

THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE
WOMEN: EXPECTATIONS OF WORK
AND RELATIONSHIPS

By

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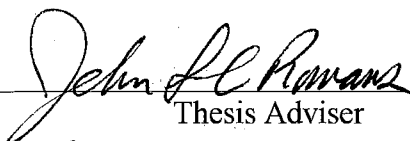
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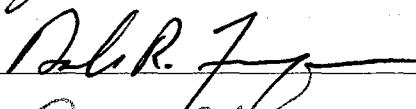
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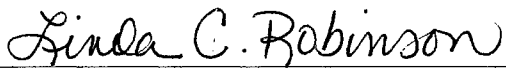
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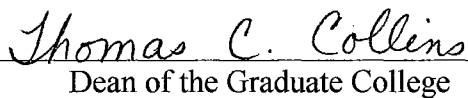
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The study presented here represents my efforts to gain a clearer understanding - both personally and professionally - of the changing lives of women. My decision to undertake this study has been strongly influenced by my desire to honor my mother's realities, to live my life with greater awareness, and to give my own sons and daughters permission to challenge old beliefs.

I am grateful to my friends, the staff of Personal Counseling Services, who supported and encouraged me throughout this process, including: Pat, for his faith and patience; Suzie, for her gifts of both confrontation and support; Susan, for clerical assistance and unwavering moral support, and Chanda, Debbie, Bithiah, Tad, and Diana for special friendships.

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This study is based upon: 1) my personal experiences of women who work (first from the perspective of a daughter and now from the perspective of a mother), and 2) the belief that the field of career development must be enriched and expanded if it is to provide meaningful assistance to women. My sincere hope is that the combined efforts of all those acknowledged here will contribute to the creation of a society which respects the different realities of both genders, without claiming that one is better than the other.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Background

While the roots of career development trail back to Frank Parsons and the opening decade of the twentieth century (Brown & Brooks, 1990), early literature which addressed the unique aspects of women's career development appeared infrequently and remained incomplete (Fassinger, 1985). Zunker (1986) observed that when women's career issues were discussed the treatment was cursory, and usually emphasized traditional female work roles and the secondary nature of women's careers to other family obligations.

Originally, the work of professionals in the vocational field involved finding a satisfactory match between an individual (usually male) and an occupation (Parsons, 1909). During the 1950s Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, & Herma (1951), Roe (1956), and Super (1953) studied the work lives of men and constructed theories which primarily depicted career development as a linear and sequential progression of occupations held throughout an individual's life span. Traditional societal roles and family responsibilities supported men's uninterrupted participation in paid work while impeding such a consistent pattern for women. Since the original theories of career development were generated through the study of men's work behavior, the variability of women's lives (including the improbability of a progressive and uninterrupted career path) was often labeled as a deficit or failure to measure up to men's career standards (Brown & Brooks, 1990; Gilligan, 1982).

About the time that the original theories of career development (Ginzberg et al., 1951; Roe, 1956; Super, 1953) were being introduced the Women's Movement succeeded in capturing media attention, raising the consciousness of a significant number of women, and focusing attention on the need for equity for women (Friedan, 1963). The American workplace was one area where striking changes occurred as increasing numbers of women became employed (Gerson, 1985). Externally, expanded opportunities became available for women during the 70s and 80s (Hoyt, 1989; Subich, 1989), although the amount and value of those increases have recently been challenged (Faludi, 1991).

Since the 1960s, this combination of social phenomena (i.e., the women's movement, and rises in both the divorce rate and the number of women heading single-parent households) has contributed to the unprecedented percentages of women participating in paid employment (Gerson, 1985). As increasing numbers of women have combined vocational obligations with their relational responsibilities apparent differences have continued to be observed between their career patterns and those of men. Career theories (due to their foundation based predominantly on the work habits of men) became increasingly unreliable in providing an organized construction of beliefs which adequately represented the experiences of women (Brown & Brooks, 1990; Osipow, 1983; Perun & Bielby, 1981; Zunker, 1986).

Super, 1957 eventually recognized the incompleteness of their theories in describing the career development of women and extended their work to include

women's variations. Others introduced theories which focused on the ways in which women's career development deviated from men's (Zytowski, 1969). In the 1980s new conceptualizations of women's work behavior were presented (Astin, 1984; Farmer, 1985; Fassinger, 1985; Gottfredson, 1981; Hackett & Betz, 1981).

In 1981 Gottfredson presented a theory which systematically explained individual development through four orientations (to: a) size and power, ages 3-5; b) sex roles, ages 6-8; c) social class, ages 9-13; and d) personal interests and abilities, ages 14+) during which boys and girls progressively differentiate, assess, and circumscribe (eliminate) vocational aspirations according to their evolving self-concepts. Although Gottfredson's theory makes a valuable contribution through its acknowledgment of the early and restrictive influence of sex-role shaping, it says little about women's career behavior beyond the original stages of circumscription, omitting maturation, life changing events, and the evolving nature of self concept.

In the same year Hackett & Betz (1981) introduced a cognitive, self-efficacy approach to women's career development, building on the work of Bandura (1977a). Like Gottfredson, they emphasized socialization forces. Their theoretical framework facilitated the development of intervention strategies aimed at increasing women's self-efficacy within four experiential realms. It failed to consider that even when women experience themselves as efficacious, they may eliminate a vocational realm based upon its incompatibility with their beliefs about their roles.

Astin's (1984) sociopsychological model was based upon the work of Roe (1956)

and Bandura (1977b) and highlighted an individual's personal characteristics, social forces, and the interaction of these two. Astin's model met with criticism (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1984) because it failed to address internal barriers and the tension of conflicting roles.

Farmer (1985) and Fassinger (1985) introduced models generated by sophisticated statistical techniques, based upon multiple variables which affect women's career decisions. Both researchers reported serious limitations due to sampling and instrument construction, while upholding the value of comprehensive explorations of the relationships among the multitude of measures which have been shown to predict career choice.

Feminists have called attention to the omission of women (both as researchers and subjects) from the formative stages of scientific studies of human development (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982). However, criticism has suggested that these recent attempts to improve career theories have continued to build on research strategies which viewed women's behavior from male perspectives and against male criteria (Belenky, et al., 1986; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987).

Along with the social and political changes occurring through the efforts of the Women's Movement came innovations in scholarly research. During the past three decades feminist researchers have had a significant impact in the field of human development. Enns (1991) reviewed recent investigations into the relational worlds of women which provide new insight into women's experience of conventional femininity:

detecting and responding to the needs of others. Feminist research has explored variations in socialization between men and women as an explanation of differences in later development (Chodorow, 1978). Further examination of the effects of dissimilar socialization messages on men and women illuminated women's tendencies to assume more passive, deferential, less assertive roles in relationships (Ehrenreich & English, 1989; Gilligan, 1982; Miller, 1976). The same strong social forces which shaped the personality development of women by assigning a set of attributes complimentary to male attributes, often devalued women who successfully internalized these attributes (Belenky et al., 1986; Bem, 1993; Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz, & Vogel, 1970; Faludi, 1991; Levinson, 1996; Miller, 1976). Levinson (1996) discussed the phenomenon of "gender splitting:" the creation of a rigid division between masculine and feminine. It appears that women's experiences in the world in general, and more specifically in work-related decisions and behavior, are strongly influenced by the existence of socially encouraged feminine traits which career theories have traditionally viewed as deficiencies. Several feminist writers have referred to these same traits as strengths (de Beauvoir, 1952; Miller, 1976) and Levinson (1996) discussed these internalized qualities as an internal ideal of traditional homemaking.

Statement of the Problem

Recent investigations into women's development have provided a deeper understanding of the way in which relationships influence women's decision-making (Gilligan, 1982; Levinson, 1996). Current theories of career development which fail to

incorporate women's relational realms remain incomplete. Additional information is needed to build a more complete understanding of career behavior which includes the experience of women in relationships.

Grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) is based upon an inductive approach to studying the phenomenon that the theory represents. Grounded theory begins with an area of study and a reciprocal relationship is developed between the data collection, analysis, and theory, allowing what is relevant to emerge. Qualitative research strategies which have been utilized by feminist researchers (i.e., Belenky et al., 1986; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan, Ward, & Taylor, 1988; Levinson, 1996; Miller, 1976) offer a viable alternative for conducting exploratory research in the area of career development. Qualitative research may produce meaningful results by focusing on women's thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about integrating work and responsibilities in relationships.

For example, Gilligan (1982) conducted interviews with women facing abortion decisions to explore the context of their experiences. Gilligan's work expanded Kohlberg's (1981) stage model of moral reasoning by unveiling an analogous approach to moral decision making which is most frequently utilized by women. Gilligan found that women often base moral decisions upon their sense of responsibility in relationships, which she labeled "the ethic of care" (1982, p. 63). The importance of Gilligan's theory to the problem stated here lies in the fact that, in context, traditional feminine ways of reasoning and behaving are recognized as being different from, but equal to, traditional

masculine ways of reasoning and behaving. When regarded contextually, women's beliefs, decisions, and behaviors may become clearer. This contextual approach has not been fully utilized as a means to gain greater understanding of women's vocational/relational decisions.

Levinson (1996) anticipated a multidisciplinary field of study to examine the life course. Additional research can merge 1) existing theories and interventions in the field of career development with 2) perspectives presented in feminist literature. Such research may identify some areas in which these two fields already overlap and other areas where further integration may be useful. More effective career interventions and instruments may evolve from a theoretical foundation which is built upon an understanding of women's uniqueness, not simply by focusing on the ways in which they differ from men. One way to continue exploring women's career behavior is through qualitative research methodology.

Purpose of the Study

This study is an attempt to explore aspects of women's lives which may lead to a clearer explanation of the components involved in women's career choices, expanding prevalent theories of women's career behavior. The study will present a qualitative exploration, emerging from feminist perspectives, of the centrality of relationships in women's lives and vocational choices.

Literature in the career and vocational fields records statistics and information about the types of choices that different populations of women make. However

vocational outcomes do not acknowledge the underlying processes and conflicts, if they exist. Levinson (1996) explained that quantitative methodology may reveal structure but not meaning. A more interactive, responsive, in-depth approach would likely produce a richer description of the internal meaning-making processes which women employ as they integrate their ideas about work and responsibilities to relationships.

Although we may speculate that college women embrace stronger beliefs (about the value of vocational training and the inevitability of their own career pursuits) than other women, these college women may reveal discord as they consider implementing their vocational training and career aspirations with their concepts of themselves as adult women. The exploration of conflicts as women incorporate their career goals into their definitions of femininity and womanhood may change our understanding of important aspects of women's realities.

CHAPTER 11: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Levinson (1996) discussed the “fragmentation” which occurs when human development is studied in discrete phases and speculated the need for a multidisciplinary field of study capable of a more complete examination of the human life course. The study reported here attempts to bridge a connection between two distinct areas of research previously seen as unconnected: traditional theories of career development and relational models of women's development. In order to integrate essential aspects of these two areas, this literature review will initially focus separately on each area of knowledge.

The literature review will begin by broadly introducing the first area of theoretical importance: theories of career development initially posited in the 1950s and 1960s, and including revisions into the 1980s. The literature review will then focus on the women's movement and recent contributions to women's development emerging from feminist research. Finally, the review will blend the essence of both trends, to create an integrated framework to support the study.

Background

Historically, women's methods of making work-related choices have not appeared as credible as men's within the scope of existing career theories. Considerations for their relationships and responsibilities to family resulted in behaviors and choices which were dissimilar from men's behaviors and choices. Early theorists attempted to explain these

choices as a natural reflection of women, without recognizing the force of the social imperative to make such choices.

There appears to be agreement that separate responsibilities for relationships and work result in conflicts for women (Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980; Hochschild, 1989; Richardson, 1979; Zytowski, 1969). Beliefs held by women about how they should resolve these conflicts between relationships and work may affect career and work decisions. This study is an exploration into the underlying beliefs which women embrace, or the processes they experience, and how these influence work decisions. In order to discuss conclusions and propose research about women's beliefs, it is necessary to begin by looking at what traditional theories of career development say, and do not say, about women and their beliefs.

Historical Context

The profession of counseling and guidance was established through the founding of the Vocational Bureau by Frank Parsons in 1908. Parsons defined his efforts to assist unemployed youth with their vocational decisions as "vocational guidance" (Gazda, Childers, & Brooks, 1987).

At the same time, the measurement movement made important strides by developing techniques which standardized procedures for measuring human qualities (i.e., judgment, intelligence, interests.) At the beginning of World War I, the need for group testing capabilities led to the development of the Army Alpha and Army Beta Tests. Soon after, the Strong Vocational Interest Blank was published, an assessment tool

capable of measuring vocational interest and producing results which pointed individuals toward certain occupations (Zunker, 1986). These formative events in the vocational guidance field provided a growing capability to match individuals with occupations, although up to this point, the individuals of interest were most often men.

Traditional Career Development Theories

In the early 50s several theories of career development and choice were introduced, resulting in a flourish of interest in career-guidance practices, instruments, and programs (Zunker, 1986). Perun & Bielby (1981) evaluated four theories set forth in the 60s (Ginzberg, 1966; Holland, 1963; Roe, 1966; Super, 1966) according to the following criteria: 1) description and explanation of a developmental process; 2) presentation of a life course perspective; and 3) comprehensiveness. Their review suggested that although these theories advanced an understanding of vocational behavior relevant to their middle class, white, male samples, their theoretical approaches were incomplete in their descriptions of the career behavior of women.

Roe's (1966) theory emphasized early parent-child interactions which influence the child's development of need primacies. Perun & Bielby (1981) criticized Roe's theory for narrowly focusing on childhood, ignoring later relationships and the impact of social conditioning. The major limitation found in Holland's (1963) theory was his utilization of occupational stereotypes, and the absence of a developmental process. Ginzberg (1966) introduced a work study based upon a sample which over-represented men and raised serious doubts about the generalizability to women.

Finally, in spite of Super's (1966) theoretical inclusion of personal and situational determinants within a life course framework, his theory was criticized because it excluded important social structures and failed to prove that self-concept development proceeds identically in men and women. Perun & Bielby's 1981 article examined the literature on women and work and suggested a developmental model of female occupational behavior. They concluded that major revisions or new theoretical formulations were required in women's career development in order to validate the ways in which women's occupational behavior differed from men's, due to reduced predictability resulting from increased investment in family cycles.

Changing Trends in Women's Work Participation

During the early decades of the twentieth century the size of the female labor force increased significantly. Between 1900 and 1945 " ...women poured into the workplace both to occupy jobs vacated by men away at war and to fill the expanding job pool in the 'pink-collar' service sector... " (Gerson, 1985, p. 4).

As men returned home from World War II, a drastic decrease in women's labor force participation occurred, but only briefly. By the mid-60s women's participation had again reached wartime levels. This escalating, long-term trend of women to enter the work force eventually caught the attention of career development theorists.

Super (1957) and Ginsberg (1966) both acknowledged aspects of career development which were unique to women. Super proposed seven patterns of career development which described women's choices: 1) stable homemaking; 2) conventional;

3) stable working, 4) double track; 5) interrupted; 6) unstable; and 7) multiple trial. The significance of this contribution arises from: a) its appreciation of homemaking as a primary or secondary career; b) recognition that some women choose work over homemaking; and c) acknowledgment of the double track, in which women combine both homemaking and career. Although Super's work recognized the unique patterns of career choice which frequently apply to women, it did not address how these women made the choices they made. Even when research produces concrete, quantifiable data about work-choice outcomes, there are no greater understandings of the process which led to that choice, or what prevented women from making another choice.

Ginsberg organized women's vocational behavior into three life-style dimensions: 1) traditional, referring to a woman who is oriented towards homemaking; 2) transitional, referring to a woman who is working, although her primary focus remains on her family; and 3) career-oriented, referring to a woman who's highest priority is given to career development. While Super and Ginsberg's work has been cited for their recognition of women's career development, there is more to learn about the differing ways in which women develop and implement their career self-concepts.

During the second half of the 1960s (coinciding with initial developments in the women's movement) increases in labor force participation by women led to expanding awareness of unique differences for women in terms of developmental stages and vocational participation. Zytowski (1969) wrote that conflicts in young women's plans for education, employment, and personal life often "...defy resolution." Finding existing

concepts of vocational development lacking, he proposed a separate theory of vocational development for women, necessitated by inequitable social expectations.

Early Thoughts about Women and Work

Writing in the Vocational Guidance Quarterly as early as 1968, Ohlsen stated, Most scholars agree that a happy marriage and family are more highly valued by our society...Consequently, girls tend to be more concerned about their success in love, marriage, and a family than they are with the choice of an out-of-home occupation (p. 124).

Patterson (1973) reported two contradictory aspects of feminine identity which cloud the individual minds of females and the collective mind of society. The first involved acceptance of the female sex-role, including selecting a partner, establishing a home, and caring for children. The second entailed acceptance of feminine assets and liabilities as they pertained to the vocational and economic patterns of society. Homemaking provided outlets for nurturance; work provided outlets for achievement. Approximately one generation ago Patterson observed these distinct aspects of a woman's identity to be incompatible.

Patterson and Ohlsen's remarks identify two areas of women's lives which are in conflict: work and relationships, and represent an emerging awareness of the complexities encountered in attempting to provide vocational assistance to young women. Popular career theories continue to fall short in their ability to explain or predict how women approach this conflict when making vocational decisions.

In a study attempting to describe sex differences and similarities in male and female high school students' life plans (including both home and career aspirations) Farmer (1983) found that the girls in her study were aspiring to higher level careers than the boys. However, greater responsibility for homemaking and child bearing tasks in women's lives led to a gap between educational and career aspirations eleven years later. Farmer concluded that, "Girls in high school are not yet dealing realistically with the experience of marriage and family, which in the future may affect their career commitment negatively" (p. 44). The females who were approaching adulthood (and were more focused on succeeding in their relational roles) at the time of Ohlsen's writing may face even more complex concerns today as they move through their forties, especially if circumstances in their lives change their experience of marriage and family and if their beliefs change. As women's experiences change, both historically and individually, adjustments are often required, and at times forced.

Ohlsen (1968) described our society's endorsement of a happy marriage and family rather than an investment in a career to young women of thirty years ago. For a myriad of reasons increasing numbers of women are combining both. How do women, who have experienced traditional socialization forces which place relationships above work, deal with the desire and/or necessity to choose work? It appears that women's choices and behaviors related to work may be strongly and tacitly influenced by socialized beliefs which may be reconstructed as they move through adult stages.

Although neither identified nor appraised in early theories of career development,

evidence emerges of internal beliefs related to what is "right" or "good" for women (Gilligan, 1982). Hoyt (1989) assessed the National Career Development Association's (NCDA) follow through on their professional commitment to extend equity in career development planning and services to women and minority persons. He conducted a 20-year retrospective review of attempts to affect change in external social structures. Subich (1989) responded to Hoyt and suggested that additional, internal forces also played an important role in women's career development. Unlike external barriers like unequal pay and limited opportunities for women, Subich stressed that these internal forces (socialized beliefs, sex-role stereotypes, self-efficacy, values, etc.) are within the individual woman's control, and therefore amenable to intervention. Recently, Levinson (1996) reported on a study of women's development and identified the Internal Traditional Homemaker Figure, reflected in the culture, the family, and occupational institutions. Levinson claimed that this internal figure exists within the psyche and often forms an ideal for a woman's conscious, valued self. For some women with career involvement another antithetical figure emerges: the Anti-Traditional Figure. Decisions about the integration of careers and relationships often involve an on-going struggle between these two internal figures.

The objective of this study is to explore the existence of such beliefs and internal barriers. Before more current theories of career development are considered, the following section will move back in time to introduce an overview of the influence that the women's movement has had on a broader understanding of women, and more

specifically, how this may relate to women's work behavior.

Women's Movement.

Concurrent with the introduction of early theories of career development came the publication of The Feminine Mystique (Friedan, 1963) which laid the groundwork for the emergence of a phenomena known as the Women's Movement. The Movement's drama and turbulence increased the visibility of its efforts, establishing it as a prominent mile-marker in the chronicling of women's history in the 20th century.

Friedan subsequently organized the National Organization for Women (NOW), and in its Statement of Purpose she called for concrete action which would obtain true equality for all women, and a fully equal partnership of the sexes. She emphasized the necessity to confront " ...the silken curtain of prejudice and discrimination... " which prevented women from " ...enjoying the equality of opportunity and freedom of choice which is their right as individual Americans, and as human beings... " (p. 87).

In the early attempts of the movement to secure equal rights for women, much attention focused on external evidence of gender discrimination: women's participation in paid work and the inequality of wages and opportunities (Friedan, 1963). Emphasis was simultaneously focused on the need for innovative social institutions (i.e., national day care programs) which would allow women to enjoy true equality in the world of work, while decreasing the probability of compromising their responsibilities as caregivers and mothers.

In the interest of the human dignity of women, the movement opposed policies

and practices which " ...in the guise of protectiveness, not only deny opportunities but also foster in women self-denigration, dependence, and evasion of responsibility, [which] undermine their confidence in their own abilities and foster contempt for women" (Friedan, 1963, p. 91).

In the summary paragraph of NOW's Statement of Purpose, Friedan (1963) urged that ...women will do most to create a new image of women by acting now and speaking out in behalf of their own equality, freedom, and human dignity...in an active, self-respecting partnership with men...to develop confidence in determining the conditions of their lives, their choices, their future and their society (p. 91).

Friedan's words kindled a movement which realized pervasive social changes in women's lives originating in the mid-60s.

Although women have been described as a heterogeneous group, the Women's Movement failed to be inclusive for all groups of women. Wills (1990) wrote that working class women were less willing than their middle class cohorts to blend their voices with the movement's outcry for equality. Although these women wanted equality in the area of work and pay, they did not understand as clearly how patriarchal values were oppressing them or how the Woman's Movement could help them. Then, as now, feminine diversity was demonstrated through individual women's alignment with different levels and aspects of feminine liberation. Even when political efforts succeeded in guaranteeing women's civil rights, evidence reveals that individual women reserved

the right to construct their own meaningful experience of freedom and equality. NOW advocated the necessity of all women to determine the conditions of their own lives, while many women continued to seek and enjoy the protectiveness of deferred self-responsibility.

Writing again ten years after the inception of NOW, Friedan acknowledged the forces which were subverting the movement both from within and without (Friedan, 1976). Real changes began to occur in the American social structure resulting simultaneously in success and divisiveness.

In the first stage of the Women's Movement social institutions which fostered and maintained gender-inequalities were attacked. Along with changes in external structures a faction of the Movement insisted that continued participation in traditional marriage and family roles was counterproductive to the mission of the Movement.

By 1976, Friedan had pondered and published her synthesis of the Movement's progression. In The Second Stage she identified the American family as the new frontier where the next wave of battles in the war for equality needed to be fought. Even as the women prepared for this next line of attack on external barriers to equality, their efforts were sabotaged by an imploding awareness of deeply entrenched internal barriers.

Divisiveness erupted within the Movement; increased resistance was encountered outside of the Movement. As a group, women had much invested in the patriarchy. Some saw it as oppressive; others welcomed it as good fortune (Gerson, 1985). The changes upon which the Movement insisted threatened the very essence of established family

structure. The second stage of the Women's Movement became the sex role revolution, a disruptive effort resulting in polarization of the Movement. While a large segment of the Movement remained determined to secure equality for women, many activists defended their powerful, personal requirements for love and championed their investments in motherhood and family. These women began to understand the complexity of their equality needs. Feeling good as a person would not be sufficient; feeling good about being women became imperative, incorporating all of the facets that womanhood can embrace (Friedan, 1976).

Feminine Research

An invaluable outgrowth of the Women's Movement evolved in academic settings with the creation and development of departments of Women's Studies. Feminist research was created and conducted to augment traditional theories of human development (i.e., personality, psychosocial, moral, and career) through a focus on women's experiences. Up until this time researchers often assessed women according to male standards, rendering the implication that women were deficient.

The irreducible element (Nielsen, 1990) in feminist analysis is a focus on the unique experiences of women, observing women - rather than just men - in the spotlight as subject matter and creator of knowledge. Feminist researchers implemented research methodologies which highlighted the relational strengths of women, and the complexities and conflicts which they often encountered in integrating their internal psychological experience with external social realities (Enns, 1991).

The Women's Movement succeeded in building a foundation which allowed female researchers to begin to ask publicly the same questions they had been asking privately. Fonow & Cook (1991) spoke of the emancipatory possibilities of feminist research (for the researchers as well as the researched) which could provide women with an understanding of how their everyday worlds and struggles are generated by the larger social structure.

Feminist researchers (Fonow & Cook, 1991) criticized the traditional approach to social science which devalued women and then recorded this devaluation and its consequences without seeking alternative possibilities. Feminist research has a commitment to developing a social science which is able to change the political and personal experiences of women as well as describe them. Nielsen (1990) claimed that the strength of the feminist contribution to the postempirical philosophy of science is that it reveals the weaknesses of explanations produced by traditional social scientists while providing alternatives to those explanations.

Recently, feminist research has paid attention to women's experiences with work and several attempts have been offered to formulate a theory of women's career development (Astin, 1984; Farmer, 1985; Fassinger, 1985; Gottfredson, 1981; Hackett & Betz, 1981).

Recent Conceptualizations of Women's

Career Development

In 1980, Fitzgerald & Crites synthesized the explosion of articles dealing with women and work and organized their comments according to what has been learned about women's career development and what counseling professionals still need to know to work effectively with women. Fitzgerald & Crites recommended that practitioners who work with women receive, in addition to a comprehensive knowledge of traditional career development theories, in-depth preparation in the career development of women. They further recommended that counselors examine their own restrictive attitudes about women's roles and career options. During the five year period following their review several authors offered models of career development which recognized the importance of social forces in shaping women's choices.

Gottfredson: Circumscription and Compromise

In 1981 Gottfredson introduced a developmental theory of occupational aspirations which combines the trait and factor approach of Holland (1992) and the developmental emphasis of Super (1966). Her model described a progressive and often permanent circumscription of occupational preferences based upon the evolving self concepts of men and women. Gottfredson's model suggested four stages (emerging approximately between ages 3 and 14) and explained that during each stage occupational aspirations continue to develop and create the self-concept.

In the first stage (ages 3-6), young children explored the concepts of size and

power, and their future work visions were as likely to involve fantasy as a realistic profession. During Stage 2 (ages 6 - 8) children formulated rules about sex-roles, focusing on the most visible cues and activities. By Stage 2 girls and boys agreed on which sex should do various jobs. At this age girls did not complain that some desirable options were foreclosed; rather they appeared to actively support these gender stereotypes.

From approximately 9 to 13 children became oriented to class and social valuation. By the end of Stage 3 boys and girls have "...integrated diverse cues and formulated an understanding of the web of factors constituting social class position" (Gottfredson, 1981, p. 561). Gottfredson reported that girls' original aspirations were much higher than boys, but awareness of social class and family expectations played a part in compromising early aspirations.

Beginning around age 14, adolescents began to turn away from their concern with external similarities with others and focused more seriously on their own unique capabilities and personality traits. During the high school years and beyond, individuals were involved in a self-defining process, including vocationally. Gottfredson (1981) acknowledged that both boys and girls became increasingly concerned with marriage and family in high school. However, due to the process of circumscription and compromise, this same interest was expressed differently. Boys became good providers through the accumulation of money and prestige; girls were concerned with being good homemakers, finding acceptable working conditions and helping others.

Gottfredson (1996) has more recently explained that her theory of Circumscription (the progressive elimination of unacceptable alternatives) and Compromise (the process of relinquishing the most preferred alternatives for less compatible but more accessible ones) explains how youngsters' "pruning of choice" results in the same social inequalities which exist among their elders. She described three fundamental assumptions that her theory shares with most theories of vocational psychology: 1) career choice is a developmental process which begins in childhood; 2) occupational aspirations reflect people's efforts to implement their self-concepts; and 3) satisfaction with career choice depends on how well that choice fits self concept.

Gottfredson's (1981) theory supports some of the foundational hunches of the current study. Her stage approach offers utility in illuminating the process by which young girls embrace and reject vocational aspirations. It also takes into account an individual's social space: the zone of acceptable vocational alternatives within an individual's cognitive map which they believe are acceptable. It acknowledges that women often make compromises as they develop their vocational plans. Gottfredson's (1981) theory responds to recent criticism about a lack of attention to social forces by focusing on the most public aspects of self (gender, social class, intelligence). However, it fails to include the more private, personal elements (values, personality, plans for family). Future research may reveal how this deemphasis of the personal elements of self affects the theory's thoroughness in representing the career behavior of women.

While Gottfredson's theory provides a foundation for understanding some unique

aspects of women's career behavior, points of concern remain. First, Gottfredson's theory (1981, 1996) relies heavily upon cognitive processes and ties self concept to cognitions. The theory assumed that cognitive maps develop as the child matures and eventually replicate those of adults. Although Gottfredson's (1981) concept of conscription may provide a structure which contains the process of eliminating vocational options, for men as well as for women, there is no explanation in the theory of the ways in which emotional and relational realms may influence women's (and men's) career choice. A deeper understanding is needed of the meaning the women place on their rejected choices and the options they eventually choose.

Second, although her theory of Circumscription and Compromise is presented as a developmental theory it stops with Stage Four: Orientation to the Internal, Unique Self (Ages Fourteen and Above). Further, this developmental process is assumed to be irreversible: Circumscription Principle Four: Progressive, Irreversible Elimination. Exploration beyond the adolescent years may uncover evidence of a developmental process with the potential to reverse some of the restriction and elimination of these early stages. While women may be included in those who circumscribe options before they fully understand them, an examination of their lives may provide evidence of a continually expanding developmental process which allows them to reintroduce formerly eliminated options.

Social space and sex-role are both linked to self-concept in Gottfredson's theory. The third concern is similar to that raised by Perun & Bielby (1981) in their review of

Super (1966) and that raised by Gilligan (1982) in her comments about the work of Erikson (1968). There is evidence to suggest that a young female's self-concept does not develop in the same way that a young male's develops.

The fourth concern may be a combination of the previous three. As career aspirations develop in women who have (or anticipate) relational commitments how do they move through this process of circumscription and compromise? Gottfredson's theory assumes that the reality of relational commitments is already subsumed into her concepts, and/or that vocational development is separate from making relational commitments. Discussion about the most prestigious, or optimal, job may be once removed from women who seek rewarding work but who also want their relationships to hold an important place in their daily lives. Could a job with less prestige still be considered "optimal" if it satisfies a woman's needs to have a fulfilling job that is compatible with her marriage and family plans? Despite the equality issue, at some developmental stages women may willingly improvise (Bateson, 1990), rather than compromise, and believe that they are gaining something important rather than being denied something important.

Gottfredson (1996) applied the tenets of her theory to a career counseling client named Joan who she described as "prone to depression." "...[she] coped with chronic anxiety by withdrawing..." from its source; desired solitude and independence; and "...sought refuge with boyfriends and family who, in urging her to take certain directions in her life, presumably relieved her of the anxiety of having to make her own decisions

...,” although currently she seems to have “...no close personal ties or support system.” Client information also revealed Joan’s pattern of terminating counseling services when she felt pushed by a counselor (p. 223-224). Although Gottfredson’s suggested interventions with this client included a discussion of interest type, prestige level, jobs below her level of skill, and Joan’s results on several career inventories, there is no discussion about the impact which Joan’s relational world may have upon her career choices and satisfaction.

Although Gottfredson’s theory contains aspects which account for women’s vocational behavior, her theory does not emphasize variations in vocational behavior which result from relational influences. Gottfredson’s decision to deemphasize the more private aspects of self, which included plans for family, is likely to render this theory less applicable to individuals who have responsibilities to family which are often women. Although social forces are discussed in Gottfredson’s theory, this current study is based upon the belief that tacit, internal barriers (which may be intensified due to social forces) exist and although a woman may have difficulty articulating what these are they are at work influencing the decisions she will make about combining work and relationships.

Hackett & Betz: Self-efficacy Approach

Based upon Bandura’s (1977a) self-efficacy theory, Hackett & Betz (1981) presented an approach to the conceptualization and facilitation of women’s career development. Their theory was an attempt to elucidate the specific mechanisms which transform societal beliefs and expectations into women’s vocational behavior. Their

investigation addressed two valuable objectives: 1) an increased understanding of women's career development; and 2) conceptualization which would foster further empirical studies and lead to interventions which increased women's status and potential for achievement in the labor market.

Hackett & Betz (1981) structured their approach around cognitive processes, building on the work of Bandura (1977a). They explained that self-efficacy expectations were related to the concept of subjective probability of success. Low self-efficacy expectations are seen as internal barriers which reduce the probability that an individual will attempt to perform a task, in spite of his/her understanding that their performance would lead to a desired outcome. Hackett & Betz further expand upon the four sources of information related to the development of self-efficacy (successful performance, vicarious learning, emotional arousal, and verbal persuasion), and explain how female socialization may influence the acquisition of each type of information, and postulate the effects of these influences.

Hackett & Betz's (1981) model identified the socialization process as the major force in the under-development of women's self-efficacy. Their emphasis upon cognitive processes constructs a theory which translates easily to interventions designed to increase women's experiences of the four sources of self-efficacy information. However, it omits women's emotional and relational worlds. A self-efficacy approach focuses on cognitive process, a realm of human personality which has traditionally been defined as masculine. While there is utility in understanding how these cognitive processes perpetuate barriers

to women's career exploration, more traditional feminine realms are overlooked. For instance, what effect does a woman's emotional realm have upon her career decision making process? How do her relationships influence the decisions that she makes?

Low self-efficacy is not the only reason why a person would not attempt to perform a certain task. A woman who experienced herself as very capable and gifted in the field of finance and accounting may eliminate such a career area due to her internal beliefs about what types of jobs she should consider. Without tacit knowing, her reasons may include the threat that such a choice would mean to her relationships. She may have received strong messages from her father about the types of jobs that wives should hold. She may also be in a romantic relationship with, or married to, a man who discourages her from pursuing a career in a field where she possesses talent. Low self-efficacy undoubtedly accounts for women's decisions to eliminate certain vocational goals. Subtle beliefs about women's responsibilities to their relationships may be at the heart of their decisions in spite of high self-efficacy. The mechanism of self efficacy provides one approach to increasing women's pursuit of fulfilling work, but it overlooks other aspects of women's experiences which also deserve investigation.

Astin: Sociopsychological Model

Astin (1984) proposed a sociopsychological model of career choice and work behavior which emphasized personal characteristics, social forces, and the interaction of the two. Her theory incorporated several earlier formulations: 1) Roe's (1956) concentration on needs and 2) the concept of self-efficacy which Bandura (1977a)

introduced in his social learning theory and was more recently applied to the career development of women by Hackett & Betz (1981).

Astin's model offers three significant contributions. First, the model employed the construct "structure of opportunity" as a way of identifying the major impact that social forces play in shaping women's occupational expectations. Second, Astin proposed that only one theory of work motivation is required to explain gender differences as long as differences in early socialization experiences and structural opportunities are acknowledged. Third, the model's structure of opportunity construct provides a way to understand not only individual changes, but generational changes in the behavior of groups.

Astin's model has met with criticism (Gilbert 1984; Harmon, 1984; Fitzgerald & Betz, 1984) due to: 1) the absence of empirical data and easily operationalized variables, and, 2) consideration of the relationship and tension which exists between women's various roles. Astin explicated a model to explain gender differences and recent changes in the career aspirations and occupational behavior of women. Her model has proven to have heuristic value by providing a structure for exploration and improvement.

Astin focused on an on-going sequence of socialization, and the changing social opportunities available to women. This certainly represented a more thorough consideration of the factors which effect women as they make decisions about work. However, Astin's model does not consider the internal barriers with which women contend.

Fassinger: Causal Model

Fassinger (1985) recognized the necessity of adding influential (independent or predictor) variables to the study of women's career development which are not usually relevant to the study of men's career development. While research in the area of women's career development has included a great number of variables Fassinger criticized much of this research for the lack of unifying theory capable of explaining the ways in which these multiple factors interact. She promoted the formulation of testable models of women's career development and the use of multivariate methodology. Fassinger (1985) analyzed Betz & Fitzgerald's (1983) structural model with data collected from 309 female college juniors and seniors, a sample representing strong tendencies toward career/family lifestyle integration.

Fassinger's inclusion of 29 variables resulted in a compromise of psychometric properties. Attempting to minimize the total number of items, some variables which can be measured with reliable instruments were reduced to single questions and other existing measures with acceptable psychometric properties were reduced to shorter forms utilizing only the items which the researcher deemed most relevant to the dimension being measured.

Fassinger's methodology produced a final model which was a radical departure from the model initially proposed, probably due to important limitations in the study. Results suggested that high-ability feminist women who are achievement oriented appear to be strongly career oriented and quite strongly family oriented. Although Fassinger

acknowledged that a large body of previous literature supports the importance of the Family Orientation construct in women's career development she suggested that the literature may be outdated or that poor measures in her study were rendering an important variable unimportant in her model. Two other important variables, Career Salience and Attitudes toward Women's Roles, were assumed to retain little discriminative power in a sample which was highly career salient.

Fassinger (1981) reported that Feminist Orientation unexpectedly emerged as a key predictor variable, suggesting its renewed importance in women's career development. However, the measure of Feminist Orientation was a simple question requiring the participants to indicate on a four point scale their preference for use of the feminist label.

Fassinger identified the preference for both career and family lifestyle plans as support for a "new cultural imperative" as an important outcome of the study. Despite her call for methodological approaches capable of integrating multiple factors, both the measures and the sample created serious limitations.

Fassinger discussed the emerging importance of "realism of choice," a term which described college women's preference for both career and family. She recognized the importance of examining the context of women's career choices. While her complicated statistical procedures produced a general model of the sample's preference for a lifestyle which integrates career and family, the limitations necessitate cautious interpretations. An alternative approach to exploring the context of women's career choices is to enter

into a dialogue with these college women and ask for their personal accounts. While the small sample size involved in such a qualitative approach also limits generalizability, the information rendered is full and rich. These results can complement the model of vocational behavior which emerges from quantitative approaches.

Farmer: Career and Achievement Motivation

Farmer (1985) also criticized previous work in the field of career development for being incomplete and too narrowly focused and presented a multidimensional design which utilized 23 measures. Farmer has also drawn upon the work of Bandura (1978) and has incorporated three sets of interacting variables (background, self-concept, and environment) on three motivational dimensions (aspiration, mastery, and career commitment). Farmer's causal design identified direct and indirect effects on each of the three dimensions, which can generate insight and interventions. The most significant findings of Farmer's study emphasized the powerful role which the changing environment had on career and achievement motivation, a perspective which Farmer claimed was missing in the dominant career models.

Both Farmer (1985) and Fassinger (1985) built their research designs with large numbers of variables which had been used in previous investigations. Fassinger recognized the necessity of including additional variables in studies which included women, but the variables of choice have often been those which were originally identified in relation to male career behavior. The inclusion of multiple factors is believed to present a model which explains a greater percentage of the variance in

women's behaviors. These studies rely on preexisting factors.

A possibility exists that some of the variety in the career behavior of women is accounted for by factors which have not yet been identified. Women's own accounts of their experiences of dealing with the changing environment may suggest variables not yet recognized. These accounts may provide greater insight into the problems which women face, and then lead to more accurate theories and intervention models.

The review thus far has included traditional theories of career development, changing trends in women's work patterns, discussion of some effects of the Women's Movement, and innovations in research methodologies used to investigate complicated areas of human behavior. The final section of this literature review will introduce an area of recent exploration outside of the domain of traditional career development theories which holds promise as a source of greater understanding of women's career behavior.

Women's Relational Worlds

Chodorow (1978) investigated the nearly universal differences in masculine and feminine personalities and roles which are reproduced in each generation. Her findings suggested that personality differences are not strongly related to anatomy. Personality differences between male and female children are created through their different ways of relating to their mothers, who are most often responsible for early child care. Gender identity formation progresses differently due to the fact that boys are cared for by their opposite-sex parent while girls are cared for by their same-sex parent.

Girls experience themselves as they experience their mothers, fusing the

experience of attachment and creating permeable boundaries. Boys come to experience themselves as different from their mothers and their development emphasizes separation, individuation, and firmer ego boundaries. Chodorow accentuated the observation that girls do not develop with weaker ego boundaries; they do develop a greater capacity for empathy, and a bias for experiencing another's needs as their own.

In 1982 Carol Gilligan published her work on women's moral development. Utilizing many of Chodorow's conclusions Gilligan challenged some traditional psychological theories and focused greater attention on the experiences of women. Expanding Chodorow's (1978) work, Gilligan discussed the difficulties which women encounter as a result of their early socialization.

Since masculinity is defined through separation while femininity is defined through attachment, male gender identity is threatened by intimacy while female gender identity is threatened by separation. Thus males tend to have difficulty with relationships while females tend to have problems with individuation (p. 8).

Gilligan's (1982) early studies extended the work of Lawrence Kohlberg (1973) by explaining women's tendencies to solve moral dilemmas from a perspective of care and by proposing a model of women's moral development. During the first stage, women were oriented to individual survival and self interest. A first transition caused them to see this perspective as selfish, and they arrived at a second stage where morality was seen as responsibility to others. During another transition women recognized the legitimacy of their own concerns, and at stage three they embraced a morality of non-violence,

balancing self-nurture with care for others.

Gilligan (1982) identified women's dominant tendency to view moral problems from a perspective of care as a legitimate alternative from the perspective of justice which Kohlberg had found to be dominant for men. She reframed women's tendency to consider the needs of others when making decisions as a demonstration of feminine strength. Her work has challenged earlier theories of development which have championed traditional masculine qualities as the qualities most indicative of successful adult development.

Levinson (1996) discussed the concept of gender splitting, which involves a rigid division between male and female. "The splitting operates at many levels: culture, social institutions, everyday social life, the individual psyche. It creates antithetical divisions between women and men...it also creates inequalities that limit the adult development of women as well as men (p. 38)."

In more recent work Gilligan and her colleagues (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, Lyons, & Hanmer, 1990; Gilligan, et al., 1988) have continued to explore gender differences with regards to relational modes. Stern (1990) explored the paradox of female adolescence: the importance of strong relationships does not abate while developmentally they are attending to the experience of separation. Her participants did not dichotomize separation and connection but spoke of independence which did not require a renouncement of interpersonal attachments. Separation, for these young women, was " ...not pitted against connection but involves a redefined ability to respond

to (and consequently to connect with) the other (p. 85).” Independence in this feminine perspective involved a renegotiation and reframing of relationships from an enlightened perspective of considering others. If female adolescent development proceeds along this path of solidifying connections at the same time that one is separating from others it may offer some guidelines in understanding how women of this same age approach decisions about work and careers.

Brown & Gilligan (1992) interviewed girls between the ages of 7 and 18. These interviews suggested that connection with others is a central component in women’s development and that psychological crises in women’s lives stem from disconnections. These researchers reported a developmental sequence of silencing. The youngest girls in their sample appeared direct and forthright, and genuine in their relationships. However, as girls moved into adolescence the silencing process occurred as young women concluded that they needed to take themselves out of relationship with themselves in order to preserve their connections and relationships with others.

Theoretically, the authors discussed female adolescence as a relational impasse, a time of compromise between women strongly knowing what they know and solidifying their connection in relationships. Although Gottfredson (1996) does not focus on the relational components of career aspirations, she does build her developmental theory on the existence of compromise. While these theories exist in areas which have previously been seen as separate, this study suggests that these two bodies of knowledge (women’s career development theories and women’s relational theories) may complement and

overlap.

Contrasted with an investigation of adolescent feminine development, Bateson (1990) examined the lives of five mature women in order to discover how women improvise to combine familiar and unfamiliar components to compose their lives. While undeniable societal changes have affected men and women during the past several decades, Bateson suggested that it is “.no longer possible to follow the paths of previous generations...especially true for women, whose whole lives no longer need be dominated by the rhythms of procreation and the dependencies that these created (p. 2).” The women who Bateson interviewed had all participated in fulfilling careers. Although they did not resemble the old stereotype of female passivity the energy of their lives was responsive rather than purposive. For them, caretaking and homemaking are not alternatives to success and productivity in the male professional or business world; they are styles of action in that world based on the recognition that ideas and organizations and imaginative visions also require fostering .

Enns (1991) reviewed five theories of identity which emphasized the relational capacities of women and expanded mainstream theories by reporting women's experiences in their own terms. Enns included a review of Barnett and Baruch's (1987) findings which reported women's roles as paid employees as strong sources of identity and self-esteem. Relational qualities and achievement in education and/or work appear to be two important aspects of women's lives which result in conflict.

Forrest and Mikolaitis (1986) recognized a critical need for a more

comprehensive theory of women's career development and suggested that the complex relational components of identity presented by Chodorow and Gilligan, while often only tacitly understood by women, may provide a conceptualization from which to examine the interaction between the vocational decisions and the relational responsibilities of the individual. These authors also suggested that career counseling, in addition to exploring aptitudes and interests, required an assessment of the client's understanding and experience of the relational component of her identity and how it affects her vocational decision-making process.

New ways of understanding women's career behaviors are possible by looking at recent work on women's relational worlds. The relational investigations introduced here consider women's compromises and improvisations as components of feminine strength which emerge at different periods in feminine development. They suggest that development for women does not take place through the step-wise process of separation and individuation on which traditional theories of development (Erikson, 1959; Super, 1953) are built. This growing body of knowledge proposes that women's development is closely tied to the existence and course of their relationships, and that feminine strengths - not deficits - render women's development different from, but not inferior to, men's development. If women's career choices are contingent upon their beliefs about relationships then career theories will be enhanced by this new understanding of women's relational worlds.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

Design

The methodology selected for this study was chosen to explore the elusive, internal process, or set of beliefs which may exist and affect women's career choices. An understanding of this process, or set of beliefs, has not previously been explored and is not sufficiently accessible through any available instrument. Therefore a methodological approach is needed which fosters a exploration of a broad area: the components (expectations, beliefs, concepts, rules, roles) which women consider as they approach and implement decisions which involve both relationships and work.

Strauss & Corbin (1990) described grounded theory as one which is inductively derived from the phenomenon it represents. To date, research in the fields of career development and women's career development has been based upon traditional, inductive methods of empirical inquiry. Despite continued concerns about the relevance of current theories of women's career development there is little evidence of attempts to ground this theory with feminist methodologies.

Empirical, qualitative interview methods have previously been selected to obtain exploratory, subjective data related to complex areas of human experience (i.e., Belenky et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Hancock, 1985; Hochschild, 1989; Levinson, 1977; Perry, 1970; Rubin 1976, 1983). In the career area, Rubin (1976) elucidated the stark realities of working class individuals who had few available options for improving their experience of life. In 1989, Hochschild studied the resolutions devised by dual-career

couples for balancing work/family issues by conducting in-depth interviews with couples over a period of eight years.

Interviewing as a research method engages participants actively in the process and provides an opportunity for them to share their stories. Story telling involves a process of reflection, selecting details, giving order and making sense: a meaning-making experience (Seidman, 1991). Levinson (1996) explained that with quantitative methods we may learn much about structure but little about meaning. Interviewing results in more textured accounts of the meaning embedded in individuals' stories.

Studies immersed in the phenomenological perspectives of participants provide an alternative inquiry style for the social sciences and offer counseling practitioners and researchers a relevant approach to explore their questions about clients (Borders & Larrabee, 1993). The qualitative nature of these research designs have been recognized (Nielsen, 1990; Seidman, 1991) for their ability to allow the researchers to maintain an inductive rather than a strong hypothetical approach, yielding to the expertise of the informants. Qualitative approaches have been valued for their ability to procure rich, complex descriptions of elusive aspects of human nature, rather than what (sometimes falsely) appears to be precise, operationalized results to more narrow questions (Hanna & Shank, 1995).

Structured, in-depth interviews were chosen for their ability to reconstruct the context of women's experiences inclusive of their own points of view, or subjective understanding (Fonow & Cook, 1991; Levinson, 1966; Nielson, 1990; Seidman, 1991;

Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Investigating women's expectations and experiences contextually allows the researcher to begin to understand the meaning of the participants' behaviors. Use of this interview format allowed the researcher to: 1) explore a void which exists in current theories of women's career development; 2) collect information which may result in a more accurate understanding of women's experiences; and 3) point the way to further research; which may result in 4) more accurate theory-building.

Situating the Study

This section will provide the reader with some specific information which will help to situate the participants within the university, the city and the region of the country. While specific information facilitates a vital understanding of the context of the subjects' lives, pseudonyms will be employed to disguise and protect the true identities of the participants. The interviews were conducted on the campus of a mid-sized (18,000 students) state university in the central region of the United States. The university is located in a mid-sized city with a population of approximately 35,000.

Participants

Demographics

Thirty participants volunteered to participate in this study. Information about the study was made available to students via copies of the printed Introduction Letter (Appendix A) which were brought to students' attention in a variety of ways (available in several campus counseling agencies and classrooms, and posted across campus in several buildings).

Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 55 with a mean age of 27; a median age of 23.5; and a modal age of 20. Participants were primarily pursuing undergraduate degrees although several were in graduate programs. One participant was involved in a post-doctoral internship. Participants represented a broad and diverse range of degree programs which included science, business, and education.

Several ethnic groups were represented. Twenty-two participants described themselves as Caucasian; two as Caucasian/Native American; one as Native American; three as Afro-American; and three provided no response to this question. Fourteen participants indicated that their permanent address was in the same city as the university; thirteen named other cities within the same state; and three were from other states.

Marital & Family Status

Of the thirty participants 16 were single and had never been married; seven of these identified themselves as being in committed relationships. Two participants were engaged, 8 were married, and 4 were previously married but were currently divorced and single-again. Several of the women in the divorced category identified their marital status as "single" rather than "divorced" on the Demographic Data Form.

Seven participants were mothers: four had only one child; two had two children; one had three children. Of the remaining 23 women 5 had not decided whether they wanted to have children and two had decided that they never wanted to have children (Two of the women who had not borne children had been sterilized by choice.)

Career Counseling Information

Seventeen participants reported that they had never received any career counseling. Nine of these also stated that they had no expectations for career counseling. The remaining eight women described the following summarized goals/expectations for career counseling :1) to change their indecision to an “exact” direction; 2) to learn about opportunities within their chosen field and similar alternatives; 3) to be “convinced” that their choice is right; and 4) to learn to be confident and successful.

Thirteen women had received career counseling which primarily consisted of completing standardized career instruments and receiving results. One student spent a day with a professional in her chosen field. One received transition counseling which involved resume writing, and another received vocational rehabilitation services.

Procedure

Once prospective participants received information about the study, it was their responsibility to call the researcher to schedule an interview. All interviews were conducted in the researcher’s campus office in the counseling center. Upon arriving they were given a clip board and asked to read, sign and respond to three documents: Consent Form (Appendix B), Demographic Data Form (Appendix C), and Family Career Background (Appendix D)..

This consent included a request to re-contact the participant on a semi-annual basis for the purpose of maintaining an updated mailing address. Approximately five years following the original interviews the researcher may contact the participants and

ask if they are willing to respond to a similar protocol.

Before taping began participants were given an opportunity to ask questions about the consent form and the study. Then they were provided with the following statements.

Although this interview is taking place in the counseling center and you may be a counseling client, the interview which will occur during the next approximately 45 minutes will not be counseling. Questions are broad and appear painless.

However, any time you are asked to think back over your past, emotions may be triggered. Before we start I want to assure you that you are in complete control of the continuation of this interview. If you want to stop, or choose not to answer a question simple say so. Your decision not to respond will not: 1) prevent me from completing my research, 2) prevent you from receiving the \$10 incentive (and the course credit, where applicable), or 3) interfere with any additional counseling services.

The audio taping machine was turned on and the researcher began the interview. Questions were not always asked in the order presented on the protocol form (see Appendix E) but attempted to follow a cohesive sequence, influenced by the content of each woman's responses. Occasionally, additional questions which are not listed on the protocol form were included as probes in order to more fully explore each question area. Interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes.

Instrument

An interview protocol (Appendix E) was developed to help the researcher explore the college women's thoughts, beliefs, and feelings about how a career fits into their lives. The questions were framed to elicit information about the messages that the participants heard throughout their lives about women and work; the model(s) of women and work to which they had been exposed; the factors which are important to them in considering an academic program/actual position; their personal feelings and thoughts about the role that work/career will play in their own lives; and their expectations for the integration of their responsibilities to their relationships and their responsibilities to their work/career.

These questions which were designed to elicit the participants' personal perspectives on career considerations were originally derived from several sources: 1) constructed by the researcher; 2) modified by the panel of experts; 3) generated during the actual study (Question 8: *What are the important things that you consider when making your career plans?*, and Question 10: *Is there anything else that you would like to add about women and work?*)

Analysis

The researcher kept on-going analytical memos in a journal throughout the course of the interview and analysis process to document the emergence of ideas and questions related to the analysis of the women's responses. The interviews were transcribed and printed. As Seidman (1991) cautioned, no pre-imposed categories were established;

rather the researcher attempted to discover within the interviews a natural structure from which to report the content. Spradley (1979) maintained that most often internal structure is only tacitly known to the informants; therefore, the objective of the research process was to enter into a dialectical process (Seidman, 1991) through which the interviewer responds to what the participants have said and relies upon their own skills (intuition, listening, experience) to discover what the participants tacitly understand and then to maintain the integrity of the participants' stories as the results are reported.

Information obtained with the Demographic Data Form and the Family Career Background, were compiled and summarized (see "Participants" earlier in Chapter III). Responses to Questions 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, and 9 were summarized and reported in the first sections of Chapter IV. Responses to Question 10 are reported at the end of Chapter IV.

Each participants' responses to Questions 4, 4a, 4b1, 4b2, 5, and 6 were mounted separately on 8 x 5 cards to assure ease while sorting. Initially, all participants' responses were sorted by questions. Responses to Question 4a (*How do you see your work and your relationships fitting together in your life?*) were read and sorted according to similar responses. Their responses were separated into several broad categories which related to their expectations/experiences about integrating work and relationships. The responses to the set of questions related to family influences (4b1, 4b2, 5, and 6) were examined according to 6 themes which had emerged during the analysis phase and were developed through the researcher's analytical memos.

A caution to qualitative researchers (Nielsen, 1990) is to remain both skeptical

and flexible. It is wise to postpone any rigid or premature conclusions. Seidman (1991) acknowledged a “dark side” to the qualitative process where the researcher must deal with ambiguities within the data and chose from alternative ways to report them.

Gradually, the descriptive categories identified in the examination of responses to Question 4a were established as a basic framework and also used as a way to organize the responses to the family influence set of questions (4b1 - 6). After proceeding to read and sort these responses it became apparent that most of the additional information could be summarized and understood as characteristics and dimensions which were common among participants within these categories.

Chapter IV: Results

Early Social and Developmental Influences

Career Ideas

As the interviews began participants were encouraged to review the career ideas they had held throughout their lives. This provided them with an opportunity to reconnect with earlier aspects of their career choice process. The research interviews began with the following question: *Think backwards and tell me the first idea you can remember about what you wanted to be when you grew up. Then trace a progression from your first idea to the present.*

As children, eleven of the women hoped to grow up to be teachers. The second most frequently mentioned aspiration ($n = 4$) was to become a veterinarian. Two women wanted to become doctors, two wanted to be nurses, and two wanted to be hairdressers. Several others selected traditional female roles: a housewife, a mom, and a ballet dancer. Others' career dreams began with very non-traditional aspirations: archeologist, astronaut, contractor (like daddy), missionary, Thunderbird pilot, and President of the United States.

At the time the interviews were conducted four of the participants had followed through on their plans to be teachers. Three were currently aspiring to be doctors and two others were working on a degree in a health-related field. Three women were in business, two were in law, three wanted a career in one of the performing arts and two were working on degrees in journalism and creative writing. While the majority of the

participants were undergraduates, several of the women were in graduate programs; one had earned her Ph.D. and was working on a post-doctoral internship.

To learn more about the forces which had affected the participants career ideas four of the other questions asked during the interview were designed to elicit information about encouragers and discouragers to career plans, role models, important things to consider when developing career plans and current career concerns. Table 1 introduces these questions and presents the main response themes.

Table 1.

Questions about Influences on the Development of Career Plans and Response Themes

Question 1. What experiences have helped in the development of your career plans?

Themes:

Receiving support from others, most often family.

Positive tone: validating the participant's skills.

Negative tone: pressure and insistence.

Following the example of others close to them.

Positive tone: Wanting to be like these others.

Negative tone: Wanting to be nothing like these others.

Opportunities to volunteer and experience a work setting.

High School Career resources.

Self reliance and determination.

Question 2. What experiences have been barriers to the development of your career plans?

Themes:

Low self-esteem, lack of confidence, and pressure to succeed.

Difficulties with various aspects of college experience.

Running up against "the good ole boy system."

Family responsibilities and obligations.

(table continues)

Lack of money.

Question 3 Could you name or two of your strongest role models and tell what it was about those individuals that influenced you?

Themes:

Actively provided recognition, support, attention and encouragement (often caregivers).

Passively provided an example of admirable qualities (not necessarily an acquaintance).

Question 4 What things were important for you to consider when making your career plans?

Themes:

Wanting to do enjoyable work that would make them happy.

Be good at what they do and provide a service to others.

Money; the ability to provide for their families.

Assurance that careers would not interfere with their ability to care ofr family.

Availability and security.

Creativity and flexibility.

Opportunities to travel.

Autonomy.

(table continues)

Question 5 Do you have any career concerns currently?

Themes:

Availability of good jobs following graduation.

Being “good enough.”

Financial concerns.

Choosing a career that is “right” and one that you will not tire of.

Fiancé will understand the importance of woman’s career.

Past drug use will not get in the way.

Being passed over due to being a woman.

Being personally threatened due to the controversial nature of the work.

Encouragers

Two strong trends emerged in the types of encouragement the participants described. First, encouragement from others, especially family, was identified as a primary force in the development of career plans. This encouragement was sometimes positive, as when others validated skills which they believed the participant possessed. However, in some cases this encouragement tended towards pressure and insistence. Second, participants were strongly influenced to choose vocational positions which were held by others close to them (i.e., hairdresser, like grandmother; teacher, like mom; contractor, like dad). Opportunities to volunteer and personally experience a work environment often encouraged these young women to set similar goals for themselves.

Several of the participants worked in family-owned day care centers which helped solidify their desire to work with young children. Another woman claimed that her opportunity to volunteer in a nature center when she was a teenager played an encouraging role in her decision to become a veterinarian. Only two mentioned career resources available within their schools which provided encouragement.

Several participants also described encouragement which came in the form of negative role models, when someone close to the participant made life choices which they did not want to follow. For instance, one participant said that her mother's lifestyle, which contained alcohol and prostitution, served as a motivator to get a degree which would allow her to have a better life with her own family.

Finally, several women stated that they had received little or no encouragement in their childhood and young adulthood and that progress towards their career goals was dependent upon self reliance and determination. Two women acknowledged financial resources as being helpful in the development of their career plans.

Discouragers

The most frequently mentioned responses fit into three main themes which represented barriers to the development of career plans. First, participants described their low self esteem, lack of confidence, and sometimes pressure to succeed as primary obstacles. Closely related in some cases were mental health issues including eating disorders, drugs, depression anxiety and abusive relationships.

Second, difficulties with various aspects of their college experience hindered

career plans. This ran a gamut of factors: low college entrance exams and GPAs, poor study skills, bad advisement, and pressure to keep scholarships. Women felt discouraged from pursuing careers in certain areas due to the length of schooling required and their expectations of difficult course work, especially in science.

The third discouragement theme was the lack of money. In addition to these frequently mentioned discouragers the following discouragers were mentioned less frequently and did not seem to be easily described by a theme: “the good ole boy system” which was mentioned more than once for women in science; being a woman, and family responsibilities and obligations.

Role Models

No definition for role model was provided. The participants’ responses fell into several categories. One group of role models could be distinguished by the active encouragement that they provided to the participants. These role models’ interactions involved giving recognition, support, and attention and helping to create an experience of being accepted and believed in. One participant who had described a very turbulent childhood filled with parental conflict and abuse identified her next door neighbor as an important role model. In describing her own family this participant believed that nobody had encouraged her; however, this neighbor’s influence remained strong since the participant’s childhood because she had given her a typewriter and told her that she could do anything.

Another group of role models were individuals who represented something

excellent, something the participants said they could “look up to.” Role models in this category were not necessarily as close to the participants as those in the first group. These role models provided an example after which participants could model themselves, a clear example of admirable qualities in action. A role model in this category had been the vice principal in the participant’s high school. She was a black woman who had grown up in the inner city and had achieved a successful status in the white educational community. The participant elaborated on the reason this woman’s example stuck with her: “She just carried herself with the idea that I can do anything, not in spite of the fact that I’m a woman but because I am.”

Role models were most predominantly family members, or others with close relationships. Participants most frequently identified their parents as positive role models. Mothers ($n = 12$) were selected almost twice as frequently as fathers ($N = 7$). Mothers’ influences included being strong, and demonstrating an ability to be caring and family-oriented while also being hard-workers, go-getters, and successful in pursuing their goals and dreams outside of their homes. Grandparents were the next most frequent choice. Other family members identified were husbands, sisters, aunts, and uncles. Participants also selected Christ, a babysitter, teachers and a previous boyfriend as important role models. Several role models who were more removed were identified (i.e., a church member, a counselor, college professors, authors, and one political woman.)

In three instances participants described negative role models, “...a perfect

example of how not to live your life.” Two of these were also mothers, while the third was a teacher-coach. In three other cases participants stated that they knew very few adults whom they admired.

In several cases gender was seriously considered in the participant’s selection process. One young woman explained that “...she has this thing about the whole male/female thing.” In her experience males have proven more dependable and trustworthy than females. Although her parents and grandparents shared a devastating bankruptcy ordeal, she believed that it “...was worse for males” and therefore saw them as more important role models.

Others were intentional in their selection of female role models. One first mentioned her father, but then quickly verbalized that she would like her role models to be two females. Another participant mentioned her father first, and then went down a checklist of female family members in search of a female role model because it was important that there not be an absence of women. When she was unable to identify a female role model from her family she created a profile for an ideal female role model:

She’d be able to communicate, to listen. She would be able to love. She’d be able to see value in herself and she would be able to express it on the job and at home. She wouldn’t have to be able to be a super mother or worker, a super anything, but feel some fulfillment in what she was trying to accomplish.

Overall, the participants chose role models who had helped them experience a sense of self-worth and/or who provided a strong example to follow. Role models were

almost exclusively family members or individuals who participated in their lives in some caring role. Only in a few cases were role models selected from outside of this caregiving realm. In searching for information about how women make decisions about combining their relational and work roles it appears that these participants most often selected role models who either represented the relational aspects of being an adult woman, or those who provided an example of succeeding in finding a balance between work and relationships. Very few role models were primarily selected for their ability to provide a primary example of succeeding in the work realm.

Career Considerations and Concerns

Important Considerations

Theorists (Ginzberg, et al, 1951; Gottfredson 1981) have discussed compromises which individuals make as they formulate their vocational plans. These compromises constrict the range of career options available to the individual. The most central and practically universal theme mentioned in the participants' responses was a desire to do enjoyable work that would make them happy, work they could imagine doing for twenty years. Closely related to this theme was the desire to be good at what they did, and to provide a service to others. Another consideration mentioned by one third of the participants was money, which often included the ability to provide for their families. A related theme represented the participants' intentions to choose careers that were family- and relationship-oriented and low stress, allowing them to emphasize the importance of caring for their families. Jobs which were available and secure, and jobs which

welcomed creativity and flexibility were frequently mentioned. Other important considerations in choosing jobs which were mentioned by one participant each were: 1) opportunities to travel, 2) jobs that were not boring; and 3) autonomy.

Career Concerns

The most frequently mentioned concern involved basic fears that by the time they were trained there would not be good jobs left. Related to this was awareness of their own lack of confidence and concerns of whether they were “good enough.” to graduate, to be hired, to be accepted into graduate programs/medical schools, to please important others, and to reach their goals. One creative writing student acknowledged her fears of eventually developing writer’s block; another student majoring in broadcasting shared her fear that her personality was changing and she was losing her flamboyance.

Several women expressed financial concerns: 1) living on their expected incomes; 2) finding a job with full employee benefits; 3) college loans coming due; and 4) having the capital to launch themselves into their chosen fields (i.e., wanting to own their own business.)

Several women described their fears of eventually hating their current career choice and wondering if it was “the right one.” This theme is consistent with expectations that career counseling will help them to discern if their career choice is the “right” one and their important considerations that they choose a career that they will enjoy across the span of their careers. Other participants mentioned the following fears: 1) that her fiance won’t understand the importance of her career; 2) that past drug use

will get in her way; 3) that she will be passed over in order to hire a male; and 4) that she may be personally threatened due to the controversial nature of her work.

Work and Relationships

The fundamental purpose of this study is an exploration of the beliefs and expectations that women hold about two very important aspects of their lives: work and relationships. Although it is common to hear women speak of either of these topics separately, a unique feature of this study is to listen to what women say about both of these important aspects of their lives within the same context. The following section introduces a model from which these two aspects of the participants' lives can be considered simultaneously. This topic was introduced to the participants by the following interview questions: *How do you see these two roles fitting together in your life?*

Continuum of Beliefs about Balancing Work and Relationships

To organize participants' responses to questions which asked what they thought about integrating their work with their relationships a conceptual framework is introduced. Participants are described according to two different conditions in their lives: 1) their relational status, and 2) their reported emphasis along the work/relationship continuum.

Ginsberg (1966) organized women's vocational lifestyles into three discrete categories. The first category was Traditional and it referred to women who oriented towards homemaking. The second category identified the Transitional woman who was employed but placed primary importance upon her family. Finally, the Career-oriented

woman prioritized career development over family.

Ginsberg's model, with several important modifications and additions, provides a continuum capable of describing the current sample. While the Traditional category was originally included, not one of the thirty participants in this study revealed an emphasis on the traditional mother/homemaker role. Therefore, this category will be eliminated from the current discussion of results, but may be a necessary inclusion when describing other (i.e., non-college) samples. For example, Levinson (1996) interviewed 45 women believed to represent a cross section of the general population to learn more about the seasons and stages of their lives and reported on the durability of the traditional pattern despite women's increasing occupational involvement.

Relationships-Over-Work. The first category, Relationship-Over-Work (R/W, N = 8), goes beyond a traditional focus on homemaking but does not reach the point where women are attempting to balance work and relationships. The women who meet the description of this category explained that they want to work but do not want their jobs to compete with or overshadow family responsibilities. One R/W woman wished that she could marry rich, but realized that she can't plan on that. Besides, she believes that staying home all the time would "get on her nerves." Another participant explained:

I wouldn't want my job to take away from what I need to be fulfilling at home as a wife or as a mother and so I would just kind of have to just balance out the two and keep my priorities straight.

Balance. The second category, Balance (B, N = 12), contains women who seek to

balance the roles of worker and woman-in-relationship in a way that neither role is neglected nor overemphasized. Both work and relationships are important, and these women anticipate investing fluctuating amounts of energy into integrating the two. Two young, single participants believed that work and relationships would fit together “very easily” and “like a hand and glove.” However, an engaged twenty year old was already experiencing conflict. Her fiancée held fairly rigid ideas about when she should begin bearing children, which would allow her to work at her profession for only two years following the completion of her degree. Taking into consideration her own beliefs that mothers should stay home with their children when they are young, she anticipated being out of work from 7 to 10 years. Her fiancée interpreted her frustration as an indication that she did not want a family. The young woman’s response was: “No, it’s not that I don’t want to but that’s not a priority right now. It doesn’t matter for you. You are going to be working all the time.”

Frequently mentioned was the belief that when a worker is just beginning a new job or career they are required to “pay their dues” and put in extra hours. Although many participants seek balance, they anticipate some imbalance during this establishment phase and generally expect understanding from their partners.

Work-Over-Relationships. Another intermediate category which falls between Balance and Career-oriented is referred to as Work-Over-Relationships (W/R, N = 8). Women whose responses place them in this category conveyed two strong themes. First, these participants also valued reaching a balance between their relationships and work,

but they clearly stated that when conflict occurred they were unwilling to subordinate their careers to their husbands' careers. An 18 year old single freshman who is in a committed relationship and hopes to become a doctor stated " ...if he was going to be selfish enough to come in between me and my career then I don't need him anyway." A twenty-five year old single English major said, "I'm not going to be the one that just gives up my job just to move where ever my husband wants to go." Older women who had more experience with marriage expressed similar concerns. A thirty-six year old married, divorced, and single-again participant explained, " ...in the past I've done a lot of putting my priorities on the back burner and letting the man's priorities be on the front burner." A married thirty-nine year old echoed: "I think so many times with work and relationships I have left my work to follow my husband and I don't know if I'm willing to do that anymore..."

Second, several women who theoretically embrace the balance concept but are pursuing demanding careers (i.e., medicine, broadcasting) believe/fear that in practice they may be required to place their careers above their families. A nineteen year old journalism major wondered:

Am I going to have time for my relationship, my spouse...I would like to say that everything's going to work out and have time for family and for work, but in reality sometimes I just think that I won't.

She underscored the uncertainty of this conflict by adding, "And I really don't know what to say about it other than it worries me."

Career Oriented. At the other side of the continuum is the Career-Oriented category (C, N=2), which represents women whose careers demand and/or are given more commitment. One nineteen year old participant hopes to become an obstetrician. As for fitting work and relationships together in her life she states, "I don't think it's going to work." She explains that her unwavering commitment to her career goals is the result of her father's brainwashing: "Me before anything."

Defining Relational Status

Results of relational status are subgrouped into three categories: single, never-been-married, which includes committed relationships and engagements (S, N = 18); currently married (M, N = 8); divorced, single again (D/S, N = 4). Originally, a separate category was included for engaged participants, but an examination of the data revealed no significant differences in the background influences for engaged women than for single women.

Eight participants were placed in the R/W category (S = 4, M = 3, D/S = 1). More women were included in the Balance category than in any other. In all, twelve women fell into this category including nine of the sixteen single women (S = 9, M = 3). The Work/Relationship category contained eight participants (S = 3, M = 2, D/S = 3). Only two women were Career-oriented (S = 2).

While participants in general represented a wide range of beliefs about the primacy of relationships, all seven of the mothers in the sample described their continued commitment to parenting as their top priority, even though no specific question targeted

this information. One thirty-two year old single-again mom who is in a committed relationship and hopes to become an environmental lawyer acknowledged that her relationship with her partner must be able to accommodate her career, especially during the career establishment phase. However, she explained, "The one thing that I want to try to avoid is it (career) infringing on the time with my child. I have to make that time. That's very important to me." Several other participants (some who want children and some who already have children) spoke of their desire to own their own business due to the flexibility it could lend to their parenting.

It may be significant that three out of the four participants in the D/S group were placed in the W/R category. These women (ages 32, 33, and 38) value a career focus over a relationship focus, and spoke of the importance of maintaining their own career and not subordinating it to a partner's. A married woman considering separation or divorce stated that she wanted to have her own job, her own career, be able to take care of herself and not depend upon her husband for insurance and all of the other things a woman must do to care for herself. Women who had ended marital relationships seemed inclined to view careers as increasing in importance in their lives.

Family Influences and Messages

Background

An important area of focus during the interviews involved the family influences and messages which were affecting the participants as they selected careers and created their plans for the future. These influences were both clear and conscious, and tacit and

unconscious. Often participants reported that nothing had ever been said directly about these matters. However, participants usually were able to respond when the question was restated asking them to discuss the conclusions they have drawn about certain issues as a result of having grown up in their own families.

This section explores participants' comments to the following questions: 4b1)

What messages have you received from your family about your career or your work?

4b2) *About combining work and family?* 5) *How have the women in your family influenced your own ideas about women and work?* 6) *How have the men in your family influenced your own ideas about women and work?*

Relationships/Work (N=8)

Single. Four single participants were in the R/W category. These four women described the families they grew up in as "traditional" and "not liberated," and yet very supportive of their education and career plans.

All of their mothers worked at home or very close by with complimentary schedules and demonstrated to their daughters their own commitment to family over career. They believed that "family comes first" and put less emphasis on their own careers in order to fulfill their duties as wives and mothers. Although these mothers appeared traditional in their commitment to care for their children, one was described as also being very strong. "She can do anything. She's never questioned what she can or can't do. She's always been, 'I can do it.' She'll do a man's work before my dad will." Thus, it appears that the mother's behavioral example of staying close to her children

when they are young influenced these daughters more than her willingness to venture into traditionally male domains.

Generally, the men in these participants' families supportive women pursuing careers. Several of their fathers had given clear messages that they did not want their wives to work but wanted them at home. These fathers openly stated that they do not want their wives to work, and simultaneously supported their daughters' endeavors to build a career. Their daughters experienced conflict in their own expectations about work and relationships as a result of these messages.

Married. Two of the four married participants placed their relationships above their work. One has been married for three years and has no children while the other has been married for 30 years and has two adult children. Both described being supported by their families in their pursuit of a career, having been influenced by female family members who were working hard to balance work and relationships, and internalizing a message about the importance of mothers staying at home with their children.

The younger participant was strongly influenced by the conflict that she observed in her mother's life. She saw how hard her mother worked to balance her work and her mothering responsibilities and knows that her mother always wanted to be at home. This participant acknowledged that her choice included a determination not to allow the void which her mother experienced to occur in her own life. Both married participants reported that males had been supportive of their careers.

Divorced, Single Again. Two of the women who placed a higher priority on

relationships than work were divorced. Neither woman received strong or encouraging messages about women working. One woman came from a family in which males were openly hostile and belittling towards females and she believed that her female relatives worked hard at low paying jobs and lacked the confidence to strive for more as a result of these negative male influences.. This participant was unwilling to follow the examples of other women in her family and was determined to pursue her own education and vocational preparation.

Both women expressed the belief that children must come first. One participant endorsed this belief because that value was demonstrated in her family of origin and the other one endorsed this belief because it was not a part of her experience.

Summary. Single and married women in this R/W category generally describe their families as traditional and supportive of their education and careers. Their mothers' lifestyles demonstrated their beliefs that "family comes first" and "mothers should stay home with their children" by choosing employment that was complimentary to their central roles as mothers. These women recalled clear messages from their fathers that they preferred having their wives stay at home.

The divorced R/W women did not receive strong family support, nor encouragement to develop a career. These women were mothers and they expressed a variation of the belief that since they were single parents their children *must* come first. Women who are combining relationships and work, but place a greater emphasis upon the importance of their relationship, have primarily come from homes in which their own

families did the same. In most cases their female family members were viewed as good, resourceful, and strong and did not receive attention for their investments as workers. Generally, these women embraced the beliefs that family comes first and that women should be at home caring for their children.

Balance (N=12)

Twelve women are represented in this category, more than any other. These women expressed a desire to find a balance between their responsibilities to relationships and their responsibilities to work.

Single. Eight of the twelve women who seek balance between work and relationships were single and had never been married; one of them was in a committed relationship and planned to become engaged.

All but one of these participants reported being encouraged and supported in their efforts to have a career. An emphasis was placed on the pragmatic aspects of a career and a paycheck as a means of earning money to take care of their families. For most of their mothers combining work with relationships was a matter of necessity. Participants described their mothers as having jobs, not careers. Even when their mothers were trained and enjoyed work, their roles as workers were not viewed as important as their husband's worker roles.

Family comes first. Most of these participants received messages, both direct and tacit, from their families-of-origin that women were expected to put their own families first, and could also expect to work hard outside of their homes. Some of them described

their mothers as very strong and capable women but did not agree with the way their mothers' efforts and authority were subordinate to their fathers'.

One participant described her father as the one in control. "What my dad says goes. And my mom follows that. I don't really like that." She recalled a story about how her father's business showed a substantial loss and her mother went out and got a job to fill in the financial holes. She continued:

I mean, my mom worked really, really hard...and not that my dad doesn't but she does more of the, like cleaning and keeping the books and you know, tedious, behind-the-scenes jobs. And I don't think that's good. She kind of sent the message that it was important to put your family first. But I didn't get enough of the message to think that your husband should be in complete control.

This participant observed her mother's determined efforts to keep the family safe during times of financial stress and framed this as a message that family always comes first. Even when her mother was earning money to assist a financial dilemma, this daughter viewed her mother's work in relational terms.

Questioning messages. Another young woman talked about the messages that she internalized as she watched her parents' marriage fall apart. She claimed that her father had attempted to run his family the same way he ran his military subordinates. She declared:

I think that first of all I'm not going to settle. I think that's how my mom began to feel...that she had just settled for somebody to get her out of small town America.

I don't want to do that. So I think that's going to be a change and I think instead of just letting the stuff fester, like I saw my mom, it's 'go and talk to them.' But if it just festers for 10, 12 years then there's no hope and I want there to be hope that I'll be growing old with this person.

In both of these examples the participant observed her mother deferring to her father and she concluded that she wants more of a voice in her own relationships and is unwilling to settle.

A third young woman who described a childhood with very little attachment to either of her parents reported that she had been deeply influenced by the unsatisfactory behavior of the adults in her family. She revealed that:

A lot of people didn't motivate...it was a deep yearning inside of myself when I looked at the others around me and instead of seeing what I want to be like I saw what I never want to be like.

Self-reliance. Finally, participants spoke of the importance of self-reliance which came in two forms: 1) direct family messages and 2) internal conclusions. Some women described messages which they received from their families which often came without words. One participant described her grandmother: "...she was always at home and she would make bread and cinnamon rolls and sew and garden and, you know, woman things, and my grandpa did everything." Her grandfather died and left a farm and livestock operation to his widow to manage. The participant continued: "I think, pardon me for putting this so boldly but I think she really got screwed because she didn't know

what was going on, you know.” On several occasions this young granddaughter figured out that her grandmother’s lack of familiarity with her husband’s business left her at a disadvantage

And so from watching that I really got a strong message that it’s important to, you know, pay attention and know what’s going on and not just depend on other people to take care of you even if it is your husband because he might die...it’s important to be able to take care of yourself and know what’s going on.

One young participant reported that her parents wanted her to be an engineer, or a doctor, or a vet and to do something that makes good money. They believed that her career choice of secondary math education was a case of underachievement. She stated that her parents would probably put more pressure on her without the knowledge that she would be well taken care of by the young man whom she planned to marry. She explained their acceptance: “...his parents are lucrative, so in the long haul everything’s going to be alright...” The message here seems to be that a career choice should be made to ensure a good income, but if that can be ensured through another source more satisfying careers can be pursued even if they have lower earning potential.

One participant explained: “I think my mom pretty much geared me that I was going to have to be independent...and having a career was just something that would come...” Another young woman spoke at length about the strong, clear messages which her mother had given her. She described her mother as “taking care of business” and having “a balance in her life.” She told her daughter to first make sure that she is happy.

“If you are concerned about how other people feel instead of yourself you’re going to end up giving all the attention to other people instead of yourself. And everybody else may end up happy but you.” She also spoke to her daughter about the reality that women don’t always have a partner to share the burdens of family life. She cautioned her daughter: “Realize there’s a life for yourself. You do your career thing because it’s not guaranteed that you’re actually going to get married. Be independent.” Her parents added that you don’t need a man to be there for you to raise a family “...if it happens that you have to do it yourself you can do it yourself...”

Her father also offered important advice: “And you consider other people’s feelings but also remember that you went to college and you got a degree and you have the right to a career just like he does.” This participant’s father is a preacher and although his wife is a Certified Public Accountant she is not working full time due to her responsibilities to her family. When this participant was asked if there was any conflict for her between her parents’ behaviors and their messages she replied: “...if she never had a job in her life it still wouldn’t make me confused because I would look at it as ‘She wants me to have what she didn’t get.’”

The one engaged R/W participant described conflict in her relationship. While her mother emphasized the importance of a woman being independent due to the uncertainty of the future, her fiance told her that it would be alright with him if she quit college and did not get a degree. She described a recent conversation in which he reminded her that he was paying the bills, which raised concerns that he will assume

greater authority at times when she is not contributing financially to their family.

Married. The average age of women in this category (41) was significantly older than the average age of women in the sample (27) and because they were married they had experience with balancing work and relationships. All three of them grew up understanding that women work, although generally their work was not expected to be satisfying, but rather a way of contributing to the family's survival.

One 36 year old participant explained that the men and women in her family sent a message that "...a woman's job is to marry, have babies, take care of her husband, and be married to her house." These family messages only served to convince her that her work was as important as theirs.

An older woman talked about her married son whose wife has no intention of working. He asked his mother: "Why did you work when we were little?" The participant responded by saying that she thought that she needed to. This woman admitted that at times she regretted working because once she did, and demonstrated that she could maintain this balance of family and work, her husband took it for granted. This generational example appears to demonstrate the unresolved conflict which a woman feels about the choices that she has made between work and relationships.

Summary. In several important ways the women in the B category were similar to the women in the R/W category. They described their families as traditional, but supportive of their educational and career plans. Their mothers choices modeled R/W values and they were described as having jobs, not careers. Their families viewed

women's jobs in pragmatic terms as a way to care for their families. They received encouragement, especially from their mothers, to be independent and self-reliant "just in case." Unlike their cohorts in the R/W group, these women were reappraising the roles which their parents were living out.

Work/Relationships

Eight of the participants are represented in this category. Their responses reveal ideas and beliefs about the centrality of careers in their lives. Their attitudes and statements show more of an understanding about the importance of work in their lives than the women in the Balance category but not as clear as women in the Career-oriented category. Two aspects of these women's lives which begin to emerge as different from the women in the Relationship/Work and Balance categories are: 1) the father's influence; and 2) the presence of other family members who have college degrees and hold professional positions.

A 25 year old participant was influenced by her grandmother who had earned a master's degree: "...for her age that's pretty uncharacteristic to have a bachelor's let alone a masters. I guess that's not really about work as much as it is about education."

Single. All three of the participants in this category received support and encouragement from their families and were told they could be anything they wanted to be. They described family expectations and sometimes pressure to go to college. One participant reported pressure to succeed while another was encouraged to select a career based upon it's salary expectations.

Each of these participants observed their own mothers struggling with the family/work balance and were insightful about the effort which that required. They anticipated that their lives would involve both work and family. One young woman explained: "I've just never thought about just being a housewife. I've always seen all of the women around me juggle both and that's just what I've always thought was supposed to happen."

Male family members were influential in several ways. One participant mentioned that her grandfather was currently working on his bachelor's degree and had always told her to do whatever makes her happy. Another explained that her father's idea of preparing her for the challenges faced by professional women was to tease her with jokes about women. She offered his motto: "Suck it up and get tough. You've got to get out there and prove yourself as a woman."

Another young participant had observed her mother juggling both professional work and housework. She believed that her father took her mother for granted. "He comes home and thinks that he can sit down and relax." She feels strongly that there will be a different dynamic operating in her own relationship.

My husband, right from the beginning, is going to have to realize that he's going to have to take up the mommy part a little bit...if he can't help and see that it's not just a woman's job to be in the home then again, he's not the right man for me...I don't want to get into the wrong relationship and love this person and then find out he's just the biggest chauvinistic pig and I can't work with him...I want

to juggle both and be able to have both but I want to be able to have help and not feel so stressed.

Married. Women in this category received support to pursue careers in their families of origin and from their husbands. Both of them observed female family members who had sacrificed something which they valued and acknowledged their own fears about having a family. A participant in her mid-twenties, who is applying to medical school, was seriously exploring the pros and cons of having children. Another participant who was almost 40 decided as a very young woman that she did not want to have children and is currently seriously reconsidering that decision.

One participant watched her mother sideline her profession as an architect in order to care for her seven children when her husband died. "I remember specifically from my mother that she gave up her life for us and I never want to feel like I gave up my life for children. I have this fear I don't want to...I'm too selfish."

Divorced, Single Again. The three participants in this category differed from the single and married women because their involvement with their careers had not been as well supported. Two of the women were each raising a son, and one had already decided that she never wanted to have children. These women did not report as much male family support as the single and married women. One woman in her mid-thirties lacked respect for her mother because of the way she fumbled and seemed to "screw up on purpose" when the participant's father ordered her around. She insisted: "I just had the feeling that I needed to be stronger than her if I wanted to be more capable of doing whatever

challenges came my way.”

Summary. The single W/R women grew up hearing the message:”...you can be/do whatever you want” from families that were also supportive, with tones of pressure and insistence, often strongly fueled by their fathers’ influences. Their mothers appeared to model B values and several family members had earned college (and advanced) degrees and were holding professional jobs of status.

Married W/R women reported generally receiving support for their education and career development from both their original families and their husbands. They also revealed a questioning stance towards the role their mothers had modeled, and believed that their mothers had sacrificed a great deal.

Another woman in her early thirties recalled her father being very nature-oriented and loving animals before he died when she was twelve. This participant was determined from an early age to become a veterinarian, and believes that this choice could be an attempt to feel close and appreciated by her father.

The third woman did not mention her father but was strongly influenced by her mother’s achievement of earning her master’s degree at the age of 40. This conveyed to the participant that if you didn’t get your degree soon after high school, you could do it later.

Career Oriented (N=2)

Single. Only two of the thirty participants fit into the Career Oriented category, (one was single and one was engaged). Both of these women received strong

encouragement from an early age to excel and their families, especially their fathers, held high expectations that they would become professionals.

A nineteen year old freshman who reported wanting to become a doctor remembered her father teaching her numbers and colors at home before she was old enough to begin school. She described interactions throughout her life when he strongly emphasized school. This “encouragement” often came in the form of “scare tactics” (participant’s wording) in which he would belittle her mother or other females. She quoted him as saying: “Your mother makes \$5. an hour. Do you want to be stupid like her?” Although this participant’s mother worked, she modeled putting relationships above her work and sacrificed her job so that her husband could advance. This young woman said that in the future she would no longer allow her father to make demeaning comments toward her mother and believed the reason her mother did not make it far in her career was the result of deference towards her father. In spite of her parents’ examples she believed that she has to look towards her father because: “Not many of the women in our family history has made anything out of themselves.” When she considers that her mother has worked so hard and done so much and at 40 she is only earning “pennies” she confessed: “I don’t want to end up like that.”

Another twenty-seven year old, engaged participant described how her family encouraged her career interests from a very early age. Her father does not believe that women should work because they are unreliable workers who require more time off than men. She described his ideas: “He believed women’s basic role in life was to get married

and sponge off of a man for the rest of their lives.” She did not think she fit his expectations of what a woman should be. She described an incident when his friends asked him why he never said anything nice about his daughter and he replied: “Because I don’t want her to develop too much of an ego.” Since he did not treat her “...like I was a real woman...” he wanted her to do something with her life, to make something of herself.

This engaged participant did not observe her mother successfully balancing the work/family dilemma. She explained her mother’s difficulty:

...(she) could either be a mother or she could work but she couldn’t seem to get it together to do both. So, I guess all my experiences...I never thought about it much but all my experiences with women and careers were ones that didn’t work very well.

Both of these women shared concerns about the feasibility of combining motherhood with their careers and mentioned that they wouldn’t want to put children through what they had been through. The younger participant concluded that individuals who do not aspire for high status professional careers are the ones who have the best families. She stated: “I don’t want to have a family. I’m just always afraid that I’m going to do the same thing to my kids.” The engaged participant revealed: “...if I ever do raise kids I’m going to raise them a lot different than the way my parents raised me. I’m kind of afraid to have children because I can see myself turning into my mother.”

The younger participant in this category chose her father first when introducing

her role models. Second she selected a woman who had employed her to work in her feminist bookstore. She described her in this way: “She was kind of abusive, too. She was always into this power thing. You were like a lesser than she but she taught me to not take anybody’s slack, though I still do.”

The second participant talked of an aunt who she didn’t really meet until she was 24 and who “would have been a great role model for me if she had been available during my life but she just got badmouthed a lot by my parents.” She described how this aunt became the first woman in the family to earn a college degree and her participation in the Civil Rights Movement. She explained: “I mean she just exuded everything that I...I mean I wanted to be like she was but I didn’t know about it until later in my life.”

Another role model that she described was a male philosophy professor who would become so engaged in his discussions with his students that he would invite them to continue their conversations at his home during dinner.

He could sit there and use the Socratic method on you, you know, and get you to say something that you didn’t know you knew. I really miss him. That was the happiest I’ve ever been when I was living up there.

Unlike the daughters reported in the work of Chodorow (1978) who grow up seeing themselves as extensions of their mothers, these daughters followed a developmental sequence that mirrored that of sons, to separate from the mother and emulate the father.

Summary. The two C women were given messages that they were expected to excel, especially by their fathers. Both of these women verbalized their determination to

“not end up like my mother.” Although both experienced conflict in their interactions with their father, they looked up to them as clear, strong role models.

These women had very limited interest in having children and believed that their career demands would translate into greater demands upon their private lives and the lives of their spouses and children. They were skeptical about the prospects of combining relationships and work, and if they ever did become mothers it would be unacceptable for them to parent their children in the same way that they were parented.

Additional Comments

As the first few interviews were ending, participants often had final comments that they wanted to share. Beginning with the eighth interview an additional question was included. Women were told that they had answered all of the prepared questions and were asked: *Is there anything that you would like to add about women and work?* The participants responded to this final question by offering ideas and opinions about women in general, rather than talking about specific aspects of their own lives. The following section describes several of the major themes.

Support, encouragement, dreams. Eleven of the twenty women who responded to this question made a comment that fit into this theme. Each echoed the sentiment that women (starting when they are very young girls) need more encouragement, support, and positive feedback. “Women don’t think big enough,” insisted one participant.

It’s important to encourage little girls ‘to reach a little farther,’ to convince them that they should never settle, that they can do anything they want. The ideas that

you embrace as a little girl are the same ideas that will shape you when you are older.

Another participant recalled a college course which devoted some focus to the socialization of men and women. She stated:

The underlying goals that women are given is that, yeah, they can work but they are to be wifey and mommy first. And it's like the attitude even though we were to get, you know, doctoral degrees and stuff, like that it's supposed to come second.

This participant lamented the experience that she saw happen with herself and other girls: someone was always squashing their dreams.

If they're not allowed to dream how are they ever going to know what they want to do because you've got to know that you can do what you want to do. But you don't know if you can't dream.

Within this theme was a plea that women who succeed in finding a place in a non-traditional field or overcome sex-role stereotypes should speak out to other women. Essentially, this means that women need more role models. One participant talked about the positive messages for women which are included in Nike commercials. Women need to be told that they can succeed and they also need to see others doing the same. These suggestions echo conclusions reported in career articles written over a decade ago (Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980; and Hackett & Betz, 1981). Hackett & Betz reported positive benefits to women's career development resulting from vicarious learning (seeing other

women succeed) and verbal persuasion (encouragement).

The oldest woman in the study, pursuing her bachelor's degree at age 55, talked about the conflict that she faced as she redistributed the balance in her roles.

I have to persevere with my goal, if my health and everything else allows me, to the point that no matter what toll it takes. I'm going to persevere and do it. I'm looking at it from another aspect now, not only for me, but I want my children to see that they have choices. Because I already see my daughters and son using me as a role model.

Questioning roles and taking care of self. An equally common theme included statements about women's need and right to choose for themselves. These participants recognized that women are not homogeneous and they defended their own right to choose motherhood, career orientation, or any combination of the two which suited their individual needs.

Our society shows increasing recognition that a woman has the right to choose her own lifestyle. Participants stated that women are free to consider the opportunity to work and then decide to stay at home. On the other hand, if women want to work they should not have to forego becoming mothers if they want. Finally, women can decide if they even want to be mothers. Women are no longer required to choose motherhood, and that was an apparent theme among participants.

One participant stated that if she had children she would expect a lot out of her husband, but observed that many bright and capable married women end up working and

assuming responsibility for the majority of the housework and child care. She stated: “I think women need to really take care of themselves maybe before they start taking care of a family.”

Inequalities at work and at home. Several women mentioned the challenges women continue to face in their work environments. Participants stated that women often have to work harder and are stereotyped and discriminated against. One participant is afraid that she will have difficulty finding a job because they will all be given to men.

Conflict and balance. Another woman talked about the eternal battle that rages within herself:

...whether I should devote my time to my family or to my career. I think because of the basic nature of women there's always going to be that battle. It's a lot of shoes to fill to try to be mother, wife, PTA leader and the soft nurturing side that you have at home and then turn around and you've got this aggressive, forceful side that you've got at work.

Another participant discussed the internal conflict with which women contend as they are multi-tasking: They must juggle work and home and be feminine but also aggressive or assertive.

Another admitted:

I'm not too sure about this Women's Lib thing. At some points in time I think we've got it made in the shade and someone's messing it up and then another part is I want to be independent but just in a nice way and not in a real blunt way.

She echoed the conflict experienced by women who seek the protectiveness of men but who also yearn for freedom.

Chapter V: Conclusions, Limitations, Suggestions for

Further Research, and Implications for Counseling

Conclusions

Centrality of Relationships: A Developmental Perspective

As the participants' comments were examined, a work-relationship continuum emerged which serves as a conceptual framework from which to discuss their differences. This continuum suggests a developmental process in which women move from beliefs about work and relationships which they have learned in their formative environments to later beliefs which represent their own reconstructions as they mature and experience environmental, physical, psychological, and relational changes. The first section of Chapter V will consider this developmental perspective.

Unchallenged beliefs. Throughout this study it was continually apparent that women's beliefs and decisions were embedded in and linked to their relationships. Levinson (1996) pointed out that marriage/family and occupation are the central components in an individual's life and stressed the importance of discovering how women's occupations are interwoven with other components. The early encouragement of participants' families and role models were very important influences in the development of their career plans. Whether or not a career was relationship-friendly was a strong consideration for career choice and a concern once the choice was made. Women who were married and/or were mothers placed these relationships at the center of their considerations when making life and career decisions. These concerns were

related to strongly held beliefs about the centrality of relationships in women's lives.

Differences seemed to exist in the participants' awareness of their beliefs about women's responsibilities to relationships and work. In response to questions about the types of messages women received from their families they often answered, "I don't remember anything ever being said about that." And yet, when they were asked what they learned growing up in their particular families they were almost always able to identify what they had internalized from their experiences. Sometimes beliefs which women embraced were tacit and unchallenged, learned without conscious examination. This phenomenon compliments Levinson's (1996) discovery of the Internal Traditional Homemaker Figure. Whether or not a woman accepted or questioned the beliefs which she internalized from her environment seemed to be a function of her position along the work-relationship continuum. Participants in the R/W category were far more likely to accept beliefs without question and women in the B, W/R, and C categories were far more likely to question tacit family beliefs, which corresponds to Levinson's description of the Anti-Traditional Figure.

Unchallenged beliefs about relationships. It is important to acknowledge that none of the participants in this study were placed in the Traditional category, although it has already been pointed out that this may not be the case in other, non-college samples. One importance of this absence is that all of the women interviewed planned to include work in their future by choice, and only a few of these women believed they would not eventually live with a partner and/or become mothers. As Levinson's (1996) research

revealed, for a majority of women there is durability in traditional roles, even when their career is important.

In 1968 Ohlsen wrote that our society values a happy marriage and family more than a girl's success in an out-of-home career. Women in the Relationship-Over-Work category tended to receive and sustain the message that family comes first and that wives and mothers should be at home with their husbands and children. This belief perpetuates a woman's tendency to equate mothering with presence. As Chodorow (1978) pointed out, as long as women parent and stay at home with their children each generation of daughters who become mothers will tend to view this application of the centrality of family as an important one to imitate. This may be related to what Gottfredson (1996) described as the apparent puzzle her theory set out to solve: Why do children seem to recreate the social inequalities that exist among their elders long before they themselves experience any barriers to pursuing their dreams?

Unchallenged beliefs about work. Women in this study frequently underscored the clear messages that they received about work, and working hard. Work for the Relationship-Over-Work participants was viewed as a means to extend their care for their families. Their work was often viewed in pragmatic terms, primarily as a way of meeting the needs and wants of husbands and children, not as an aspect of their own identity and/or development.

However, the comments of participants in the W/R and C categories on the work-relationship continuum placed increasingly higher emphases on work as something

meaningful to them in addition to its contribution to family finances. This supports the work of Barnett & Baruch (1987) who stated that women's roles as paid employees were strong sources of identity and self-esteem.

Conflict: Roles in question. Earlier writers agreed that much conflict existed when women attempted to develop their vocational identities while also embracing societal sex-roles (Ohlsen, 1968; Patterson, 1973; Zytowski, 1969). Others discussed the necessity of resolving conflicts in order to integrate roles (Fassinger, 1985; Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980; Hochschild, 1989; Richardson, 1979).

Conflict and tension about roles was evident in the participants' lives in several ways. 1) Women talked about the conflict which they experienced as they tried to determine how much of their attention, time, and energy would be given to their relationships and how much would be given to their work. 2) Participants reported conflict between what they saw their parents doing and what their parents were verbalizing to them. For instance, some women received unspoken messages from their mothers' behaviors that women are to sacrifice their own careers for their husbands and always be available to care for their children. At the same time some parents were telling them not to rely on a man but to be independent. A second example of this particular conflict arose when women heard their fathers say that they preferred to have their wives stay at home while they were simultaneously telling their daughters to get an education in order to find a good job. 3) Women experienced conflict between their own beliefs that mothers should be at home with their young children and their desire to have a career

that required a long period of training and high demands.

The results of the current study add support to the concept that women's beliefs about responsibilities to relationships may be in conflict with their ability to implement career choices (Enns, 1991; Forrest & Mikolaitis, 1986; Gerson, 1985; Hochschild, 1989). Despite the central role that relationships play in women's life choices, until recently very little emphasis has been placed on the relational aspects of women's lives when formulating career theories and devising career interventions for women.

Redefining centrality. Reconstructing beliefs. The work/relationship continuum seemed to demonstrate a correlation between women's changing beliefs and their ability to tolerate conflict and to consider increasingly innovative solutions to the work-relationship dilemma while maintaining the centrality of their relationships. It does not appear that relationships lost importance across the continuum, but rather that the value and importance of career increased. Women were able to implement centrality in more divergent ways. For instance, every mother in this study indicated that her children were her top priority, but the context in which they accomplished this changed across categories (R/W women felt compelled to be at home for as long and as much as possible while W/R women were able to tolerate more ambiguity and tension about resolving this dilemma.) Another way to view this is by looking at the responses of divorced women who were mothers. All three of them were in the Work-Over-Relationship category, which meant that they were placing a strong emphasis upon their work, but this focus did not detract from the central place their mothering held in their lives. Without a

significant relationship, work held a large part of the meaning and purpose of their lives, and became a more important aspect of a divorced woman caring for her family than it was for women with partners. The strength of these divorced women's emphasis upon mothering became evident as they spoke voluntarily about the centrality of their commitment to their children.

Conflict that women experience as they attempt to implement and integrate their career and family plans often leads to a process of appraisal in which they allow themselves to question the old, tacit beliefs and search for new beliefs which are more personally meaningful to them. The reconstruction of beliefs is evident as the work-relationship continuum moves from R/W and B to W/R and C.

Extended beliefs and expanding opportunities. The college women who participated in this study clearly indicated that they wanted to have both families and jobs and had often watched their mothers struggle to balance both of these roles. The more a family emphasized education, the greater value the participants tended to place on the importance of work. Several believed that their own mothers had made large career and personal sacrifices which they were unwilling to make. Women in the W/R and C categories conveyed increasingly strong beliefs that their relationships would be structured differently to permit them to meet their career goals, even if that required their husbands and children to endure inconveniences and sacrifices. These women were expanding the limited models of "good wife and mother" to which they had originally been exposed. It is possible that this may be a developmental progression. The process

through which women move as they seek to integrate work and relationships in their lives may be related to the stages of moral development which Gilligan has described. Fox & Halbrook (1994) found a similar process for low income women moving through the divorce process.

Career choice within a relational context. Women talked about having jobs that allowed them to do something that they enjoyed and could do with confidence. Generally, they seemed to select careers which were compatible with their ideas about the centrality of relationships, and differed by category in the work-relationship continuum. Research (Farmer, 1983; Gottfredson, 1981, 1996) has demonstrated that girls originally aspire to higher status careers than boys. Gottfredson explained that these early ideas change as little girls move through the stages of circumscription while Farmer reported that high school girls were not dealing realistically with the experience of marriage and family, which could affect their career commitment negatively in the future.

Inequalities for women who must balance work and family have been discussed in earlier chapters, and there is little disagreement that women's career opportunities continue to be restricted due to their involvement in mothering. More social change is needed. At the same time career theories can become more sensitive to the contextual realities in which women make decisions in order to describe their current behaviors in positive terms. Women's career choices may be restricted by external barriers (i.e., narrow family and cultural beliefs) and by internal barriers (which include tacit beliefs,

lack of encouragement, low self-esteem, personal elements which Gottfredson, 1996, deemphasized in her theory). However, if their behavior is viewed within the context of their lives, an optimal choice career may be defined as one which provides the best compromise of balancing work and relationships at an infinite number of points along the work-relationship continuum.

Women's career choices have not historically been examined and described from within a relational context. Chapter II reviewed the historical trend in vocational psychology, following the introduction of standardized procedures for measuring human qualities and then matching them with the optimal, most prestigious occupation. Theories in career development have undergone significant modification, but the underlying purpose is usually to gain greater insight into how individuals select careers and how this information can help counselors to assist in this process.

The results of this study support the hunch that when women's career choices are examined in a context which includes both their desire to select meaningful work and their perceived and real responsibilities to relationships that they are not selecting in ways that parallel the traditional trait and factor approach, nor the widely accepted models of career development. These results suggest that a process exists which attempts to integrate a woman's career aspirations and her beliefs about relationships (which may be tacit and exist at a level of awareness below her conscious, obvious ideas.) Examination of this process prior to the implementation of traditional career interventions may result in more effective career planning.

Male Influences

Perhaps one of the results which stands out most distinctly on the work/relationship continuum is the influence of males. For participants in the W/R and C categories males emerged playing a central role. Even though participants expressed anger and conflict in their relationships with their fathers, some women rejected their mothers' examples and modeled themselves after their fathers. They felt that their mothers had not been successful, and hoped they would not be like them. Divorced women also reported receiving less support in general from families and less male involvement in their lives.

It is not clear why women in the R/W category emulated mothers who had traditional roles, women in the B category began to question these roles, and women in the W/R and C categories were disappointed in their mothers for their traditional roles. Roe's (1966) belief that parenting styles mediate a child's need hierarchy which motivates vocational choice may have application here.

One single participant explained: "...people don't understand, fathers have an impact on their son's lives but they have a greater impact on their daughters 'cause that's going to set the standard of what you expect for, in the mate." For some women, fathers also not only set a standard for the type of mate they would like to find but they set a standard for the daughter's own behavior.

Male messages and influences may have affected the participants' opinions of their mothers. Mothers of the R/W women were generally seen as good and strong, and

the participants wanted to be like their mothers. However, in the C category the fathers tended to make negative comments about women in general and both participants in this category found fault with their mothers' behaviors and choices.

Self Esteem and Encouragement

Strong themes in the women's responses revealed low self esteem, which Hackett & Betz (1981) discussed in terms of low self efficacy and Subich (1989) described as internal barriers. These concepts were mentioned frequently as discouragers and career concerns. Despite Barnett & Baruch's (1987) conclusions that work is a strong source of self esteem, in many cases participants did not receive positive messages about the value and worth, but rather the necessity, of their work.

Role models were frequently identified by their ability to encourage the participants and raise their self esteem. Participants talked about the need for more encouragement from and for women, more role models, more success stories, and more positive messages. Participants talked about the importance of dreaming as girls grow and create future plans, and expressed frustration that many times these dreams were squashed.

One participant described a problem for women in career development.

A lot of times when I've wanted to talk to a particular male professor I've had to sit there and wait for him to finish talking to someone on the phone or in person about Boy Scouts. I listened to the great concern with which they go over every little detail of some incident x and what that means for their moral and character

and the future development of some young man, and I thought, 'Wow, wouldn't it be neat if people put that much care and concern into the care and development of women? ...I don't know if it's a survival thing or what, but I don't think most women think actively that way. They would more naturally think 'I need to do this and this for my son,' but especially if your daughter seems to know kinda what she wants you don't need to give her any guidance...

A common theme in the participants' final comments echoed the belief that women need more examples of other women finding ways to integrate relationships and work.

Limitations and Further Research

Limitations

Limitations in the current study are primarily related to the size of the sample and the fact that all participants were college women who lived within a fairly homogeneous rural area. As was reported earlier, none of the participants in this study was pursuing a traditional role, defined as an orientation towards homemaking. The absence of traditional women is also a limitation.

Another limitation is related to the selection process. Participation depended upon an individual who learned about the study (by reading the Introduction Letter or through word of mouth) voluntarily contacting the researcher. The results may be biased by the responses of women who chose to participate and may be missing information from women who learned of the study but chose not to participate.

College status did not relate to similarities in family background; participants

belonged to families in all levels of socio-economic status and were pursuing a wide range of educational and career goals. Due to the small sample size and limited geographic location the results reported here are not readily generalizable to other populations. However, the themes which emerged from this study are worthy of further consideration and investigation. Dissimilar results are likely among other groups of women and also among college women in different locations.

Further Research

Career theories from a relational perspective. A fundamental goal of this research has been to create a link between traditional career theories and more recent understandings about women's relational worlds. As Chapter II attempted to demonstrate, the entire field of vocational guidance was originally created to find a good fit between workers and occupations. The labor force at this time was predominantly made up of males and females who were not primarily responsible for the daily physical care of a family. Several decades of scholarly research developed a body of knowledge from male perspectives and relevant to male realities.

Recent efforts have attempted to expand these theories to make them relevant to and effective with women. It is questionable whether this can be done with theoretical additions, or if the entire foundation upon which traditional theories are built must be reworked. Perhaps, if a foundation was being laid for a new field of study, work and relationships would not be viewed as two separate aspects of an individual's life, but as two inseparable components of an integrated life. If theory development over the past

three decades assumed the necessity of integrating work and relationships (which is a nearly universal reality for women) current theories may be far more relevant to the conflict facing women (and men). Additional research which integrates the career literature with recent work on the relational aspects of women's lives is needed. Not only are increasing numbers of women employed, but more and more of them are partially, or solely responsible for the financial support of their families. Finding meaningful work with adequate pay is a necessity for many women. Most standard career inventories omit a focus on the relational aspects of women's lives and could be made more relevant through the inclusion of this focus. Theories and interventions which are grounded in women's realities and relational worlds are essential.

Longitudinal career research from a relational perspective. Longitudinal studies which track women's career beliefs, decisions, and behaviors over their adult lifespan could provide important information. Such studies could help 1) determine whether women are able to anticipate how they will integrate work and relationships, and/or) identify obscure influences or processes which results in outcomes not previously expected. Longitudinal studies would provide a means to explore the idea that a developmental process exists which accounts for changes in women's career ideas and choices throughout every phase of their lives.

The work-relationship continuum. The work-relationship continuum which was generated by these results may provide a basis for future research. Interviewing women from other populations and geographic locations may develop this concept further.

Research which further explores 1) the concept of a continuum to describe the beliefs women hold about integrating work and relationships and 2) their ability to move across this continuum would be helpful.

Fathers' influence. Results which indicated the important roles which fathers play in their daughters' career development suggest another area for further research.

Fassinger's (1985) initial causal model of college women's career choice contained twenty nine variables including: 1) female parent's work; 2) significant other women's work; 3) male parent's attitudes; and 4) female parent's attitudes. However, not one of these variables was present in her final model. Farmer's (1985) Model of Career and Achievement Motivation for Women and Men contained an environmental variable termed parent support. This variable was found non-significant for young men while it was shown to influence female motivation over a longer time period. However, the parent support variable does not separate out the support of a father and the support of a mother.

How a father's attitude, encouragement, and expectations influence his daughter's beliefs about how she will integrate her own relationships and career suggests an innovative area of research which may provide important information.

Gottfredson's Model. 1) Compromise. Many of the concepts set forth in Gottfredson's (1991, 1996) theory were supported in the results reported in this study. Compromise is described by Gottfredson (1996) as the process in which developing children relinquish their most preferred alternatives for less compatible but more

accessible ones. This concept relates to the process which women in this study described, however, their personal reports did not always contain the tone of relinquishment, rather women chose careers which represented solutions to their work-relationship dilemmas. Women who reported resentment at having given up something, or observing their mothers' sacrifices, were predominantly in the R/W and B categories on the work-relationship continuum.

2) Irreversibility. Gottfredson's model stated that the process of circumscriptions and compromise which occurs beginning around age three and extending past age fourteen appears to be irreversible. Results in the current study suggest that women's development along the work-relationship continuum follows a more expansive, orthogenetic principle of unfolding potential. Gilligan et al., (1990) discussed development from a teleological perspective, suggesting that the purpose, perfection, or 'final cause' of human development is an integral aspect of the explanation of development. The potential to be generative seems to be an intrinsic aspect of developmental theories.

Several of the participants in the current study commented that they had never stopped to consider what influences were shaping their beliefs and behaviors. They acknowledged that the very process of reconstructing aspects of their personal story during the interview had been insightful, which resulted in their own consideration of alternatives. This ability to review their past and gain an understanding of their own behaviors (the meaning-making described by Seidman, 1991) suggests development-in-

progress. Longitudinal research may augment Gottfredson's model by expanding development to a lifespan process which continues to unfold beyond adolescence and throughout the stages of adulthood.

3) The case of Joan. As described in Chapter II, Gottfredson (1996) applied the tenets of her theory to a career counseling client named Joan but with no attention to Joan's relational beliefs and goals. In light of the results of this study, it would be interesting to first explore Joan's beliefs about relationships and the ways in which she relates to people. The current void of relationships in Joan's life may be significant and much of her dissatisfaction with work may be secondary to her difficulties relating to people. While thoughtful career interventions may alleviate some of the distress in Joan's life, career interventions which disregard her personal concerns will be incomplete at best. Additional career interventions which include a focus on the relational aspects of women's lives are recommended.

Implications for Counselors

When Fitzgerald & Crites reviewed the existing literature of women's career development to identify what was known and still needed to be determined about women's career behavior, they recommended that counselors who intended to provide interventions for women receive extensive, additional training. Although most of the accepted theories of career development do not discuss the relational worlds of women, the conclusions discussed in this section suggest that counselors would do well to pay close attention to this area when working with women.

In approaching career counseling with women a counselor might begin by helping the woman clarify her own ideas and beliefs about the work-relationship dilemma. While it would be inappropriate to expect women to set aside their beliefs about the centrality of their relationships, simply helping them to understand these often tacit beliefs may expand their career and lifestyle options.

Counselors should be informed consumers when it comes to theories, instruments, and interventions and should examine them carefully to determine the foundations upon which they are built. Career material which does not consider the unique experience of women (especially women who are in relationships and have families) may be inappropriate and ineffective.

Counselors might also explore the idea of a developmental process in a woman's approach to dealing with the work-relationship dilemma. Where a woman describes herself on this continuum suggests different types of interventions. Counselors should guard against their own subjective beliefs about how women resolve the work-relationship dilemma and should be willing to accept a woman at her current place on the continuum. Women who emphasize relationships as a higher priority than their counselor should not be pressured to place more emphasis upon their work. Likewise, women who place more emphasis upon their work than their counselor should not be viewed as radical, unwomanly, bad, or inappropriate.

Finally, counselors should be creative in 1) developing interventions which challenge circumscription beliefs and, 2) uncovering underlying assumptions and beliefs

which women hold about their responsibilities which are likely to be overlooked by conventional career assessment strategies. Women who receive career interventions which do not accommodate their relational concerns are likely to discard this information, or use it with frustration.

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Appendix A: Letter of Introduction

THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE WOMEN:
EXPECTATIONS OF WORK & RELATIONSHIPS

What influences from childhood, family, community, and prior relationships contribute to the career choices which women make?

How do beliefs about women's responsibilities in relationships (daughter, mother, partner) affect women's work-related decisions and behaviors?

A research study is underway at Oklahoma State University which will explore the elements which are involved in women's career choices. On an individual level, this information could be beneficial to you as you explore career-related issues. On a broader scale the information collected in this study could lead to the expansion of current theories of career development, making them more accurate in describing the vocational behavior of women. A \$10.00 incentive will be paid to women who complete the research interview.

Participation in the study will involve signing a consent form which will be a record of your agreement to participate in the study and to have your interview audio taped and later transcribed. Interviews will be confidential and the storage of data and reporting of results will involve anonymity. Interviews will be conducted by the researcher in an office at the counseling center and will last approximately one hour. You will be asked to complete a Demographic Data Form and Family Career Background sheet. Interview questions will focus on your recollections of early career ideas, developmental experiences which have both helped and hindered career planning, family messages about career and work, role models, considerations in balancing work and relationships, and reasons for initiating career counseling.

Participation or non-participation will have no effect upon the provision of counseling services or academic evaluation. Although not expected, aspects of the interview may be sensitive. If warranted the researcher, who is a Licensed Professional Counselor, will assist in making a referral for a counseling intervention. You will have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, with no penalty. Results of the study will be made available to you upon request. You will also be asked to consent to being re-contacted in the future to provide longitudinal information.

If you would like further information about the study and/or wish to participate please contact: Connie Fox, M. A., L. P. C., 744-7007 or 624-1543.

Appendix B: Consent Form

THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE WOMEN:
EXPECTATIONS OF WORK & RELATIONSHIPS

I, _____, hereby consent to participate in the research study entitled *The Career Development of College Women: Expectations of Work & Relationships* which is being conducted by Connie Fox. I have been informed of the following procedures:

- *The study will explore the elements which are involved in women's career choices.
- *Participation in this study may benefit my career development.
- *Information collected in this study may lead to the expansion of career theories, making them more relevant to women.
- *Depending upon the outcome of this study I may be asked to contribute additional information at a future date.
- *My responses during the (approximately) forty-five minute interview will be audio-taped, transcribed, and then the tapes will be destroyed.
- *My consent form will be held in a separate file in the researcher's office and any additional materials created during the research study (tapes, transcriptions, the reporting of results) will be identified with a pseudonym.
- *The researcher will make every attempt to keep my involvement confidential. Confidentiality may be broken without prior consent only in extremely rare situations where 1) maintaining confidentiality would clearly be of danger to the participant or others, 2) information is subpoenaed in legal proceedings, and 3) the information is required by law to be reported (e.g., knowledge of child abuse).
- *My participation is voluntary. There is no penalty for refusal to participate. I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time after notifying the researcher (Connie Fox, 744-7007) or University Research Services (Gay Clarkson, 744-5700) 305 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK, 74078.

*I am entitled to the results of the study if I so request.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: _____ Time: _____ (a.m., p.m.)

Signed: _____
(Signature of Participant)

I give my consent to be re-contacted in the future to provide longitudinal information. I understand that this requires my providing a permanent address, and that I will receive a self-addressed, postage paid postcard from the researcher on a semi-annual basis for the purpose of up-dating my address. An interview similar to the one I am currently agreeing to may be scheduled in five years.

Permanent Address: _____

Signed: _____
(Signature of Participant)

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the participant before requesting that she sign it.

Signed: _____
(Signature of Researcher)

Consent C: Demographic Data Form

THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE WOMEN:
EXPECTATIONS OF WORK & RELATIONSHIPS

Personal Background

Participant Number: _____

Date: _____ Age: _____

Ethnic Background: _____

Marital Status: _____

Current College Major: _____

Past College Majors (starting with the first one): _____

Have you ever had career counseling or career testing? (Yes) (No)

If "Yes," please describe the content. If "No," briefly explain your current goals/expectations for career counseling. _____

Appendix D: Family Career Background

FAMILY CAREER BACKGROUND

Please provide the following career information about your family members:

Relationship _____
Occupation _____
Completed High School: Yes No
Completed some College: Yes No
Completed some Vo-tech: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed bachelor's degree: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed graduate degree: Yes No
Major: _____

Relationship _____
Occupation _____
Completed High School: Yes No
Completed some College: Yes No
Completed some Vo-tech: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed bachelor's degree: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed graduate degree: Yes No
Major: _____

Relationship _____
Occupation _____
Completed High School: Yes No
Completed some College: Yes No
Completed some Vo-tech: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed bachelor's degree: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed graduate degree: Yes No
Major: _____

Relationship _____
Occupation _____
Completed High School: Yes No
Completed some College: Yes No
Completed some Vo-tech: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed bachelor's degree: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed graduate degree: Yes No
Major: _____

Relationship _____
Occupation _____
Completed High School: Yes No
Completed some College: Yes No
Completed some Vo-tech: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed bachelor's degree: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed graduate degree: Yes No
Major: _____

Relationship _____
Occupation _____
Completed High School: Yes No
Completed some College: Yes No
Completed some Vo-tech: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed bachelor's degree: Yes No
Major: _____
Completed graduate degree: Yes No
Major: _____

Appendix E: Interview Protocol

THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE WOMEN:
EXPECTATIONS OF WORK & RELATIONSHIPS

Interview Protocol

- 1 Thinking backwards to your earliest ideas about jobs and occupations, could you give me a history/sequence of the careers in which you have been interested?
- 2 What experiences have helped in the development of your career plans?
- 3 What experiences have gotten in the way of the development of your career plans?
- 4 Are you currently in/Do you want to have a committed relationship?
 - 4a How do you see your work and your relationships fitting together in your life?
 - 4b (1) What messages have you received from your family about your career or your work:? (2) About combining work and family?
- 5 How have the women in your family influenced your own ideas about women and work?
- 6 How have the men in your family influenced your own ideas about women and work?
- 7 Name 1 or 2 of your strongest role models. What about them has influenced you?
- 8 What things have been important for you to consider as you develop your career plans?
- 9 Do you have any career concerns at this time?
- 10 Is there anything that you would like to add about women and work?

Appendix F: Institutional Review Board Form

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW**

Date: 05-29-96

IRB#: ED-96-129

Proposal Title: THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE WOMEN:
EXPECTATIONS OF WORK AND RELATIONSHIPS

Principal Investigator(s): John Romans, Connie Fox

Reviewed and Processed as: Modification

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

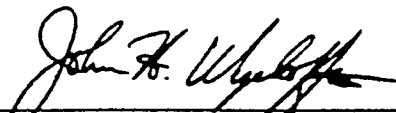
ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
AT NEXT MEETING, AS WELL AS ARE SUBJECT TO MONITORING AT ANY TIME DURING
THE APPROVAL PERIOD.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR A ONE CALENDAR YEAR
PERIOD AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE
SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.

ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR
APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature: _____



Chair of Institutional Review Board

cc: Connie Fox

Date: September 5, 1996

2

VITA

Connie Jung Fox

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE WOMEN: EXPECTATIONS
OF WORK & RELATIONSHIPS

Major Field: Applied Behavioral Studies

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Cincinnati, OH, on June 27, 1949, the daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Jung.

Education: Graduated from McNicholas High School, Cincinnati, OH, in May, 1967; received Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Edgewood College, Cincinnati, OH, in June, 1971; received Master of Arts degree in Counselor Education from The University of New Orleans, New Orleans, LA, in December, 1991. Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Department of Applied Behavioral Studies in the Counseling and Human Development program with a specialization in Women's Career Development at Oklahoma State University in May, 1997.

Experience: Mother of five children and homemaker until beginning Master's degree in 1988; varied positions at Personal Counseling Services, Oklahoma State University; August, 1995 to present: Senior Clinical Counselor, Personal Counseling Service, Oklahoma State University.

Professional Memberships: Psi Chi, Phi Kappa Phi, Chi Sigma Iota, Oklahoma College Student Personnel Association, Oklahoma Counseling Association, American Counseling Association, Association of Adult Development and Aging, Oklahoma Licensed Professional Counselor.