

# Marla B. Isaacs, Ph.D., ABPP

510 South 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19146

## *Curriculum Vitae*

Phone: (215) 546-2379  
MarlabIsaacs@gmail.com

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## CLINICAL AND FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST

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Forensic expertise in psychological testing, custody and personal injury. Psychotherapy with adult individuals, couples and family. Authored book on children and divorce, widely published in professional journals, and featured as a guest lecturer at national conferences and symposiums.

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### Current Positions

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UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

**Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry**

PRIVATE PRACTICE — CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

**Psychotherapy:** Serve adults (individual and marital), children, and families of divorce and remarriage.

**Forensic Psychology:** Expert witness on forensic cases involving custody and divorce and personal injury. Expertise in psychological testing.

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### Education

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<b>Ph.D., Counseling Psychology</b>	University of California — Berkeley, CA	1974
<b>M.Ed., Counseling Psychology</b>	Columbia University — New York, NY	1969
<b>M.A., Indian Studies</b>	University of Wisconsin — Madison, WI	1967
<b>B.A., Asian Studies</b>	University of Wisconsin — Madison, WI	1966

### *Postgraduate Training and Fellowships:*

National Institute of Mental Health, Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Clinical Psychology	1974 to 1976
Mount Zion Hospital and Medical Center, San Francisco, CA	1974 to 1976
Soroptimist Federation of the Americas Award	1971 to 1972
Veteran Administration Traineeship, Columbia University	1967 to 1969
National Defense Foreign Language Fellowship, University of Wisconsin	1966 to 1967

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### Board Certification / Licensure

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**AMERICAN BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Board Certified in Clinical Psychology

**STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA:** Psychology License

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA:** Psychology License, School Psychology Certification, Marriage, Family and Child Certification

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# Marla B. Isaacs, Ph.D., ABPP

Page 2

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## Professional Appointments

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### *Faculty Appointments:*

<b>Assistant Clinical Professor in Psychiatry</b>	University of Pennsylvania, School of Medicine	1982 to present
<b>Associate Clinical Professor in Psychology</b>	Widener University, Institute for Graduate Clinical Psychology	2000 to 2013
<b>Lecturer</b>	University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education	1984 to 1991

### *Administrative and Clinical Appointments:*

<b>Founder and Director</b>	Families of Divorce Project, Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic	1978 to 1987
<b>Psychologist</b>	Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic	1976 to 1987
<b>Child Abuse Consultant</b>	Children's Hospital of Philadelphia	1977 to 1979
<b>Research Associate</b>	Analysis of Defenses in Psychotherapy Research Project, San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute	1975 to 1977
<b>Guidance Consultant</b>	Richmond Unified School District, California	1969 to 1972

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## Professional Affiliations

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- American Psychological Association
- Society For Personality Assessment
- Pennsylvania Psychological Association [Child Custody Group]
- Academy of Clinical Psychology
- Philadelphia Society of Clinical Psychologists
- Association of Family and Conciliation Courts

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## Grant Awards

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- Child Adjustment to Divorce in the Family Context. National Institute of Mental Health (grant number MH37925-02), 1984-87, \$232,510.
- Children of Divorce: A Response to Community Concerns. Pew Memorial Trust, 1982-85, \$600,000.
- Children of Divorce: A Family Systems Approach For Service, Training and Research. Pew Memorial Trust, 1979-82, \$660,000

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# Marla B. Isaacs, Ph.D., ABPP

Page 3

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## Books

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- **Isaacs, M.B.**, Montalvo, B., and Abelson, D., *Therapy Of The Difficult Divorce: Managing Crises, Reorienting Warring Couples, Working with the Children and Expediting Court Processes* (reissued), Jason Aaronson, Master Work Series, New Jersey and London, 2000.
- **Isaacs, M.B.**, Montalvo, B., and Abelson, D., *The Difficult Divorce: Therapy for Children and Families*, Basic Books, New York, 1986.

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## Articles

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- **George, C., Isaacs, M. and Marvin, R.** *Incorporating Attachment Assessment in Custody Evaluations: The Case of a Two-Year Old and her Parents*,” Family Court Review, July 2011.
- **Isaacs, M., George, C., and Marvin, R.**, “*Utilizing Attachment Measures in Child Custody Evaluations: Incremental Validity*,” Journal of Child Custody, Volume 6, No 1-2, 2009.
- **Isaacs, M.** “*Tools of The Trade: Creating the Good Divorce*,” PSYCHOTHERAPY NETWORKER, Vol. 25, No. 2, March 2001.
- **Isaacs, M.** “*Children In The Middle: From Loyalty Conflicts to Parental Alienation*,” PHILADELPHIA BAR ASSOCIATION FAMILY LAW SECTION NEWSLETTER, December 2000.
- **Isaacs, M.** and Montalvo, B. “*The Difficult Divorce*,” FAMILY THERAPY NETWORKER, November/December 1989.
- **Isaacs, M.** and Leon, G. “*Divorce, Disputation and Discussion: Communicational Styles Among Recently Separated Spouses*,” JOURNAL OF FAMILY PSYCHOLOGY, Vol. 1, No. 3 (March 1988):298-311.
- **Isaacs, M.** and Leon, G. “*Remarriage and Its Alternatives following Divorce: Mother and Child Adjustment*,” JOURNAL OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY, Vol. 14, No. 2 (April 1988):163-173.
- **Isaacs, M.** “*The Visitation Schedule and Child Adjustment: A Three-Year Study*,” FAMILY PROCESS, 27 (June 1988):251-256.
- **Isaacs, M.** and Leon, G. “*Race, Marital Dissolution and Visitation: An Examination of Adaptive Family Strategies*,” JOURNAL OF DIVORCE, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1988):17-31.
- **Isaacs, M.**, Leon, G. and Kline, M. “*When Is a Parent Out of the Picture?: Different Custody, Different Perceptions*,” FAMILY PROCESS, 26 (1987):101-110.
- **Isaacs, M.**, Leon, G. and Donohue, A.M. “*Who Are the ‘Normal’ Children of Divorce?: On the Need to Specify Populations*,” JOURNAL OF DIVORCE, Vol. 10, Nos. 1/2 (Fall/Winter 1986):107-119.
- **Isaacs, M.** and Leon, G. “*Social Networks, Divorce and Adjustment: A Tale of Three Generations*,” JOURNAL OF DIVORCE, Vol. 9 (4), (Summer 1986):1-16
- **Isaacs, M.** and Levin, I. “*Who's in My Family?: A Longitudinal Study of Drawings of Children of Divorce*,” JOURNAL OF DIVORCE, 7 (Summer 1984):1-2.
- **Isaacs, M.** “*Helping Mom Fail: A Case of a Stalemated Divorcing Process*,” FAMILY PROCESS, 21 (June 1982):225-34.
- **Isaacs, M.** “*Sex Role Stereotyping and the Evaluation of the Performance of Women: Changing Trends*,” PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN QUARTERLY, 6 (Spring 1982).
- **Isaacs, M.** “*Needs vs. Rights*,” THE SHINGLE, 42 (Winter 1979).

# Marla B. Isaacs, Ph.D., ABPP

Page 4

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## Reviews and Chapters

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- **Isaacs, M.** *“Psychological Testing and Child Custody Evaluations,”* Lawyers & Counselors Tackle Tough Child Custody Problems, Pennsylvania Bar Institute, 2004.
- **Isaacs, M.** Review of *“The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce: A 25 Year Landmark Study,”* Wallerstein, J., Lewis, J., Blakeslee, S. in *The Philadelphia Lawyer*, Vol. 64, No.2, Summer 2001.
- **Isaacs, M.** Review of *“Families in Transition,”* Eds. L. Bond and B. Wagner, in *AMERICAN FAMILY THERAPY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER*, 1989.
- **Isaacs, M.** *“Dysfunctional Arrangements in Divorcing Families,”* in *CLINICAL ISSUES IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES*, Ed. M. Lindblad-Goldberg, The Family Therapy Collections, Aspen Publication, Rockville, MD, 1987.
- Shilkret, C., **Isaacs, M.**, Drucker, C. and Curtis, J. *“The Acquisition of Insight,”* in *THE PSYCHOANALYTIC PROCESS: THEORY CLINICAL OBSERVATION AND EMPIRICAL RESEARCH*, Weiss, J. and Sampson, H., Guilford Press, New York, 1986.
- **Isaacs, M.** Review of *“Growing Up Divorced,”* by Linda Bird Francke, *THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER*, June 30, 1983.
- **Isaacs, M.** *“When Families Break: Three Approaches to Child Custody Litigation,”* *FAMILY PROCESS*, Winter 1983.
- **Isaacs, M.** *“Facilitating Restructuring and Relinkage: Issues in Divorce Therapy,”* in *THERAPY WITH REMARRIAGE FAMILIES*, Ed. L. Messinger, The Family Therapy Collections, Aspen Publication, Rockville, MD and London, 1982.
- **Isaacs, M.** *“Treatment for Families of Divorce: A Systems Model of Prevention,”* in *CHILDREN OF SEPARATION AND DIVORCE: MANAGEMENT AND TREATMENT*, Eds. I. Stuart and L. Abt, New York, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1981.

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## National Media Exposure

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- **Nightline**, 1990
- **Nightwatch**, 1989
- **The Phil Donahue Show**, 1986
- **Washington Post**, 2/13/90
- **Boston Globe**, 11/17/89, 10/14/93, 9/95, 10/00
- **New York Times**, 12/1/88, 10/26/89, 4/2/92, 5/95, 4/24/95
- **Newsweek**, 10/24/87, 2/2/89, 3/12/90
- **USA Today**, 10/27/86, 11/15/90

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## Selected Lectures by Invitation

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- “Attachment—An Evolving Factor in Custody Cases,” Pennsylvania Bar Institute, Philadelphia, PA, November 11, 2014; Mechanicsburg, PA, November 19, 2014
- “Attachment Theory in the Courtroom: Informed Decisions for Young Children,” Pennsylvania Trial Judges Conference, Philadelphia, PA, February 20, 2013.
- “Attachment in Child Custody Evaluations: An Emerging Methodology,” Association for Family and Conciliation Courts Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, June 2012.
- “Attachment Measures in Child Custody Evaluations: The Use of The Strange Situation,” Society for Personality Assessment Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, March 2012.
- *Assessing Attachment in Young Children: Incremental Validity For Custody Evaluations*,” Society for Personality Assessment Annual Meeting, San Jose, CA, March, 2010.
- “Evaluating Attachment in Child Custody Evaluations,” Association for Family and Conciliation Courts Annual Meeting, New Orleans, May 2009.
- “Attachment Measures in Child Custody Evaluations”, Society for Personality Assessment Annual Meeting, Chicago, Ill., March 6, 2009.
- “The Rorschach in Custody Evaluations,” Pennsylvania Bar Association, Family Law Section, Philadelphia, September 25, 2008.
- “Parenting Coordination: Is Pennsylvania Ready” Panel, Conference sponsored by the Pennsylvania Psychological Association and the Pennsylvania Bar Association, Harrisburg, November 24, 2008.
- “The Parent Coordinator,” Plenary, Pennsylvania Bar Association, Family Law Section Summer Meeting, Toronto, Canada, July 14, 2006.
- “Termination of Parental Rights: How the system can falter,” Princeton University, School of Law, April 17, 2006, Princeton, New Jersey.
- “Parental Alienation,” The Montgomery Bar Association, February 1, 2006, Norristown, Pennsylvania.
- “The Parent Coordinator,” Doris Jonas Fried Inn of Court, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, September 13, 2005.
- “Parental Alienation: What is it and what can the courts do?” Annual Meeting, Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges, Hershey, PA, July 22, 2004.
- “The Art Of Writing For Judges,” Panel: The Incremental Value of the Rorschach, Society For Personality Assessment, Annual Meeting, Miami, March 12, 2004.
- “Paternity Issues: Best Interest for Children and DNA Testing,” Pennsylvania Conferences of State Trial Judges, Philadelphia, February 19, 2004.
- “Update on Brainwashing and Parental Alienation,” Philadelphia Bar Association, Family Law Section, January 5, 2004.
- “Child Abduction: Risk Factors, The Trauma and Preventative Interventions,” 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference, Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, Ottawa, Ontario, May 29, 2003.
- “The Role of the Mental Health Professional in a Child Custody Case,” as part of “Family Law Potpourri,” Pennsylvania Bar Institute, The Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA, April 1, 2003.
- “Current Research on Divorce,” Philadelphia Bar Association, Family Law Section, December 2, 2002.
- “Where is Johnny Sleeping Tonight? Custody, Parenting Time and Expert Evaluations,” Thomas S. Forkin Family Law, New Jersey, November 12, 2002.
- “Interviewing the Child/ The Child as a Witness,” Pennsylvania Bar Institute, June 12, 2002.

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## Selected Lectures by Invitation

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- “*Child Custody Evaluations*,” Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Residency Didactic Program, The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, March 28, 2002.
- “*Joint Custody*,” Pennsylvania Bar Association, Family Law Section, Winter Meeting, January 19, 2002.
- “*The Role of Psychological Testing and Expert Testimony*,” New York University Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, December 15, 2002.
- “*New Issues In Custody*,” Philadelphia Bar Association, December 12, 2001.
- “*Peer Pressure*,” The Philadelphia School, January 9, 2001.
- “*Reproductive Technology and Its Impact on Children*,” The American Family in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Family Law Symposium 2000, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, November 18, 2000.
- “*Working with Warring Couples*,” Reading Hospital, Grand Rounds, Department of Psychiatry, Reading, PA, October 10 and 24, 2000.
- “*Personal Injury and Child Custody Evaluations of Children*,” Forensic Consult Module, Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, The Child Guidance Center of the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, January 20, 2000.
- “*Children in the Middle: From Loyalty Conflicts to Parental Alienation*,” Family Law Section, Philadelphia Bar Association, Philadelphia, PA March 8, 2000.
- Panel: “*High Conflict Divorce*,” Family Law Section, Philadelphia Bar Association, Philadelphia, PA, December 9, 1999.
- “*Advanced Mediation Training Seminar*,” Philadelphia Family Court, Philadelphia, PA, October 1, 1999.
- “*Psychological Testing for Workman’s Compensation Evaluations*,” Annual Judges Conference, State College, PA, July 13, 1999.
- “*Child Custody Evaluations*,” School of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania, April 5, 1999.
- “*Therapy with Children of Divorce*,” “Social Work Options, Philadelphia, PA, November 16, 1998.
- “*The Children*,” interview included in the Pennsylvania Bar Association Video on Family Court Reform, Pennsylvania Bar Association, Commission on Women in the Profession, May 15, 1997.
- “*Eclectic Therapy*,” Rutgers University, New Jersey, February 3, 1997.
- Panel: “*Winning Your Case with Proper Use of Forensic Experts*,” Philadelphia Bar Association, Family Law Symposium, Philadelphia, PA, April 17, 1996.
- “*Divorce Mediation: Couples Work after Divorce*,” Belmont Center, November 10, 1994. *bical Issues in Custody Litigation*,” Continuing Legal Education Seminar, Pennsylvania Bar Association, September 1994.
- Panel: “*Interventions with High-Conflict Litigating Families in Custody Disputes*,” Co-sponsored by the New Jersey Psychological Association and the New Jersey Institute for Continuing Legal Education, New Brunswick, NJ, December 8, 9, 1995.
- “*The Expert Witness*,” Temple Law School, Philadelphia, PA, October 1995.
- Seminar: “*The Process of Therapy*,” Marriage Council of Philadelphia, December 1993-February 1994.
- “*Ethical Issues in Custody Litigation*,” Continuing Legal Education Seminar, Pennsylvania Bar Association, September 1994.
- Seminar: “*The Process of Therapy*,” Marriage Council of Philadelphia, December 1993-February 1994.
- “*Infertility and Marital Problems with Endometriosis*,” Endometriosis Association, Bucks County, PA, January 1995.

# Marla B. Isaacs, Ph.D., ABPP

Page 7

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## Selected Lectures by Invitation

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- *"Divorce and Children,"* Grand Rounds, Temple University, School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry, November 1993.
- *"Difficult Divorce,"* Marywood College, School of Continuing Education, Scranton, PA, November 1992.
- Panel: *"Preparing Your Custody Case from Plowman Hearing to Final Order,"* Philadelphia Bar Association, Family Law Winter Meeting, January 1993.
- *"The Difficult Divorce,"* Mid-Hudson Divorce & Family Mediation Center, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY, May 1991.
- *"The Difficult Divorce,"* Annual Meeting of the South Dakota Psychological Association, Rapid City, SD, May 1991.
- *"Helping Children Through the Difficult Divorce,"* 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Therapy Networker Symposium, Washington, D.C., March 1991.
- *"The Rorschach Test in Forensic Settings,"* Philadelphia Bar Association, Family Law Division, Philadelphia, Panel, December 1990.
- *"The Adult Child of Divorce,"* University of Pennsylvania, Student Health, October 1990.
- *"What a Divorcing Family Can Tell Us,"* Plenary Session, The Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, June 1990.
- *"Divorce and Adolescence,"* Meadowbrook Hospital, New Castle, DE, February 23, 1990.
- *"Functional and Dysfunctional Divorcing Families,"* conference sponsored by St. Vincent Health Center, Erie, PA, May 1989.
- *"The 'Good Enough' Separation,"* 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, New York City, March 1989.
- *"Children and Divorce,"* Annual Meeting, National Association of Social Work, Tampa, FL, April 1989.
- *"The Difficult Divorce,"* Annual Family Therapy Networker Symposium, Washington, D.C., March 1989.
- *"Innovative Interventions in Divorce,"* UCI-California College of Medicine, University of California, Irvine, Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior, May 1988.
- *"The Difficult Divorce,"* conference sponsored by The Family Institute, Albuquerque, NM, April 1988
- *"The Parent-Child Relationship After Divorce: Gender Differences,"* 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, San Francisco, March 1988.
- *"His View, Her View: Gender Differences in Divorcing Parents,"* 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, Washington, D.C., March 1987.
- *"Separation and Divorce: The Child's View,"* 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, Washington, D.C., March 1987.
- *"Child Psychiatry Conference,"* Continuing Medical Education for the 7<sup>th</sup> Medical Command (Western Europe), sponsored by the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Mannheim, West Germany, February 1987.
- *"Child Custody Considerations,"* 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Association for Psychiatry and the Law, Philadelphia, October 1986.
- *"The Impact of Divorce on Children: A Longitudinal Perspective,"* 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, Chicago, April 1986.
- *"Successful Patterns In Divorce,"* Annual Family Therapy Networker Symposium, Washington, D.C., March 1986.

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## Selected Lectures by Invitation

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- *"The Unfolding Process of Divorce: How Children Perceive Their Divorced Families,"* Plenary at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Family Therapy Association, San Diego, CA, June 1985.
- *"Children of Divorce,"* conference sponsored by the Thistleton Regional Centre for Children and Adolescents, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, May 1985.
- *"Families in Transition: Working With Parents and Children in Divorce and Remarriage,"* conference sponsored by the Tressler Center for Human Growth, Wilmington, DE, May 1985.
- *"Children of Separation and Divorce: Findings from a Three-Year Study,"* 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, New York City, April 1985.
- *"Restructuring and Relinkage in Divorce Work,"* conference sponsored by the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic, Philadelphia, May 1984.
- *"Predictive Indicators of Child Adjustment: A Two-Year Study of Divorce,"* 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, April 1984.
- *"Relationships Between Children and Parents After Divorce,"* Annual Symposium of the Bryn Mawr Youth Psychotherapy Center, Bryn Mawr Hospital, Bryn Mawr, PA, October 1984.
- *"Outcome for Children of Divorce: A Family Perspective,"* 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, Boston MA, April 1983.
- *"Counseling Couples Who Are Heading for Divorce,"* conference sponsored by the Tressler-Lutheran Service Association, Camp Hill, PA, April 1983.
- *"Families of Divorce: Towards a Framework of Intervention,"* 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Therapy Networker Symposium, Washington, D.C., March 1982.
- *"Children of Divorce: New Family Systems,"* conference sponsored by Child Guidance Clinic, Jacksonville, FL, February 1982.
- *"Children of Separation and Divorce,"* conference sponsored by Wayne Counseling Center, Wayne, NJ, July 1981.
- *"Children of Separation and Divorce: Towards a Framework of Intervention,"* Regional Conference of the Families of Divorce Project, Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic, June 1981.
- *"Divorcing Parents Who Won't Part: A Special Problem In Divorce Counseling,"* Annual Meeting of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, San Diego, CA, October 1981.
- *"The Response of Children to Parental Divorce,"* conference sponsored by Hall-Mercer Community Health Center of Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, May 1981.
- *"Separation, Divorce and the Family,"* conference sponsored by the Education Institute, Catholic Diocese of Arlington, VA, October 1980.
- *"Child Custody: Whose Needs Are Being Met?"* Child Development Program, Hall-Mercer Community Mental Health Center of Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, October 1980.
- *"Reactions of Children to Divorce"* (keynote speaker), conference sponsored by the Sarah Reed Children's Center, Erie, PA, September 1979.
- *"Reactions of Children to Divorce"* (keynote speaker), conference sponsored by the Sarah Reed Children's Center, Erie, PA, September 1979.