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The Intersection Of Family And Career Working Mothers In The 21st Century

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The Intersection of Family and Career Working Mothers in the 21st Century

By Shannon Rossman Allen

Thesis Adviser

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts in Corporate and Public Communications**

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Chapter 1

Working Mothers at a Crossroads

Because I am a woman, I must make unusual efforts to succeed. If I fail, no one will say, "She doesn't have what it takes." They will say, "Women don't have what it takes."

— Clare Booth Luce

While women of past generations have made dramatic progress in their great effort to garner equality in the workplace and their lives in general, there is still much ahead to accomplish for the next generation of women. As a woman and the author of this research project, I am keenly interested in the future of mothers in the workforce, and how both motherhood and work interface. In my research, I have found staggering statistics: "Demographic data project that the U.S. work force will comprise up to 80 percent women and people of color sometime early in the 21st century. These data reveal that 65 percent of the female workers will have school-aged children, 80 percent will be of childbearing age, and 90 percent will bear children" (Daly, 1998, p. 368). Based on these statistics, there must be a future – and a bright one – for working mothers in the new millennium.

The mother of Connor, 6, and Elaina, 5, I have experienced both the challenges and rewards of working outside the home during "regular business hours" – approximately 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. – five days a week. The challenges I have met range from caring for a sick child smack dab in the middle of the week on the same day I have a meeting with the vice president of my division; getting a call in the middle of the work day from my day care center informing me that Elaina is running a fever (which means she has to go home immediately and be fever-free for 24 hours before she can return to school – so she is out the following day, as well); to feeling physically and emotionally exhausted while practicing reading skills with a cranky 6-year-old who does not take a nap with his other kindergarten friends. Yet the rewards are endless: "Mommy time" with the kids; tickle torture; listening to them share their favorite parts of the day; seeing

their dazzling smiles, hearing the words “I love you” – and enjoying two careers: one as a mother; the other as a public relations professional.

I also regularly experience what author Arlie Russell Hochschild (1989, 2003) has termed “The Second Shift.” This “second shift” refers to the work mothers tend to once they arrive home and walk through their front door – after their professional lives have “ended” for the day. Those tasks range from cooking dinner and bathing little ones, assisting with the rigors of homework, enjoying the little quality time (with children) that is left before bedtime. And after bedtime, there’s laundry, housework, washing the dinner dishes, finishing my own homework, cramming in personal time and more.

Many working mothers today continue to be torn between their two roles – myself included. First and foremost, I have chosen to be a mother; and second (and a very close second), I have chosen to pursue a profession, a career in the field of public relations. Yet, I now know – and can publicly acknowledge – that my role as mother is, and must be, my first priority. But it wasn’t until a few months ago that I had the courage to stand up and say it out loud, let alone write it on paper for the world to read.

A Brief History of One Working Mother

Growing up in rural Illinois and attending Millikin University, a small liberal arts college in Decatur that boasted small class sizes and a small teacher-to-student ratio with only 1,200 undergraduate students, I was taught that as a woman I must stand up for myself and the future and fortune of others like me. While I would not exactly categorize myself as a staunch “feminist,” I did believe that women were neither treated equally in a historical and present-day context, nor were they taken seriously. This was made crystal

clear to me in the many literature courses I took (I was an English major), which lacked texts from what I considered to be famous and integral female authors. In order to study the works of women, I had to take a women in literature class. And, of course, the class' student body comprised all women, with the exception of one brave gentleman who took the course, but it soon became clear that he wasn't interested in the literature.

In this class, I was turned on to the likes of Charlotte Perkins Gilmore ("The Yellow Wallpaper"), Jane Austin (Pride and Prejudice), Edith Wharton (Ethan Fromme), Sylvia Plath (The Bell Jar), Marilyn French (The Women's Room), Virginia Woolf (A Room of One's Own), and the list goes on and on. I was both amazed and appalled by this new literature that I was being introduced to at the ripe "old" age of 20. Why had I never come in contact with these wonderful authors? Where had they been throughout my high school and early college careers? And, most importantly, why wasn't I reading these works in my 20th-century literature courses? There were no satisfying answers for me when I approached my English professors with these perplexities, which only led me to draw my own conclusions about how women's contributions to literature – and possibly to the world – were viewed. Thus was the beginning of my "women's rights" stage in life, when I decided I would be an ally for all women as they – we – marched forward to equality.

Nearly 15 years after this experience in my women's literature course, I feel rather confused about the course that "feminism" has led me. Women continue to be paid less than men: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2004) full-time working females earned 79.4 percent what their male counterparts did last year. There are also few women leading major corporations, businesses and organizations. According to a 1995

report of the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, "... white men occupy 95 out of 100 senior management positions ...," yet women make up approximately 50 percent of the workforce (Crittenden, 2001, p. 29).

But it wasn't until 1998, when I had my first child that I thought about – and experienced – the struggles of both working and parenting. I certainly agree that men have struggles in this same area. However, the documentation for such a struggle is scarce when compared to that of working mothers, most likely because cultural norms leave child rearing to the mothers. In fact, most children's primary caregivers are mothers – single, married or divorced. The point: These primary caregivers are predominately female (Crittenden, 2001, p. 7). This is not a sexist statement; rather, it is a fact. Mothers tend to be the nurturers, the ones who care for the needs of a child; while typically, the fathers serve as providers.

Fathers certainly love their children – who would dispute that? However, traditionally their primary role has been to ensure stability when it comes to their family's basic needs. Far more women than men stay home to take care of the children. Yet today, "... more women with children are employed full-time than ever before ... and they are not necessarily working at the careers for which they have been trained, or at the most challenging levels of those careers, or at the salaries that their training would normally command" (Crittenden, 2001, p. 28). All the while, the number of women in the workplace continues to rise: "Between 1994 and 1999 alone, nearly 1 million women a year moved from part-time to full-time employment, including a record number of mothers of even very young children (Crittenden, 19).

Taking a Closer Look

So, while I share with readers that the role of parenting yields both joys and rewards in terms of experiences, the actual parenting role can add intensity to many other aspects of working mothers' lives – most especially in their careers. According to a recent survey in Parents magazine (June 2003), mothers in the workplace continue to feel torn between their jobs and their families. The survey, conducted online by Beta Research Corporation, polled 1,009 mothers of children between the ages of 0 and 12 years old. The results are staggering, suggesting that the traditional role of mother – caretaker – still exists, despite the fact that 71 percent of the mother's surveyed work “because their family depends on the income”; “35% are the primary breadwinner, and 36% say their income is ‘crucial to their family’s survival’” (Parents, June 2003, p. 55). On another note, only 11 percent stated that they worked because they found their jobs to be fulfilling, and 99 percent of the mothers polled stated that “they feel stressed some or most of the time” (Parents, June 2003, p. 55). This sad commentary on motherhood in the 21st century prompted me to take a closer look at the roles of mother and the affect these roles have on careers and vice-versa.

I'd been “stuck” in a job that I wasn't happy with for more than two years. My unhappiness with work resonated throughout my life. I was apathetic at work; I was dysfunctional and scattered at home. In fact, I was what my kids called a “mean mom,” and I was practically nonexistent to my spouse. This was not how I wanted to move ahead in life. So I began to look at other career opportunities – those that would offer me a better work/life balance, but would still challenge me, yet not require too much from me. At first, I felt as if I was letting down all “female kind” – after all, I was supposed to

take on the world along with all my “sisters” to make it a better place for women. And taking a step back in my career was really the opposite of what I viewed feminism to be. Yet I had to be true to myself – my own womanhood – and my family. This thesis is the culmination of my decision.

Research Question: Today’s Working Mother

This research addresses the issues working mothers face in the 21st century when it comes to combining motherhood and a career. The role of parent – for both mothers and fathers – is a joyous and rewarding experience. Yet the time element associated with parenthood and raising a family – an entire lifetime – can add intensity and significant stress to all aspects of a parent’s life, most notably, related to a parent’s career. What is the profile, perspective and progress of working mothers in the 21st century, and how does motherhood affect her professional career advancement?

Purpose of the Study

As we progress further and further into the 21st century, women more and more are approaching equality. Yet working mothers continue to lag behind. Educating the workforce as to the value of working mothers is a piece of unfinished business for the women’s movement. According to Susan Faludi, author of the best-selling and controversial book Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women, “... the afflictions ascribed to feminism are all myths. From the ‘man shortage to ‘the infertility epidemic’ to ‘female burnout’ to ‘toxic day care’ these so called female crises have had their origins not in the actual conditions of women’s lives, but rather in a closed system

that starts and ends in media, popular culture, and advertising – an endless feedback loop that perpetuates and exaggerates its own false images of motherhood” (1993, p. xv).

The feminism of the 21st century is less about women being “equal” to men. It is less about being deserving of rights and opportunities that have been male dominated. Working women and working mothers are finally protected by legislation so they can seek these “traditional” male roles. But today’s feminism asks that women not be forced to make decisions between a professional career and family. It asks that women be free to define themselves – instead of having their identity defined for them, which also means freedom to choose: career, family – or both (Fauldi, 1991).

This thesis addresses the above-stated research question and its subsidiary questions (listed below) through a variety of means, including a survey of both working mothers and working women; personal interviews with two working mothers (Lisa Belkin, New York Times columnist, and Lisa Bearson, founding editor of Creating Keepsakes magazine); and extensive research about working mothers from such authors as Arlie Russell Hochschild (The Second Shift, 1989, 2003), Susan Faludi (Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women, 1991), Ann Crittenden (The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued, 2001) and Dr. Julianne Malveaux and Deborah Perry (Unfinished Business: The 10 Most Important Issues Women Face Today, 2002).

Subsidiary Questions

In an effort to understand the impact motherhood has on working mothers’ career advancement, this study will also attempt to answer the following subsidiary questions:

1. What is the historical background of the women's movement, and how does the women's movement affect working women, especially those who are mothers, in the 21st century?
2. What role do working mothers play in today's professional world?
3. How are working mothers valued and devalued in the professional workplace?
4. How do organizations react to working mothers in the professional workplace?
5. What is the future for working mothers in the 21st century and beyond?
6. Do working mothers pay a higher price – receive less compensation, get passed over for promotion, lose personal liberties, etc. – than men in the professional work environment?

Definition of Terms

Working Mother – For the purpose of this thesis, a working mother is defined as a mother – single, married or divorced – who works part-time or full-time outside of the home. The author of this thesis does, however, acknowledge the fact that all mothers work.

The Second Shift – Coined by author Arlie Russell Hochschild in her ground-breaking book of the same title, "The Second Shift" refers to a working mother's work at home – after her professional job ends, most likely between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8 a.m.

Feminism – Feminism is the theory of political, economic and social equality between men and women that is organized actively on behalf of women's rights and interests.

Mommy Track – The mommy track is a derogatory reference in regard to women who choose to pursue motherhood, rather than a professional career.

Gender Wage Gap – The gender wage gap, or wage gap (as used in this thesis) denotes the difference in pay (wages) between men and women.

Mommy Tax – The “mommy tax” refers to what women “pay” to be mothers – loss of income, loss of benefits, loss of retirement savings, etc.

Mommy Gap – This term refers to the wage gap between working mothers and working, childless women.

Soccer Mom – This term is used as a derogatory term for a stay-at-home mother.

Dual Earners – This term refers to married couples where both spouses work outside the home and contribute to the family income.

The Next Step

In order to fully understand the issue of work/life balance and the affect motherhood has on career advancement, it is important to look at history, specifically the women’s movement and how feminism has shaped the world of work for today’s working mother. Chapter 2, The Self Determination of Women, provides a comprehensive, though not all-inclusive, look at the women’s movement and its many challenges and successes.

Chapter 2

The Self-Determination of Women

I do not wish women to have power over men: but over themselves.

— Mary Wollstonecraft

Women -- and mothers -- have been in the workplace since the 1700s, starting with 17-year-old Eliza Lucas Pinckney, who successfully managed her father's 5,000-acre plantation in the southern-most colonies called the Carolinas (Hymowitz and Weissman, 1978). While there certainly have been struggles for women -- mothers or not -- to be accepted by society, let alone the workplace, this thesis does not specifically deal with women's rights. However, it would be an egregious oversight not to highlight some of the major accomplishments of women in history.

Women's History Timeline

The women's history highlights below by no means cover the entire spectrum of work that women have accomplished throughout the course of many women's movements in history. The timeline below reflects what the author deems to be cornerstones in women's history.

1850 – The first national women's rights convention in Worcester, Massachusetts, attracts more than 1,000 participants.

1855 – The University of Iowa becomes the first state school to admit women to study.

1866 – The American Equal Rights Association is founded, the first organization in the United States to advocate for women's suffrage.

1868 – The National Labor Union supports equal pay for equal work.

1869 – Suffragists Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton form the National Woman Suffrage Association.

1878 – The Susan B. Anthony Amendment to grant women the right to vote is first introduced to Congress.

While women's right to vote in presidential elections does not pointedly affect women in the workforce, it does, however, send a message as to the value of women. Throughout the 1800s, the value of women as thinking, contributing members of society is almost unheard of. Susan B. Anthony was a renegade in her time, as were many other women who believed in a better life with more – and equal – opportunities for women.

Women and Work in the 20th Century: A Timeline

For the purpose of this thesis, the author will focus on 10 major points in history in the 1900s that are more directly associated with women and mothers in the workforce.

1903 – To bring public attention to the concerns of women in the workplace, two women found the National Women's Trade Unions League.

Mary Kenney Sullivan and Leonora O'Reilly founded the National Women's Trade Unions League to improve wages and working conditions for working women. Both Sullivan and O'Reilly were frustrated by the lack of support women received from the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which seemed to view women as second-class citizens.

The National league's motto was "The Eight Hour Day; A Living Wage; To Guard the Home" (Lunardini, 1997, p. 147). Even in the early 1900s, women knew the importance of earning a wage and contributing to the financial well-being of their families, while balancing their roles as workers and mothers; hence the reference in their motto "to guard the home." This organization took a stand for women in the workforce and those who supported such women.

At its first convention, the league proposed some lofty goals, including equal pay for equal work; women's right to vote; full unionization; an eight-hour day; mandatory minimum wage and economic benefits as prescribed in the AFL's economic program (Hymowitz and Weissman, 1978). The league's momentum helped to form chapters in 11 cities from Boston to Denver by 1911; however it lost influence after World War I because men returned home from war and took over many of the jobs within the workforce, and it never regained its original prominence. It did, however, remain active until after World War II, dedicating itself to improving working conditions for women.

1920 – Women gain the right to vote after nearly 100 years.

After nearly 100 years of working toward the right to vote, the Nineteenth Amendment is ratified in 1920, guaranteeing American women citizens this right. Rather than being a celebration of sorts, it is quietly signed into law in a ceremony to which the press and suffragists are not invited (National Organization of Women website, 2004).

The road to women's right to vote began in 1866 when the American Equal Rights Association, the first organization in the United States to advocate for women's suffrage, was founded. Three years later, the first woman suffrage law in the United States passed in the territory of Wyoming. That same year, suffragists Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton formed the National Woman Suffrage Association. In 1872, Anthony and 14 women registered to vote in that year's presidential election to test whether the recently adopted Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees equal protection, could be interpreted as protecting women's rights. Anthony was arrested, tried, found guilty and fined \$100, which she refused to pay (National Organization of Women website, 2004).

In 1878, the Susan B. Anthony Amendment to grant women the vote was first introduced to Congress and almost 10 years later, for the first and only time in the 19th century, the U.S. Senate voted on woman suffrage. It lost, 34 to 16, with 25 senators abstaining from the vote.

In 1919, the Woman Suffrage Amendment was passed by the House of Representatives, 304 to 89, and the Senate, 56 to 25 – nearly 100 years after the struggle for this right began.

1941 – A massive advertising campaign launches, aimed at encouraging women to enter the workforce during World War II.

During World War II, there was an understandable need for the United States to continue to be productive throughout the war. To ensure U.S. productivity, the U.S. government and industry launched a massive media campaign to encourage women to take jobs outside the home. Nearly 7 million women responded – 2 million served in industrial “Rosie the Riveter” type jobs, while 400,000 more joined the military in positions other than the traditional nursing role (National Organization of Women website). However, it is important to note that while women were employed in nearly every job category in the Armed Services, they were still not allowed into combat.

The war provided women with more job opportunities than ever before. “In order to accomplish the monumental production task [related to World War II], industrialists turned to a previously untapped labor source: middle class women. The desire to contribute to the war effort and reasonable compensation attracted hundreds of thousands of women who had never before been involved in the industrial work force.” (Lunardini, 1997, p. 263) As a result, between 1940 and 1945, the number of women in the

workforce rose from 12 million to 19 million (Hymowitz and Weissman, 1978). There no longer seemed to be any rules or barriers for women; the opportunities seemed endless.

“The shape of the work force and its impact on women was felt in other ways as well.

The percentage of married women entering the work force increased by more than one-third from 18 to almost 25 percent. This trend continued even after the war ended. At the same time, women were experiencing on a large scale the double phenomenon of taking sole responsibility for making family decisions regarding everything including the allocation of financial resources, to earning a paycheck over which they had sole discretion” (Lunardini, 1997, p. 264).

Prior to the war, women wanted to work only until the war’s conclusion; however, following the war, many women changed their minds. But the job opportunities afforded to women during the war were only temporary. Similar to World War I, as men returned home from war, they also returned to their pre-war jobs. But it was World War II that very much initiated change in the way America viewed women workers. And, for women in the workplace, there was no turning back.

1961 – President John F. Kennedy establishes the President’s Commission on the Status of Women.

President John F. Kennedy established the first President’s Commission on the Status of Women when Ester Peterson, head of the Women’s Bureau and the highest-level woman appointed to the Kennedy administration, suggested its formation. She recommended this first government-sponsored study to deflect potential pro-equal rights amendment activity that organized labor opposed and to see legislation enacted to guarantee women equal pay for equal work (Hymowitz and Weissman, 1978).

The commission, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, comprised 13 women and 11 men. Its main focus was to research the rights of women in the United States and report back on the findings. The report, issued in October 1963, was groundbreaking. According to Christine Lunardini's book, What Every American Should Know About Women's History, the commission is cited to have found that there was no need for an equal rights amendment at the time since the Fifth and Fourteenth amendments both guaranteed equal right for women. The commission also advocated that women no longer be prohibited from serving on a jury and restrictions on married women's rights end as well. In its report, the commission supported federally and privately funded child care centers, joint guardianship of children and continuing education programs for women. Most importantly, the report highlighted the commission's support of working mothers, in particular such issues as paid maternity leaves, equal pay laws, increased vocational training, promotion of women to high-level government jobs and more appointments of women to policy-making jobs (Lunardini, 1997).

The commission also expressed its concerns regarding how the media portrayed women – specifically the objectification of women – and the issues of African-American women. This report revitalized the women's movement and ultimately resulted in the passage of the first federal law prohibiting gender discrimination in 1964 (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act) and the Equal Pay Act in 1963 (Malveaux and Perry, 2002).

1962 – Felice Schwartz founds Catalyst to help women enter the workforce.

Felice Schwartz founded Catalyst, a research and advisory organization, to expand options for women in the workplace, at the beginning of the “new” women's movement in the United States. She met with the college presidents of Smith, Lawrence,

Mills and Sarah Lawrence and Wellesley, who served as Catalysts' first board of directors, to launch the organization. By 1964, "Catalyst on Campus" began to explore with college educators ways in which undergraduate women could "plan more effectively for the successive phases of their lives" (Catalyst website, 2004). By 1969, the organization administered its first national survey, which documented employers' attitudes toward hiring women for part-time management positions.

Schwartz herself was no stranger to the workplace and the issues facing women. A mother of three, she worked part-time from home for eight years in order to be with her children while they were young. According to Ann Crittenden, author of The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World Is Still the Least Valued, Schwartz "saw such a 'time out' as a reasonable option for many mothers, if companies would accept it without stigmatizing those who chose that route" (2001, p. 30). In a Harvard Business Review article, Schwartz wrote about the biological, traditional and sociological differences between men and women and why women might want to reduce their workload – and pace – in order to care for their children. She wrote that providing flexibility and a slower career path "is in the employers' best interest ... because the cost of losing talented women is greater than the cost of employing them" (Crittenden, 2001, p. 31). Unfortunately, Schwartz' thoughts were ahead of her time – business was not ready to give into a flexible schedule for women and many feminists were outraged by Schwartz' supposition that men and women are, indeed, different. Feminists, to this point, were most concerned with equal rights – which many times translated into equal pay, equality in promotional opportunities, etc. The tradition of women "acting" as men in order to get ahead in business continued.

However, Schwartz clung to her convictions and continued to educate corporations and organizations about the importance of employing women. Since its inception, Catalyst has initiated ground-breaking research on women in the workforce and paved the way for the advancement of women in business, providing resources to women, corporations and organizations that support women in the workforce. The organization has established the National Network of Career Resource Centers, The Career and Family Center, The Center for Career and Leadership Development; it has built its resource library to include a plethora of information on women and work and also serves as a resource for corporate policymakers, scholars and journalists. In 1975, Catalyst shifted its focus to begin working with corporations and professional firms, as well as women. "Catalyst realizes that while women have broken into the corporate world, they lack the education and skills necessary to advance, most still hold jobs on the lowest rung on the corporate ladder. It is time to fix the corporations, not the women" (Catalyst website, 2004).

The organization also has conducted a variety of studies on women in corporate America, including the first National Census of Women Board Directors, the first Census of Women Corporate Officers and Top Earners, Women in Corporate Leadership: Progress and Prospects; and Women of Color in Corporate Management. Now functioning under the direction of Sheila W. Wellington, the organization continues to document and research the challenges facing women in the workforce – and the challenge facing the world of business in the 21st century.

1963 – Congress Passes the Equal Pay Act.

As a result of a recommendation by the President's Commission on the Status of Women, Congress passed the Equal Pay Act, which provided "equal pay" for both men and women who were doing the same type of jobs. The act focused on workers' skills and responsibilities – regardless of gender – and also prevented employers from lowering wages for one gender in order to pay the other gender less (Malveaux and Perry, 2002).

Passage of this act resulted in the first national legislation on behalf of women's employment since before World War I. While there were several attempts over time to ensure minimum wage laws for women workers and many states passed such laws, the Supreme Court eventually declared them unconstitutional in 1923 (Hymowitz and Weissman, 1978). The state of Wyoming was the only state to have an equal pay law for women in effect until 1963. According to Christine Lunardini, "There were several reasons for this state of affairs, not the least of which was a culturally accepted tradition that men were entitled to earn more than women, even when they both did the same job, because men were the breadwinners and the heads of households" (1997, p. 306).

In general, the Equal Pay Act has been difficult to enforce since its inception because it is not easy to interpret what constitutes equal effort, skill and responsibility in a job. In the 1960s, jobs were often defined as "male or female," and, until 1972, classified advertising in the help-wanted section could specifically state whether a male or female worker was being sought. Since the 1970s, more and more women have won law suits that show wage disparity because instead of focusing on skill, effort and responsibility, they began, Lunardini states, "looking for comparable worth in job descriptions and wages. Where it could be demonstrated that jobs held by men and

women had comparable worth, the courts were much more inclined to rule in favor of women litigants” (1997, p. 307).

Another paramount event in 1963 was the publication of Betty Freidan’s The Feminine Mystic, which featured the “problem that has no name.” In her book, Freidan found that many women believed they were fulfilled in devoting their lives to their husbands, marriage, children and homemaking as a result of media’s portrayal of the traditional woman, wife and mother “This ‘cult of domesticity’ might have continued unchallenged had not the expanded opportunities for women created by World War II, and thereafter retracted, resulted in a groundswell of discontent, boredom and loneliness” (Lunardini, 1997, p. 308). In many ways, The Feminine Mystic catapulted a revived women’s movement in the 1960s.

1966 – The National Organization of Women (NOW) forms.

As a result of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, enacted in 1964, which bars employment discrimination based on race, gender and other grounds by private employers, employment agencies and unions, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was formed. In its first five years, the commission received hundreds of thousands of complaints related to gender discrimination. In response to the EEOC’s inaction on employment discrimination complaints, a cadre of women, led by Betty Friedan, author of The Feminine Mystic, founded the National Organization of Women (NOW) to function as a civil rights organization for women. Its 28 founders created NOW to work for women in the same way the NAACP was devised for the African-American people (National Organization of Women website, 2004).

“NOW’s statement of purpose rejected tokenism and demanded a ‘fully equal partnership of the sexes, as part of the worldwide revolution of human rights’ ... They rejected the idea that men had to carry the full burden of supporting themselves, their wives, and their families, as well as the idea that women were solely responsible for the nurturing of marriage, home, and family” (Lunardini, 1997, p. 317). The organization also made it perfectly clear that it did not believe that women had to choose between marriage and family and a fulfilling career.

In October 1966, 300 men and women attended the first meeting of the National Organization of Women, where Friedan was appointed the organization’s first president. “NOW organizers also put together its version of a Bill of Rights that included an equal rights amendment to the U.S. Constitution. It also included maternity leave, deductions for home and childcare expenses for working parents, government subsidized day care, equal education, training for poor women, the right to legal abortion, and not least, EEOC enforcement of all Title VII provisions” (Lunardini, 1997, p. 317). In its first five years of existence, the National Organization of Women grew to 15,000. It became the leading voice for the modern women’s movement, and continues to be a strong voice for women in the 21st century. (National Organization of Women website, 2004).

1973 – Karen A. Nussbaum founds 9to5: National Association of Working Women.

The mission of 9to5: National Association of Working Women is to put working women’s issues on the public agenda. It all began “in 1973 when a group of office workers in Boston began to talk about issues that had no name—sexual harassment, work/family challenges, and pay equity” (9to5: National Association of Working Women website, 2004). While the organization’s constituents tend to be lower-wage women and

those who've experienced discrimination, membership is open to all women searching for economic justice.

Specifically, the organization commits itself to:

- **Winning family-friendly policies to help working people balance responsibilities at home and on the job.**
- **Making nonstandard jobs voluntary and equitable so that those who work part-time or as temps receive fair pay and benefits.**
- **Eliminating workplace discrimination through educating about legal rights on the job, monitoring enforcement agencies and expanding anti-discrimination laws.**
- **Opposing punitive welfare policies and backing those that allow women to be self-sufficient while supporting their families (9to5: National Association of Working Women website, 2004).**

9to5 has conducted research on issues affecting working women in regard to part-time and temporary work, workplace discrimination, family leave, welfare policy, office health and safety and job retention, and it works to pass legislation protecting women in the workplace. The organization was instrumental in helping to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Family and Medical Leave Act, state health and safety laws, living wage ordinances and anti-discrimination measures (9to5: National Association of Working Women website, 2004).

The largest nonprofit membership organization of working women in the United States, 9to5: National Association of Working Women boasts more than 20 chapters with members in all 50 states. This organization addressed the issues of both sexual

harassment and discrimination, and has helped to win better salaries, working conditions and family-friendly work-related policies for women and working mothers.

1978 – The Pregnancy Discrimination Act bans employment discrimination against pregnant women.

A breakthrough in women's rights in the workplace, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (an amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) protected working women – and their unborn children – and showed the world that female employees are an asset in the work world (Lenz and Myerhoff, 1985). The act was passed as a result of active lobbying of many women's groups, including the National Organization of Women, which proved that these organizations had the power to force change.

With the passage of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, pregnancy and childbirth are deemed similar to physical disabilities. This legislation forced many companies to change their policies – if they indeed had any – in regard to maternity leave. While pregnancy is considered a “disability” in this legislation, it is important to note that many organizations and women – the author included – are offended by the term “disability” as it relates to the Pregnancy Discrimination Act. Motherhood is a fact of life for many women in America and, thus should not be designated a “disability.” However, the legislation that now protects pregnant women was much-needed to protect working mothers in the workplace.

After October 1978, companies that treated maternity leave differently from other disabilities were required to change their policies, and more formal maternity-leave plans and longer paid leave for maternity were added to company disability plans (Lenz and

Myerhoff, 1985). It is important to note that while change is happening in terms of family-friendly legislation, it has been slow. For the most part, maternity leaves are generally no longer than six to-eight weeks; the length of time depending on whether a woman has a natural childbirth or Cesarean section. And many states do not have laws that require a business to offer a maternity leave. In Unfinished Business: The 10 Most Important Issues Women Face Today, Julianne Malveaux and Deborah Perry (2002) argue that while pregnant women are now protected by law, they are still not truly supported: "The very first act of juggling for a woman comes with her pregnancy Eliminating discrimination against pregnant women though, doesn't mean that a woman's pregnancy is encouraged or supported in a corporate setting" (48). Yet, in the 21st century, this issue has come to the forefront, as many women work toward a healthy balance between career and family.

1993 – The Family and Medical Leave Act goes into effect.

The passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act has both a positive and negative effect on women in the workforce. According to the act, employees are afforded 12 weeks off from work in a 12-month period for the birth or adoption of a child or to take care of a child, spouse or parent with a serious health condition. (It is important to note that fathers are also afforded this same benefit; however, for the purpose of this thesis, the author is focusing on the act as it relates to women.)

The act covers employees, in the case of this thesis – women, who have worked for a covered employer (one who employs 50 or more employees for 20 or more workweeks) for at least 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12-month period. Women also retain their employer-paid health benefits under the Family

and Medical Leave Act, and the use of this leave cannot result in a loss of any employment benefit earned prior to the leave or earned during the leave. When a woman returns from leave, she also must be employed in her original job, or to an equivalent job with equal pay, benefits and employment terms and conditions.

While this legislation affords working women the opportunity to spend time with their children and to relish their new roles as mothers, women earn no income when they take such leave, which results in no earned retirement benefits for that period of time. It is almost as if the employee has left the workforce completely. And, in some instances, women who return from family and medical leave do not return to their original positions, which is legal under the act. Rather, they are placed in an equivalent employment position, again legal under the act, but one that may not fulfill them from a career standpoint. Thus, women feel as if they are being discriminated against because they took a leave of absence from work.

Looking at the Family and Medical Leave Act from the point of view of small business, it can be seen as a detriment because small companies lose an employee for a 12-week period of time. Forty million Americans – both men and women – do not qualify for coverage under the Family Medical Leave Act because it applies to businesses of 50 or more employees. (Malveaux and Perry, 2001). That company must then find a short-term replacement to fill in, or another employee within the organization takes on the additional workload. With the growth of small business rising, small businesses are generally unsupportive of the Family and Medical Leave Act because it means a loss in productivity and a loss in human resources for a period of time.

Since 1993, there has been no major legislation passed to protect working women or working mothers in the workplace. Yet, more and more women are graduating from college and entering the professional arena: fast forward to the 21st century.

Women in the New Millennium

Working women – mothers in particular – in the new millennium find themselves in a new predicament. No longer just merely soccer moms, mothers of the late 20th and early 21st centuries are multi-taskers who strive to do it all – and do it well. Rather than looking for equality in the workplace in the sense that early feminists were, women of the 21st century are looking to engage in fulfilling professional careers as well as motherhood. In a workaholic culture, time-starved mothers are trying to make it work – some successfully, others unsuccessfully.

Today, 70 percent of married mothers with children under the age of 18 are in the labor force (Bureau of Labor statistics, 2002). In the national best-selling book, The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued (2001), author Ann Crittenden finds that more women with children are working full time, outside the home, than ever before. Within the pages of her book, Crittenden cites a number of studies and reports that support what women seem to already know is true: To excel in the workforce, motherhood must be treated as a secondary job. Yet, according to Crittenden, women are not “prepared to do what most men do willingly—reduce our parental role to that of a fond breadwinner” (2001, p. 29)

Women with children have found over the years that they are, indeed, different from men, but in order to succeed in business they must become more like men. In the

chapter titled "A Conspiracy of Silence," Crittenden (2001) looks at a study by economist Claudia Goldin that sheds some light on the role of women as parents and career professionals since the early 1900s. What Goldin reveals is depressing: The first women to receive a higher education graduated around 1910, and these women "virtually had to renounce motherhood and family life if they wanted a career [most likely in the teaching field]. More than half of the female college graduates of that generation never had children (2001, p. 33). Goldin defines this as the "career or family track." Women who graduated around 1933 were on the "job then family track," and the graduates of the 1950s who launched the modern women's movement followed a "family then job track." The college-educated baby-boomers of the 1970s were the group of women who were going to beat the odds and have it all (Crittenden, 2001).

Goldin's study looked closely at these college-educated baby-boomers, of which she was one. She expected to see highly successful women – women who had families and flourishing careers (Crittenden, 2001). What she discovered was unexpected and unsettling: Fewer than 20 percent of the women had achieved motherhood and a career by the time they were 50. Goldin also found that a female baby-boomer's successful career directly correlated with her status as a parent. "The women without children have been *twice* as successful in achieving a career as the women with children. Fully *half* of the women who had attained a career by midlife were childless," Crittenden wrote (2001, p. 32).

The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World Is Still the Least Valued examines a number of workplace realities for career women who have children, and Crittenden feels that while women have made strides in the corporate

world, they still have work to do. Despite the fact that women have been instrumental in a number of major inventions – the development of some of the earliest computers and the COBOL language – they are seen as replaceable, especially if they have children who could potentially take them away from their work or distract them. With 40 percent of working mothers having children under the age of 18 and 64 percent of female executives having children, many working mothers are making changes in both their careers and their work lives (Catalyst, 2002).

Though women are accepted in the workplace and make up half the workforce, they still fight the stigma that their own mothers fought – just in a different way. It is rather confusing for many modern-day feminists to move forward without thinking they are letting down “all female kind” – and the feminist fight. According to Lisa Belkin, New York Times columnist, who writes in “The Opt-Out Revolution” (New York Times Magazine, October 2003), “Women [in the 1960s] ... were supposed to achieve like men. Once the barriers came down, once the playing field was leveled, they were supposed to march toward the future and take rightful ownership of the universe, or at the very least, ownership of their half. The women’s movement was largely about grabbing a fair share of power – making equal money, standing at the helm in the macho realms of business and government and law. It was about running the world” (2003, p. 44). But today, there is less talk about the glass ceiling and more talk about the problems and issues facing mothers in the workplace.

Belkin shares statistics on mothers who are leaving the workforce or scaling back their workload in order to take care of their children – and themselves. The United States Census shows that the “number of children being cared for by stay-at home moms has

increased nearly 13 percent in less than a decade. At the same time, the percentage of new mothers who go back to work fell from 59 percent in 1998 to 55 percent in 2000” (44). And many women are taking a step back in the age bracket (25-44) that is considered to be “crucial career building years” (2003, 44). Today’s women, including some well-known and high-profile mothers like President Bush’s advisor Karen Hughes; Brenda Barnes, president and CEO of Pepsi-Cola North; and Wendy Chamberlin, ambassador to Pakistan, are making great changes in their lives and looking for something more.

New studies show that the wage gap between men and women is closing at 98 percent when looking at entry-level professional positions, according to Women’s E-News website (2004). However, working mothers are paid 70 cents for every dollar that men receive; for childless women, the gap is a mere 10 cents (www.womenseneew.org). Gone is the wage gap – enter the mommy gap. This new wage gap is taking a toll on American families. Economist Heidi Hartmann cites that “American families lose a staggering \$200 billion annually to the wage gap – an average loss of more than \$4,000 each for working women’s families every year (Women’s E-News website, 2004). And, according to an article titled “Wage Gap for Working Mothers May Cost Billions” (Women’s E-News website, 2004), the situation becomes more compounded because working mothers tend to take breaks in their employment in their 30s, which is when their careers are taking off and their salaries are likely to increase.

How can the issues of the wage gap and the mommy gap be rectified? Many women believe that part-time schedules during the critical child-rearing years can help maintain career flow (Catalyst website, 2004). The expansion of maternity leaves, job

protection policies, affordable child care and family-friendly work policies can also support working women in their professional and personal lives. And a large percentage – nearly 80 percent – of working women believe paid family medical leave is more important than either a raise or a promotion (Women E-News website, 2004).

Arlie Russell Hochschild (1989, 2003) documents the “second shift” – what she aptly terms women’s second job – in her New York Times best-selling book The Second Shift. First published in 1989, The Second Shift documented the lives of 50 couples through interviews, beginning in 1976 and culminating in 1989. Hochschild also visited some of those homes to view the couples’ everyday lives in order to gain significant data. What Hochschild found was riveting: She established that working mothers – on average – work one month more per year than their spouses and stay-at-home mothers. This extra month of work equaled household and home-related duties, as well as child care, according to Hochschild. The act of balancing a career and taking on the “traditional” role of wife, mother and homemaker meant there was not time for leisure after “regular” business hours because, for mothers, there simply are no “regular business hours.” Hochschild found that a majority of the men involved in the study did not share in the work at home (i.e. housework, grocery shopping, childcare, etc.), which meant it fell to their spouses. And the women interviewed for Hochschild’s study felt deeply torn between the demands of work and family.

The republished work in 2003 follows up with many of The Second Shift’s original couples and remains just as riveting. But still there are no definitive answers for today’s working mothers. Hochschild writes: “The workforce has changed. Women have changed. But most workplaces have remained inflexible in the face of the family

demands of their workers, and at home, most men have yet to really adapt to the changes in women (2003, p. 12).

Hochschild also notes that in "... 2000, half of American families pooling two incomes made \$50,000 or less, and only 15 percent made \$100,000 or more" (2003, p. 26). This points out the need, from a financial standpoint, for mothers to continue working in order to provide for their families.

A Study on the Changing World of Work

In 2002, The Families and Work Institute (FWI) published its study, Highlights of the National Study of the Changing Workforce. A nonprofit center for research that provides data to inform decision making on the changing workforce, changing family and changing community, the FWI is known for its research into vital emerging workforce issues. The National Study of the Changing Workforce builds off three national studies of the U.S. workforce funded by the Department of Labor as part of the Quality of Employment Survey (Bond, 2002). The last survey in the series, conducted in 1977, marked the first time a study collected information about work lives and personal lives of both men and women. The FWI obtained private funding to continue to build upon this research in the early 1990s in order to understand the issues related to balancing work and life.

The report, authored by James T. Bond, with Cynthia Thompson, Ellen Galinsky and David Prottas, examined changes over time – from 1977 to 2002 and 1992 to 2002 – in five topics areas:

1. **Women in the Workforce**
2. **Dual-Earner Couples**
3. **The Role of Technology in Employees' Lives**
4. **Work-Life Supports on the Job**
5. **Working for Oneself versus Someone Else**

For the purpose of this thesis, the author will focus on **Women in the Workforce, The Role of Technology in Employees' Lives and Work-Life Supports on the Job.**

Women in the Workforce

The report cited that the number of men and women in the workforce is now almost equal and that men are more accepting of women in the professional arena; however two in five employed men still embrace traditional gender role ideology. Also women are more likely to hold managerial and professional occupations than men because women have, over the course of the years, become better educated. What does remain the same, however, is that women's annual salaries are lower than those of men. The report's authors also assert that women are still more likely to shoulder the outside-of-work-responsibilities at home related to raising the children and caring for the household.

The Role of Technology in Employees' Lives

While technology may seem unrelated to work/life balance, it can add balance to a working mother's life -- or take it away. The report cites that approximately two-thirds of the workforce use computers in their daily jobs, while more than one-third use a

computer at home for job-related work. Cell phones, beepers, pagers and email have made managing work, personal and family lives easier for many; however, “it also appears that employees who experience higher levels of negative spillover from work into their home lives rely more heavily on these technologies in an effort to manage the demands of life on and off the job (Bond, p.2).

Work-Life Supports on the Job

The authors underscore that work-life supports on the job have, indeed, increased, but not by much in the past decade. What does make a difference for any employee in the workplace is the fact that “when more supportive work-life policies and practices are available, employees exhibit more positive work outcomes – job satisfaction, commitment to employer, retention – and more positive life outcomes – less interference between job and family life, less negative spillover from job to home, greater life satisfaction, and better mental health” (Bond, p. 2).

The Next Step

In order to learn more about today’s working mother and her perspectives on work/life balance and career advancement, the author set out to survey a number of working women as well as profile two women who partake in the balancing act daily. Chapter 3, *Researching Perspectives and Perceptions*, advances the topical research to the next level.

Chapter 3

Researching Perspectives and Perceptions

Any woman who has a career and a family automatically develops something in the way of two personalities, like two sides of a dollar bill, each different in design Her problem is to keep one from draining the life from the other.

— Ivy Baker Priest

Description of the Survey

The survey (Appendix A), titled "Today's Working Mothers: Your Views," began by asking each survey participant to indicate whether she is a working mother with at least one child or a working woman with no children. The body of the survey includes nine statements using the Likert scale measurement, a survey system that uses a five-point scale. In this instance, instead of using the numbers 1 through 5, the survey respondents were asked to respond to the nine statements based on their agreement: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Question number 10 asked survey respondents to rank the importance (from 5 to 1, with five as high and 1 as low) of the following concerns for working mothers:

- Work/Family Balance
- Paycheck
- Child Care
- Job Performance
- Career Advancement
- Personal Health
- Personal Time
- Job Security
- Health Care Benefits

Each of the survey questions is designed to elicit a response pertaining to how women in the workforce – mothers or not – perceive their organizations acceptance of mothers in the workplace as well as the opportunities and perceived stress levels of

working mothers. The author's particular intention was to elicit a positive or negative response to questions number four:

In general, it is easy for working mothers to balance their professional careers and personal lives.

It is also important to note that the author defined the term "working mother" on the survey instrument in order not to offend or judge any woman. For the purpose of this survey, a working mother is defined as a mother – single or married – who works part-time or full-time outside of the home. The author does acknowledge the fact that all mothers work.

Sample

The goal of the survey was to elicit responses from at least 50 women in order to receive a relevant response. Each person surveyed was targeted because she was a woman – many turned out to be working women with children. The reasoning for such a targeted survey was to get an understanding from working women and working mothers about the specific issues they face in the workplace and to learn if there were differences in perception amongst working women and working mothers.

Purpose of the Survey

The purpose of the survey was to access the profile, perspective and progress of today's working mothers. The results of the research will in turn help the author to determine how motherhood influences the professional career advancement of working

mothers. Is motherhood a detriment to an upwardly mobile career? Are working mothers feeling supported in the workplace? Are working mothers making radical decisions in regard to their employment once they have children? These questions and more are addressed in the survey and the additional comments extracted from participants.

Analyzing the Survey Results

In approximately one month, the author gathered nearly 65 responses from working women and working mothers. Surveys were sent to homes via email and U.S. mail. Two women, New York Times columnist Lisa Belkin and Founding Editor of Creating Keepsakes magazine Lisa Bearnson, were interviewed personally, and their profiles appear as feature vignettes. After collecting the surveys, the author tallied the results and responses for each statement and measured the results by calculating a percentage (Appendix B).

Survey Demographics

The survey reached 50 working mothers with at least one child and 12 working women. In terms of demographics, the breakdown is as follows:

Age	21-30	31-40	41-50	50+
	20 (31 percent)	27 (44 percent)	12 (19 percent)	3 (5 percent)

Marital Status	Single	Married	Divorced	Partner
	7 (11 percent)	52 (83 percent)	2 (3 percent)	1 (1 percent)

Children	One	Two	Three	Four
	12 (19 percent)	26 (42 percent)	6 (10 percent)	1 (1 percent)

Survey respondents tended to be highly educated, with 36 indicating they had completed some graduate work or earned a graduate degree (58 percent) and 18 (29 percent) indicating they had completed some college or earned a bachelor's degree. Six respondents (10 percent) had some post-graduate work completed or a post-graduate degree and two respondents (3 percent) had a high school education level. The survey responses indicated that 50 respondents (81 percent) are currently employed full-time and 12 (19 percent) are working part-time. The majority of respondents, 27 (44 percent), have been with their organization for 1-4 years and 33 (53 percent) have been in their current position for that same amount of time.

Cases In Point

To clearly illustrate the issues facing today's working mothers, the author interviewed two well-known and accomplished women who seem to have conquered the balancing act. Here are their inspiring stories.

Lisa Belkin, New York Times Columnist

With more than 100,000 words under her belt, New York Times columnist Lisa Belkin is the reigning "queen" of work/life balance from the perspective of her readers. But this mother of two also admits to feeling the challenges and struggles that accompany mixing motherhood and a successful career. Belkin has been walking the work/life tightrope for more 13 years, working as a journalist and raising her two sons, Evan and Alex.

A Princeton University graduate, Belkin began working for The New York Times in 1982. But her personal life soon took her away from New York – but not The Times – when she met and fell in love with Bruce, a soon-to-be-doctor. A few months after they met, Bruce relocated to Houston, and Belkin made a very uncharacteristic decision: She quit her job, married Bruce and moved to Houston.

While in Texas, she continued to build her career, jetting around the state as a freelancer for The Times. She began writing longer magazine articles, some of which became part of her first book: First Do No Harm.

In 1991, Evan was born, and when he was 3 months old, Belkin and her family returned to New York. And she returned to The New York Times' newsroom.

Determined to balance her new role as mother with her love for journalism, Belkin made it work with the innovation of technology – most importantly, a cell phone.

Though few people had this technological delicacy in the early 1990s, Belkin demanded one to make her job easier and allow her to finish work after regular business hours. She could phone in her edits from the subway, her car, her home – anywhere.

When Alex was born three years later, she left the newsroom for good to resurrect her freelance career. She continued to freelance for The Times and other publications over the years, but her “big break” came in 1999 when The New York Times approached her about penning the “Life’s Work” column. Presented to her as a column about the “intersection of life and work,” Belkin soon found out it’s more accurately about the “collisions that happen daily at the intersection.”

Intrigued by the project, Belkin decided she was up to the challenge for a number of reasons, not the least of which was that serving as a columnist for one of the most widely read newspapers in the country was the opportunity of a lifetime. Yet there was more driving her: “The parent in me wanted answers,” Belkin says. She figured she would interview knowledgeable, educated experts from whom she could glean the answers to work/life balance, and then she would impart her newfound wisdom on her readers. That’s not quite how it turned out. The mother in her soon realized that all the expert interviews in the world wouldn’t provide her – or her readers – with the answers to work/life balance.

Another reason Belkin took on the column was the opportunity it provided to write on a topic that had recently taken hold of working women. In the introduction of her most recent book, Life’s Work: Confessions of an Unbalanced Mom, Belkin writes: “The reporter in me understood that this emotional and economic tug-of-war was central to the story of our generation.”

So Belkin immersed herself in the topic – even becoming one of the first columnists to include her e-mail address at the end of her 850-word, biweekly column.

Lucky for her, work/life balance is an issue about which women are passionate. Having received more than 10,000 e-mail messages from readers who are part of this balancing act, many of her story ideas come directly from her readers. And her personal, conversational writing style naturally draws readers into the subject matter. “I’m often told that I write the way I talk,” she says. “I’d like to say that I have honed a style, but people like to read things that are written by *real* people.”

And it’s real people and real issues, such as “time” and “guilt” that get a rise out of her readers. “‘Time’ – actually lack of it – and ‘guilt’ are what drives everything else in a woman’s life,” Belkin has found. “I try to put a different lens on the topic [of time and guilt]. I encourage women to see this [imbalance] not as a failure – rather as part of life.” Belkin believes women are perfectionists who are too hard on themselves – that “we all do it better than we think we do” when it comes to work, life and family balance.

“Woman today do more and are capable of more than ever before,” she continues. “There are so many opportunities for us. And we constantly need to remind ourselves of this, rather than focus on the negative. We are not perpetually screwing things up. We are not failures.”

Ultimately, the work/life issue does not center on whether parents stay home or work, Belkin has realized throughout her four years of writing “Life’s Work.” It’s more likely about stress in the workplace. “If parents could just relax [at home], children would be sufficiently happier,” she notes, citing a study by Ellen Galinsky, president of the

Families and Work Institute, that shows children react to the stress their parents bring home.

But work isn't getting any easier for women, Belkin notes. "We are working longer hours, which means we're working harder, and technological advances allow us to work anywhere, any time," she says. "But it's important to remember that we are in control of the 'off button.' We close the home office door."

In response to the increase in hours, Belkin finds that work can be more flexible. She encourages women to change their jobs "as much as the job is changeable" to promote a balanced lifestyle. By change she means telecommuting at least a few days a week, starting your own business, working part time, etc.

But this new flexibility in work hardly solves the work/life dilemma. "Work is more all-consuming, and home is pulling us even harder," Belkin says. Unfortunately, there's no ultimate answer, she says. Every woman has to find that balance for herself.

"Most of the issues surrounding work, life and balance aren't about parenting – they are about work and the workplace," Belkin notes. "Women are unhappy in the workforce. If work is good, there aren't nearly as many balance issue. It's about changing the workplace to be more supportive."

Many successful and educated women are searching for that ultimate balance. In a Fall 2003 New York Times Magazine article, Belkin wrote about the "The Opt-Out Revolution." But she feels a need to define the term, "opt-out," for fear that it will be misunderstood: Opt-out refers to "the ratcheting back or redefinition of work," she stresses. It's not about women leaving work for the sake of leaving work. "Women are

working part-time, or changing the way they work in order to strive for a better balance,” she says.

While Belkin acknowledges that generalizations do not apply to every woman, she has, indeed, found that many women are also redefining their definitions of success. “That definition used to revolve around money and power, but that’s not the case any more,” she says. “Women aren’t willing to pay the high price for traditional success any longer.”

It is important to note that while Belkin’s readers are predominately women, she also receives comments from men. “They remind me that they’re out there, experiencing some of the same issues,” she says. “I get e-mail like ‘Hey, don’t forget about us.’” Belkin writes about the topics men show an interest in – however it’s in proportion to how she hears about them. “I hear from men who stay home by choice, as well as those who are unemployed,” she says. “A number of the men who respond to my column are going through a life crisis and are making personal changes as a result.”

Belkin likes that her words reach a wide audience. “None of these issues will go anywhere if they remain women’s issues,” she stresses.

And as the search for balance continues, Belkin is especially interested in seeing how the next generation of women handles work, life and balance. “Studies show that the next generation of women are having kids sooner because they’ve been scared by Sylvia Hewlett [author of Creating a Life: Professional Women and the Quest for Children, who finds that women’s fertility begins to decline at the age of 25],” Belkin notes. “And they are determined not to follow in the footsteps of their parents. They think they can do better.”

And maybe they can. Meanwhile, Belkin feels comfortable knowing that she will continue searching for that “perfect” balance, which, most likely, will remain elusive, but is worth it in the end.

Lisa Bearnson, Founding Editor of Creating Keepsakes Magazine

Lisa Bearnson isn't a household name – unless you're one of the half-million scrapbooking aficionados who read her monthly magazine, Creating Keepsakes, or watch her demonstrate all the latest in scrapbooking products and ideas on QVC's Creating Keepsakes Hour.

A mother of four, Bearnson is a typical parent – trying to balance the work/life issues that baffle many working mothers. But what sets her apart from her peers is the fact that she's built her own empire – out of acid-free paper, family photographs and a variety of embellishments.

A native of Utah, Bearnson graduated in 1988 from Brigham Young University in Provo, where she majored in public relations. Fresh out of college, she began a career at the WordPerfect company, also in Provo, as a customer service representative.

While Bearnson wasn't a “techno wiz,” she was certainly driven. “I had a feeling that the WordPerfect experience would prove valuable in the end, so I immersed myself and learned everything I could about the software.”

Nine months later, WordPerfect Magazine was launched, and Bearnson became an ad representative. But it was her drive to learn the WordPerfect software that paid dividends. When the editorial side of the house realized that Bearnson knew more about the WordPerfect program than they did, she was asked to join the editorial staff.

In the midst of this new job, Bearnson married her sweetheart, Steve, and 13 months later they welcomed their first son, Kade. And, thus, the work/life balancing act began. She deftly balanced her role as mother with her career, while her husband stayed home with Kade and also took college courses to earn his bachelor's degree.

"I started at the bottom of the totem pole. I was paid \$900 a month, and I remember thinking, 'This is why I went to college?'" Over the next seven years – and two children later, she climbed the ladder of success at WordPerfect Magazine, ultimately serving as editor-in-chief.

"I became bored with RAM, ROM, BITS and BYTES," Bearnson says. "I was never passionate about computers or the technology industry. I did however want to learn about the magazine business.

"At the same time, I knew something was missing," she continues. "I did some serious soul-searching. I knew I had to contribute to my growing family's financial needs, and I wanted something more out of work."

While searching for meaningful work, Bearnson was also immersing herself in her favorite hobby: scrapbooking. "I would stay up until 1 or 2 in the morning making scrapbook pages," she says. "Then I'd take them to work the next day and show my colleagues, who would 'ooh and ahh' over them."

As a mother working outside the home, Bearnson didn't have the luxury of taking classes to learn new scrapbooking techniques and ideas. "I found myself yearning for something to inspire and motive me," she says. "I truly believe that my love for scrapbooking was divine intervention. I suddenly realized that everyone has memories

and photographs that they don't know how to properly preserve. My meaningful work was scrapbooking."

Bearson shared her thoughts about a scrapbooking magazine with a friend and WordPerfect Magazine colleague Don Lambson, who also served as the magazine's designer. "He knew it was a good idea from the start," she says.

"We didn't share our idea with anyone – for fear that someone might beat us to the punch," Bearson says, "and it was a hard secret to keep because it had the potential to be such an exciting opportunity."

Bearson and Lambson each took out a second mortgage on their homes and combined the money. They had \$100,000 to invest in their new idea.

Their first step in launching a magazine was to attend a 1996 Folio conference in Los Angeles. In the course of taking part in seminars, they met a professor who was well versed in the magazine industry. But when Bearson approached him with her idea, the response was less than enthusiastic.

"He said the magazine would fail," she says. "He told us that we needed to do market research for at least a year to see if there really was a market out there for a scrapbooking magazine – he didn't think there was.

"Second, he told us \$100,000 was not nearly enough to start a magazine," she continues. "And finally, he told us that the subject matter was stupid."

But Bearson and Lambson's run-in with the Folio professor didn't crush their dream for long. "We forged ahead anyway. And with a lot of luck and support, we succeeded," Bearson says.

The first issue of Creating Keepsakes magazine came out in November 1996; 40,000 issues were printed. Lisa was working out of her home, caring for Kade; her second son, Collin; with another on the way. “I would never have been able to do this without such a supportive husband,” Bearnson notes. “He helped me set up the business and encouraged me to follow my dreams.”

From the start, Bearnson and Lambson knew they wanted to make a living doing what they loved. “We realized what we were good – and not good – at,” she says. “I’m not an accountant; I’m not a manager. I enjoy creating the pages and writing. Don also didn’t care for the business side of things. His focus was design. Knowing this, we brought someone in to do the business management. You really have to be able to let go of your ego to do this – to relinquish control – but it has proved to be the best way to maintain a healthy balance between work and family.”

The magazine was an instant success. “We bought lists from the 30 scrapbooking stores and sent them direct mail pieces regarding subscriptions,” Bearnson says. “A normal response rate is between 2 and 4 percent. We got 20 percent from many of the lists we used.”

Bearnson and Lambson built the magazine for five years before it was bought out by Primedia, who sponsored the Folio conference that could have ended Bearnson’s dream. “Everything has truly come full circle,” she muses. Both founders remain intricately involved in the future of Creating Keepsakes.

Today, the monthly magazine has a solid readership, and it made \$19 million in sales last year. The success has launched Bearnson into other endeavors as well. She is the author of four books: Mom’s Little Book of Displaying Children’s Art (2000), Mom’s

Little Book of Photo Tips (1999), The Joy of Scrapbooking (1998) and Scrapbooking with Lisa Bearnson. A new magazine, Simple Scrapbooks; various Creating Keepsakes idea books and a QVC television show are some of the other opportunities that have come to her as a result of the magazine's success.

QVC really put Bearnson, Creating Keepsakes magazine and scrapbooking on the map. "It's unique because people can actually watch how the products are used before purchasing," she says.

While Bearnson is happy with her success, she also knows her life is blessed. And she lives according to her favorite quote: "No success can compensate for failure in the home" by David O'McKay, a prominent religious leader in 1954. In 2004, her work centers on Kade, 13; Collin, 10; and her daughters, Brecken, 7, and Sage, 3.

"My family is the most important thing in my life, and I do my best to make sure my work reflects that," she says. "I work from my home office and set boundaries for myself. I start work at 9 a.m., after my kids are at school, and I end my day – and close my home office door – at 5 p.m. It's very rare that I work in the evening."

Bearnson also has a nanny who has been with the family for seven years. "She allows me to focus on the aspects of family life that I find most important – spending time with my children," she says.

Since the scrapbooking explosion, Bearnson works part time and is able to pick and choose her projects. Her next big thing: "To be the most incredible Mom I can be," she says. "My happiness really comes through my family. The magazine's success has been wonderful, and it has afforded me many opportunities, but more money doesn't bring more happiness."

“My life is a balancing act,” Bearnson admits. “I balance my life as a wife, a mother and a career woman. The most important thing a working mother can do is to ensure that she doesn’t make her family feel as if they are second. That’s how I live my life: Family comes first. I have four little people I take care of – and yes, things can get crazy around here. But I truly think of them as my greatest accomplishment.”

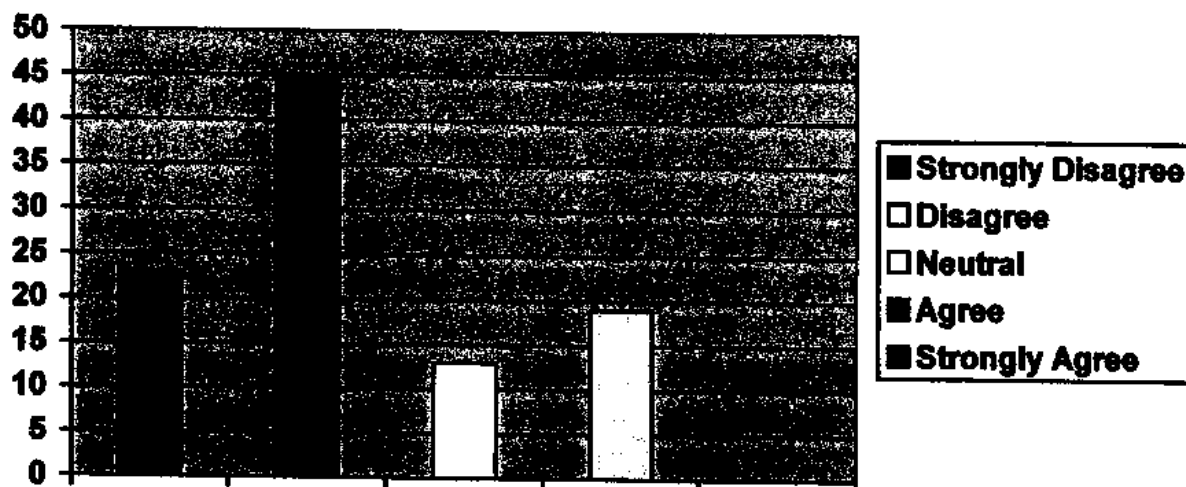
Chapter 4

Profile, Perspective and Progress

I've always believed that one woman's success can only help another woman's success.
— Gloria Vanderbilt

Results of Today's Working Mother: Your Views Survey

1. My company values working mothers.



For this statement, 14 respondents (23 percent) strongly agreed that “My company values working mothers.” Twenty-eight respondents (45 percent) agreed, eight respondents (13 percent) were neutral, and 12 respondents (19 percent) disagreed in regard to the statement. Zero respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

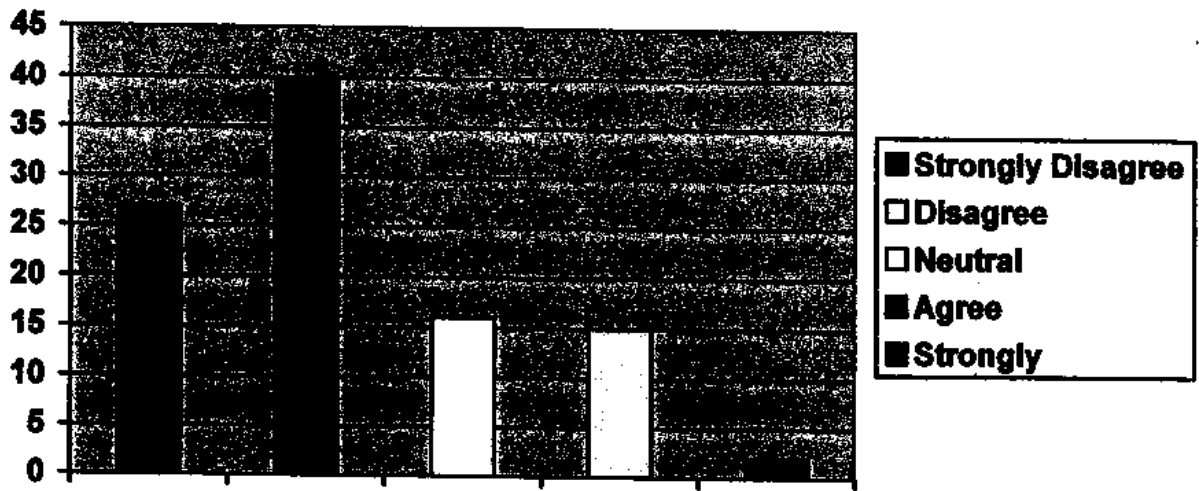
Since the majority, 68 percent, strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, the author can conclude that the belief among working women is that companies, in general, value working mothers.

This statistic – 68 percent of women who either strongly agree or agree that companies value working mothers – is quite surprising based on the author’s historical research. While there are certainly working mothers who are happy in their current positions within their organizations and who feel valued, there remain issues in regard to job flexibility, maternity leave and the mommy gap, to name just a few. It is the author’s view that the working women and working mothers surveyed may not be aware or

extremely knowledgeable about the issues that face working mothers when it comes to policies in the workplace and the wage gap. The author also feels that the *value* in this statement – My company *values* working mothers – denotes to many respondents the emotion of the word *value*, rather than the qualitative and quantitative definition of *value*.

One survey respondent, a director of marketing with two children, sums up her feelings regarding companies and how they value working mothers: “I don’t believe that a company/employer sets the standard for how working mothers are treated; rather, it’s the direct supervisor. It’s only when a supervisor can be understanding and supportive of responsibilities outside of work that a working mother can truly be happy and productive at work.” A coordinator for educational programs, leadership and outreach with one child feels fortunate to work for an organization that values her, but knows this isn’t always the case: “I am very fortunate to work for an organization that values its employees and recognizes that mothers take time off for doctor appointments, day care issues, and the like. This has by no means impeded my opportunities for promotions shortly after returning from maternity leave. I also know this is probably an anomaly.”

2. For the most part, my organization considers, with compassion, the needs of working mothers.



For this statement, 17 respondents (27 percent) strongly agreed that “For the most part, my organization considers, with compassion, the needs of working mothers.”

Twenty-five respondents (40 percent) agreed, 10 respondents (16 percent) were neutral in regard to the statement, and nine respondents (15 percent) disagreed. One respondent (2 percent) strongly disagreed with the statement.

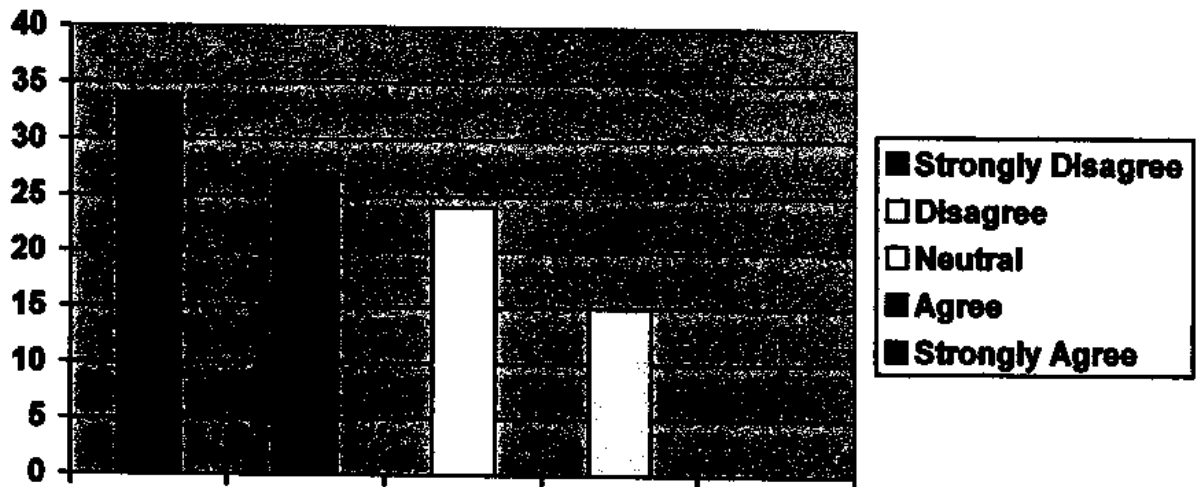
Since the majority, 67 percent, strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, the author can conclude that the belief among working women is that for the most part, their organizations consider, with compassion, the needs of working mothers.

Again, this statistic – 67 percent of women who either strong agree or agree that companies consider, with compassion, the needs of working mothers – is surprising based on the author’s historical research. Many women believe that part-time schedules during childbearing and childrearing periods, expansion of maternity leaves, job protection policies, affordable child care and family-friendly work policies are needed to supporting working mothers. And, according to the 2002 National Partnership for Women and

Families study (Women's E-News website, 2004), nearly 80 percent of working women believe that paid family and medical leave is more important than a salary increase or promotion. The needs of many working mothers are less about high-paying salaries and more about flexibility in the workplace, and historically, women do not feel as if they have the right amount of flexibility.

A director of corporate relations who currently has no children was surprised at what she learned in regard to benefits at her workplace: "I was shocked to learn that my place of work – an internationally renowned health organization – offers only 12 weeks of maternity leave. Regardless of whatever other policies an organization offers in its efforts to support working mothers, I believe this is the most important in evaluating its true commitment." An instructor with two children sums up her feelings in regard to the workplace: "For all actively parenting mothers and fathers, the workplace is inhospitable."

3. Working mothers are generally more stressed at work than are women with no children.



For this statement, 21 respondents (34 percent) strongly agreed that “Working mothers are generally more stressed at work than are women with no children.”

Seventeen respondents (27 percent) agreed, 15 respondents (24 percent) were neutral, and nine respondents (15 percent) disagreed in regard to the statement. Zero respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

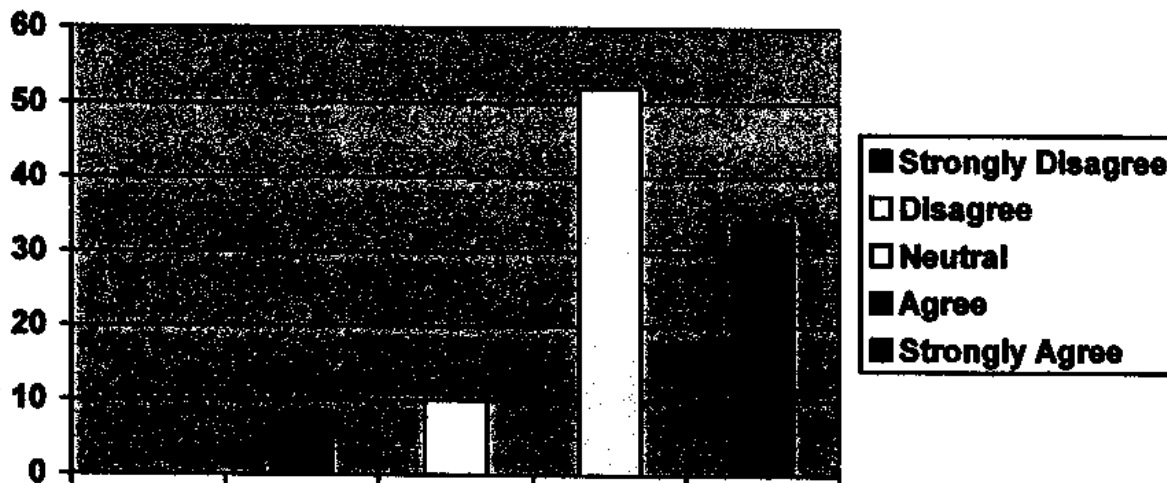
Since the majority, 61 percent, strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, the author can conclude that the belief among working women is that working mothers are generally more stressed at work than are women with no children.

This statistic – 61 percent of women who strongly agree or agree that working mothers are generally more stressed at work than are women with no children – is consistent with the current research on the issue. Women, as mothers, tend to be the primary care givers – the nurturers, in a family. This means there are additional responsibilities placed on a working woman when she assumes the role of mother. Arlie Russell Hochschild (1989, 2003) documents working mothers’ dual responsibilities in her

groundbreaking New York Times best-seller The Second Shift. While there certainly are spouses who share in the responsibilities at home, women tend to take on that traditional role of homemaker and child care provider. The women in Hochschild's study felt deeply torn between the demands of work and family, which can play out – as an increase in stress – both at home and in the workplace.

A teacher with two children describes her daily stress: “Working women are set up to feel inadequate both in their personal and professional lives. It is a constant source of stress knowing that I perform at less than 100 percent as a mother and an employee. If my family had the means, I would give up my job so I could concentrate my energy on one task – parenting.”

4. In general, it is easy for working mothers to balance their professional and personal lives.



For this statement, zero respondents strongly agreed that “In general, it is easy for working mothers to balance their professional and personal lives.” Three respondents (5 percent) agreed, six respondents (10 percent) were neutral, 32 respondents (52 percent) disagreed, and 21 (34 percent) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

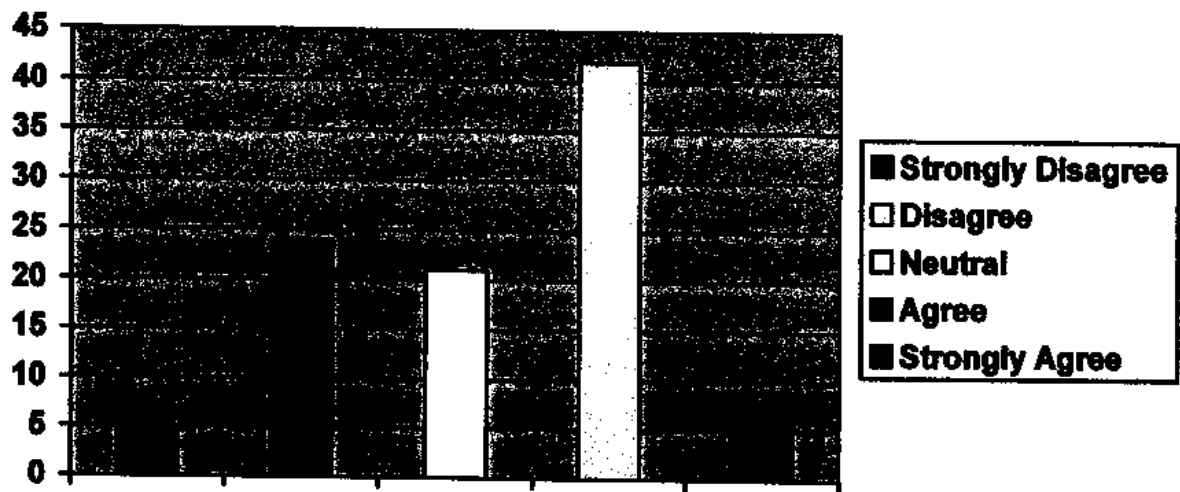
Since the majority, 86 percent, strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, the author can conclude that the belief among working women is that in general, it is NOT easy for working mothers to balance their professional and personal lives.

This statistic – 86 percent of women who strongly disagree or disagree that in general it is easy for working mothers to balance their professional careers and personal lives – is truly telling and is consistent with the historical research. Many women of the 21st century are “opting out” of the workforce in their 30s in order to better balance their lives and commit to motherhood. However, opting out does not mean entirely leaving the workforce forever, according to New York Times columnist Lisa Belkin. Her groundbreaking article in September 2003 in the New York Times Magazine follows the

paths of many educated and highly successful women who make a conscious choice to take a step to the side and let the rat race pass them by for a period of time while they relish a new role – that of mother. Because it is not easy for a working mother to balance a career and family – that is not to say that she can't and doesn't – women are taking control of their lives and making choices in regard to their careers and children.

An attorney with one child expresses her feeling in regard to stress and balance: “There’s a constant tension between the demand of work and parenting. Personally, I think it’s impossible to give both the attention that they require. One is always, to some extent, suffering. If you take your parenting responsibilities as seriously as they need to be taken, you should consider yourself very lucky if you get to keep your job at all.”

5. For working mothers, maintaining a strong career is as important as being a parent.



For this statement, three respondents (5 percent) strongly agreed that “For working mothers, maintaining a strong career is as important as being a parent.” Fifteen respondents (24 percent) agreed, 13 respondents (21 percent) were neutral, 26 respondents (42 percent) disagreed in regard to the statement, and five respondents (8 percent) strongly disagreed with the statement.

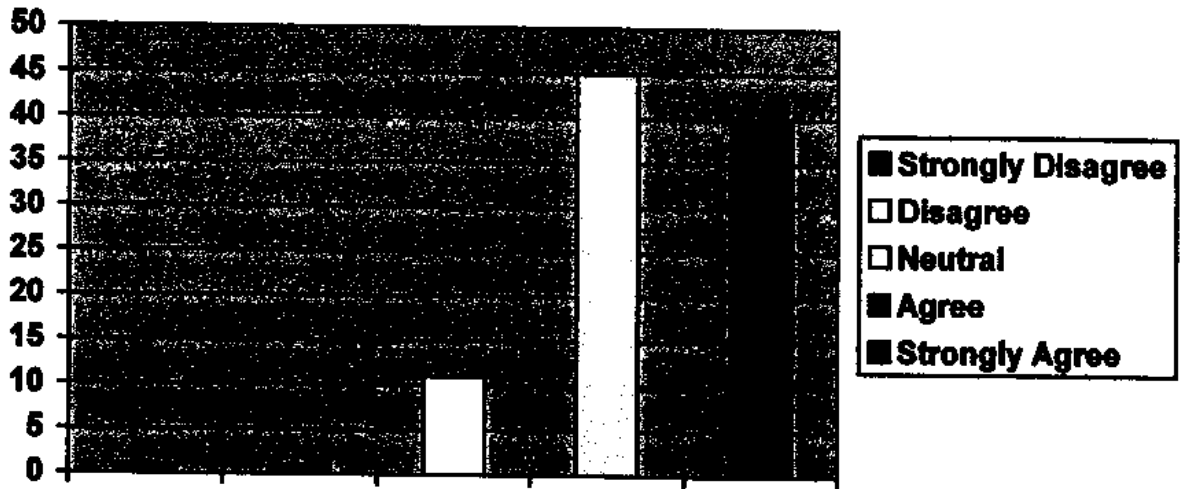
Since the majority, 50 percent, disagreed with the statement, the author can conclude that the belief among working women is that for working mothers, maintaining a strong career is NOT as important as being a parent.

The statistic – 50 percent of women who strongly disagree or disagree that for working mothers maintaining a strong career is as important as being a parent – is consistent with recent research. In this survey question, there also was a high percentage of respondents who opted to be neutral in regard to this statement. The author believes this neutral response even further validates the struggle that women have in relation to career and family. It is difficult to choose one over the other when you have both.

However, more and more women are opting to look at their situations in a new light and are taking advantage of flexible work offerings that exist within their professional workplace.

Working mothers today are choosing to step back from the workforce in order to focus more fully on their roles as mothers. An administrative assistant with one child shares her thoughts: "Every woman's answers are different, depending on her situation. However, for me, my career seems much less important since having my daughter. I have opted for a lower level, lower time-commitment position in order to allow maximum time with my daughter. In fact, I am now debating my lower paying position and thinking of staying home with my daughter."

6. An upwardly mobile career path is highly desirable for working mothers regardless of the impact on their personal lives.



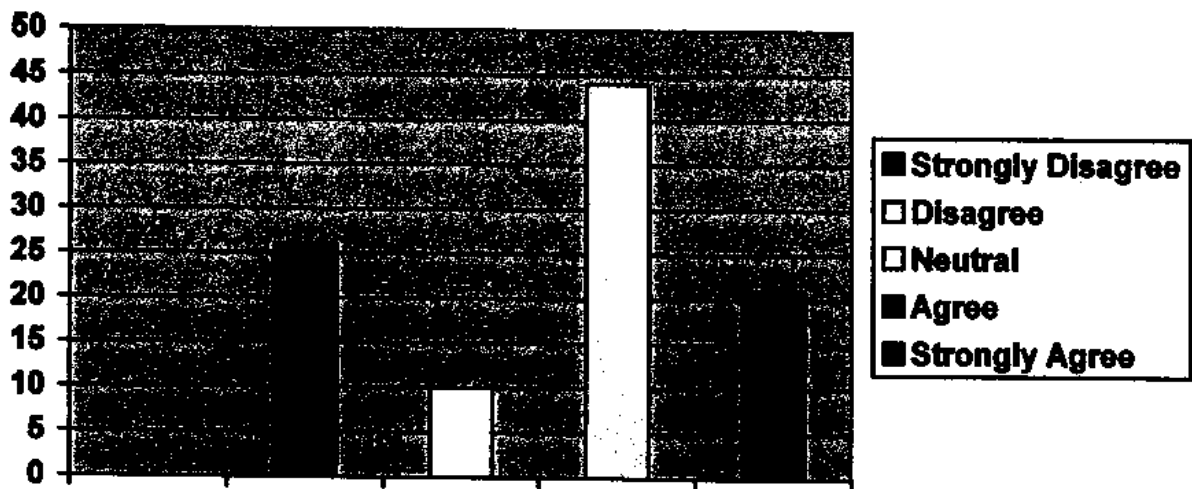
For this statement, one respondent (2 percent) strongly agreed that “An upwardly mobile career path is highly desirable for working mothers regardless of the impact on their personal lives.” One respondent (2 percent) agreed, seven respondents (11 percent) were neutral, 28 respondents (45 percent) disagreed, and 25 respondents (40 percent) strongly disagreed with the statement.

Since the majority, 85 percent, strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, the author can conclude that the belief among working women is that an upwardly mobile career path is NOT highly desirable for working mothers regardless of the impact on their personal lives.

The statistic – 85 percent of women who strongly disagree or disagree that an upwardly mobile career path is highly desirable for working mothers regardless of the impact of the impact on their personal lives – supports the author’s research. Women of the 21st century, while making an impact professionally, do not allow their work to govern their lives. Today’s women do not view themselves as traditional mothers and

wives, yet they see the value of balance in their lives. This balance allows them to accomplish more, both personally and professionally. And sometimes balance encourages women to take a step back – or to the side – to make the tough choices.

7. For the most part, working mothers are provided the same professional opportunities in the workplace as their male counterparts.



For this statement, zero respondents strongly agreed that “For the most part, working mothers are provided the same professional opportunities in the workplace as their male counterparts.” Sixteen respondents (26 percent) agreed, six respondents (10 percent) were neutral, 27 respondents (44 percent) disagreed, and 13 respondents (21 percent) strongly disagreed with the statement.

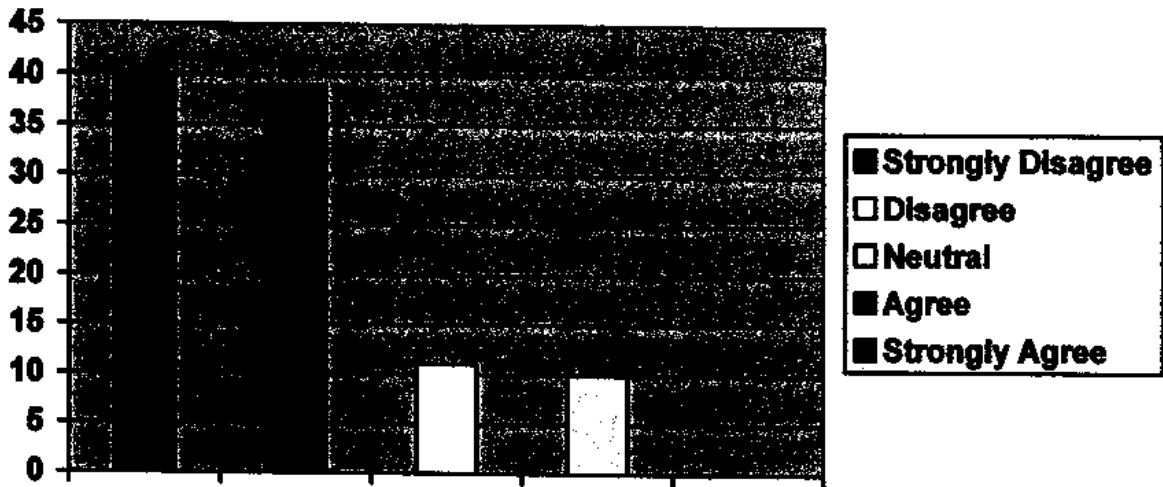
Since the majority, 65 percent, strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, the author can conclude that the belief among working women is that for the most part, working mothers are NOT provided the same professional opportunities in the workplace as their male counterparts.

The statistic – 65 percent of women who strongly disagree or disagree that for the most part working mothers are provided the same professional opportunities in the workplace as their male counterparts – resonates with the author’s research. Research shows that women are not provided the same professional opportunities and advantages as men. The wage gap is a case in point, and the mommy gap even furthers that point.

Women have historically made less money than men and working mothers make even less. Women traditionally have responsibilities outside the home, and those responsibilities, such as caring for a sick child, can take a mother out of the workplace for a period of time. From a legal standpoint, this time outside the office cannot be used against a mother when promotions are handed out; however, it does happen. And if mothers are promoted, many of them are choosing to opt out and not take promotions offered because they know the time commitment involved.

An assistant director of residence life with one child shares her thoughts on promotion: "Although I received a promotion, my supervisor implied that I could not take it if I was going to do "mother" related errands (class trips, etc.) with my son once I began my new position responsibilities." An assistant director of special events with no children believes mothers have a unique perspective on work: "I do think that mothers are offered many of the same opportunities as their male peers, but due to the fact that they are mothers and have other responsibilities, they are often forced to pass the opportunities up. I think the real problem is the fact that our society places more responsibility on mothers rather than on fathers for parenting and keeping the house. Until our culture and society change the accepted view of what is considered valuable work, men will not be held accountable and women will continue to bear the burden of balancing work, family and personal time."

8. The needs of working mothers are different from those of their male counterparts.



For this statement, 25 respondents (40 percent) strongly agreed that “The needs of working mothers are different than those of their male counterparts.” Twenty-four respondents (39 percent) agreed, seven respondents (11 percent) were neutral, and six respondents (10 percent) disagreed in regard to the statement. Zero respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

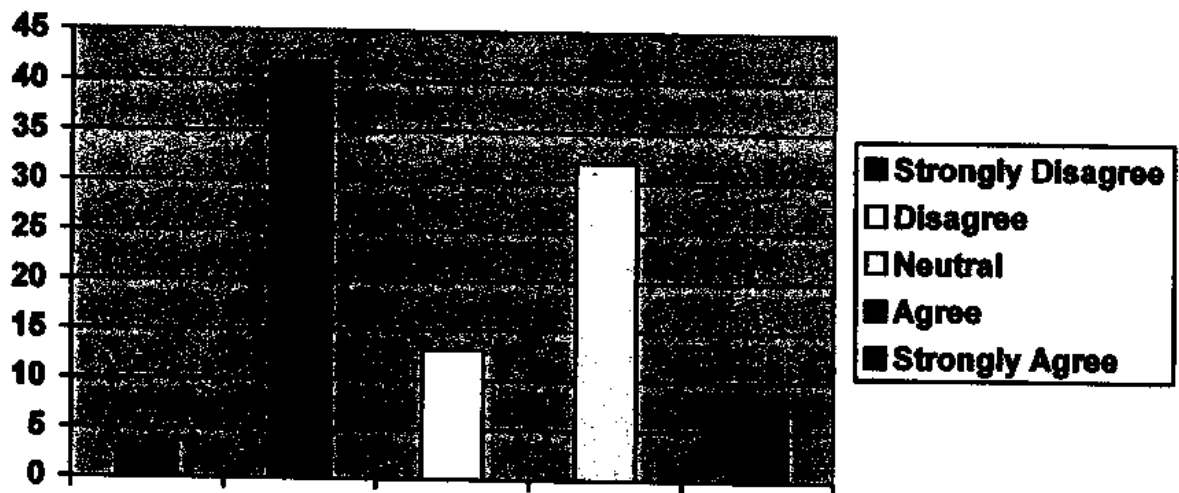
Since the majority, 79 percent, strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, the author can conclude that the belief among working women is that the needs of working mothers are different from those of their male counterparts.

The statistic – 79 percent of women who strongly agree or agree that the needs of working mothers are different from those of their male counterparts – is both expected and unexpected. Since the 1800s women have been fighting for equality. It began with the right to vote, the right to own and obtain property, and it grew into equal rights in the workplace. Today’s working mother is breaking free from this mold. She is standing up for her rights, which include the rights of women, but also take into account the needs of

a working mother. Part of the work/life dilemma stems from feminism and its fight for equality. Many working mothers feel as if they are letting down their gender by acknowledging the fact that working mothers are concerned with work/life balance. It means recognizing that there cannot be a true and ideal equality between men and women. It means accepting that men and women are, indeed, different with different desires and needs in relation to work/life balance and parenthood. It does not mean that women or working mothers are “less than” men. Working mothers today are looking at a bigger picture – that of a professional life and that of a family life.

A director of development communication with three children has learned the art of prioritization in order to succeed in the workplace: “I think that working mothers have to work harder than everyone else just to stay in the game, so to speak. Being a working mother has taught me about prioritizing and not sweating the small stuff. As a working mother, I’m committed to getting my job done well, in spite of occasionally having to miss ‘face time’ or meetings in the office because of a sick child or similarly motherly obligation.” A part-time associate with two children who took a six-month maternity leave and has worked part time (at 70 percent) for three years details her struggle: “Working mothers face slower career tracks. Realistically, they often do not spend as much time in the office as their male or female-childless counterparts. In comparison to my full-time colleagues, I have worked almost a full year less than they have worked over the same period of time.”

9. In general, organizations respect and recognize that working mothers have responsibilities outside of work.



For this statement, two respondents (3 percent) strongly agreed that “In general, organizations respect and recognize that working mothers have responsibilities outside of work.” Twenty-six respondents (42 percent) agreed, eight respondents (13 percent) were neutral, 21 respondents (34 percent) disagreed, and five respondents (8 percent) strongly disagreed with the statement.

Since the majority, 45 percent, agreed with the statement, the author can conclude that the belief among working women is that in general, organizations respect and recognize that working mothers have responsibilities outside of work.

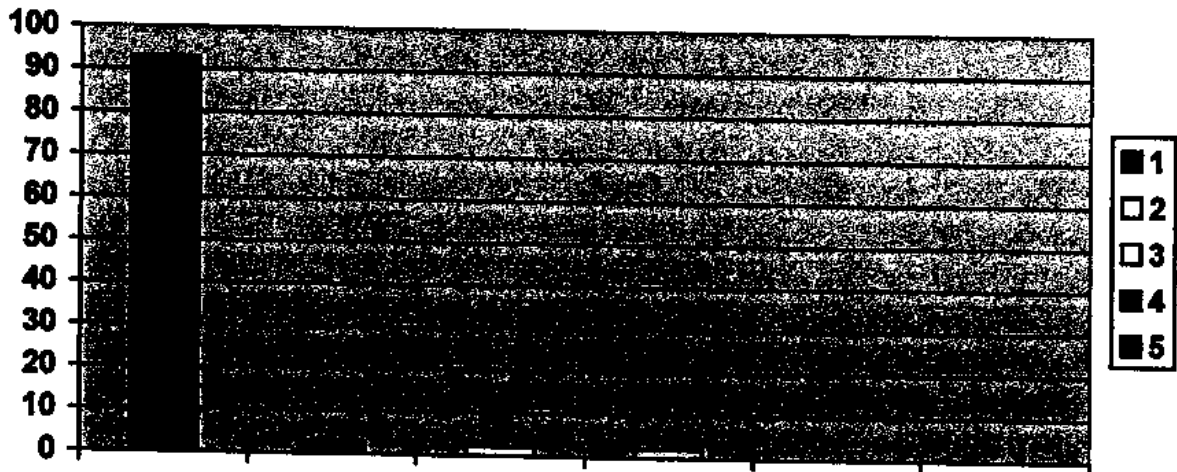
The statistic – 45 percent of women who strongly agree or agree that in general organizations respect and recognize that working mothers have responsibilities outside of work – is comforting and shows that the business world may, indeed, be reassessing itself when it comes to working mothers and work/life balance. However, 40 percent of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, indicating that there is still a split in regard to this issue. While working mothers do not want to special

treatment in terms of completing their daily job tasks, they do want the flexibility to complete them on their own terms. Again, flexible scheduling, extended maternity leaves, etc., show that organizations respect and recognize their working mother employees, which, in turn, adds value to their work and the organization as a whole.

A part-time environmental scientist with two children is one of the lucky working mothers who has reaped the advantages of a flexible work environment: "My current employers allowed me to work partially from home and be flexible with my work hours after I had my second child and after working for the firm for more than eight years." A vice president for marketing with two children feels that her work recognizes her dual commitments: "Motherhood affects the professional career if there is insufficient support at home to help and if there is an unsupportive work environment. I am fortunate to have support at work and at home, so feel I am able to have a rewarding and challenging career while still maintaining my ability to be involved as a parent."

10. Rank the importance of the following concerns for working mothers (5 is high; 1 is low):

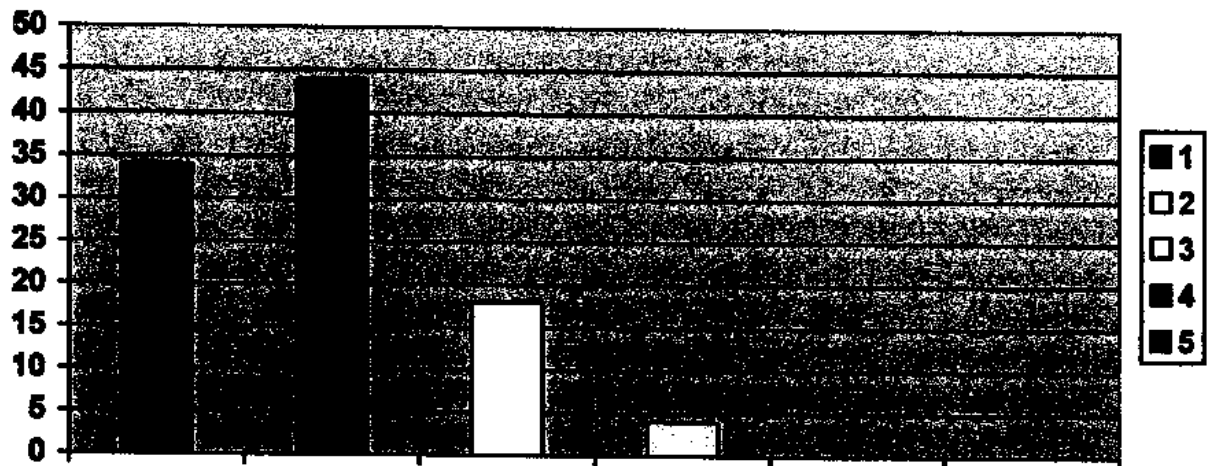
Work/Family Balance



For this statement, 58 respondents (94 percent) rated work/family balance as a 5 on the Likert scale. Two respondents (3 percent) rated it as a 4, one respondent (1 percent) rated it as a 3, one (1 percent) gave it a 2, and zero gave work/family balance a 1.

Since the majority, 97 percent, rated work/family balance with a 5 or 4, the author can conclude that the belief among working women and working mothers is that work/family balance is an important issue, which supports the general premise of the thesis and validates the author's research.

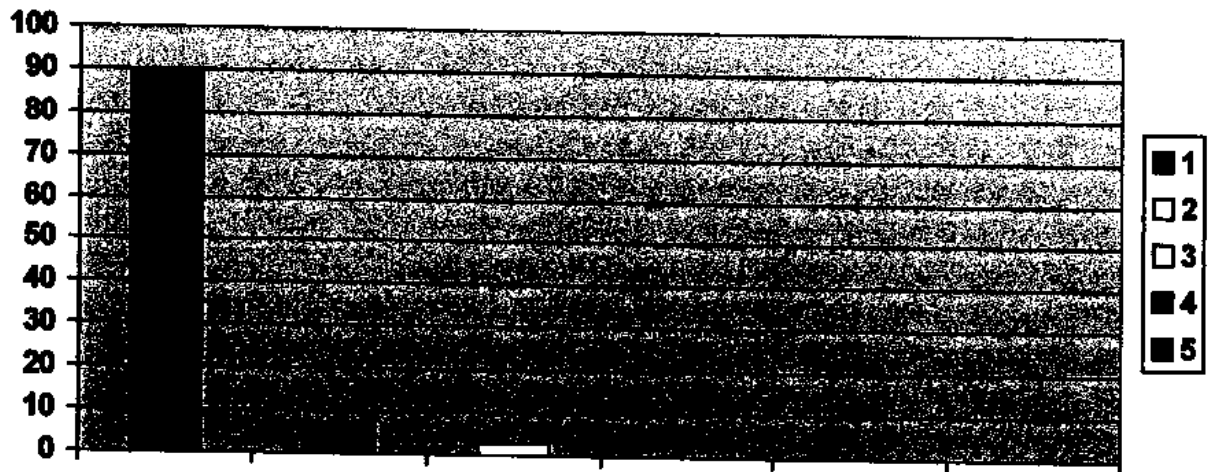
Paycheck



For this statement, 21 respondents (34 percent) rated a paycheck as a 5 on the Likert scale. Twenty-seven respondents (44 percent) rated it as a 4, 11 respondents (18 percent) rated it as a 3, three (5 percent) rated it as a 2, and zero respondents rated paycheck as a 1.

Since the majority, 78 percent, rated a paycheck with a 5 or 4, the author can conclude that the belief among working women and working mothers is that a paycheck is an important issue. In today's society, there are many dual-earning families. Most dual-earning families choose to be so in order to afford a particular lifestyle, and, thus, work as a means to an end. While the author did not look at dual-earning families in depth, it would make sense that some mothers would work out of necessity in order to bring home a paycheck.

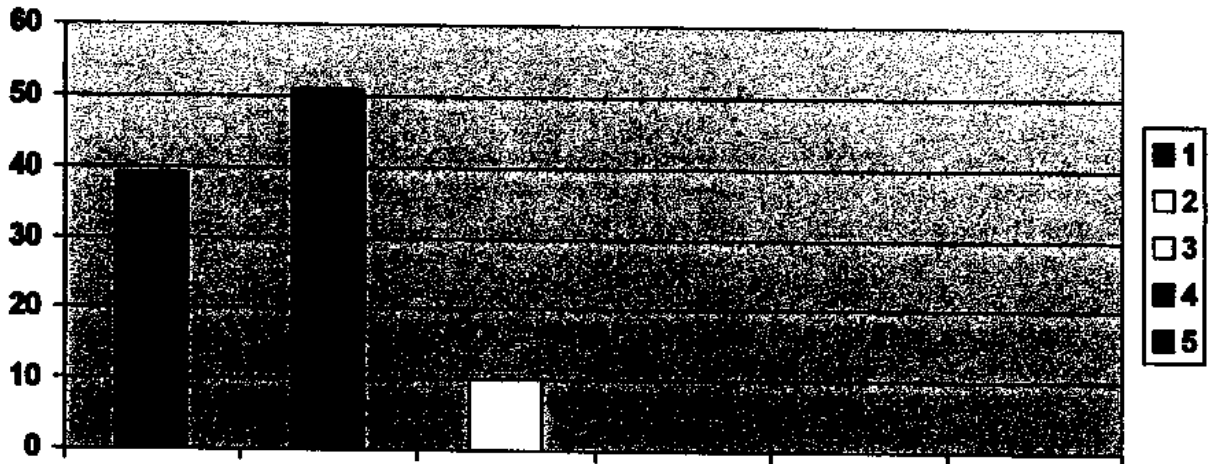
Child Care



For this statement, 56 respondents (90 percent) rated child care as a 5 on the Likert scale. Two respondents (3 percent) rated it as a 4, one respondent (1 percent) rated it as a 3, one (1 percent) rated it as a 2, and zero respondents rated child care as a 1.

Since the majority, 93 percent, rated child care with a 5 or 4, the author can conclude that the belief among working women and working mothers is that child care is an important issue. Many working mothers believe that if an organization sponsored affordable and safe child care, it would illustrate the organization's commitment to working mothers. The issue of child care will forever be a hot issue for mothers returning to the workforce after maternity leave.

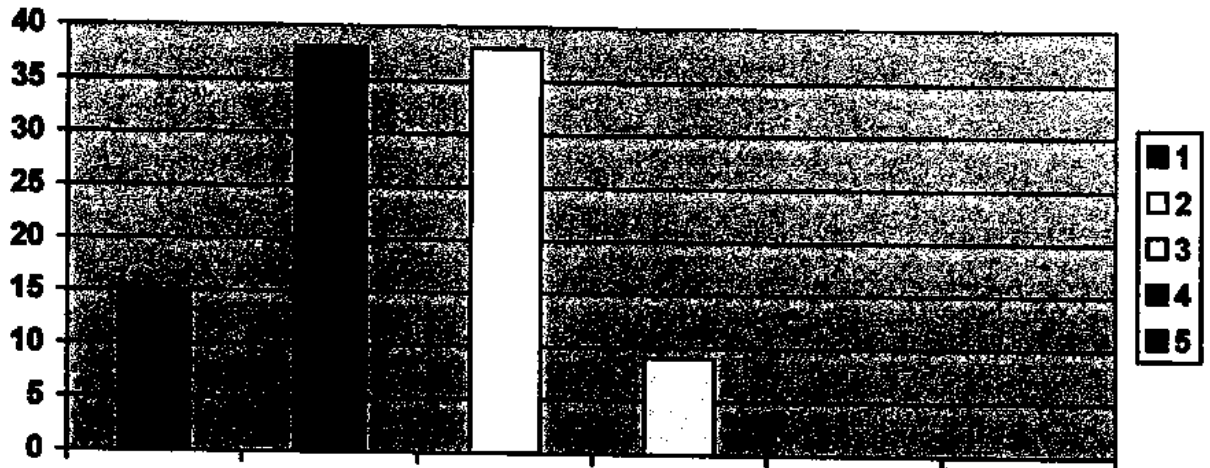
Job Performance



For this statement, 24 respondents (39 percent) rated job performance as a 5 on the Likert scale. Thirty-one respondents (46 percent) rated it as a 4, six respondents (10 percent) rated it as a 3, and zero respondents rated it as a 2 or a 1.

Since the majority, 85 percent, rated job performance with a 5 or 4, the author can conclude that the belief among working women and working mothers is that job performance is an important issue. Today's working mothers are hard working and proud. They do not complete a job halfway – that is not part of their nature. By definition, working mothers are multi-taskers, and they work hard, day in and day out, to prove that they can accomplish what their male and female-childless counterparts can accomplish.

Career Advancement



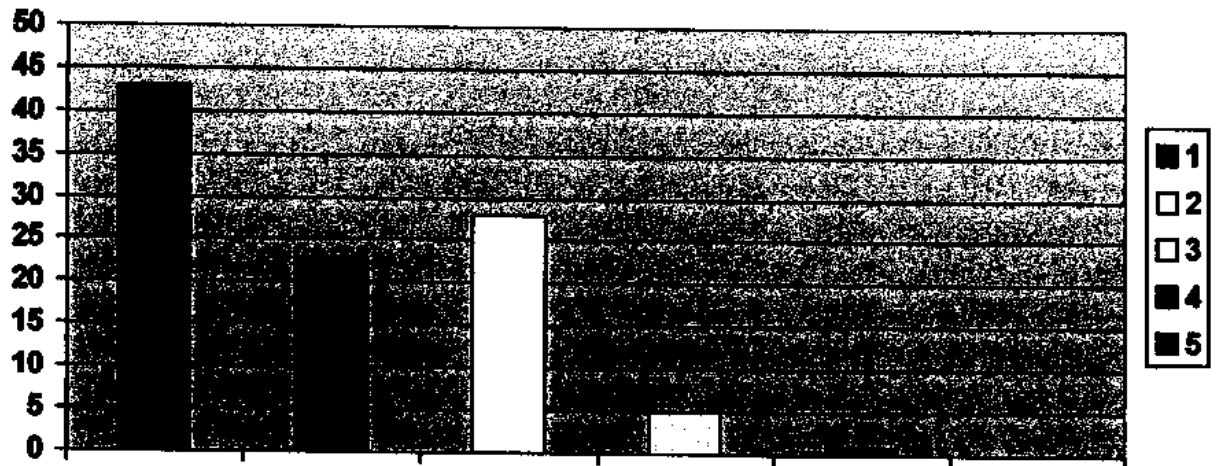
For this statement, 9 respondents (15 percent) rated career advancement as a 5 on the Likert scale. Twenty-three respondents (37 percent) rated it as a 4, 23 respondents (37 percent) rated it as a 3, six (10 percent) rated it as a 2, and zero respondents rated career advancement as a 1. Since the majority, 52 percent, rated career advancement with a 5 or 4, the author can conclude that the belief among working women and working mothers is that career advancement is an important issue.

While 52 percent of women ranked career advancement highly (with a 5 or 4), this does not parallel respondents' answers to the question number 5: For working mothers, maintaining a strong career is as important as being a parent; and question number 6: An upwardly mobile career path is highly desirable for working mothers regardless of the impact on their personal lives. This type of result gracefully illustrates the work/life balance issue for working mothers. Many times, working mothers don't know exactly how they feel about an advancing career and motherhood. They want both,

yet know the difficulties and challenges associated with being successful at both. There is inherent pressure to succeed in both.

Still, there is a significant group of respondents who are neutral or less concerned with career advancement. This illustrates the challenges women face and the fact that many are opting to take less responsibility in the workplace or passing on promotions in order maintain a better work/life balance.

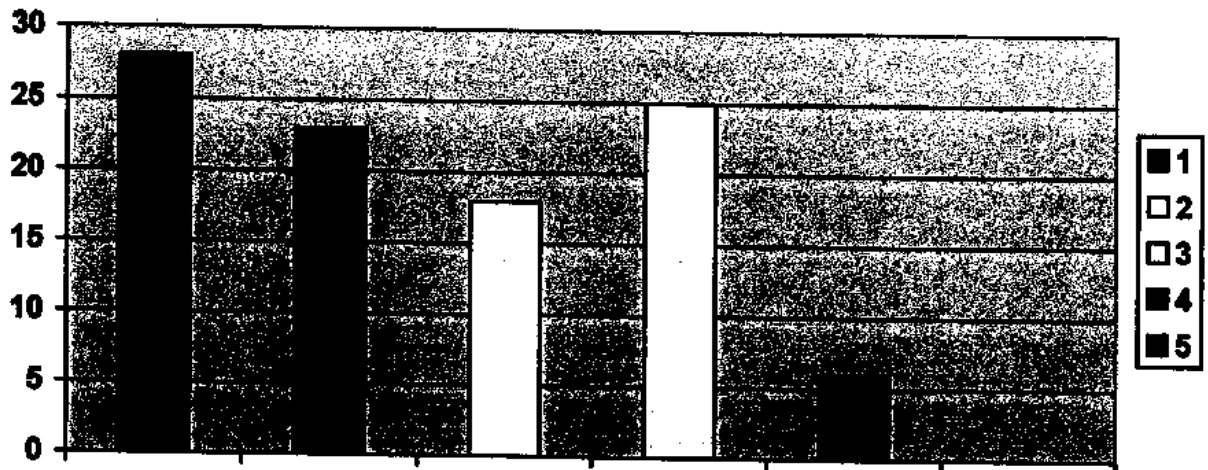
Personal Health



For this statement, 17 respondents (27 percent) rated personal health as a 5 on the Likert scale. Fourteen respondents (23 percent) rated it as a 4, 17 respondents (27 percent) rated it as a 3, three (5 percent) rated it as a 2, and one respondent (1 percent) rated career advancement as a 1.

Since the majority, 50 percent, rated personal health with a 5 or 4, the author can conclude that the belief among working women and working mothers is that personal health is an important issue. While the author did not delve deeply into the issue of personal health in this thesis, it makes perfect sense that working mothers would value personal health. A mother must be healthy in order to function on the job and at home.

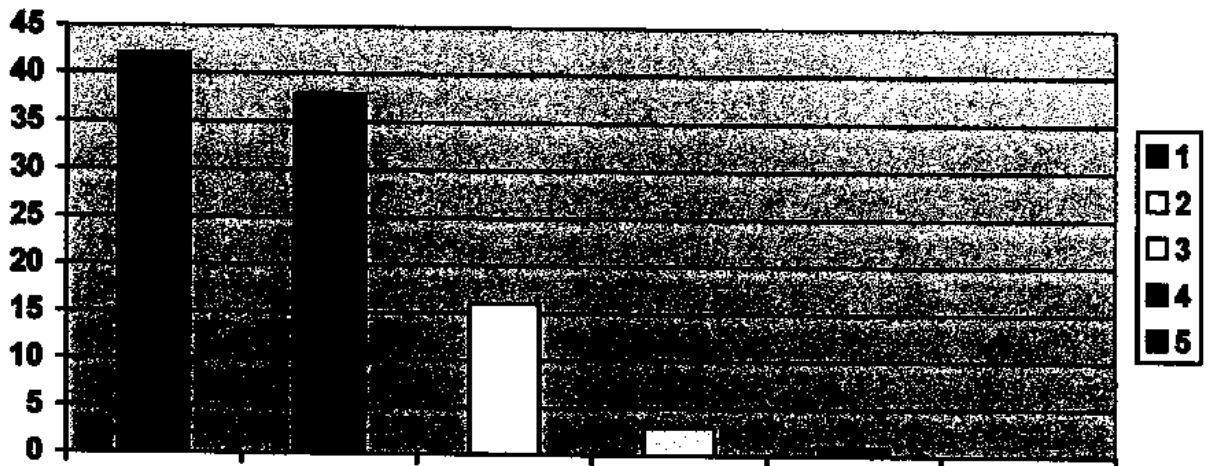
Personal Time



For this statement, 17 respondents (27 percent) rated personal time as a 5 on the Likert scale. Fourteen respondents (23 percent) rated it as a 4, 11 respondents (18 percent) rated it as a 3, 15 (24 percent) rated it as a 2, and four (6 percent) respondents rated personal time as a 1.

Since the majority, 50 percent, rated personal time with a 5 or 4, the author can conclude that the belief among working women and working mothers is that personal time is an important issue. The results of this statement are truly telling – 50 percent of women ranked this issue high (as a 5 or 4) and 50 percent ranked it as a 3, 2 or 1. Personal time is important to working mothers; yet, it is personal time that is the first to be set aside. The author contends that 50 percent of respondents already experience the fact that personal time must be set aside, especially if working mothers have two or more children. Working mothers with one child and new mothers may not experience the personal time crunch immediately.

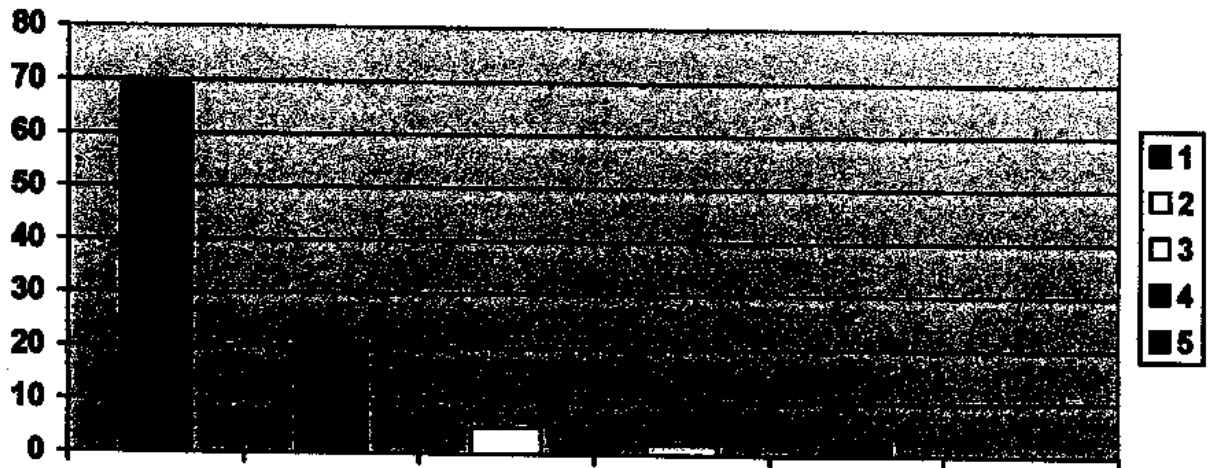
Job Security



For this statement, 26 respondents (42 percent) rated job security as a 5 on the Likert scale. Twenty-three respondents (37 percent) rated it as a 4, 10 respondents (16 percent) rated it as a 3, two (3 percent) rated it as a 2, and one respondent (1 percent) rated career advancement as a 1.

Since the majority, 79 percent, rated job security with a 5 or 4, the author can conclude that the belief among working women and working mothers is that job security is an important issue. Job security ranks high, which makes sense especially when coupled with the result regarding paycheck. Security is important when the money is needed in order to be financially sound. Job security also denotes strong performance, which, coupled with the job performance statistics also validates this answer.

Health Care Benefits



For this statement, 43 respondents (69 percent) rated health care benefits as a 5 on the Likert scale. Thirteen respondents (21 percent) rated it as a 4, three respondents (5 percent) rated it as a 3, one (1 percent) rated it as a 2, and two respondents (3 percent) rated career advancement as a 1.

Since the majority, 90 percent, rated health care benefits with a 5 or 4, the author can conclude that the belief among working women and working mothers is that health care benefits is an important issue. While the author did not delve deeply into the issues of health care, research shows that care related to maternity leave and post-delivery is important to working mothers.

Concluding Thoughts on Question 10 and its Ratings

What is most interesting about the results of question 10 is that all topics ranked high (as a 5 or 4). The rankings show the true colors of working mothers today. They do it all and want it all, yet are trying to find a balance to really make it work to their benefit.

Chapter 5

First Person, Fresh Perspectives

I'm a woman / Phenomenally. / Phenomenally woman, / That's me.

— Maya Angelou

Additional Comments

To illustrate how important the work/life balance issue is to both working mothers and working women, the author compiled the additional comments from the survey mechanism. It is important to note that an overwhelming amount of survey respondents felt the need to comment additionally on this important and pressing issue. A graduate student and director of the Poetic Journeys, Creative Writing Program at a major university, shared her thoughts on becoming a new mother, working and balancing:

"I don't know that there's one answer that would apply to every working mother. It depends on her career path, whether or not she has a partner who shares in the responsibility of caring for her children, among other things. Some mothers work jobs for a paycheck; others work jobs for personal fulfillment; others for a combination of the two. Some mothers work in fields that are more receptive to working mothers/parents; others do not. And I think we're beginning to realize, as a society, that issues important to working mothers impact working fathers as well, even if they do so in different ways. In my own situation, I have realized that being a mother will undoubtedly affect my career advancement – I well understand that I cannot devote the time to my job that I did not only when I did not have children but when I did not have a spouse. I don't devote the time to my job that I once did. But that means I'm giving about 90 percent rather than 120 percent. Is that enough? I don't know. I hope I am in a situation where my employer will accept something a bit less until my children are in school or grown, and I can give more. Having said that, I also think it's important for workplaces to accommodate working parents. If we are a society that gives lip service to family, then we should support family.

Additional comments are captured below:

Personally, the older I become, the more important my personal life and time with my family becomes. **50+ Director of Photography, 1 child**

Being single (will be married in 2004), I am a bit nervous about that part of my future. I already find it difficult to maintain a comfortable balance between work and personal life, including health, such as working out to maintain health weight and provide stress relief. I do feel that once I become a mother that my career, somewhat, will suffer and am willing to accept that once I get to that point. **21-30 Senior Consultant (single)**

In your definition of working mother, it fails to recognize that there are working mothers out there where the children do not live with the mother. The father might have custody or the children are already grown and living outside the home.

21-30 Training Instructional Specialist

I am not yet a working mother, but a working woman. I do want to have children and am concerned about advancing my career and trying to manage a family. Organizations say that they tend to the needs of working mothers, and some of them may, but I still think there are those that definitely do not. For me, at this time, I feel as if the next job I take, I will have to look for an organization that supposedly tends to those needs of women with children and I don't feel I should have to do that. If a child is sick for example, in most cases, it's the mother who stays home with the child and the mother has to take time off for that in the end. An organization may want to promote and look at that woman and say, "Well, she has been out of x number of days with her children being sick" and that has an effect on their decision to promote. I don't think every organization will be perfect when it comes to working mothers and the road blocks they face, but I do think that organizations can/need to focus on a working mother's brains, not how many children she has. **21-30 Assistant Director, Alumni Relations**

I have one friend with a child – she is an elementary school teacher with little to no time to herself. She is waiting to be "tenured" before having more children. Her family always comes first – as a single mom (before she was married), she worked two jobs, went to school and graduated from college. She's now successful. **21-30 Media Analyst**

Motherhood changes your (my) priorities in life. Before, work was one of the main activities that defined my personality. Now motherhood takes priority.

21-30 Counselor, 1 child

Priorities change and the time commitment required for advancement is not always possible. **41-50 Marketing Manager, 2 children**

My company has allowed me to work at home when one of my children is sick. This makes other employees angry. They feel I am getting special treatment. As a result, I am anxious about staying home with my child. I am not regarded as a "team player." I am late for work every day. Again, my supervisor is understanding of this, but other employees resent it and let me know it. Although I shouldn't let that bother me, it can be a distraction while trying to work with others. There are feelings of resentment and jealousy. **31-40 Marketing Specialist, 2 children**

I am not so happy with the phrase "working mothers": all mothers are working mothers, whether they get paid for working outside the home or not. The biggest impact on the career path of mothers who work outside the home remains the private circumstances of their personal lives: for women with partners who do their share of the parenting, things are less horrible. For all actively parenting mothers or fathers the workplace is inhospitable. Academia is less inhospitable than many environments for parents, but I cannot think of any truly nurturing environment. **41-50 Instructor**

I have observed that motherhood itself does not necessarily negatively impact the career advancement of working mothers; however, it depends on her choices. If a nanny is the child care choice, then the worker can put in “equal” time. If the choice is to be more involved with your children and try to “balance” work and family, you are put at a disadvantage compared to your peer set. **41-50 Associate Director, 2 children**

Personally, I would love to go back to school to work on my graduate degree but I don't have time of the money. I will have to put it on hold for awhile.
21-30 Program Coordinator/Teacher, 2 children

Unfortunately, I am not in a career for “advancement” but even as a teacher, there are still concerns of working and balancing family needs (i.e., missing work for sick kids, school functions, etc.). **41-50 Special Education Teacher, 3 children**

It is a daily challenge to balance work and family since the workplace is not set to accommodate women with families. I feel it is a struggle to fulfill my responsibilities as home with my family and as a professional.
41-50 Ombudsman for Student Academic Affairs, 2 children

Your focus is suddenly split between two high priority items: family and your career. Both are constantly competing for your attention.
31-40 Project Manager – IT Software Projects, 2 children

Being a working mother is a challenge. Much of one's success at juggling a career and children comes down to how good a boss you have, and how supportive they are of the realities of working mothers vs. universal lip service. Ironically, I have found that men bosses are more supportive and understanding than women bosses, even those who are mothers themselves. It's almost as if women, especially older women, resent the opportunities available to today's working mothers vs. their experiences in the “old days.” Some people, both bosses and fellow employees, seem to see it as a zero-sum game, where mothers get leeway that others don't. Before I was a working mother, co-workers would sometimes criticize working mother colleagues to me, saying that working moms got special treatment. I didn't agree with that back then and I certainly don't now. **31-40 Director of Development Communication, 3 children**

By necessity, working mothers are multi-taskers, which often make them highly valuable to the workplace. Because we have so much to do in any given day, working mothers generally do not appreciate having their time wasted. My last thought is that while most working women can balance family and work, it is the other things in their lives that suffer – their friendship with other women, their time to workout (take care of themselves physically) and other things that promote good mental health.
41-50 Executive Vice President and CEO, 1 child

Actually, this is a different answer for each person. We are all different with different needs and priorities. I have some dads with kids in my class this year who have lost their

wives; they are experiencing the same conflicts and problems. Maybe the focus should be on working parents in general. **41-50 Teacher, 3 children**

I think that there are also issues when a working mom or a first-time mom is pregnant and how the organization views future career advancement and involvement due to maternity leave and the very visual reality that they will or have children, and that is an issue. **31-40 College Administrator, 1 child (one on the way)**

While items like health, personal time and personal well-being should be extremely important to everyone, regardless of whether one has children, many working mothers put themselves last. I feel this is sometime done out of necessity – they put their families first, work second and they cannot find the time for themselves that they need and should have. **31-40, Marketing Manager**

I think how well a woman advances at her place of business depends heavily on who is the supervisor. If supervisors don't value having children, their attitudes and flexibility may be different than someone who is more sympathetic. I do believe women have to make choices when it comes to career advancement and begin considering the needs of their children over their own. It is still possible to advance in your career and have a family. This really depends on the support and flexibility of the spouse.

21-30 Assistant Director for Residence Life, 1 child

In general, mothers are negatively impacted when they take maternity leave and when they take sick leave to be with a child. Even if young mothers have more than enough sick or vacation days, when they take leave, they are criticized for taking off. In fields such as law, women lose years on the partnership track just for taking six weeks off for the birth of a child. **50+ Director of Student Activities, two children**

It is much more difficult when one has a child. Something as little as leaving work on time so I can get to day care and pick up my child before it closes is not recognized or supported. It is looked as though I never want to stay late at work. No one ever notices that I come in at least an hour early because I know I can never stay past 5 p.m. This is just one example that I deal with every day. **21-30 Property Manager, 1 child**

I do not feel that working mothers are valued as much as they should be in the workforce. Working mothers and working married women have several careers they are juggling at once. This is a difficult task as they are always juggling, always having to sacrifice something of themselves for the good of someone else. Because of this, they really should be put up on a pedestal. My goodness, I mean we women have at least two careers going simultaneously and it is just expected. This is not fair. Do I think things can change? Yes, many, many years from now, but it starts with people like you doing research, communicating and trying to make this a better world for women. Women should be fully recognized for their many, important roles throughout their lives. And another thought for you is what is this with health care organizations offering benefits only to the person who works there and not the family! What is this about? Than, on one

salary, who can afford hundreds of dollars each month for health benefits. Talk about forcing mothers to be in the work force – wouldn't it be nice to HAVE a real choice to hold down only two jobs for a period of time (i.e., mother and wife) instead of three (mother, wife and career) to give your family the best possible care if you so desire? That is so anti-family it is not funny. It is a crying shame. People are biased and prejudice against working mothers. They are not given the same opportunities as non-married, childless women. Society does not treat working mothers OR married women with without children the same as non-married women. No woman is treated the same as her male counterparts. I mean, we have to face reality here. Is it fair, not way, not at all, does this prejudice and deep-rooted sexism still exist in society: yeast indeed and the sooner women come together and acknowledge this fact, the sooner unfair treatment can be changed. The proof is in the pudding. Men still make more than woman dollar for dollar.

31-40 Director of Development Communication

Chapter 6

The Balancing Act

The good mother, the wise mother ... is more important to the community than even the ablest man; her career is more worthy of honor and is more useful to the community than the career of any man, no matter how successful.

— Theodore Roosevelt

In the course of the research for this thesis, the author found that the definition for feminism must be radically changed in order to reflect the views of women and working mothers in the new millennium. This new, 21st century definition is less about being equal to men. It is less about being deserving of rights and opportunities that have been traditionally male dominated. Today's feminism asks that women be free to choose: family, career – or both.

Work/Life Balance: A Hot Issue

Many articles on the issue of work/life balance and “opting-out” have been published – and many were published recently, just as I was concluding my research. This suggests the ongoing nature of the work/family issue and the ongoing struggle, in regard to balance, for working mothers – and working women – today. This issue is hot, and will continue to be.

A March 2004 issue of Time magazine profiled the struggle of many working mothers in its article titled “The Case for Staying Home: More Women are Sticking with Kids.” This article mirrors Lisa Belkin's New York Times Magazine article, “The Opt-Out Revolution.” Women are choosing to opt out of the workplace for a period of time in order to devote their time and attention to their children – and the role of mother. This choice is relatively new to the mothers of the 21st century, who are more familiar with the traditional definition of feminism and its fight for overall equality, but it is a choice that can have a major affect on the professional workplace and more as more women make the choice to opt out and later re-enter the workforce throughout their lives.

The phenomenon of work/life balance and working mothers plays itself out in the world of literature, movies and television today. I Don't Know How She Does It: The Life of Kate Reddy, Working Mother (2002) by Allison Pearson, documents the life of Kate Reddy, a hedge fund manager and mother of two. The book opens with Kate trying to disguise a store-bought cake to make it look homemade – at the ungodly hour of 1:37 a.m. And there's amandabright@home (2003) by Danielle Crittenden, which tells the story of Amanda Bright, who has decided to “opt-out” and stay home with her children. What she finds is that her college degree from an elite university didn't really prepare her for the role of motherhood. As for movies, there's “One Fine Day” with Michelle Pfeiffer. The story of a working mom who ends up taking her 8-year-old son to work with her after she misses her son's field trip ferry, “One Fine Day,” documents the life of one frazzled working mother. In the realm of television, there are working mothers balancing a career and motherhood in shows such as “Hope and Faith,” “Joan of Arcadia” and “Life with Bonnie.” And, of course, there are work/life columns in major newspapers, including The New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, as well as a number of nonfiction, self-help books related to the topic. The list the list will go on.

Suggestions for the World of Work

What has changed for the women of today? The workweek has, for one. The workweek continues to average around 34 hours; however those in financial services take on a 55-hour work week, and top executives are clocking 60 to 70 hours a week (Time, 2004). And the workweek for a dual-career family, according to the Families and Work Institute was 91 hours combined in 2002. “We are now the workaholism capital of the

world, surpassing the Japanese,” says Arlie Hochschild, author of The Second Shift (Time, 2004, p. 52). Yet with the number of hours spent in the workplace, working mothers are also spending a significant number of hours outside of work – tending to the work that keeps their family running.

The professional world must be made better aware of – and empathetic to – the commitments working mothers have outside of work. While working mothers should not receive special treatment, there are a number of “perks” that an organization can include within its benefits package that can help working mothers and other employees strike a better balance between their lives at home and their careers.

While working mothers should be applauded for having the courage to opt out of the workforce in today’ sluggish economy, too many women leaving the workforce can result in a shortage of knowledgeable employees – a negative “revolution” with both working mothers and businesses suffering. So what can be done to help strike a better balance?

Flexible Scheduling

What can help here is flexible scheduling. According to the author’s research, women are looking for alternatives to the 40-hour workweek as well as benefits in the workplace. Working mothers don’t want to be tied to the office – telecommuting is possible thanks to the advent of email, the Internet, fax machines, pagers and cell phones. But this type of you-can-reach-me 24/7 lifestyle has its downside, too. Mothers must set boundaries when taking advantage of such benefits. Part-time work or job-sharing at

reduced salaries look promising too many working mothers as well, but boundary-setting remains important in order to strike that positive balance.

Paid Leaves

Structured maternity leave and paid family medical leave time also show an employer's commitment to its working mother contingency. And it is important to note that family medical leave can be used for circumstances other than the birth or adoption of a child. Therefore, this paid time off can benefit other employees who may need to care, for a period of time, for a spouse or parent in need. Commitment, understanding and support are what working mothers are looking for in the daily workplace.

Those working mothers who do decide to take a break from their careers don't want to be frowned upon for making a "traditional" choice. Psychologist Daphne de Marneffe argues in her new book, Maternal Desire: On Children, Love and the Inner Life (2004), that feminists and society as a whole tend to ignore the urge that many mothers feel in regard to spending quality, uninterrupted time with their children. Time magazine's article states: "The book, which puts an idyllic gloss on staying home, could launch a thousand resignations" (2004, p. 55) But what researchers – and the author of this thesis – are learning is that many women tend to be unhappy in their work. The workplace for any professional is inflexible, but imagine balancing this inflexibility with motherhood? There is an added level of stress to a working mother's life when their workplace atmosphere is unwilling is rigid and unwilling to take steps toward flexibility and balance.

Career Advancement

Based on the number of working mothers who are choosing to opt out versus those who are staying in the workforce and the survey results compiled through the author's master's thesis survey, working mothers are generally unconcerned with career advancement. While career advancement traditionally means an increase in salary, it most definitely means an increase in responsibilities. Most high-level job positions make it difficult to take advantage of flexible work arrangements and part-time opportunities. Working mothers are making a responsible choice here. They choose more responsibility at home.

Help for Working Mothers in the Workplace

While there is no definitive answer to the work/life struggle for working mothers, there are a variety of available resources. For 18 years, Working Woman magazine has published the "100 Best Companies for Working Mothers." This highly sought-after magazine issue details the 100 top companies in the United States that are working to provide on-the-job and off-the-job support to working mothers.

Other major corporations are engaging in the work/life balance dialogue as well. Part-time and flexible positions are being created at PriceWaterhouseCoopers, where 10 percent of the firm's female partners work part-time, and Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu is launching the Personal Pursuits program, which will allow above-average performers to take a leave of absence of up to five years for personal reasons. While many benefits will be suspended if employees take advantage of such a leave, the firm will cover licensing

fees and will send them to yearly training sessions to keep their skills sharp. And they are guaranteed a job when they do return to the workforce.

While some companies today are engaging in more flexible working situations, there are other companies that must open their eyes and follow suit. Mere programs do not solve today's work/life balance issues, however. Work/life balance must be a strategy within a business or organization in order to truly be effective.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Today's Working Mothers: Your Views

This survey is a critical element in research being conducted for a thesis project at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey, to earn a Master of Arts in Corporate and Public Communication. The purpose of this survey is to assess the profile, perspective and progress of today's working mothers. The results of this research will help the researcher determine how motherhood influences the professional career advancement of working mothers.

All survey results are strictly confidential. If you would like to know the final survey results and conclusions of this research, please contact me at allensha22@yahoo.com, and I will provide you with a final copy (completion in May 2004).

Please return the completed survey to:

Shannon Rossman Allen
28 Emerald Place
Clark, NJ 07066
allensha22@yahoo.com

Thank you for your participation in this project.

Definition of Terms: Working Mothers

For the purpose of this survey, a working mother is defined as a mother, single or married, who works part-time or full-time outside of the home. The researcher does acknowledge the fact that all mothers work.

Part I: Survey Questions

Please identify yourself as one of the following:

- Working Mother w/at least one child Working Woman w/no children

Based on the scale below, please circle the answer that most closely represents your opinion.

	SA Strongly Agree	A Agree	N Neutral	D Disagree	SD Strongly Disagree
1. My company values working mothers.	SA	A	N	D	SD
2. For the most part, my organization considers, with compassion, the needs of working mothers.	SA	A	N	D	SD
3. Working mothers are generally more stressed at work than are women with no children.	SA	A	N	D	SD
4. In general, it is easy for working mothers to balance their professional careers and personal lives.	SA	A	N	D	SD
5. For working mothers, maintaining a strong career is as important as being a parent.	SA	A	N	D	SD
6. An upwardly mobile career path is highly desirable for working mothers regardless of the impact on their personal lives.	SA	A	N	D	SD
7. For the most part, working mothers are provided the same professional opportunities in the workplace as their male counterparts.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8. The needs of working mothers are different than those of their male counterparts.	SA	A	N	D	SD
9. In general, organizations respect and recognize that working mothers have responsibilities outside of work.	SA	A	N	D	SD

10. Rank the importance of the following concerns for working mothers (5 is high; 1 is low):

Work/Family Balance	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Paycheck	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Child Care	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Job Performance	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Career Advancement	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Personal Health	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Personal Time	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

Job Security 5 4 3 2 1
Health Care Benefits 5 4 3 2 1

Please offer any additional comments you have regarding how motherhood affects the professional career advancement of working mothers.

Part II: Demographics Questions

Please answer the questions below.

Age: 21-30 31-40 41-50 50 or above

Marital Status: Single Married Divorced

Number of Children: _____

Level of Education: High School Some College Undergraduate
 Some Graduate Graduate Post Graduate
 Other _____

Employment Status: Full-Time Part-Time

Occupational Title: _____

Length of Time at Current Organization: _____

Length of Time in Current Position: _____

Survey Results

50 Working mothers with at least one child**12 Working women****1. My company values working mothers.**

SA	14 (23%)
A	28 (45%)
N	8 (13%)
D	12 (19%)
SD	0

2. For the most part, my organization considers, with compassion, the needs of working mothers.

SA	17 (27%)
A	25 (40%)
N	10 (16%)
D	9 (15%)
SD	1 (2%)

3. Working mothers are generally more stressed at work than are women with no children.

SA	21 (34%)
A	17 (27%)
N	15 (24%)
D	9 (15%)
SD	0

4. In general, it is easy for working mothers to balance their professional careers and personal lives.

SA	0
A	3 (5%)
N	6 (10%)
D	32 (52%)
SD	21 (34%)

5. For working mothers, maintaining a strong career is as important as being a parent.

SA	3 (5%)
A	15 (24%)
N	13 (21%)
D	26 (42%)
SD	5 (8%)

6. An upwardly mobile career path is highly desirable for working mothers regardless of the impact on their personal lives.

SA	1 (2%)
A	1 (2%)
N	7 (11%)
D	28 (45%)
SD	25 (40%)

7. For the most part, working mothers are provided the same professional opportunities in the workplace as their male counterparts.

SA 0
 A 16 (26%)
 N 6 (10%)
 D 27 (44%)
 SD 13 (21%)

8. The needs of working mothers are different than those of their male counterparts.

SA 25 (40%)
 A 24 (39%)
 N 7 (11%)
 D 6 (10%)
 SD 1 (2%)

9. In general, organizations respect and recognize that working mothers have responsibilities outside of work.

SA 2 (3%)
 A 26 (42%)
 N 8 (13%)
 D 20 (32%)
 SD 5 (8%)

10. Rank the importance of the following concerns for working mothers (5 is high; 1 is low):

Work/Family Balance	5 (58)	4 (2)	3 (1)	2 (1)	1 (0)
Paycheck	5 (21)	4 (27)	3 (11)	2 (3)	1 (0)
Child Care	5 (56)	4 (4)	3 (2)	2 (0)	1 (0)
Job Performance	5 (24)	4 (31)	3 (6)	2 (0)	1 (0)
Career Advancement	5 (9)	4 (23)	3 (23)	2 (6)	1 (0)
Health	5 (26)	4 (14)	3 (17)	2 (3)	1 (1)
Personal Time	5 (17)	4 (14)	3 (11)	2 (15)	1 (4)
Job Security	5 (26)	4 (23)	3 (10)	2 (2)	1 (1)
Health Care Benefits	5 (43)	4 (13)	3 (3)	2 (1)	1 (2)

Part II: Demographics Questions

Age: 21-30 (20) 31-40 (27) 41-50 (12) 50+ (3)

Marital Status: Single (7) Married (52) Divorced (2) Partner (1)

Number of Children: One (12) Two (26) Three (6) Four (1)

Level of Education: High School (2) Some College (3) Undergraduate (15)
 Some Graduate (9) Graduate (27) Post Graduate (5)
 Other – J.D. (1)

Employment Status: Full-Time (50) Part-Time (12)

Length of Time at Current Organization:

15 or more years (5)

10-14 years (6)

5-9 years (14)

1-4 years (27)

less than 1 year (8)

Length of Time in Current Position:

15 or more years (3)

10-14 years (4)

5-9 years (9)

1-4 years (33)

less than 1 year (11)

Occupational Title:

Training Instructional Specialist

Teacher and owner of General Contracting Business

AVP, Public Relations and Marketing

Financial Manager

Student Life Coordinator

Director, Institutional Image Campaign

Production Buyer – Direct Mail

Sole Business Owner

Graphic Designer (2)

Director, Johnson Center and University Life Program

Senior Benefits Representative

Executive Director

Administrative Assistant (2)

Secretary

Attorney (2)

Property Manager

Graduate Student and Director, Poetic Journeys, Creative Writing

Associate

Director of Student Activities at a University

Coordinator, Educational Programs, Leadership and Outreach

Assistant Director, Alumni Relations (2)

Assistant Director for Special Events (2)

Assistant Director of Residence Life (3)

Associate Director, Outreach

College Administrator

Media Analyst

Director of Corporate Relations

Library Media Specialist

Director of Development

Counselor

Marketing Manager (2)

Marketing Specialist

Instructor

Associate Director (2)

Program Coordinator/Teacher

Special Education Teacher
Director of Marketing
Environmental Scientist
Ombudsman for Student Academic Affairs, George Mason University
Project Manager – IT Software Projects
Vice President, Marketing
Director of Development Communications
Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
Teacher, Public School System (2)
Senior Consultant
Account Executive
Audit Manager
Manager
Treasurer
Director of Photography
Registered Nurse (2)