents as the only sign of parental love. The 19-year-old daughter from family 116 says: "… also show their love in other ways besides money" ["...rakastavat muullakin kuin rahalla.] She is talking about both parents, not just a mother and her love, but I though this excerpt is worth presenting here as I think it reflects a more general belief in our culture that money is dirty and it should not have any relation with love. This implies that if your parents give you money and not their time and attention, they do not love you properly. Thus there are right and proper ways of showing love.

Loving with food

The practice of giving the child treats as a reward for a job well-done has been reported by Kemppainen (2001, 74). Treats were used also in showing affection and pampering the children. A mother, born in 1927 (MV: K39/761), describes her activities:

> I showed my love by bringing home ice cream when I had to attend meetings of the board of directors of the dairy for several hours, I brought home ice cream, and bananas and doughnuts also were treats.
> [Hellin jäätelöllä, kun jouduin olemaan Meijerin hallituksen kokouksissa useamman tunnin, toin kotia tullessa jäätelöä, myös banaani ja munkit olivat herkkua.]

The mother seems to have felt that her being away from her children could be interpreted as lovelessness, and to ensure that her children knew she loved them she brings them ice cream.

Another mother, born in 1933(MV: K39/ 436) showed her love by arranging surprises and making everyday meals special.

> I tried to think up small surprises, for instance, and an extra special dessert in the middle of the week.
> [Koetin keksiä pieniä yllätyksiä, esim. erikois hyvää jälkiruokaa keskellä viikkoa...]

By providing special desserts this mother let her children know that they are special and loved.

Paying positive attention to the child

A mother's love can be shown by giving material things, food, money and the like. A mother, born in 1934 (MV: K39/ 110), suggests that even paying attention to and noticing the child is needed and understood as loving. She writes: "A child must be loved and cared about and noticed positively. [Lasta pitää rakastaa ja hänestä välittää ja hänet myönteisesti huomioida]. The meaning here comes very close to spending time with the child, and both meanings are connected to official advice from the period of psychological educational morality, and especially normative-maturative psychological thinking, which exhorts parents to enjoy their child and demonstrate their enjoyment to the child (Tähtinen 1992, 201). Moreover, this particular mother, who was trained as a teacher, was probably familiar with the explanation that the children who behave badly at school are only asking to be noticed.

Seeing after the child, knowing the whereabouts of the child

A loving mother knows were her child is. A mother, aged 43 (Finnish interviews), says:

> So, if you love your child, then the older the child becomes and these limits become looser and the child is allowed to go about more freely, then the parents must see to that they know where the child is and with whom.
> [Niin jos rakastaa lastaan ni sitte mitä isommaks se tulee ja nää rajat tosiaan laajenee ja laps saa liikkumavapautta, ni vanhempien täytyy huolehtia siitä, että ne tietää missä se laps on ja kenen kanssa.].

A good mother according to a 23-year-old son (Finnish interviews), is

> of course loving, gentle and caring and all things that most mothers automatically surely are.[Tottakai rakastava, hellä ja huolehtiva ja kaikki ne mitä varmasti suurin osa äideistä on kyllä automaattisestiki.]

I interpret his expression 'caring' as carrying the same meaning as was expressed by the mother above as the need to know where the child is.

A loving mother gives feedback, setting limits is showing love

A belief found already in Ruoppila (1945, 156) is that loving one's child means setting limits and disciplining the child. According to Ruoppila, the belief comes from the Bible and it refers especially to corporal punishment. The belief is often expressed in the form of a proverb "Spare the rod, spoil the child". [Joka vitsaa säästää, se lastaan vihaa].

Today's parents, though familiar with the belief, do not all accept it as such and even reverse it (see Kemppainen 2001, 88). A mother, aged 48, from family 121 (Finnish interviews) contemplates on the proverb "Spare the rod, spoil the child" and its meaning:

"That is from the Bible, I think it comes from the Bible. And you might think that the wisdom lies in the thought that a person who is not given feedback is not loved… Well, I think that if you love your child you do give feedback."["Siinä on tuo raamatun, minun käsittääkseni raamatullinen tämä sanonta. Ja vois ajatella, että siinä viisaus on, että semmmonen ihminen, joka jää ilman palautetta, ni sitä ei rakasteta... Että nyt on lähinnä minusta niinku, joka rakastaa lastaan, niin se antaa oikean palautteen."]

Thus giving feedback, pointing out to the child where she has done wrong is one of the meanings given to a mother's love. As a daughter, aged 18, from family 28 (Finnish interviews) says: "And like the proverb says, a mother who loves her child also punishes her."["Ja niinhän se sananlaskukin sanoo, että se joka rakastaa lastaan, myös rankaisee tätä."]

A 58-year-old mother from family 72 (Finnish interviews) offers a new slant on to this love-discipline connection when she says: "Disciplining is also love -it brings security". ["Kurinpito on myös rakkautta - se antaa turvallisuutta."] A loving mother sets the limits to her child and so the child feels secure.

Giving comfort, believing in the child

One of the problems often associated with a mother's love from the 19th century onwards is that a mother might spoil her children because she loves them so much. A mother born in 1925 (MV: K39/606) writes:

I don't think I have spoilt my children. When they were babies I let them cry much more than children today need to. But I often said to them that I love you, that I believe in you and that I will help you if you're in trouble.
[Jag tror inte att jag skämt bort mina barn. Som spädbarn fick de skrika mycket mera än nutidens småbarn behöver göra. Men jag sade ofta att jag älskade dem och jag tror på dig och jag hjäpler dig om du misslyckas.]

This mother defends herself against possible allegations of spoiling her children by pointing out that she let her children cry. She probably followed the child-rearing advice according to which the mother should feed the child following a strict schedule and not to let the child decide when to eat and in that way control the mother (see Tähtinen 1992, 156). The mother, however, seems to be aware that modern mothers are told to do otherwise and she is perhaps a little worried if the way she treated her children would today be judged loveless. So she explains how she showed her love by simply telling her children that she loved them and believed in them.

The power of a mother's love

What I have written about a mother's love above describes this love as a fairly mundane, practical everyday matter. There does not seem to be anything as dramatic as the scenes from Harry Potter or Kalevala. However, the informants also describe meanings pertaining to deeper, cultural beliefs and myths.

Loving is unconscious, natural

The literature often presents a mother's love as natural and irrational (e.g. Badinter 1981, 10; Rossi 1993, 193). In the child-care manuals explored by Marshall (1991, 69) loving the child is supposed to take place irrespective of the mother's consciousness; a mother's love just erupts. A 47-year-old mother from family 110 maintains that loving is the most important characteristic of a good mother: "There can of course be many kinds of good mothers but the most important thing is that she loves her child and does her best. The good mother is not necessarily… [Se voi olla hyvin monenlainen, mutta tärkeintä on, että se rakastaa sitä lastaan ja tekee tietysti parhaansa. Välttämättä hyvä äiti ei ole se...]. The interviewer elaborates the question further and asks: "Do you think that a good mother is an educator or is it more a question of love? [Liittykö hyvään äitiin paljon kasvattajaa vai onko se enimmäkseen sitä rakkautta?] This question pertains to the reluctance of talking about child-rearing (kasvatus) as purposeful, conscious activity. This reluctance has been noted by researchers (Hoikkala 1993; Kemppainen 2001, 64, 113–114). In her answer the mother reflects on the matter:

> It must be more a question of loving, but upbringing is also needed, but I don't think… I think that at least I am not conscious of it.
> ["Kyllä se varmasti eniten on sitä rakkautta, mutta tuleehan siihen tietysti sitä kasvattajaaakin, mutta ei varmaankaan. Must tuntuu, että minä en ainakaan ajattele, että se tulee niin tietosesti."]

Thus the mother connects a mother's love with not especially thinking and reflecting on what you are doing as a mother; the unconscious part of mothering is love.

Loving makes the difference, makes upbringing effective

During the period of religious educational morality, described by Tähtinen (1992), love was thought to make upbringing effective. Likewise in the period of psychological educational morality loving the child was the basic premise (ibid. 201, 210, 215). Reima (1912), in his advice leaflet to parents from the period of religious educational morality titled *Rakkaus kasvatuksen palveluksessa [Love in the service of child-rearing]*, gives several examples of how loving will make the difference in child-rearing. Reima's point (ibid. 10) is that by loving their children parents make their children love them and listen to their advice. The contemporary American informants in Hays' (1996) study suggest the opposite: it is the fact that the child loves her mother that makes the mother love the child. However, all seem to agree on the belief that love makes a difference in child-rearing.

A grandmother, aged 68, from family 56 (Finnish interviews) agrees with the idea of love's effectiveness and suggests that children should be "loved both on good days and bad days" ["rakkaus sitten kaikin puolin niin hyvässä kuin pahasssa"]. Moreover, she maintains that "love is more effective than anger"["Rakkaudella saa enemmän kuin vihalla"]. A mother, aged 53, from

family 23 (Finnish interviews) takes an even more definite stand on love's effectiveness when she says:

> I think that love is all. You should have an attitude and a grasp on of upbringing which I would call firm but loving.
> [Minusta rakkaus tekee kaiken. Pitäs olla asenne ja kasvatusote ns. lempeänluja.]

The mothers above and the grandmother below all talk about trying to find a balance or a way of combining a mother's love and discipline. The grandmother, aged 77, from family 121 (Finnish interviews) gives an interpretation of the proverb "spare the rod, spoil the child" and says that the proverb should not be taken literally because love is more effective, it makes things better.

> Well you should not take it (the proverb)... well I'll tell you inso many words, well, should not be taken literally only metaphorically, I mean, love is the best way to make things better, if there is something to be made better.
> [No sitä ei pie käsittee, minä sanon monella sanalla, tuota, justiinsa noin niinku se sanotaan, vaan kuvaannollisesti ottoo huomioon, että kyllä se paras on rakkaus, joka parantas, jos vaan kerran parantaa pittää.]

A mother, born in 1927 (MV: K39/ 577) writes emphasising the power of a mother's love:

> If you love your children and you are with them you'll have no problems with them.
> [Jos rakastaa lapsiaan ja aina on heidän luonaan niin ei heidän kanssaan ole vaikeuksia.]

The effectivity of a mother's love is not always evident as a grandmother, aged 76, from family 123 (Finnish interviews) suggests. She says:

> ...you need love I should say, love even if you feel that it does not bring any results.
> [... eiköhän siihen tarvita sitä rakkautta, ja rakkautta sittenkin, vaikka se joskus tuntuisi semmoselta, että se ei tuottaisi tulosta.]

Besides being the force that makes child-rearing effective, a mother's love is also the motivation for care. A grandmother aged 88, from family 23 (Finnish interviews) describes a good mother and the mother's motivation:

> A good mother loves her children and love is the reason behind everything she does.
> [Hyvä äiti rakastaa lapsiaan, ja rakkaudesta johtuu kaikki hyvät työt.]

One of the uses of a mother's love is suggested by a 43-year-old father, from family 107 (Finnish interviews):

> And yes, well, a good mother teaches the child, especially when the child is young, with love and tenderness. Because tenderness plays an important role in upbringing.
> [Ja kyllä, tuota, hyvä äiti opettaa lasta varsinki sillon kun se on pieni sillä äidin rakkaudella ja hellyydellä. Sillä hellyydellä on suuri osuus siihen kasvatukseen…]

This idea of teaching the child with love comes very close to Reima's (1915) thinking that a child is more apt to listen to a loving mother.

Love guides the mother to do the right thing

The informants also expressed the belief that love guides the mother to do the right thing and consequently deeds done lovingly are well. A 50-year-old mother from family 116 (Finnish interviews) explains:

> But this is how I understand it; a good mother loves her children. That is the most important thing, and then love guides her in the upbringing of her children.
> [Mutta kyllä minä näkisin näin, että hyvä äiti rakastaa lapsiaan. Se on tärkeintä ja sitten rakkaus ohjaa siinä lasten kasvatuksessa.]

A son, aged 23, from family 151 (Finnish interviews), replies when he is asked about differences in the ways child-rearing between him, his parent and his grandparents, states that he does not disagree with the older generations because he thinks that as long as the parents love their child they cannot do wrong.

> No, no I do not disagree, because I think that, well, that the child's own parents love him and they do as they see best in the child-rearing.
> [Ei, ei oo, koska mä oon sitä meiltä, että, niin, että kyllä omat vanhemmat niin kuitenki sillä tavalla rakastaa lapsiansa, ja ne teköö niinku ne parhaaksi näköö siinä.]

The child comes first, unselfishness

 "The children mean everything to me. I love them." ["Lapset ovat minulle kaikki kaikessa. Rakastan heitä."], writes a mother born in 1924 (MV: K39/688). Only three informants in the Finnish interview data said that a good mother is self-sacrificing. However, it seems that this belief might be embedded in the meanings of a mother's love. The precedence of motherhood over all other interests in a woman's life was noted in the discourse of the 'good mother' by Susan, the informant in Raddon's (2002) study. Likewise, Hays (1996) reports how stay-at-home mothers in her study saw themselves as opposing the contemporary logic of self-interest by being unselfish and putting the child first. Such unselfish caring work by mothers has been explained as the reason for the higher morals of mothers (e.g. Helén 1997). Leffers (1993) explored the idea that maternal thinking, including a mother's love and responding to the needs of others, promotes moral reasoning in mothers. According to Leffers (1993, 66) total unselfishness does not exemplify the highest level of moral reasoning. Moral reasoning of the highest level also includes looking after one's own needs and not self-sacrifice.

A 47-year-old mother from family 102 (Finnish interviews) suggests another aspect of a mother's love. Even though the mother should love her children and give them precedence, she should also allow the father to participate in parenting. This is what she says when she is asked to describe a good mother:

> She is kind of loving... she loves her children and cares about them and I would say that the child comes first and after that everything else.. And of course she should also consider the father, so as not to be terribly selfish ... selfish and make room also for the father to be the father of the child, to participate in the care of the child.

> [Se on sellanen rakastava... lapsiaan rakastava ja niistä välittävä ja sanosin ensisijasesti on se lapsi ja sitten tulee muut… Tietenkin pitäs ottaa myös isä huomioon ettei äiti olis hirveen itsekäs... itsekäs, että antaa myös tilaa isälle olla sen lapsen isä, osallistua siihen hoitoon.]

The kind of selfishness the mother above is talking about has been called maternal gate-keeping (see e.g. De Luccie 1995). The mother above seems to be saying that the all-encompassing love of a mother can turn into selfish gatekeeping.

Psychological a mother's love

Safety, security, talking/writing about basic trust

Mother, aged 50, from family 126 (Finnish interviews) describes a phenomenon which, during the period of cognitive and humanistic forms of psychological educational morality of child-rearing advice, was named basic trust (Tähtinen 1992, 210, 215). The mother says:

> Well a good mother makes the child feel secure and she loves her child from birth. The feeling of security comes about when the mother holds the child in her arms and breastfeeds. But then when the child has grown older, when things are taught to the child, then the child needs love and control.
> [No hyvän äitin pitäs antaa lapselle turvallisuutta ja rakkautta ihan ensimmäisistä elinpäivistä lähtien. Turvallisuuden tunnehan siitä syntyy, ku äiti pitää sylissä ja imettää. Mutta sitte myöhemmin isompana, sitte ku lasta kasvatetaan, ni rakkautta ja rajat.]

Basic trust describes the child's relationship with the surrounding world and the most important part of this relationship is the loving mother who cares for the child in a way that creates trust in the child. For instance, the idea of basic trust seems to be contained in the *Vanhempain koulu [Parenting school]* leaflets published by The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare in 1985 and analysed by Vuori (2001, 147–150).

Unconditional love

A good mother according to a 19-year-old daughter from family 101 is "one who loves and does not desert - whatever happens."["joka rakastaa, eikä hylkää - tapahtuipa mitä hyvänsä."]. A mother, born in 1934 (MV: K39/110) writes:

> The main thing is that the child feels that she is loved despite how she behaves. Something the child says or does might be naughty or stupid but the child is not.
> [Pääasia on se, että lapsi tuntee, että hänestä pidetään ihan riippumatta siitä, miten hän käyttäytyy. Jokin lapsen sana tai teko voi olla tuhma tai typerä, mutta lasta itseään ei saa siksi leimata.].

Thus a mother's love is unconditional; the mother must love her child irrespective of how the child behaves.

Respecting the child's independence

A mother can love her child too much and then love becomes suffocating and possessive (see e.g. Grant 1998, 210–211). A mother, aged 47 from family 74 (Finnish interviews) contemplates this danger:

> The first thing to come to mind is that she (a good mother) loves her child terribly much. She does not try to control. She supports her child's decisions and actions. Well, I suppose the kind of motherwho discusses things a lot with her child and is interested in her child's life. Doesn't shackle the child. How can you differentiate between shackling and loving? I don't know.
> [Tulee mieleen ekana, että rakastaa hirveesti lastaan. Ei pyri ohjailemaan. Tukee niitä lapsen päätöksiä, niitä tekemisiä. Vissiin semmonen, joka keskustelee paljon lapsensa kanssa ja on kiinnostunut lapsen asioista. Eikä kahlitse. Miten voi erotella kahlitsemisen ja rakastamisen? Enpä tiiä.].

It is not possible to love too much

One mother, born in 1925 (MV: K39/428), was not worried over loving her child too much when she gave birth to her son after having been childless for thirteen years. She writes:

> It was a Great Event and brought a new, longed for member to our family.
> Kalle Österlund's advice:[29] Anyway I will give you two pieces of advice. The first: do not dress the child too warmly and the second: love him as much as you can, because you can never bee loved too much in this world!
> [Se oli Suuri Tapaus ja toi perheeseemme toivotun jäsenen. Kalle Österlundin ohje: Siinä tapauksessa annan teille kaksi ohjetta. Ensiksi: älkää pukeko lasta liian lämpimästi ja toiseksi: r a k a s t a k a a häntä niin paljon kuin osaatte, sillä maailmassa ei saa koskaan liikaa rakkautta!]

Though the writer refers to the advice of a paediatrician, the text makes it clear that she loved her son and did not think of a mother's love as something that could be suffocative.

The consequences of a mother's love

According to Reima (1912) the most important aim of loving one's child is to make him love his parents, and a loving child will be easy to raise. Today's informants do not seem to aim at making the child easier to raise, instead, they seem to consider the ability to love worth aiming at as such. Regarding love as important in child-rearing does not have an instrumental aim.

The child in turn learns to love

A daughter, aged 19, from family 45 (Finnish interviews) explains the consequences of a mother's love like this:

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[29] Kalle Österlund was a famous Finnish paediatrician, who even had a TVshow of his own.

The good mother loves her child and in this way the child will learn to love his/her children.
[Hyvä äiti rakastaa lastaan ja näin lapsikin oppii rakastamaan myöhemmin omia lapsiaan.]

This thinking is in line with ideas that a child learns various things by following a model. The whole idea of a mother's love also has an interactive meaning in it, although the mother is expected to love her child regardless of the child's feelings.

A mother, born in 1939 (MV: K39/296), shows similarities in her thinking with the mothers of Hays' (1996) study. Like those mothers she seems to consider a mother's love as a way of making the world a better place. She writes, after having first emphasised the importance of love in child-rearing:

I have tried to show them love, and it has not even been difficult. I hope they are able to love, too.
[Rakkautta olen pyrkinyt heille jakamaan, eikä se ole ollut edes vaikeata. Toivon, että heilläkin olisi sitä jakaa.]

The child loves his mother

One of the possible consequences, already expressed by Reima (1912) is that the child learns to love her mother. Mother's love and the fact the he loved his mother are still remembered by a 71- year-old grandfather from family 18 (Finnish interviews) when he describes a good mother:

The little my mother reared me. I felt she loved me, and I also loved my own mother.
[Se vähä, mitä mun äiti mua kasvatti, mä tunsin rakkautta hänen taholtaan, ja mä myöskin rakastin omaa äitiäni.]

Summary

Below I will present a list of all the meanings of a mother's love I found in the data as well as some concluding comments on a mother's love.

* A loving mother shows her affection
  Showing one's love, tenderness, physically for a small child, holding a child in one's lap.
  All children are not or do not feel loved
  Contradiction between work and children, no time to show affection
  A stay at- home-mother loves her children?
  A mother loves her child even if you can not always see it
* A loving mother gives.
  Loving is spending time with the child
  Paying positive attention to the child
  Showing affection by buying things and not by buying things to the child
  Loving with food
  Seeing after the child, knowing the whereabouts of the child

> *A loving mother gives feedback, setting limits is showing love*
> *Giving comfort, believing in the child*

* The power of a mother's love
> *Loving is unconscious, natural*
> *Loving makes the difference, makes upbringing effective*
> *Love guides the mother to do the right thing*
> *The child comes first, unselfishness*

* "Psychological" a mother's love
> *Safety, security, talking/writing about basic trust*
> *Unconditional love*
> *Respecting the child's independence*

* It is not possible to love too much
* The consequences of a mother's love
> *The child in turn learns to love*
> *The child loves his mother*

There are several contradictions in these meanings attributed to a mother's love. A mother's love appears to be both controlled and uncontrolled. The mother is not supposed to be able to stop her feelings of love towards her child. This feeling emerges naturally and unconsciously. However, to have this feeling is a 'must' for a good mother. Yet, a mother's love is controlled in the sense that it is used to achieve aims in child-rearing. In fact, the effectiveness of maternal child-rearing is presented as depending on the existence of this feeling. Moreover, a mother must be able to limit her love, allow the child to become independent and allow the father also love the child.

It seems very likely that a mother's love is an "all-purpose" general belief in the Finnish culture. A mother's love is used as an explanation for various things; it seems to be built into a mother's every activity, in fact, certain other feelings, like hate or anger, seem more or less forbidden to mothers. Moreover, on the basis of the previous literature, the belief in a mother's love appears to cover contemporary western cultures in general (Hays 1996). As western theories of child development and parenting, for instance, the attachment theory, spread more globally, so will, where it already has not done so, the belief in a mother's love.

7.2 A father's time and how it is spend with children

When the informants in the Finnish interviews described a good father the most often mentioned characterising belief was that a father should have time to spend with his children. The number of informants who mentioned this was considerably lower than the number of informants who talked about a mother's love. A father's time was talked about by 68 (18%) informants.

Time to us is mostly a quantifiable resource, the meaning of which seems to lie in how many hours and minutes we have at our disposal Likewise, the

first studies on family time treated time as something the meaning of which resided in the number of hours and minutes spend on an activity. (Daly 1996). However, conceptions and meanings of time are various. The conception of time as linear and measurable became more widely adopted in Finland during the 19th century with the coming of railways and timetables (Ollila 2000). But althought time outside the home was linear, time within the family remained cyclical, and was mostly the mother's time (Gills 1996, 87). Hochschild (1997, 5, 77) writes about child time, by which she means time that the child schedules. Living according to child time means letting the child sleep and eat when she needs to. Eeva Jokinen (1994, 78) writes about the 'feminine-maternal' conception of time, which is also cyclical. Hareven (1982) differentiates between 'family time' and 'industrial time'. Family time is the time of the woman at home, who can in most cases control the pace of her work. The husband, who works outside the family, is geared to 'industrial time'. One of the problems facing contemporary parents working outside the home is how to synchronise 'time' at home, including child time, family time and 'feminine-maternal' time, with the linear, industrial time of the work place.

Daly (1996, 467) suggests that mothers and fathers assign different meanings to the time spent with children. For fathers, time spent at work is time taken away from the family and making time for children is necessary. For mothers time with children is more taken for granted, it requires no special arrangements. This may explain why 'time' receives such strong emphasis in connection with fathers, even though working mothers probably experience the same lack of time.

Time is often emphasised in studies on fatherhood. Present-day British fathers experience a tension between time with the children and time at work. These fathers would like to have more time to spend with their children but work takes up most of their time (Henwood & Procter 2003). Likewise, in Daly's (1996) study, the 32 interviewed American fathers described a good father as someone who has time to spend with his children. Time seemed to have several meaning for these fathers. These meanings were, according to Daly, related to the working patterns in family as well as to the age of the child (ibid. 472). When the father worked full-time and the mother had a part-time job or was a stay-at-home mother, the father's perception was that irrespective of his beliefs in the importance of sharing parenting responsibilities, the mother had more time to spend in the home. When the both parents were working full-time, the fathers were more involved with their children, but they found the involvement less enjoyable. The fathers' desire to spend time with the children increased as the children grew older. (ibid. 473).

Hochschild (1997, 132) discusses the meaning of the expression 'family man'. According to her, a 'family man' has traditionally meant a father who works hard to provide for his family. Today 'family man' has negative overtones of a worker who is not seriously dedicated to his job. This meaning of 'family man' implicitly questions the worker's masculinity.

According to Jallinoja (2000, 12), time in family life has a symbolic meaning. It is taken to symbolise what each member of the family sees as

important. Likewise, time is a symbol of commitment in the workplace (Hochschild 1997, 69).

Kuivakangas (2002, 43–45) discusses the connections between family time and the well-being of children, and describes the life of a contemporary family as one of never-ending negotiations. Family time is loaded with expectations of togetherness and nostalgia. The nostalgic image of a whole family spending time happily together gets compared with the present reality of hasty meals and parents working overtime. However, the core of the problem with family time is perhaps not with time itself; instead, the high, unfulfilled expectations of family members may be the reason for the dissatisfaction. The older informants of this study describe their father as always working and point out that it was necessary for the family's survival. Yet, at the same time the absent fathers of today get described in very negative terms. The fathers in Daly's (1996, 473) described themselves as being different from their fathers because they wanted to spend time with their children, while at the time when their fathers were fathering this was not considered important. Hochschild (ibid. 63) describes a father who 'was a better father at work' because he was nearly always there. His teenaged son now asked where his father had been all through his childhood years. The expectations of where a good father should spend most of his time had probably changed since the time this father was a young man. His son now expressed the present-day expectation of a father who has time for his children.

Research has also focussed on the time fathers spend with their children. Lamb et al. (1985) proposed that paternal involvement, i.e. the time fathers spend in connection with their child, could be divided into three components for analytical purposes. This division is based on the intensity of the involvement. The most intensive activity of the father is called *interaction or engagement* and it occurs when the father has direct contact with his child in caregiving and shared activities. The father can also be *potentially available* for interaction by being present or accessible to the child whether or not interaction is occurring. The least intensive and the most covert type of involvement is labelled *responsibility*. When being responsible, the father makes sure that the child is taken care of and arranges for resources to be available for the child. Time spent being responsible is the most difficult to measure.

As pointed out in the discussion above, besides its practical everyday meanings, time has a symbolic meaning around the idea of commitment. Below I take the commitment to mean involvement, and report in the summarising section how the three components of father's involvement fit the descriptions of how fathers spend their time with their children.

Most of the informants who produced descriptions of a father's time and how it is spend with children are drawn from the National Board of Antiquities data. They are mostly about the same age as the grandparents in the Finnish interview data and the descriptions of a father's time with his children are reminiscences from their own childhoods. Thus the data does not consists of descriptions of a father's time and activities with children as these are today;

instead, the time span covered runs approximately from the 1930s to 1994, hence the main focus is on how things used be in the past.

The aim here is not to capture changes or similarities in the descriptions by the different generations, but it should be noted that several informants point to the fact that modern fathers are different. In the words of a 75-year-old grandmother, from family 68:

> ... these modern fathers are so nice, they take care of their children much more than the fathers of my generation did. I mean, I'm not sure what would a good father be like. I just admire the young fathers who take care of their children.
> [...et nykyajan isät on erittäin mukavia siinä, että ne huolehtii paljon enemmän kuin minun sukupolven isät. Että tuota, mää en osaa siinä mielessä sanoo mikä oilis hyvä isä. Mää vaan ihannoin noita nuoria isiä, jotka tuolla hoitaa lapsiaan.]

Caretaker fathers

The data contained descriptions of the *father's direct involvement in child-care activities*. A father, born in 1906, (MV: K39/401) tells of the time when his son was a baby. Later he became a single father.

> ...when he was a small child I could take care of him and caress him as much as I wanted to, that was a good time, when my wife took no interest in our son.
> [... aivan pienenä sain hoitaa ja helliä häntä mielin määrin ja se oli hyvää aikaa, kun vaimoni ei kiinnostunut pojasta.]

The mother of the son left the family and the informant took care of the son alone. During the war when he was sent to the front, taking care of his son became really difficult. The child was placed in an orphanage and when, on a leave the father went to see him, he found the child sick and nearly starving. After this incident the father took the boy to a farm owned by people he knew. On the farm the son was well looked after while the father was at war. From the story told by this father it is obvious that war-time society considered single fathers an exception.

Though shared parenting is regarded as a modern way of child-rearing, there have always been families and parents who have shared the care of the children. The mother who describes the care of her infant son below is the same mother who was quoted in the section 'A mother's love'. She is the mother of the family who were childless for thirteen years before their son was born. In this family, parenting was shared. The mother, born in 1925 (MV: K39/428), writes:

> We both took care of the boy. The father also participated in the 'night shift'.
> [Hoidimme poikaa molemmat, myös isä osallistui 'yövuoroihin'].

A mother's care and a father's care are often compared in the descriptions of parenting. According to the nuclear family ideology fathers work and mothers care, yet the mother is often described as busy working at home, strong and effective. Although the mother is at home she does not always have time for the child (Katvala 2001, 63). A mother, born in 1925 (MV: K39/406), writes about a father who had more time than the mother to hold the children in his lap:

> He (the father) held us in his lap more than our mother. Mother never had the time I suppose.
> [Enemmän hän meitä sylissä piti kuin äiti. Äiti ei kai koskaan ehtinyt].

Often it was the father who, after coming home from work, had time to sit down with the child in his lap, as a mother, born in 1923 (MV: K39/533), remembers:

> ... and the when he (the father) got home from the work he often held us in his lap.
> [... ja isä töistä tultuaan piti meitä paljon sylissä.]

Some informants describe situations when *the mother was away and the father took care of the children.* On the Finnish farms taking care of the cows has traditionally been a woman's job (Helsti 2000, 101–103). If a woman had children she had to arrange for the care of the children during the time she spent in the cowshed. Often the caretaker was the grandmother or mother-in-law. The children could be left to take care of themselves or the oldest child was held responsible for the care of the younger ones. (Korkiakangas 1996, 156–158). In the family of one mother, born in 1931 (MV: K39/ 640), the father was the babysitter while the mother milked the cows in the mornings:

> Father was with the children when mother was working in the cowshed, and he often made breakfast so that it was ready when mother got back from the cowshed.
> [Isä oli navettatöiden aikaana lasten kanssa, ja teki useasti aamiaisen siksi kun äiti palasi askareilta.]

In the descriptions above, the father's participation in child-rearing is mostly a 'must' (with the exception of the story told by the mother MV: K39/428). The mother is not there and the father is the only person available. Participation in child-care was not in general expected of fathers in the descriptions of father's activities. A different tone is used when the father's participation is talked about in connection with the image of a good father. Here the father should participate, not because the mother is not available but because it is what good fathers do. A 39-year-old mother, from family 61 (Finnish interviews), says:

> ... a good father is with his children, he participates in the upbringing of the children.
> [...hyvä isä on lasten kanssa, on mukana lasten kasvatuksessa].

It is possible to interpret the description of a mother, aged 46 from family 58 (Finnish interviews), to mean that though *the fathers should participate* they do not always do so:

> In my opinion the father should be involved, and always, in the child-rearing at home, so that the father is not hanging out somewhere else... and doing things together with the children.
> [Isän pitäs minun mielest olla ja aina siinä kotikasvatukses, ettei isä taas huitele muualla... ja lasten kans touhuta yhessä.]

Joint activities by fathers and children

Fathers did not just participate in childcare, but they spend time in helping their children in various ways, teaching them and participating in all kinds of leisure activities. In these descriptions the father does not get compared with mother. The informants do not first tell us what they did with their mother and then describe what they did with their father. Here the focus is on the child and her father.

A mother, born in 1943 (MV: K39/363), writes about how *the father helped the children with* school-related activities: "The father 'coached' the children for the secondary school entrance examination." ["Isä 'preppasi' oppikouluun pyrkivät lapsensa."].

A mother, born in 1934 (MV: K39/110) and who spend her childhood in Helsinki, needed her *father's assistance* in getting to school. This is how she describes her father's behaviour:

> Because I easily felt sick on a tram my father, without a complaint, got up early during the school year and took to me to Kulosaari in his car, so that I was able to finish my year there. I got back home by myself. My father made no fuss over this sacrifice, he only said that it was important for him to practise driving because he had only got a car and a driver's licence when he was already fifty.
> [Kun minä tulin helposti pahoinvoivaksi raitiovaunussa, isä mukisematta nousi koko lukuvuoden ajan varhain ja vei minut autolla Kulosaareen, että sain käydä luokkani loppuun. Kotiin päin tulin sitten itse. Mitään numeroa isä ei tästä uhrauksestaan tehnyt, vaan totesi ajamiseen tottumisen olevan hänellekin tärkeää, kun vasta viisikymppisenä oli hankkinut auton ja ajokortin.]

The impression one gets from the description is that the daughter considers her father's behaviour as exceptionally nice and unusual.

The father spends time also in teaching the child various things. In the Finnish interview data teaching as a belief in the image of a good father was mentioned more by the generation of grandparents than by the two younger generations. Likewise, most of the descriptions of the father teaching the child something quoted here come from the National Board of Antiquities data or from the grandparents in the Finnish interview data and are thus produced by people born before World War II.

A farmer's wife, born in 1934 (MV: K39/135), has warm memories of her father and his teachings:

> My father taught me to say evening prayers. I remember father's lap. It was so nice sitting there listening to the sound of his voice when he was talking with guests, men from the neighbourhood. That's where I heard all kinds of philosophing!
> [Isä opetti iltarukouksen. Isän sylin muistan. Oli mukava istua isän sylissä, kuunnella puheäänen kuminaa, korva rintaa vasten, kun hän puheli vieraittensa, naapurin miesten kanssa. Siinä sitä kuunteli filosofoinnit!]

Fathers taught also practical things, especially to their sons. A boatbuilder, born in 1920 (MV: K39/233), describes the teachings of his father who taught him various tricks ,which were probably needed in his trade:

My father died when I was fourteen. When he knew he was dying he tried to give me all kinds practical tips on how to do things, he was a very handy man. I had had a knife of my own since the age of four.
[Isäni kuoli ollessani 14-vuotias. Kun hän tiesi sammuvansa yritti hän minulle selostaa käytännön työkikkoja erittäin kätevä kun oli. Oma puukkohan minulla on ollut nelivuotiaasta.]

In particular, fathers taught all kinds of men's work to their sons. A father, born in 1932 (MV: K39/424), writes:

We were taught all kinds of jobs which needed to be done at home. When possible we were always with father. In his spare time, for example, father made sledges for logs. We, his sons made the same in miniature.
[Meille opetettiin kaikkia kodin töitä. Olimme aina mukana isän kanssa, jos se suinkin oli mahdollista. Puhdetöinä isä teki mm. tukkirekiä. Me poikaset teimme niitä pienoiskoossa.]

An activity described and remembered by many informants was *reading and telling stories.* A mother, born in 1943 (MV: K39/363), who in her childhood memories writes only about her father, remembers the bedtime tales her father told her and her younger siblings:

The bedtime stories father told us (the flight of the animals, Matthew the strong, the black birds), was the privilege of us the youngest ones.
[Isän kertomat iltasadut (Eläinten pakomatka, Väkevä-Matti, Mustat linnut) oli meidän neljän nuorimman etuoikeus.]

The relationship between this informant and her father seems to have been very close, and he was probably her primary parent as she does not write anything about her mother.

Fathers read to their children, for instance, stories from the newspapers (MV:K39/135), *Tales of the field surgeon* by Topelius (MV: K39/365, MV: K39/135), *the Iliad* and *the Odyssey* (MV: K39/365), stories by Juhani Aho (MV: K39/135), and stories from *the Bible* (MV: K39/406). Some informants remark that it was their father whose task it was to read to the children. A farmer's wife, born in 1923 (MV: K39/409), writes about how she and her husband reared their children:

When our children were small we used to read them in the evenings and mostly it was my husband who read because he had more time.
[Kun lapsemme olivat pieniä, luimme heille iltaisin ja useimmin se oli mieheni, joka luki, koska hänellä oli enemmän aikaa.]

According to several informants *the father was also a playmate and a maker of toys.* A mother, born in 1918 (MV: K39/371), writes about her father:

Well we used play a lot on the floor with our father and he made us wooden toys
[Kyllähän sitä isän kanssa paljon pyörittiin lattialla ja leluja hän teki meille puusta.]

A grandmother, aged 78, from family 57 (Finnish interviews) puts it plain and simple:

> The father has time to play with his children
> [Isällä on aikaa leikkiä lastensa kanssa.]

Work is in most cases described as the reason why the father has no time and why the father does not play with his children. The father of mother, born in 1926 (MV: K39/227), was, however, not always too tired:

> Sometimes our father was not too tired to play with us children, though he had been working hard all day, but he was a young man then.
> [Isä jaksoi joskus meidän lasten kanssa pelata, vaikka oli ollut päivän raskaassa työssä, mutta olihan vielä nuori.]

Like the adolescents in Innanen's (2001, 53) study, the mother above seems to understand that the father was had had enough of working and that he would perhaps have wanted to play with his children even more.

When the Finnish interviewees described the image of a good father they often pointed out that the *father should spend time with the child on the child's hobbies,* spending time with children was a must. For instance, a mother, aged 39 from family 61 (Finnish interviews), said that:

> ...a good father is with his children, he participates in child-rearing and developing and is active in their hobbies and spends a lot of free time with his children.
> [...hyvä isä on lasten kanssa, on mukana lasten kasvatuksessa ja kehityksessä ja toimii heidän harrastuksissaan mukana sekä vapaa-aikanaan on paljon lastensa kanssa.]

The husband of a mother, born in 1926 (MV: K39/496), went skiing with his daughters. In her words: "Father made long skiing trips with our daughters."["Isä teki talvisin tyttöjen kanssa pitkiä hiihtoretkiä."]. The husband of a mother, born in 1923 (MV: K39/409), recalls several activities that her husband did with their children:

> When we got to L., we Karelians founded a Sunday school, like we had had in our previous home village and my husband was one of the teachers. On Sundays he went to Sunday school with our children. My husband also took the children to sport competitions, where they skied and run.
> [Tullessamme L:lle, perustimme me karjalaiset kyläämme pyhäkoulun, kuten entisessä kotikylässämmekin oli ollut ja mieheni oli yksi opettaja. Hän kävi lasten kanssa sunnuntaisin pyhäkoulussa. Mieheni kuljetti lapsia myös urheilukilpailuihin, joissa he hiihtivät ja juoksivat.]

A popular father-child activity was *going fishing*. A father, born in 1920 (MV:K39/16), a fisherman by trade had eleven children. He writes that he often went fishing with his sons. [Olen kulkenut poikain kanssa paljon kalastamassa ...”]. It was not, however, clear if the going fishing was a leisure time activity or work. A father, born in 1920 (MV: K39/233), writes:

> The word leisure had not yet been invented. Though our father went fishing with us on Sunday mornings it was to get something to eat with our the bread, not leisure.
> [Vapaa-aika -sanaa ei oltu vielä keksitty. Isä kyllä lähti meidän poikien kanssa sunnuntaiaamuisin aikaisin ongelle, mutta se oli särpimen hankkimista, ei sen kummemmin vapaa-ajan viettoa.]

In Innanen's study (2001), 26 of the 92 texts concerned fishing trips with the father. The researcher interpreted the importance of these trips and the reason why they were written about under the heading "*Tender moments with Father*" as providing a metaphor for expressing togetherness with the father (ibid. 63).

Some fathers shared hobbies with their children. A father, born in 1920 (MV: K39/16), collected various things with his father:

> ... when I was under school age my father got me a notebook in which we glued stamps, wrappings from sweets, shaving-blade boxes...I also collected matchboxes with my father.
> [... kun olin alle kouluikäinen, liimasi isä minulle merkkivihon, johon laitettiin postimerkkejä, karamellipapereita, partakoneen koteloita ... Tulitikkulaatikoita keräsin myös isän kanssa.]

Most informants describing time spend with their father are from the oldest generations, mostly born before the World War II. In their childhood living, especially in the country side, meant *working*. Children often worked with their parents, and this was also considered a way of teaching the child the specific tasks and the importance of work in general (e.g. Kemppainen 2001; Korkiakangas 1996; Ruoppila 1954). A grandmother, aged 78, from family 57 (Finnish interviews), expects this from a good father:

> A good father takes the child to work with him, and he is never too strict.
> [Hyvä isä ottaa mukaan askareihinsa, eikä ole koskaan liian ankara.]

A mother, born in 1945 (MV: K39/33), answered the question of how leisure time was spent in her childhood:

> I suppose my parents never had any leisure time. We worked together, the children worked in the fields, in the woods, in the threshing barn and cowshed, everywhere where they possibly could. I really can't remember any joint activity with my parents that would not have been connected to work in one way or another.
> [Minun vanhemmillani ei kai koskaan ollut vapaa-aikaa, Työtä tehtiin yhdessä, lapset olivat mukana pellolla, metsässä, riihellä, navetassa, joka työssä, mihin vain suinkin kykenivät. En tosiaankaan kykene muistamaan mitään yhdessä olemisen muotoa vanhempieni kanssa, johon ei olisi liittynyt työnteko tavalla tai toisella.]

Working together was normal and not all children minded this arrangement. A farmer's wife, born in 1934 (MV: K39/135), recalls how she enjoyed working with her father:

> We did not negotiate much over it. Father said what we should do today. And we did it without a complaint. I enjoyed doing almost anything!
> [Eipä sitä päätöksistä paljonkaan neuvoteltu. Isä sanoi, mitä tänään tehdään. Ja mukisematta tehtiin. Minusta oli hauska tehdä melkein mitä vain!]

The informant above writes also that she sowed fields with her father. Sowing was, according to the old agrarian rule, a job for men only (Helsti 2000, 100). The enjoyment the informant describes could be due to the fact that her work was valued and appreciated, and she was given important jobs.

As already mentioned inconnection with father's spending time teaching their children, fathers were often expected to teach their sons men's jobs. This

could be done by doing jobs together. A mother, born in 1925 (MV: K39/292), writes:

> When the boys grew older and were interested in the men's jobs, their father took them with him to do some jobs. It did not happen very often, though.
> [Kun pojat kasvoivat ja olivat kiinnostuneita miesten töistä, otti isänsä heitä mukaan joihinkin hommiin. Hyvin vähäistä se kyllä oli.]

Fathers and children did not spend time togther only at work; fathers took their children with them to all kinds of places. A mother, born in 1922 (MV: K39/365), who spent her childhood in Helsinki, describes all the trips her father took his children on:

> He took us with him on excursions, to collect plants, to his office at the Department of Geography, to Seurasaari and to the courtyard of the National Museum of Finland which became one of our favourite places for play.
> [Hän otti meidät mukaansa ekskursioille, kasveja keräämään, työpaikkaansa geologian laitokselle, Seurasaareen ja Kansallismuseon pihalle, josta tulikin yksi vakituisista leikkipaikoistamme.]

The informant remembers also that her father took the children with him to concerts, to the cinema, to church and to parties. Going to church with one's father was also remembered by other informants (MV: K39/72; MV: K39/217). Besides often going to church with one's father, a farmer's daughter, born in 1913 (MV: K39/217), sometimes went to the library with her father. ["Kirkossa kävimme aika usein isän kanssa kävelemällä, tai sitten joskus kirjastossa..."]

Fathers and children went also on all kinds of trips. These fathers and their children lived mostly in towns or at least not on a farm, and such trips were mostly done during leisure time. A mother, born in 1929 (MV: K39/ 238), went cycling with her father:

> Father often took me cycling to the countryside and I remember how he picked flowers from the river bank with me on our way back home.
> [Isä kuljetti minua usein pyörällä maaseudulla ja muistan miten hän keräsi kukkia kanssani joen reunoilta matkalla kotiin.]

An informant from Helsinki, born in 1922 (MV: K39/772), writes about childhood trips with her father:

> The trips to pick mushrooms with my father were fun. We pretended to be gold diggers and Indians. I was afraid of the cows and when they came close father pretended to be a bear and scared them away.
> [Hauskoja olivat isäni ja minun sieniretket, Leikimme olevamme kullankaivajia ja intiaaneja. Minä pelkäsin lehmiä, ja kun ne tulivat lähelle, isä tekeytyi karhuksi ja pelotti ne pois.]

Mushroom picking would have probably been described as work by the more agrarian informants. The father of the informant above, however, made the picking fun.

A mother, born in 1919 (MV: K39/ 335), spent her childhood in Tampere. She went for walks with her father. This is what she writes:

> ... on Sunday mornings father took me walking with him (in Tampere), and I still remember, though I was only 3 years old how well dressed I was in a red coat and I had a sailor's cap with long strings and the name of the ship... We walked hand by hand along Hämeenpuisto to the rocks at Mustalahti, father often took me to the Museum of Häme and there somewhere we would have lemonade.
> [...sunnutaiaamuisin isä otti minut mukaansa kävelylle (Tampereella) ja muistan vieläkin, vaikka olin silloin 3-vuotias, miten huolellisesti minut puettiin punaiseen takkiin ja päähän asetettiin merimieslakki, jossa oli pitkät nauhat ja laivan nimi...Kävelimme käsi kädessä nyk. Hämeenpuistoa pitkin Mustanlahden kalliolle, isä vei minut usein Hämeen museoon ja jossain siellä joimme sitruunasuudaakin.]

A father was available

Included in the descriptions of having time to spend with one's children, is the idea that a *father is available for his children*. A mother, born in 1929 (MV: K39/238), described her husband's fathering:

> My husband raised our children consistently, in my opinion. (He died in 1991). He was very calm and lost seldom his temper with the children - he was always available for the children (even if behind his newspaper) and helped if he was asked or was needed.
> [Mieheni antama kasvatus oli myöskin mielestäni johdonmukaista. (Hän kuoli 1991) Hän oli rauhallinen ja hyvin harvoin menetti malttinsa lasten kanssa - oli aina lasten saatavilla (joskin lehtensä takana) ja antoi apua, jos sitä pyydettiin tai muuten tarvitiin.]

For some children their father was available because he was working at home. A father's availability does not seem have been always a positive thing. When the father was present he also paid attention to discipline in the family. A farmer's wife, born in 1919 (MV: K39/72), wrote about her childhood home:

> My father (a tailor) was always there because of his work so both the parents raised us, the mother more calmly, the father with more of a temper. Father told mother to whip us.
> [Isä (räätäli) oli työnsä takia aina läsnä joten he molemmat vanhemmat meitä kasvattivat, äiti enemmän rauhallisesti, isä kiukkuisemmin. Isä komensi äidin piiskaamaan.]

The informant above was probably not always happy because her father was at home and available. Some informants, however, connect the availability of their father to a sense of security. The father is there and can be called on if his help is needed. A grandmother, aged 88, from family 69 (Finnish interviews) described a good father like this:

> A good father gives a sense of security, too. His relationship with the child cannot mostly become as close as the mother's. However, the father must make time for his child when needed.
> [Hyvä isäkin on turvallinen, Hänen suhteensa lapseen ei useimmiten voi muodostua yhtä läheiseksi kuin äidin. Silti hyvä isä niinikään varaa aikaa lapselleen kun tarvitaan.]

In Garbarino's longitudinal study (1992) it was concluded that children appreciate it when fathers spend time with them, as it gives children access to their father and shows them that the father is willing to personally invest in

them. According to Garbarino, children do not necessary differentiate between good and bad reasons for their father's absence, i.e. the father is as absent for the child when he is at work as when he is drunk. The important factor is that the father is loyal to the child and is psychologically connected to the child. Expectations of what a good father should be like as expressed by a 19-year-old son from family 25 (Finnish interviews), focuses on this issue:

> Well, I think that *a good father should have time for his children, so that the children would really get to know their father*, not just to see a glimpse of him every now and then.
> [Tota, mun mielest hyväl isäl pitäis olla aikaa lapsillee, sillee, et lapset oppis tosissaa tuntemaa isäns, eikä vaa näkis sillon tällön vilaukselt.]

Distant fathers

What follows are not descriptions of how fathers spend time with their children but how the informants explain why fathers do not or did not spend time with their children. Fathers who did not spend time with their children have been called, for instance, distant authorities (Korhonen 1999, 141–142) or traditional fathers (Huttunen 1994, 50– 51); for most of the informants in the Finnish interview data these fathers would have been bad fathers.

Sometimes fathers considered it *unfit for a man* to have a close contact with their children. A mother, born in 1924 (MV: K39/149) writes about her husband and the father of their children when she answers the question of who was responsible for the child-rearing in her family:

> The main responsibility was the mother's. Father kept a distance and considered being with children as 'unmanly'.
> [Pääasiallinen vastuu lapsista on ollut äidillä. Isä pysytteli etäisenä pitäen lasten kanssa olemista "akkamaisena.]

The father of a farmer's wife, born in 1913 (MV: K39/ 543), was very similar to the father above, even though he is a representative of the previous generation. The informant writes:

> My father had the opinion that children are not a man's job. He never took us in his lap.
> [Isällä oli ajatus, etteivät lapset kuulu miehelle. Koskaan ei isä ottanut syliinsä.]

According to these fathers, spending time with children was not manly and worthy of a man, but then work was what a man's honour was based on. A mother aged 50 from family 69 (Finnish interviews) seems to be familiar with this kind of thinking when she says:

> (A good father) ... spends time with his children, so that he is not thinking that everything that is connected to with work and so on is valuable and so fit for him but that he really is with his children.
> [(Hyvä isä)...joka kans antaa aikaa lapsille, sillä tavalla, ettei se vaan ajattele, että kaikki se mikä työhön liittyy ja näin, niin on sitä arvokasta ja hänelle sopivaa, vaan niin, että se myöskin on todella niinkun lasten kans.]

At work, no time for children

Very often the reason why fathers spent no time with children was that they were working. Often children saw their father only in the mornings and in the evenings and on Sundays. A grandmother, aged 79, from family 79 (Finnish interviews), comments:

> When I was a child, when father was always working, in those days, from morning till late at night, you were lucky if you could see him when he was in bed, but Sunday... on Sundays.
> [Ett sillon lapsena kun isä oli aina työssä niin sillon aikaa oltiin niin aamusta aikaan iltaan myöhään töissä, että hyvä että sängyssä joskus tapasi, ett sunnuntai ... sunnuntaisin.]

Not all children saaw their fathers even on Sundays. The husband of a mother, born in 1919 (MV: K39/295), was a clergyman and thus working also on Sundays:

> Father was a clergyman so he was away from home almost always, it was always work, no days off nor evenings. The children still remember that their father came home only for meals and to sleep.
> [Isä oli pappina melkein aina poissa kotoa, silloin oli työtä aina, ei vapaapäiviä eikä -iltoja. Lapset muistavat vieläkin, että isä kävi vain syömässä ja nukkumassa.]

However, a grandmother, aged 76, from family 19 (Finnish interviews) is not totally convinced that it was only work that kept fathers away from their children. She suggests that not all fathers wanted to be with their children.

> ... in those days men never took children in their lap. They did not have time, it was as simple as that, only in the evenings if the children said they wanted to, then the father might perhaps take them in his lap. Child-rearing was like that in those days... It was so that sometimes when they had to push the pram and rock the baby, it happened only in the evenings, if they had time of if they wanted to. Not all of them wanted to.
> [...Silloi aikaa miehet ei pitäny lapsia sylissäkään lainkaan. Ei ne kerta kaikkiaan joutanu, muuta ku illoin, jos ne lapset meni tyrkylle, niin silloin isä saattoi ottaa sylihinsä. Se oli tämmöstä hoitamista silloi. ...Se oli nii joskus ku ne joutu ottaa ja vaunuja lykähän ja nukuttahan, että se oli vain iltasella jos kerkes ja halus. Eihän kaikki halunnukkaan.]

The grandmother poses a comparison between how fathers 'in those days' behaved and how father today supposedly behave. The grandmother implicitly expresses a belief that the fathers today are different. In the same vein, Daly (1996, 469) concludes that the cultural expectation that a father should have time for his children is new.

Grandfathers - second chance

Some informants also comment on the role of a grandfather. It seems to be that although men as fathers do not have time nor wish to spend time with their children, when they become grandfathers things can change. A grandmother, born in 1924 (MV: K39/149), reports the 'usual development' as she puts it:

> An interesting feature in my husband is the usual development from a father to a grandfather. Only now as a grandfather does he have a lot to do and many places to visit with his grandchildren. At the moment they are building a den for a fox together with five-year-old Antti in the garden.
> [Mielenkiintoinen piirre miehessäni on se tavallinen kehitys isästä vaariksi. Vasta lastenlasten kanssa on paljonkin tekemistä ja menemistä. Parhaillaan tekevät 5 vanhan Antin kanssa pihaan ketunluolaa.]

Summary

Father directly involved in child-care – caretaker fathers
Mother was away and father took care of the children
Joint activities by fathers and children
Father helped the children with school-related activities
Father taught the child...
Reading and telling stories
Father as a playmate and a maker of toys
Father involved in the child's hobbies
Fishing with father
Working with father
With father at church, at the movies, in the library etc.
Going with the father on all kinds of trips
A father is available
A father should spend time with his children so that they learn to know him
Distant fathers
At work, no time for children
Grandfathers - second chance

The above meanings can be sorted according to two of the components of paternal involvement proposed by Lamb et al. (1985). The activities under the headings 'The father directly involved in child-care' and 'Joint activities by fathers and children' fall into the component of 'direct interaction or engagement'. The descriptions under the third heading describe father's potential availability. Lamb et al.'s third component, being responsible, seems in the present data to be included in the two other components. For example, descriptions of a father's involvement in the direct care of the child also mostly include the care arrangements. Sole responsibility without overt activity, for instance, when a father is planning the arrangements for the child's care, was not talked about.

Included in the exploration of the father's time above are also explanations of why all fathers do not consider or have not considered spending time with their children as important. The two explicit reasons were that taking care of children is unmanly and that the father is working. When a man becomes a grandfather things may be different. A grandfather perhaps does not worry about appearing unmanly and, if he has retired, work does not take up his time. It must also be noted, that expectations of what a man is supposed to do with his grandchildren have perhaps changed, although the data from the National Board of Antiquities contains many memories of grandfathers who had time.

Having time to spend with the children seems to be the core belief of a good father. It seems to be an 'all purpose' general belief, as described by Harkness et al. (1992). Having time appears as a prerequisite for most things fathers are expected to do with their children. This finding of the centrality of time in the image of a good father is the same as in Daly's (1996) study on American fathers. The answers the fathers gave when asked to describe what it meant for them to be a good father were mostly connected to the idea that a good father must have time to spend with his children (ibid. 469).

The contradiction between family time and linear, industrial time arose with industrialisation. Thus it is likely that a father's time will be emphasised in all those countries which have experienced industrialisation.

8 DISCUSSION

Ethnotheories of parenting are collective constructions within a culture and consist of beliefs and belief entities. The belief entities focussed on in this study were images of a good father and a good mother. The organisation of beliefs into entities is difficult to conceptualise. Harkness et al. (1992) propose that some beliefs function as common denominators for several beliefs, yet the organisation of beliefs into entities, like images, resembles a network more than a hierarchical construction.

The most often-mentioned quality of a good mother was love. Exploration of the meanings attached to a mother's love, showed this to be an 'all purpose' general belief. It is used as a common denominator of various other beliefs. Moreover, it is shows conflicting dimensions; for instance, a mother's love is thought to be uncontrollable, yet the mother should be able to use it her child-rearing. Likewise, the belief in the importance of a father's time appears to be an 'all purpose' general belief. A father's time seems to be a common denominator for several other beliefs. For example, a father is expected to listen to his child and create an open relationship; if he does not have time for his children he is not able to achieve this. According to the informants, the significance of a father to his children seems to depend on the father's presence.

Both a mother's love and a father's time were used as sufficient explanations for various parental activities. A good mother behaves in a certain manner because she loves her children and if a good father has time to spend with his children he is able to behave the way a good father should.

According to the Finnish informants loving, caring, and protecting are the central qualities of a good mother but, in addition to love, a mother is expected to be able to control the child's behaviour without, however, suppressing the child's personality.

The effectiveness of child-rearing advice could be seen when the images produced by the groups of informants were compared. It was noted that on the basis of the images of a good mother the informants could be divided into two groups, an "Informed" group and a "Traditional" group. The "Informed" group consisted of mothers, sons and daughters and the "Traditional" group was formed of fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers. The images produced

by the "Traditional" and the "Informed" groups differed from each other in statistically significant ways in several of their beliefs characterising a good mother. The image of a good mother by the "Informed" was more in line with the official advice. This group would seem to be comprised of people who are interested in child-rearing and are aware of such advice. However, most of the informants also had closely followed media discussion and knew, for example, that corporal punishment is prohibited by law in Finland. Thus the media, especially when something radical like the prohibition of corporal punishment takes place, probably acts as a force moulding the beliefs of Finns.

Advice from child-rearing professionals and experts, especially when it is delivered orally in maternity and child health care centres, is a co-construction of the professional and the mother (Kuronen 1999). It is a mixture of scientific knowledge acquired during the professional training together with the professional's personal and perhaps more traditional images plus the beliefs and images the mother brings with her. The professional advice emphasises the close relationship between the mother and her child, possibly in this way strengthening the transfer of images from mother to child. However, the direction of the transfer cannot be established for methodological reasons in this study. To determine how beliefs are transferred between generations longitudinal data and a new study would be needed. Child-rearing professionals' ethnotheories of parenting would also merit closer study.

In comparison with the Italian, Swedish and American mothers reported in the literature Swedish mothers bear greater similarity to the Finnish 'good mother'. In both countries the child's emotional needs (Love) and growth into an independent person (Listens) are emphasized. Unlike Italian mothers, a good Finnish mother, according to these informants, is not particularly worried about the proper nourishment of her child. This finding may also be linked to the age of child the interviewees had in mind when they were giving their views to the fact that Finnish mothers get quite detailed post-natal advice on how to feed a baby and thus the proper feeding of a baby is fairly 'standardised' in Finland. Unlike the American mothers, a good Finnish mother does not pay attention to the socially interactive behaviour of her child, though mothers in both countries express the wish that their child would become an independent person with thoughts and ideas of his own. In generally, good mothers in western countries, who produce and use much of the available developmental psychological knowledge seem fairly alike, suggesting that also knowledge in this area can become global.

Besides discussing the beliefs characterising a good mother expressed by the informants it is worth taking up a number of issues that were not mentioned with any great frequency by the interviewees. I expected one crucial issue affecting the image of a good mother to be whether she worked outside the home. Although the working mother is not a new idea in Finnish society, heated public debate on the matter spring up every now and then. The increase of unemployment, the recession and the cutbacks in the child-care services seemed especially to ignite this debate. Yet only a few interviewees brought this issue up. Only twelve of the interviewees directly stated that a 'good mother' is

a housewife. A reason for this could be that when informants are asked to describe an ideal, the more mundane matters of life, like work, simply do not occur to them. However, when Katvala (2001, 111) analysed these same interview data as used in this study using everything the interviewees said about mothers and mothering, and not just the descriptions of a good mother, she noted that an over-arching belief was that "a good mother's place is at home, taking care of and raising children".

Another issue seen as problematic in psychological research on motherhood is the normal age at which a woman may become a mother. Teenage motherhood is often considered deviant and problematic (Phoenix & Woollett 1991b, 15). The Finnish informants in this study did not talk about age when they described a good mother. A good mother was defined strictly in the context of child-rearing. The age of the mother, her marital status, and whether she works are matters that were not connected to the mother's 'goodness' by the interviewees; what mattered was her relationship with her child.

In describing the image of a good mother we simultaneously also sketch the contours of a bad mother. However, a bad mother is perhaps an even more all-encompassing construction as it seems to include elements which define those for whom motherhood is not seen as appropriate. Thus the image of a bad mother can include women who are not even mothers (Woodward 1997, 279). The definition of a bad mother has included various groups of women, and these groups have changed according to 'fashion'. Among those groups who have been included are, for instance, lesbian mothers, mentally ill mothers, single mothers (May 2001; Phoenix & Woollett 1991b, 15), teenage mothers (Hanna 2001), divorced mothers (Phoenix & Woollett 1991b, 15), drug-using mothers, alcoholics, handicapped mothers, poor mothers (Nätkin 2003, 26), mothers with syphilis (Nätkin 2003, 23), depressed mothers (Marshall 1991, 69), insensitive mothers (Woollett & Phoenix 1991c, 35), mothers having needs of their own (Burman 1994, 82), and even working mothers (Lewis 1991, 196; Nätkin 2003, 24; Phoenix & Woollett 1991b, 15), especially if they regard their work as important (Burman 1994, 82; Raddon 2002).

Some mothers have become defined as 'bad' by their daughters. In a Norwegian three generation study by Bjerrum Nielsen and Rudberg (2000) daughters, born in 1940–1948, who had experienced a social rise, and who had changed a rural for an urban way of life and received more education than their mothers despised the way their mothers had lived. One of the daughters described her mother by saying that her birth was her mother's main achievement in life and that her mother's child-rearing style was controlling and manipulative. One of the explanations offered by the researchers was that expectations of what the mother-daughter relationship should be like had changed: the daughters expected a more child-centred child-rearing style and thus mothers who were not child-centred were seen as bad mothers.

The image of a good Finnish father consists of the following characterising beliefs. The good father has time for his children and he loves his children. A father's love contributes to his children's sense of security. The good father controls his children, but he is not a harsh disciplinarian. He gives his children

advice, listens to them and acts as a model. He is the breadwinner and the authority in the family. He is patient and feels responsible for his family. In general, this image seems to be more related to the life led outside than within the family as well as containing beliefs reflecting both expert advice and traditional manly virtues.

The groups of informants did not differ on the good father issue in ways that allowed a pattern or new groupings, as in the case of a good mother, to emerge. However, it is possible to see traces of changes in the image of a good father. Sons differed from the other groups, especially from the two older male groups, at several points. For instance, sons did not include what perhaps is the most traditional belief in the father as a breadwinner in their image of a good father; instead they emphasised that a father should have time for his children.

As with the image of a good mother, describing a good father also defines bad fathers. Bad fathers in the colonial time in the USA were those who did not marry the girl they got pregnant or did not provide support for their child. A bad father also failed to provide his child with moral and religious instruction. When breadwinning became the most important task of a good father, those fathers who used their earnings on drink were considered bad. Often, the characteristics of a bad father were found in immigrant fathers or fathers with a rural background. (Pleck & Pleck 1997, 39–40). For the present informants, a contemporary bad father is the one who does not have time for his children.

Whereas previously a father's work and his role as a breadwinner in the family were understandable reasons for his absence or were even seen as signs of good fatherhood, today it is not enough for a father to work hard; instead, his presence in the everyday life of the family is required. One reason for this change could be the increased material well-being of modern families and the realisation that if the father is not able to provide for the family, the family will be provided for in any case by the mother or by the state.

The differences in the images of a good father and a good mother between the generations suggest that these images are both transmitted from one generation to another and change. Evidently, changes in thinking about parenting, in parenting ideas and beliefs do not take place overnight. Moreover, as Lightfoot and Valsiner (1992, 400) point out, such changes appear in the form of a shift in "focus or interest, rather than conceptual revolutions." The descriptions of good parents do not change radically; some aspects of what is perceived as good simply become more salient than others. Cultures change, globalised ideas are adopted by parents and experts, and our images about what constitutes a good parent are liable to change. However, earlier images remain as subterranean layers underneath the dominant ones and as images in some subcultures.

Women's and men's images of a good father and a good mother were very similar. The differences appeared in comparisons within generations, which suggests that experience plays a role in the formation of these images. Likewise, the images of a good mother and a good father contained many similar characterising beliefs. However, although several informants said they would prefer to talk about what makes a good parent they nonetheless produced

images of good mothers and fathers that were qualitatively different. The mother emerged as the primary parent against which the father is compared.

The tendency of the Finns to present the mother as the primary parent was highlighted in the comparisons of the images between the Estonian and the Finnish informants. The Finns spoke about mothers more than the Estonians. The Estonian good father, besides being talked about more than the Finnish good father, also assumed more traditional characterics, such as the role of a breadwinner. In general, the Estonian images of good parents contained more beliefs pertaining to the parents' role as spouses, i.e. as men and women. It seems that for a Finn a mother is seen more as a mother than a woman, and a father more as a father than a man. However, it should be noted that the interviews were conducted by students of education and about half of them interviewed their own families. This might have introduced some bias into the results as it can be presumed that these persons or some of them were more informed or at least more interested in child rearing than the average Finn. In particular, it is possible that, more than the average Finn, these informants are prone to focus on upbringing in connection with parenthood and to set aside femininity and masculinity and the idea of a romantic parental relationship.

A study of this kind obviously gives rise to thoughts about how far ideas and actions match each other, whether Finnish parents in fact aim at becoming the kinds of good parents they describe. Like LaRossa (1997, 11), we consider the link between the culture of parenthood and the conduct of parenthood, we must similarly conclude that the relationship between thought and deed is a very complicated one. Even if parents do not act according to their ideals, it is important to know what these ideals are, as parents use them as a guide in their parenting and as a basis for evaluating others and themselves (Pleck & Pleck 1997, 35). Moreover, it is clear that, like other 'conceptions', images shape society's response to a phenomenon (Chafel 1997). As Phoenix and Woollett (1991b, 25) write on motherhood: "Good mothering by a good mother is socially constructed and has political implications and consequences." Some thirty years ago Haavind (1974, 38) expressed the fear that the very idea of a 'good mother' would promote a conservative conception of mothering and restrict the choices of women. It is to be hoped that when images are explicit they will become less effective as a tool for controlling people.

The image of a good parent is invoked by asking the question; it is a response, an answer to that question. It does not tell us much of the role the image might play in the everyday life of the informants. By posing a question in this way we present our informants with the presumption, or at leat expectation, of that such an image exists. How 'real' this image is, what effect it has on practice or child-rearing beliefs in general is not investigated here. However, several mothers replied, when they were asked to describe a good mother, that they themselves were not good mothers, and that they did not think that such a mother really exists. According to Jahoda (1999, xiv) images are more often a reflection of the perceivers' needs than characteristics of the perceived.

From a constructivist viewpoint the data of a study such as the present one is understood to be co-produced by the informant, interviewer and the context. This contains the possibility that in another place at another time with another interviewer the informant would give different answers to the questions asked. In this framework the question of the connection between belief and parental activity loses some of its relevance, at least to the extent that we suppose that we can predict a person's behaviour on the basis of her/his beliefs. The main contribution of the study to the cultural images of a good mother and a good father is not to provide knowledge on the basis of which it would be possible to predict how people act; instead, it is the fact that stating our tacit expectations makes it possible to consider their relevance and justification.

Images of a good father and a good mother are obviously parts of a larger puzzle consisting of a father, a mother and a child (Ambert 1994). Moreover, images of good parents, especially the image of a good mother, become defined in connection with the child. What the child is seen as needing good parents should provide. Thus in the future we need also to study the image of a child.

The connection between thinking and language poses problems for the interpretation of the results of this study. This problem appears, for example, in speculations about the possible changes in images. The images of different generations are different, but what has changed could be the prevaling ways of speaking about parenting. For instance, if the younger generations do not say that a good mother gives advice to her children, this does not mean that children are not taught nor that giving advice is not be included in the image of a good mother by these generations. Instead, it is possible that the ways of using language have changed. Giving advice could be included in the setting of limits, i.e. the child is taught what she should or should not do.

The intimacy of the interview situation in the Finnish interview data raises ethical questions because the interviews took often place within a family. In some cases the informants discuss such matters as conflicts between the family members. However, the anonymity of the informants has been preserved and thus any such family conflicts remain unspecified. Moreover, though I felt a certain uneasiness when reading some of the more intimate interviews, my aim was not to produce provocative accounts of Finnish family life. Rather the focus was on general images of good parents and not on any particular individual's "goodness" as a parent. The informants also knew that the interviews would be read by a researcher. Thus on the one hand the information obtained from the interviews was sometimes intimate and on the other hand I was excluded from the interviewing situation, although my cultural insiders' knowledge helped me in picturing the context.

There seem to be multiple criteria even within a qualitative framework for evaluating research (Denzin & Lincoln 2000a, 23). Terms like credibility, transferability, and confirmability have all been used as criteria. These criteria propose that, accordingly, the account the research gives of the world should be true. For pragmatists 'truth' is what works when dealing with the world (Howe 1988, 15). But, of course, there is no single 'truth' and all truths are partial and

incomplete (Denzin & Lincoln 2000c, 162). Moreover, qualitative theories often share the premise that human knowledge is "literally constructed during inquiry and hence is inevitably entwined with the perceptual frames, histories and values of the inquirer" (Greene 1994, 539). However, the purpose of research is not to present truths which are truths only to the researcher. I have aimed here to present an account of some Finnish ethnotheories of parenting, as produced by the informants.

YHTEENVETO

Kulttuuriset mielikuvat hyvästä äidistä ja hyvästä isästä kolmessa sukupolvessa

Vanhempien kasvatusajattelua on tutkittu jo pitkään. Aluksi ajattelua tarkasteltiin lähinnä kahdesta näkökulmasta. Ensinnäkin on tarkasteltu vanhempien ajattelua osana kontekstia, jossa lapsi kehittyy. Toiseksi kasvatusajattelusta on oltu kiinnostuneita yhtenä esimerkkinä ihmisen kognitiivisista kyvyistä. Goodnow (1996, 315) on lisännyt näihin lähestymistapoihin kaksi uutta näkökulmaa. Hän ajattelee, että yhtäältä vanhempien ajattelun tunteminen auttaa heidän kasvatustoimintansa selittämisessä ja ymmärtämisessä. Toisaalta vanhempien kasvatusajattelua voidaan tarkastella esimerkkinä muutoksista kulttuurissa ja ajattelun siirtymisestä sukupolvelta toiselle. Viime aikoina kasvatusajattelun tutkimuksessa on korostunut kulttuurin merkitys. Tätä kasvatusajattelun sidoksisuutta kulttuuriseen kontekstiin on pyritty selittämään mm. etnoteoreettisen lähestymistavan avulla (Harkness & Super 1996).

Vanhemmuuden etnoteorialla tarkoitetaan vanhempien uskomusten, käsitysten ja mielikuvien rakennelmaa. Tämä rakennelma on muodostunut tietyssä kulttuurissa, tiettynä aikana. Vanhemmuuden etnoteorian osia ovat esimerkiksi uskomukset siitä, millainen lapsi on, lapsen toimintaan ja kehitykseen liittyvät attribuutiot sekä käsitykset vanhemmuuden merkityksestä ja luonteesta. Koska etnoteoriat ovat sidottuja tiettyyn aikaan ja paikkaan, kulttuurin lisäksi myös sukupolvella on vaikutuksensa niiden muodostumiseen.

Etnoteoria ei ole teoria sanan tieteellisessä mielessä, vaan se koostuu *uskomuksista (beliefs), mielikuvista (images)* ja käsityksistä. Tässä tutkimuksessa mielikuvan ajatellaan koostuvan sitä kuvaavista uskomuksista. Vanhempien toiminnalle uskomukset ja mielikuvat muodostavat tulkinnalliset puitteet, joita käytetään esimerkiksi perusteltaessa jonkin toimintatavan valintaa (Markus & Kitayama 1998). Vanhemmuuteen ja kasvattamiseen liittyvät mielikuvat voivat myös kuvata sitä, miten asioiden pitäisi olla. Esimerkiksi hyvän vanhemman mielikuvat tuottavat arvoja ja normeja kasvattajana toimimiselle. Käsitellessään mielikuvia lapsesta Sigel (1996, 66) huomauttaa, että mielikuvissa tulevat näkyviin perheen ja sosiaalisen ympäristön toiveet asioiden ihanteellisesta tilasta. Mielikuvien voima perustuu niiden tapaan rajoittaa erilaisten vaihtoehtojen havaitsemista (Muncie & Wetherell 1995, 69).

Etnoteoriat ovat kulttuurikohtaisia, enemmän tai vähemmän homogeenisia uskomusrakennelmia. Tässä tarkastelussa *kulttuurin* ajatellaan olevan ihmisen psyyken erottamaton, psyyken sisään kasvanut osa. Lähtökohtana on kulttuurin huomioiva psykologinen lähestymistapa (cultural psychology) vastakohtana kulttuureja vertailevalle psykologialle (cross-cultural psychology), jossa ihmisen perusolemuksen ajatellaan olevan kaikkialla sama, ikään kuin kulttuuri olisi ainoastaan universaalin ihmisen päälle liimautunut kuori. (Näiden para-

digmojen erosta, esim. Shweder 1990; Markus & Kitayama 1998). Kulttuurin huomioiva psykologinen lähestymistapa (cultural psychology) sopii hyvin yhteen etnoteoreettisen tarkastelun kanssa, koska molemmissa tutkitaan ihmisen arkielämässä toimivia, luonnollisina pidettyjä ajatusrakennelmia. Kulttuurin huomioivassa lähestymistavassa on tärkeää myös tutkijan oma tietoisuus omista kulttuurisista uskomuksistaan: tutkijan pitää havaita kulttuurisuus myös siinä, mitä itse pitää asioiden normaalina, luonnollisena asiantilana. Kulttuureja vertaava paradigma (cross-cultural psychology) syyllistyy usein siihen, että tutkijan omaa kulttuuria pidetään luonnollisena ja muita kulttuureja siitä poikkeavina kummallisuuksina. Kahden kulttuurin rinnakkain asettamisella saadaan kuitenkin omakin kulttuuri näkyväksi.

Samankaan kulttuurin edustajat eivät kuitenkaan muodosta mitään täysin yhtenäistä etnoteoriaa, vaan kulttuurin sisällä on vaihtelua (ks. esim. Lightfoot & Valsiner 1992; Palacios & Moreno 1996). Eri *sukupolviin* kuuluvilla ihmisillä on jossakin määrin erilainen käsitys esimerkiksi ihannevanhemmasta (Magen 1994). Kulttuurin vaikutus ihmisen elämään alkaa viimeistään syntymästä. Kuitenkaan ei voida ajatella niin, että vain kulttuurin vaikuttaa yksilöön, vaan on huomattava, että myös yksilö vaikuttaa kulttuuriin. Kulttuuri ei myöskään ole muuttumaton. Vanhempien ihmisten käsitykset eivät siis ole välttämättä ole vanhoja ja nuorten uusia. Myös isovanhemman uskomus voi olla tämän päivän tuotetta. Aikaisempien sukupolvien kasvatusajattelu on läsnä ja vaikuttavana tekijänä sekä omien vanhempien uskomusten ja mielikuvien siirtymisen kautta että laajemmasta kulttuurisesta taustasta tulevana.

Sukupuoli ymmärretään tässä tutkimuksessa sosiaalisesti rakentuneeksi. Tässä rakentumisessa vanhemmuudella on tärkeä osa. Äitiyden on ajateltu olevan mahdollisesti naisen eniten sukupuolta tuottava kokemus (Fox 2001, 374). Toisin kuin mies, nainen joutuu ottamaan kantaa vanhemmuuteen (äitiyteen) riippumatta siitä onko hän itse äiti vai ei. Äitiys on naiseuteen sisäänrakentunutta (Kopytoff 1990; Phoenix & Woollett 1991b, 13; Wetherell 1995). Sukupuoli tässä tutkimuksessa on yksi aineiston tuottajien luokitteluperuste ja eri sukupuolta olevien vastaajien mielikuvia vertaillaan keskenään tarkoituksena tavoittaa sukupuolen merkitys mielikuvan synnyssä.

Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastelun kohteena ovat erityisesti sukupolven, sukupuolen ja kulttuurin merkitykset hyvän äidin ja isän mielikuville. Viitekehyksenä on käytetty etnoteoreettista lähestymistapaa (Harkness & Super 1996). Tutkimuksessa vertaillaan eri kulttuureissa (Viro ja Suomi) elävien ihmisten mielikuvien lisäksi myös perheen eri sukupolviin kuuluvien ihmisten mielikuvia. Eri sukupolviin kuuluvien ihmisten kasvatusajattelun vertailu antaa suuntaa myös ajatteluun vaikuttavien tekijöiden (esim. kokemuksen vaikutus) hahmottamiselle ja sen pohtimiselle miten ajattelu siirtyy sukupolvelta toiselle.

Tutkimuksessa vastataan seuraaviin kysymyksiin:

Minkälaisia ovat suomalaisten vastaajien hyvän äidin ja hyvän isän mielikuvat?
Mikä merkitys kulttuurilla, sukupuolella ja sukupolvella on hyvän äidin ja hyvän isän mielikuville?

Vanhemmuuden etnoteorian rakennelma koostuu erilaisista uskomuksista ja mielikuvista. Nämä osaset ovat osittain hierarkkisessa suhteessa toisiinsa, osittain ne muodostavat ketjuja ja verkostoja. Aikaisemmissa tutkimuksissa on havaittu, että jotkin uskomukset toimivat jonkinlaisina 'joka paikan' uskomuksina. Esimerkiksi monet amerikkalaiset vanhemmat pitävät lapsen itsenäisyyttä tärkeänä (Harkness, Super & van Tijen 2000). Tällä uskomuksella ikään kuin selitetään muita uskomuksia, vaikkapa ajatusta siitä, että lapsen on nukuttava yksin. Tässä tutkimuksessa ajateltiin, että parhaiten tunnetut ja sen vuoksi eniten mainitut hyvää äitiä ja hyvää isää kuvaavat uskomukset voisivat olla tällaisia yleisuskomuksia ja niiden sisältä olisi löydettävissä muita merkityksiä. Niinpä kolmas tutkimuskysymys kuuluu:

> *Minkälaisia merkityksiä sisältyy hyvän äidin ja hyvän isän mielikuviin kuuluviin, eniten mainittuihin uskomuksiin?*

Käytössäni olivat vuosina 1995–1997 Jyväskylän yliopiston kasvatustieteen laitoksella ja Virossa, Tarton yliopistossa kerätyt vanhempien kasvatususkomuksia sisältävät haastatteluaineistot. Tämän lisäksi osa aineistostani muodostui Museoviraston keruuarkistosta saaduista vastauksista 1994 kyselylehtisellä suoritettuun, lasten kotikasvatusta käsitelleeseen keruuseen.

Jyväskylän Avoimen yliopiston kasvatustieteen approbaturin suorittajat saivat lukuvuonna 1995–1996 yhdeksi valinnaiseksi tehtäväkseen haastatella samojen sukujen kolmen sukupolven edustajia[30]. Lukuvuonna 1996–1997 Virossa, Tarton yliopistossa, kerättiin professori Inger Kraavin johdolla vastaava aineisto, jota Edda Kaimre työsti edelleen.

Opiskelijat saivat ohjeekseen suorittaa haastattelut teemahaastatteluna, nauhoittaa ne ja litteroida sanasanaisesti. Ensimmäinen haastattelun teemoista koski hyvää vanhempaa. Tässä tutkimuksessa on mukana 387 suomalaisen henkilön kuvaus 'hyvästä äidistä' ja 'hyvästä isästä'. Vastaajat edustivat 129 eri sukua. Enemmistö (325) vastaajista oli naisia, miehiä oli vain 62. Nuorimmat vastaajat olivat 18-vuotiaita ja vanhin oli 89-vuotias. Sukupolvittain ja sukupuolittain luokiteltuna haastatellut jakaantuivat seuraavasti: isoäitejä 115, isoisiä 14, äitejä 110, isiä 19, tyttäriä 100 ja poikia 29. Sukupolvi tässä tutkimuksessa tarkoittaa henkilön asemaa sukupolvien ketjussa, ei siis ikäpolvea. Nuorin sukupolvi oli 18–35 -vuotiaita ($\overline{X}$ = 22), keskimmäinen sukupolvi 38–64 -vuotiaita ($\overline{X}$ =45) ja vanhin sukupolvi 58–89 -vuotiaita ($\overline{X}$ =74).

Virossa haastateltiin 138 naista ja 39 miestä 59 suvusta. Nuorin haastateltu oli 15-vuotias ja vanhin 94 (Kaimre 1999, 39). Viron aineiston analyysin suoritti tutkija Edda Kaimre lukuun ottamatta tilastollisia testauksia.

Hakiessani vastauksia viimeiseen tutkimuskysymykseeni käytän myös Museoviraston 1994 keräämiä vastauksia kotikasvatusta käsittelevään kyselyyn. Museovirasto on kerännyt vuosittain vuodesta 1956 lähtien muistitietoa kansankulttuurin eri aloilta. Keräys on toteutettu kyselylehden avulla. Tässä tutki-

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[30] Aineisto on osa professori Sirkka Hirsjärven ja professori Leena Laurisen johtaman Perinne ja muutos vanhemmuudessa ja kasvatuksessa. Sukupolvien ja kulttuurien välinen tarkastelu –projektin aineistoa.

muksessa hyödynnettävä aineisto on kerätty vuoden 1994 kyselylehtisellä nro 39. Lehtisessä oli lasten kotikasvatusta koskeva osa. Kotikasvatusta koskevat kysymykset oli jaettu kahden pääotsikon alle: 'Kasvatus lapsuudenkodissanne' ja 'Omien lastenne kasvatus'. Tähän Museoviraston kyselyyn vastasi 689 henkilöä. Tätä tutkimusta varten poimittiin 236 henkilön vastaukset (noin joka kolmas).

TAULUKKO 1   Tutkimuksen aineistot

Aineiston lähde	Informanttien lukumäärä	Nainen/mies	Ikä	Huomautuksia
Opiskelijoiden suorittamat haastattelut Suomessa	387	325 / 62	18–89	Haastatellut jaettu kuuteen ryhmään sukupolven ja sukupuolen mukaan
Opiskelijoiden suorittamat haastattelut Virossa	177	138/39	15–94	Haastatellut jaettu kuuteen ryhmään sukupolven ja sukupuolen mukaan
Museoviraston kysely	236	192 / 42	31–94	Kirjoitettuja kuvauksia vastaajien lapsuudesta ja siitä miten he itse kasvattivat lapsiaan.

Olen analysoinut aineistoja useammalla tavalla. Hyvän äidin ja isän mielikuvaa varten suoritin analyysin seuraavasti. Vastauksissaan haastatellut tuottivat usein listan ominaisuuksia ja tehtäviä. Kirjoitin mainitut hyvää äitiä ja hyvää isää kuvaavat uskomukset muistiin. Useamman haastatellun mainittua saman uskomuksen muodostin luokan, johon lisäsin uudet maininnat sitä mukaa kun niitä esiin tuli. Seuraavassa vaiheessa yhdistelin luokkia teemoittain niin, että lopuksi sain 21 erilaista uskomusluokkaa ja jokaiseen luokkaan kuuluvien mainintojen frekvenssit. Näin muodostui koko vastaajajoukon 'hyvän äidin' ja 'hyvän isän' mielikuvaan kuuluvien uskomusten lista, jossa ensimmäisenä oli eniten mainittu uskomus, toisena toiseksi eniten mainittu jne. Kirjoitin hyvää äitiä ja hyvää isä kuvaavista, vastaajien tuottamista uskomuksista kokonaiset mielikuvat yhdistämällä jokaisesta uskomusluokasta poimimani lainaukset yhtenäiseksi tekstiksi aloittaen siitä luokasta, jossa mainintoja oli eniten. Eri vastaajaryhmien mielikuvien vertailun tein testaamalla eri ryhmien tuottamien mielikuvien yhteensopivuutta (ks. Ranta, Rita & Kouki 1997,143–144).

Suomalaiset haastatellut kuvasivat hyvän äidin seuraavasti:

(Sekä) hyvän äidin (että hyvän isän) velvollisuus on rakastaa lastaan. Lastaan rakastava (vanhempi) äiti pitää huolta lapsesta ja tarjoaa tälle turvallisen elämän perustan. Hyvä äiti myös näyttää rakkautensa hellimällä lastaan. Äiti on kiinnostunut lastensa tekemisistä, hän luo avoimen puheyhteyden lapseensa. Lapsi uskaltaa kertoa kaikki huolensa ja murheensa äidille, joka ymmärtää, lohduttaa ja auttaa kykyjensä mukaan. Hyvä äiti ei holhoa, vaan kunnioittaa lapsensa ajatuksia ja mielipiteitä.

Äidilliseen rakkauteen kuuluu myös rajojen asettaminen. Ne tuovat turvallisuutta lapsen elämään, ja lapsi tietää, että hänestä välitetään eikä hän ole yhdentekevä. Lasta ei saa liiallisesti rajoittaa eikä estää häntä kasvamasta omaksi persoonakseen. Lapselle ei saa karjua eikä huutaa, eikä lasta myöskään saa piiskata. Äidin on kuitenkin pidettävä lapsi kurissa ja tottelevaisena.

Äidin tehtävänä on neuvoa, ohjata ja opettaa lasta. Erityisesti lapsi on opetettava teke-mään työtä, puhumaan totta sekä olemaan aina rehellinen ja kunnioittamaan toisia ih-misiä. Äidin on myös kerrottava lapselle asioista, eikä lapselle saa valehdella. Äiti siirtää lapselle 'hyviä ja tärkeitä' arvoja.

Hyvä äiti ei ole väkivaltainen räyhääjä, vaan hän ymmärtää lasta ja jaksaa olla kärsivällinen ja jaksaa ymmärtää suhtautumalla lapseen huumorintajuisesti kunnioitta-en tämän omia mieltymyksiä. Hän on mukana lastensa harrastuksissa, kiinnostunut heidän koulunkäynnistään ja ennen kaikkea hän käyttää aikaa lastensa kanssa olemiseen ja toimimiseen.

Hyvä äiti rohkaisee lasta yrittämään eteenpäin uusiin kokemuksiin. Hän kannus-taa lasta ja luottaa lapseensa. Koska lapsi oppii myös esimerkin kautta, hyvä äiti on esi-merkillinen, erityisesti hän toimii naisen mallina tyttärelleen. Hyvä äiti kohtelee lapsi-aan tasapuolisesti.

Hyvän äidin mielikuvissa ei sukupuolten välillä ollut eroja kun verrattiin kaik-kien ryhmien tuottamia mielikuvia samanaikaisesti. Sen sijaan verrattaessa su-kupuolia tietyssä sukupolvessa mielikuvat erosivat. Esimerkiksi keskimmäises-sä sukupolvessa äidit sanoivat hyvällä äidillä olevan aikaa olla lapsensa kanssa. Isistä tästä piirteestä ei puhunut kukaan.

Vastaajat oli mahdollista jakaa hyvän äidin mielikuvan perusteella kahteen joukkoon: isiin, isoäiteihin ja isoisiin, joiden mielikuva hyvästä äidistä oli perin-teisempi, ja tyttäriin, poikiin ja äiteihin, joiden mielikuva sisälsi useita sellaisia piirteitä, jotka ovat löydettävissä myös vanhemmille tarkoitetuista oppaista ja asiantuntijoiden antamista neuvoista. Nimesin tämän jälkimmäisen joukon Va-listetuiksi ja edellisen Perinteiseksi. Valistettujen ryhmä puhui useammin kuin Perinteisten ryhmä hyvästä äidistä ihmisenä joka kuuntelee lastaan ja luo avoi-men suhteen lapseensa, asettaa rajat lapselle, jolla on aikaa lapselle ja joka tukee lapsen itsetuntoa.

Hyvän isän suomalaiset haastatellut kuvasivat seuraavasti:

Hyvä isä viettää aikaa lastensa kanssa vaikka olisi kuinka kiireinen. Lapsille on oltava aikaa. Hän huolehtii perheestään ja näyttää tunteensa, osoittaa lapsilleen, kuinka tärkei-tä he hänelle ovat. Erityisesti hyvä isä luo perheeseen turvallisuuden tunteen. Hyvän isän tehtäviin kuuluvat myös kurinpidolliset asiat. Hän ohjaa lapsia oikealle tielle. Hyvä isä ottaa muutkin perheenjäsenet huomioon ja lapset voivat kysellä asioista häneltä. Hyvän isän tulee olla esimerkillinen myös omien elämäntapojensa suhteen. Hän on miehen malli. Hyvä isä turvaa perheen taloudellisen hyvinvoinnin ja on perheenpää. Hyvä isä ei koskaan hermostu silmittömästi eikä huuda. Hyvä isä kantaa vastuuta las-ten kasvatuksesta samoin kuin äitikin.

Eri sukupuolten mielikuvat hyvästä isästä erosivat vain tietyissä sukupol-vissa. Esimerkiksi nuorimmassa sukupolvessa pojat puhuivat tyttöjä enemmän hyvästä isästä kurinpitäjänä. Eri sukupolvien tuottamien hyvän isän mielikuvi-en välillä oli eroja, esimerkiksi pojat puhuivat useammin kuin isät hyvästä isäs-tä henkilönä, jolla on aikaa lapselle. Haastateltuja uudelleen ryhmittelemällä ei kuitenkaan syntynyt samantapaisia eroja kuin hyvän äidin mielikuvien kohdal-la. Erot sukupolvien välillä viittaavat kuitenkin siihen, että hyvän isän mieliku-va on mahdollisesti muuttumassa.

Hyvän äidin ja hyvän isän mielikuvia rinnakkain tarkasteltaessa hyvä äiti nousee hallitsevaksi. Hyvästä äidistä haastateltavat puhuivat paljon enemmän kuin hyvästä isästä. Hyvän isän mielikuvaan kuuluva, eniten mainittu uskomus, isän aika, mainittiin 68 kertaa kun vastaava hyvän äidin useimmin mainittu uskomus, äidin rakkaus, mainittiin 278 kertaa. Monet haastateltavat aloittivat kuitenkin vastauksensa ilmoittamalla, että eivät haluaisi erotella hyvää äitiä ja hyvää isää. Haastatelluista 61 prosenttia sanoikin hyvän äidin ja isän olevan samanlaisia. Haastateltavat kuitenkin kuvasivat hyvän isän ja äidin erilaisiksi. Useimmin he asettivat äidin ikään kuin malliksi, pääasialliseksi vanhemmaksi, johon isää sitten verrattiin. Isällä on äidistä poikkeavia ominaisuuksia. Hyvä isä esimerkiksi turvaa perheen talouden ja on miehen malli pojilleen. Hyvää isää kuvatessaan haastateltavat usein puhuivat muutoksesta verratessaan nykypäivän nuoria isiä ja menneiden aikojen isiä.

Virolaisten ja suomalaisten haastateltujen hyvän äidin ja hyvän isän mielikuvia tarkasteltaessa selvimmin esiin nouseva havainto oli se, että suomalaiset puhuivat äidistä enemmän kuin virolaiset, kun taas virolaisilla oli hyvään isään kohdistuvia uskomuksia enemmän kuin suomalaisilla. Hyvän äidin mielikuvat erosivat eniten vanhimmassa sukupolvessa kun verrattiin suomalaisten ja virolaisten sukupolvien tuottamia mielikuvia. Hyvän isän mielikuvat puolestaan olivat erilaisimmillaan nuorimmassa sukupolvessa. Virolaiset haastellut mainitsivat sekä hyvän äidin että hyvän isän ominaisuuksiksi piirteitä, jotka puuttuivat suomalaisesta aineistosta. Tällaisia piirteitä olivat esimerkiksi, että hyvä äiti pukeutuu muodikkaasti ja pitää huolta ulkonäöstään. Virolainen hyvä isä puolestaan ottaa kasvatuksessaan huomioon lapsen iän ja kehitystason. Virolaiset puhuivat vanhemmista puolisoina useammin kuin suomalaiset.

Aineiston analyysi eteni kaksivaiheisesti tarkentaen samalla tutkimuskysymyksiä prosessin edetessä. Analyysin ensimmäisessä vaiheessa analysoin siis hyvän äidin ja hyvän isän mielikuvia kuvaavat uskomukset. Hyvän äidin mielikuvan useimmin mainittu uskomus oli äidin rakkaus. Hyvän isän mielikuvan vastaava uskomus oli isän aika. Toisessa vaiheessa otin käyttöön myös Museoviraston keräämän aineiston ja etsin molemmista suomalaisista aineistoista vastaajien kuvauksia näistä seikoista. Teemoittelin nämä kuvaukset saadakseni mahdollisimman monipuolisen käsityksen siitä mitä nämä ihmiset tarkoittavat näistä uskomuksista puhuessaan.

Äidin rakkauteen liitetyt merkitykset olivat osittain ristiriitaisia. Äidin rakkauden ajatellaan syntyvän itsestään ja olevan luonnollista. Äidin on kuitenkin kyettävä kontrolloimaan tunteitaan, jotta rakkautta voisi käyttää kasvatuksessa. Äidin rakkaus ja isän aika näyttävät molemmat olevan jollakin tavalla 'joka paikan' yleisuskomuksia. Hyvällä isällä on oltava aikaa, jotta hän voi esimerkiksi opettaa lasta, asettaa rajoja ja luoda avoimen suhteen lapseensa.

Hyvän äidin ja hyvä isän mielikuvien kuvaaminen tuo mukanaan kysymyksen siitä, toimivatko vanhemmat näiden mielikuviensa mukaisesti. Tähän kysymykseen vastaaminen ei ole tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena. Kysymys sinänsä johtaa pohtimaan yleisesti ottaen ajattelun ja toiminnan välistä suhdetta, joka puolestaan on hyvin monimutkainen. Toisaalta voidaan ajatella, että vaikka vanhemmat eivät toimikaan näiden mielikuvien mukaisesti, mielikuvat

muokkaavat yhteiskunnan vanhemmuuteen kohdistuvia toimia. Joka tapauksessa vanhemmat arvioivat näiden mielikuvien avulla omaa ja muiden vanhempien onnistumista vanhempana. Koska mielikuvat ovat osittain tiedostamattomia ja niiden kuvaaminen nostaa ne tietoisuuteen, jossa niiden oikeutusta voidaan paremmin tarkastella.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Characterising beliefs of a good parent

1. Loving, takes care, trustworthy, helping, never lets the child down, (Love).

2. Controls the child's behaviour, sets limits, discipline (Control).

3. Listens to the child, supports the child's growth into an independent person (Listens).

4. Makes no sacrifices, takes care also of herself or himself.

5. Gives advice, teaches the child the importance of work and honesty (Advice).

6. Fair, just (Just).

7. Forgets his or her own interests in cases of conflict, serves others (Sacrifice)

8. Patient, understanding, has a sense of humour, not easily upset (Patience).

9. Consistent, purposeful (Consistence).

10. Supportive, trusts the child, helps the child to become confident (Support).

11. Honest to the child, apologizes also to the child (Honesty).

12. Acts as a model, an example (Model).

13. Has time to spend with the child, in the child's hobbies, together with the child (Time).

14. Has a sense of responsibility (Responsible).

15. Supports the family, takes care of the house, family car, etc. (Breadwinner).

16. Head of the family, authority (Authority).

17. Takes the child's age, personality, and skills into account.

18. Takes care of the religious upbringing of the child (Religion).

19. Parents agree on child- rearing (Parents agree).

20. Parents get along with each other.

21. A good mother/father is the one who is a house wife/house husband (Housewife/house husband)

Appendix 2   Questions asked in leaflet no: 39, 1994, The National Board of Antiquities

The National Board of Antiquities in Finland
Leaflet no 39, 1994
(The questions were written in Finnish by Merja Tuovinen and translated into English by the author)
<u>Child-rearing at home</u>
Various kinds of pressures have been directed at parenting with the changes that have taken place in the society during the 1990s. Parents have continuously faced new challenges. However, school, day-care and other social institutions have taken responsibility in part for the tasks that were previously looked after in the home. Also, the position of children in our society has changed. With the help of this inquiry we aim to investigate the changes in the ways and views of rearing children. The first questions cocernthe child-rearing you received in your childhood home. The main emphasis of the questions, however, is on how you describe your own activities as a parent. We also value your opinions concerning reasons for these changes. We hope to receive answers from all generations as well as from people living in urban and rural areas.

Child-rearing in your childhood home
46. Describe the child-rearing you received in your childhood. Where did you live as a child (locality, village or area in a town)? What were your parents by occupation? How many children there were in your family? Who was responsible for the child-rearing in your childhood home? Did your parents share the child-rearing responsibilities in any specific way? What was the mother/you and what was the father/you responsible for? How about the other members of your family (grandparents, siblings, other relatives, servants)? How about people outside the family? How did the age of the child affect the way she/he was raised; i.e. were children of different ages raised differently? Where were you able to see the difference? Please give examples.

47. What kind of rules and norms/regulations did children have to obey? How table were manners and manners in general taught? How much were the children allowed to go outside the home (visiting peers, going out etc.) and in what way they were expected to behave in such situations? How was tidiness taught? In what ways were children expected to behave with other people (respect for elders, considering other people)? How did your parents explain the reasons for their rules and norms/regulations?

48. What kinds of duties were given to children by your parents? Were children expected that to participate in housework (e.g. cleaning the house or other housework)? Did your parents give you weekly allowances or money for doing housework? Did children work for money outside the home? Were you allowed

to use your money as you liked or did your parents tell you what to do with it? Please give examples.

49. Were children taught specific skills or knowledge at home? What skills were considered important by your parents? Were children allowed to participate in the decision making in the family? If so, concerning what kind of issues (e.g. food, clothing, toys, etc.)? Did your parents spend leisure time together with the children? Doing what? What kinds of things were done together? How long were the children under parental authority?

Your own activities as a parent

50. How many children there are in your family? When were they born? Please, also state their gender.

51. Who in your family was the main person responsible for child-rearing (mother, father, grandparents, others)? How was responsibility shared? For which issues were you/the mother responsible, and for which issues you/the father? How did grandparents participate in child-rearing? How about persons outside the family (relatives, daycare providers)? Have you yourself participated in the care of other children beside your own? In which ways was the rearing of boys and girls different? How about the rearing of children at different ages?

52. Where did your receive advice on everyday child-rearing? Have you read any child-care manuals or magazines giving advice on childcare? What do you think you learnt from such manuals? Have you discussed child-rearing with your spouse?

53. What kind of values have you wished to convey to your children? What personality characteristics did you want them to have and which did you not want? In what ways did you try to foster 'good' characteristics and what did you do to eliminate 'bad' characteristics? What kind of adults did you want your children to become?

54. How important was your children's education to you? What hopes and goals did you have concerning your children's education and choice of occupation? Have your hopes come true? Have you allowed your children to decide for themselves over these issues? Have you participated in the educational activities of your children for example, by helping with homework, contacting the teacher, etc.?

55. Have your children participated in housework? What did they do? How did you teach them? What kind of rewards did you give your children when they participated in housework? What kinds of jobs have your children had outside the home? How did they cope with going to school and working? Have you

allowed your children to use their wages how they wanted or did you control their use of money (e.g. by teaching them to save money or to use money wisely)? Did your children receive weekly allowance? Starting at which age? How have they used it?

56. What kind of skills and knowledge have you conveyed or taught to your children? Are there any special practical skills you considered it important they learn? What kinds of knowledge (e.g. for living) did you consider important?

57. For what kinds of offences did you punish your children (disobedience, lying, breaking things, swearing, fighting, etc.)? What kinds of punishments did you use (scolding, shouting, denying benefits, grounding, extra work, pulling by the hair, other corporal punishments, etc.)? How often and for what offences did you use corporal punishment to be? How necessary do you consider corporal punishment? Who in your family meted out the punishments? What means of punishment did you use? Is punishing girls different from the punishing of boys? How did you generally solve conflicts between family members?

58. What did you do to make your children obey and do as you told them to? Did you give your children rewards for e.g. a job done well, a good school report, etc.? How did you show affection?

59. What kind of rules and prohibitions for children were there in your family? What reasons did you give for rules and prohibitions? What kinds of manners did you teach your children? How did you require that your children behave outside the home? Please give examples. At what age did you allow your children to move outside the home and where were they allowed to go? Did you agree on the time when they had to be back at home? Did you allow your children freely to choose their friends? Were they allowed to visit their friends and invite their friends to your house or did you set limits to these kinds of activities? What kinds of limits? How did you respond to your children's smoking or drinking? Did you limit your children's TV watching? If so,how?

60. How did you try to raise your children to be independent? Did your children have responsibilities/duties at home or outside the home? What kinds of duties? Up to what age do you consider children to be under parental control? At what age were they allowed to start to make their own decisions?

61. Have you taught your children traditions from your childhood home or your childhood locality (e.g. food traditions, traditions connected with festivities, games, sayings etc.)? Which traditions did you wish to pass onto your children? What have you told your children about your own childhood and up bringing?

62. Have you shared hobbies with your children or have you joinedin your children's hobbies? What hobbies? How did you spend time with your children (housework, homework from school, games, etc,)? What did you do together outside the home (movies, theatre, art exhibitions, sports, visits, outdoors, travelling, etc.)?

63. What did you teach your children about differences between people, for example, different social classes and what group you belong to? How do you expect your children to regard other people (elderly, handicapped, different ethnic groups, etc.)? Have you taught your children about ideological or political matters? If so, what? Did you give your children religious up bringing?

64. Did children participate in decision making in your family? Did the issues they were allowed to participate in concern only the child him/herself or the whole family? Please give examples. What in your opinion is your relationship with your children like?

65. Compare your upbringing in your childhood home and the upbringing you have given your children. What differences can you see? What do you think what has caused these differences? How far have you consciously tried to act differently from your parents in matters of child-rearing and upbringing? What ways of child-rearing have you tried to change and what have you sought to keep as they are? Please give examples. What was good in the way children were brought up earlier and what was bad? What do you think of the way children are brought up today? Has the position of the child in the family changed? If so, how?

Appendix 3 Instructions for the student interviewers in Finland

ETÄTEHTÄVÄ 1

Pienimuotoinen haastattelututkimus, jonka voit tehdä joko yksin tai parityönä. Tutkimuksen kohteena ovat kasvatusta koskevat **uskomukset ja sanonnat ja niiden siirtyminen sukupolvelta toiselle.**

Tutkimuksen taustaa: Ihmisen jokapäiväiseen puheeseen sisältyy monenlaisia mielipiteitä ja arjen uskomuksia. Jotkut uskomukset ovat aikojen kuluessa kiteytyneet kaikkien tuntemiksi sanonnoiksi, esimerkiksi, "Huono onni pelissä, hyvä onni rakkaudessa", "Ei oppi ojaan kaada", "Koulu tappaa luovuuden", "Nauru pidentää ikää", "Harjoitus tekee mestarin", "Aika parantaa haavat", "Ei omena kauas puusta putoa" ja "Paha saa aina palkkansa".
Nyt olisi tarkoitus kirvoittaa tällaisia uskomuksia ja sanontoja haastattelututkimuksen avulla. Uskomusten tulisi koskea **lasten kasvatusta, lapsia, äitiä, isää ja vanhemmuutta.**

Menettele seuraavasti: Haastattele kolmea henkilöä.

1. VAIHE. <u>Valitse perhe, jossa on elossa kolme sukupolvea</u>. Sukupolviketjun nuorin edustaja voi olla 18–30 vuotias. Voit mielellään valita oman sukusi. Jos suvun isovanhemman tavoittaminen on mahdotonta, niin valitse hänen sijastaan jonkin iäkäs henkilö (ehkä löytyisi samasta suvusta). Jos itselläsi on jo aikuisia lapsia ja haluat koota tutkimusaineiston omasta suvustasi, niin valitse tutkimukseen oma lapsesi, itsesi ja toinen vanhemmistasi.

2. VAIHE. Jos valitset tutkimuskohteeksi oman sukusi, <u>kirjoita</u> **ensin itse** lyhyet vastaukset alla olevien haastatteluteemojen kysymyksiin. Haastattele sitten sukusi kaksi henkilöä (siis esimerkiksi äitisi ja isoäitisi, tai aikuinen lapsesi ja äitisi). Jos valitset muun kuin oman sukusi, haastattele valitsemasi sukupolviketjun kolme jäsentä. Jos tehtävä tehdään parityönä, voi parin toinen jäsen esimerkiksi tehdä haastattelut ja toinen purkaa aineiston.

Oheisena on neljä haastatteluteemaa ja esimerkkeinä kysymyksistä joita voit käyttää haastattelussa apuna. Kysymysten tarkoituksena on virittää ajatuksia ja kokemuksia kasvatuksesta. Kasvatususkomusten, sanontojen ja kasvatusta koskevien ohjeiden mieleenpalauttaminen ja erottaminen toisistaan ei aina ole helppoa ja ihmiset saattavat kertoa näistä kaikista yhden haastatteluteeman alla. Useimmat ihmiset tarvitsevat aikaa kasvatusta koskevien ajatusten ja sanontojen mieleenpalauttamiseen, joten etene rauhallisesti teemasta toiseen. Älä odota, että kiteytyneitä uskomuksia tulee lukumääräisesti paljon. Muutamakin (2–3 sanontaa) on jo tulos.

Haastatteluteemat ja esimerkkejä kysymyksistä:

1. Hyvä äiti, hyvä isä
Millainen on mielestäsi hyvä äiti, entä hyvä isä?

2. Ajattelun erot sukupolvien välillä lastenkasvatuksessa.
Onko lastenkasvatuksessa jotain sellaista mistä olet (olit) eri mieltä kuin omat a) omat vanhempasi ja b) isovanhempasi?

3. Ohjenuorat kasvatuksessa
Onko (oliko) sinulla itselläsi joitain ohjenuoria tai pelisääntöjä toimiessasi lastesi kansaa? Mitä ne ovat?

4. Lähisukulaisten kasvatussanonnat, kasanviisaudet ja arkiuskomukset
Muistatko joitain kasvatusta koskevia sanontoja, kansanviisauksia tai "ikuisia totuuksia" (esim. "Valheella on lyhyet jäljet")? Ne voivat koskea lasta, äitiä, isää, vanhempia, kuritusta, tottelemista, lasten kohtelua. Mitä sanontoja muistat? Uskotko itse niihin? Muistatko kuka lähisukulaisistasi olisi käyttänyt niitä?

Sovita kysymysten sana- ja aikamuodot siten, että ne luontuvat hyvin haastateltavillesi.

3. VAIHE. Pura haastattelut tekstiksi sanasanaisesti mitään sanontoja tai murreilmauksia muuttamatta. Tätä puhutun teksti kirjoitettuun muotoon muuttamista kutsutaan litteroimiseksi. Merkitse litteroinnin alkuun haastateltavan sukupuoli, etunimi, ikä ja sukulaisuussuhde ko. suvun kolmen sukupolven ketjussa (tytär tai poika, äiti tai isä ja isoäiti tai isoisä - mahdollisesti isotäti tai isosetä jne).
Jos haastateltavat intoutuu kertomaan pitkiä tarinoita "asian vierestä", voit jättää niiden yksityiskohdat litteroimatta ja merkitä puuttuvat puheenosat perättäisillä pisteillä.

4. VAIHE. Analysoi litteroitua aineistoa. Etsi siitä kasvatususkomuksia ja - sanontoja, alleviivaa ne ja merkitse kenen sanonnoista on kyse. Kokoa niitä luetteloksi ja jos uskomuksia ja sanontoja on paljon, ryhmittele niitä (esimerkiksi isää koskevat uskomukset ja sanonnat yhteen ryhmään). Älä tässäkään vaiheessa muuta haastateltavien tekstiä kirjakielen mukaiseksi äläkä muuta heidän murreilmaisujaan. Jos epäilet, ettei jokin sana tai ilmaisu ole ymmärrettävä perhepiirin tai murrealueen ulkopuolella voit "suomentaa" sanan sulkeisiin. Jos on mahdollista, vertaile hieman eri sukupolvien tuottamia tuloksia.

5. VAIHE. Luonnehdi tämän tyyppistä tutkimusta (esim. onko se kokeellista, vaikuttamistutkimusta, toimintatutkimusta jne). Käytä apuna kirjan lukua V (Hirsjärvi & Huttunen).

6. VAIHE. <u>Lähetä</u> litteroitu teksti, analyysisi ja vastauksesi etäohjaajalle. Litteroituja tekstejä ja analyysia ei palauteta, joten ota niistä tarvittaessa itsellesi kopiot.

Tulokset ja litteroidut tekstit talletetaan Suomalaisen kasvatuksen perinteitä ja nykykäsityksiä koskevaan arkistoon Jyväskylän Yliopiston kasvatustieteen laitokselle. Tätä arkistoa voidaan myöhemmin käyttää tutkimustarkoituksiin. Aineistoa käyttävät tutkijat sitoutuvat toimimaan tutkimuseettisen toimikunnan sääntöjen mukaisesti, joten vastaajien intimiteettisuojaa ei rikota.

(Haastattelukirjallisuutta: **Hirsjärvi ja Hurme, Teemahaastattelu**, Gaudeamus ja Yliopistopaino. Arkiuskomuksista: **Virtanen. Punatukkaiset ovat intohimoisia. Arjen uskomuksia**, WSOY.)

Appendix 4 Instructions for the student interviewers in Estonia

INTERVJUEERIMINE
KASVATUSLIKE HOIAKUTE JA TÕEKSPIDAMISTE KOHTA PEREKONNAS
JA NENDE PÜSIVUSE KOHTA PÕLVEST PÕLVE

Uurimuse taust:Argielus tegutsedes lähtutakse mit mesugustest arvamustest ja
uskumustest, mis väljenduvad kõnes ja mõjutavad kasvatustegelikkust. Mõned
hoiakud on aegade jooksul kokku surutud üldtuntud kõne käändudeks-
vanasõnadeks, nt. Ega käbi kännust kaugele kuku; Mida armsam laps, seda
valusam vits; Ükski meister pole kurviga taevast alla lastud jne. jne. On ka
pikemaid tarkusi, mida vanasõnaks nimetada ei saa, nt. Kui sööd kirsikivi ära,
kasvab kõhtu kirsipuu; Mis see laste kasvamisest teab, kel endal lapsi pole.

Praegus uurimistöö eesmärgiks on koguda intervjuumeetodil arvamusi,
uskumusi, seisukohti kasvatuse kohta. Kogutavad uskumudes peaksid
puudutama **laste kasvatust, lapsi, ema, isa ja vanemsust**.
TEGUTSE JÄRNEVALT:
intervjueeri kolme isikut.
1 ASTE.
Vali pere, kus elus on kolm põlvkonda. Põlvkondade keti noorim esindaja võiks
olla 18-30 aastane. Võidväga hästi kasutad oma perekinda., peaasi, et kõik on
samast suguvõsast. Kui Sul endal on juba täsikasvanud lapsi ja tahad koguda
materjali oma suguvõsast, võid valida uurimiseks oma lapse, iseenda ja ühe
oma vanematest.

2. ASTE. Kui valisid oma pere, siis kirjuta kõigepealt ise vastused
alljärgnevatele intervjuu küsimustele. Intervjueeri siis suguvõsa teisi liikmeid
(nt. Oma ema ja vanaema). Kui valid muu suguvõsa, siis intervjueeri kõiki
kolme põlvkondade keti liiget.
Järgnevlat on antud viis teemat ja näiteid küsimustest, mida võiksid kasutada.
Sobita küsimuste vorm vastaja eripärale. Küsimuste eesmärk on ergutada
mõtlema kasvatusest. äratada mõtteid ja meenutada vastaja kogemusi. Pole
kerge eristada kogemusi ja uskumusi, inimesed võivad neist kõigist rääkida
segiläbi. Enamus inimesi vajab aega, et kasvatus puudutavad mõtted ja
vanasõnad meelde tuleksid, nii ei liigu rahulikult ühelt teemalt teisele.

TEEMAD.
1 Hea ema, hea isa.

1. Milline on sinu arvates hea ema? Hea isa?
2. Mõtete erinevusi põlvkondade vahel lastekasvatuse teemal. Kas
    kasvatuses on midagi sellist, milles oled eri arvamusel a) oma
    vanematega? b) oma vanavanematega?

3. Kasvatusejhtnööre. Kas sul endal on olnud mingeid kindlaid juhtnööre või mängureegleid, kuid tegeled (tegelesid) oma lastega? Mis need on

4. Lähisugulaste kasvatuslikud tõekspidamised, rahvatarkused, argiuskumused. Kas mäletad jkõnekäände, vanasõnu, rahvatarkusi või igavesi tõdesid? Need võivd puudutada last, ema, isa, bvanemaid, distsiplineerimist, karistusi, laste kohtlemist. Milliseid uskumusi mäletad? Kas pead neid õigeseks? Kas mäletad, et keegi lähisugulastest on käitunud nende alusel?

5. Poiste ja tüdrukute kophta käivad erinevad nõuded, piirangud, vabadused, nende kasvatamise eripär (kui seda oli).

3. ASTE
Kirjuta intervjuu sõna-sõnalt üles ühtki sõna, väljendust või murdejoont muutmata (parandamata). See on litereerimine. Märgi litereerimise algusesseintervjuuritu sugu, eesnimi, vanus ja sugulussuhe kolme põlve ketis (tütar v. poeg, vanaema jne.)
Kui intervjueeritav on hoogu sattuds jutustanud pikki lugusid, mis teemaga seontud ei ole, siis margi paari oma sõnaga, millest on jutt, ja tähista see punktiiriga.

4 ASTE. Analüüsi litereeritud ainestikku., klassifitseeri, püüa neid kirjakeelde tõlkida! Kui arvad, et sõna üldkeeles tundmatu, pane sugludesse tähendus. Püüa võrrelda kasvatust eri sugupõlvedes.

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