

COLLEGE WOMEN'S SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES AND
PLANS FOR WORK AND FAMILIES

by

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APPROVED

Miriam M. Johnson

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INTRODUCTION

and

REVIEW of the LITERATURE

Since the emergence of the "modern family" in the nineteenth century, the ideal role for men in the family has been that of the worker and main provider, whereas the ideal role for women has been that of homemaker and childcare-provider (Degler, 1980). Although these idealized roles developed in the middle class, they were also incorporated into working class and immigrant family ideals.

During World War II, women began to enter the labor force in significant numbers. Since that time, there has been a steady increase in the number (and the social acceptability) of married women working outside the home, including married women with young children (Hoffman and Nye, 1974; Degler, 1980). In 1940, around fifteen percent of all married women worked outside the home (Degler, 1980: 418); in 1981, fifty-one percent of all married women with husbands in the same household were in the paid labor force (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982:382). Nearly forty-eight percent of all married women with children under age six participated in the labor force in 1981 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982:382). This thesis examines how college women are planning to combine work with women's traditional family role.

The increase in the number of working married women has made full-time housewifery something almost to be apologized for, as indicated by the statement, "I'm just a housewife." In a review of several studies, Stockard noted, "from 1955 to 1970 then there seems to have been a large and continuous decline in the number of women opting for life as a housewife (1974:61-62)."

Although women's work role has increased in importance, women have not lost interest in the roles of wife and mother (Aneshensel and Rosen, 1980). In other surveys, the majority of college women still indicated a desire to marry and have children, and a large number of women are planning to combine work and family roles (Angrist, 1972; Parelius, 1974). Women are planning to have fewer children than before (Cook et al., 1982); they "appear to limit their fertility plans to accommodate their plans to participate in the labor force (Waite and Ross, 1976:250)." In other words, women who choose to work have fewer children than those who choose not to work.

Does the combination of work and family roles have a counterpart in the male sphere? Young and Willmott (1973) predicted that, as more women work, men will increase their participation in the home, so that by the next century they too will play both roles. Husband and wife would both work outside the home and share responsibility for work within the home. This is described as the "symmetrical family."

Young and Willmott's hypothesis is partially supported by recent research; Petersen and Maynard (1981) found that the more a wife earns in proportion to her husband's earnings, the more she will expect him to share in the housework. Yet expectations are not always met.

Despite the increased importance of the work role for women, women are still primarily responsible for maintaining the home and family, and these responsibilities are still expected to be paramount for women (Fogarty et al., 1974). In a review of cross-sectional household time-budget studies, Pleck (1977) found that the time husbands spent in family tasks did not vary in response to the decrease in time that wives spent in family tasks due to their paid employment. Bahr (1974), in a similar review, found that working wives receive some help from their husbands, but housework remained primarily women's responsibility. Pleck (1977) and Komarovsky (1973) noted that, in many cases, men's acceptance of their wives' work or future work was contingent upon their wives fulfilling their housework and family responsibilities. The plans of college women verify these priorities: few college women would sacrifice marriage or motherhood for occupational success (Parelius, 1974).

Researchers have described the work and family roles of women as conflicting ones, and have hypothesized that this conflict has limited women's achievement. Some of these limits are practical ones. Partly because of women's tra-

ditional choice not to work full-time while there are young children at home, women are effectively shut out of jobs which involve lengthy training or steady movement up long career ladders. They are more likely to work in jobs which can be re-entered after the childcare years, unless they delay childbearing until after they are well established in their careers. Other limits on women's achievement are psychological, and are derived from the fear of appearing "unfeminine." They range from fear of success (Horner, 1972) to the fear of achieving more than one's male partner does (Komarovsky, 1946). These fears may be exacerbated by the attitudes of men, who may be unwilling to be outclassed in their own sphere. Pleck described a pattern in which "husbands can accept their wives' employment as long as it doesn't come too close to, or worse, surpass their own in prestige, earnings, or psychological commitment (1977:422.)" The worker role is the primary source of self-esteem for men, and the movement of women into this sphere can be ego-threatening, especially if there is no reciprocal movement of men into the home. Consequently, men may be less likely to choose the company of "threatening" (i.e. achieving) women (Komarovsky, 1973).

Women are concentrated in jobs characterized by lower earnings and lower prestige when compared to men's jobs. Half of all working women are in 21 of the 250 jobs listed by the census bureau, whereas half of all working men are

employed in 65 occupations (Stockard and Johnson, 1980: 29). In 1981, the median earnings for female full-time workers was \$11,197, compared to \$18,612 for male full-time workers (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982:403). This means that women were earning, on the average, sixty percent of what men earned. The earnings gap is even larger than the prestige gap, because the average earnings in traditionally female jobs are even less than their prestige levels would lead one to expect (England, 1979).

Another characteristic of women's jobs is that they have traditionally been those that help people, such as teaching, nursing, and secretarial work. These jobs fit the ideal of women as nurturers. Work in these areas is seen as an extension of women's work in the home. Also, women's jobs have traditionally put them in the role of "helpers" to a male authority, such as nurse to doctor, teacher to principal, secretary to executive. Previous studies have found that women are more likely than men to give "working with people" or "helping people" as a main reason for wanting a particular job (Schwarzweiler, 1960; Stockard et al., 1973; Lueptow, 1980). This may have helped to keep women in lower prestige, traditionally female occupations (although Schwarzweiler also found a positive relationship between the desire to work with people and status aspiration for both sexes).

Despite the conflicts between work and family roles,

or perhaps because of them, women's sex-role attitudes have been becoming more egalitarian (Thornton and Freedman, 1979; Lueptow, 1980; Thornton et al., 1983). Women with more egalitarian sex-role attitudes have been found to aspire to and gain higher status positions (Scanzoni, 1980), but researchers have also noted a gap or lag between sex-role attitude change and actual behavior change (Araji, 1977; Lueptow, 1980).

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between college women's sex-role attitudes and their plans concerning work and families. We will investigate the changes in college women's sex-role attitudes over the past ten years, and how sex-role attitudes affect prestige aspiration and ideal family size. We will also examine lifestyle priorities (work versus family), and the expected division of labor in the household.

METHODOLOGY

The Sample

The data were collected during spring term, 1982, from three introductory level sociology classes at the University of Oregon. One hundred twenty males and 113 females were surveyed; the males served as a control group. Ninety-three percent of the respondents had never been married. Their mean age was 19.9 years, and 81% were freshmen or sophomores. Most fields of study were represented, with the largest concentration of students coming from business-related areas (30%). Only 2% of the respondents were sociology majors, although the survey was conducted in sociology classes. Sociology majors make up about 1% of the total university undergraduate population.

Use of this non-random sample can be justified in two ways. First, the social and behavioral sciences form a "group requirement" at the university, which means that all students, regardless of major, are required to take some coursework in this area. The introductory nature of the classes would draw students from a wide variety of major fields so that the sample would not be unreasonably high in sociology majors. The small percentage of sociology majors in the sample attests to this. The second reason for choosing this sample population is that similar and

related studies have been done previously with this type of sample (Komarovsky, 1946 and 1973; Stockard et al., 1973). This similarity of sample populations facilitated comparison of the results.

We compared the respondents' answers with data from the Stockard study mentioned previously, in which there were 585 males and 643 females. The mean age of the respondents in the 1973 study was also 19.9 years.

The Instrument

The data were collected through the use of an anonymous, self-administered three page questionnaire. The questionnaire included questions about occupational goals, family plans, the anticipated division of labor in the household, and sex-role attitudes. Some of the questions were borrowed from a previous study (Stockard et al., 1973) in order to facilitate cross-sectional comparison between time periods. The researcher chose to use a questionnaire because it was an efficient, inexpensive way to collect data from a large sample in a small amount of time. The anonymity of the respondents should have encouraged both their willingness to respond, and to respond honestly.

Measures

The analysis involved comparisons of means and percentages for statistical significance. The women's answers

were compared with those of the men in the sample and the women in a 1973 sample. We also made within group comparisons for the women in the current study. All probabilities given for tests of statistical significance are for one-tailed tests unless otherwise noted.

The feminism scale was borrowed from a previous study by Jean Stockard (1980), and "was designed to measure attitudes towards issues such as women's work status and sex-roles in the home. The seven Likert scale items used were chosen for their high interitem correlation among both males and females (Stockard, 1980:66)." The present questionnaire originally included nine sex-role questions, but two were omitted in the calculation of the feminism score by Stockard and this researcher because they "had very low correlations with the other items for the males (Stockard, 1980:79)." The responses to the questions about sex-roles were averaged together to calculate one score for each respondent. (For comparison with the 1973 data, the responses were merely summed.) The scale's range is from one to five points, with five indicating the most egalitarian attitudes.

The occupations that the respondents said they were considering were assigned prestige ratings. The ratings consisted of a number between 0 and 100. These values were adapted from the Hodge-Siegel-Rossi prestige scores in the National Data Program for the Social Sciences (National Opinion Research Center, 1977). Prestige was defined as

the respondents' (of the Hodge-Siegel-Rossi study) estimation of the social standing of the occupations. Further description of the prestige score can be found in the National Data Program for the Social Sciences (NORC, 1977: 139-140).

that they wish to marry and have children, and a small proportion have already done so. Ninety-two percent of the women surveyed wish to marry, as do 90.3% of the men. Only 1.5% of the women and 8.3% of the men are already married. The number of respondents who favor marriage did not differ significantly between the sexes. A large majority of both sexes, 87.5% of the women and 80.8% of the men, wish to have children, and 1.8% of the women and 4.2% of the men are already parents. Women want an average of 2.34 children, and men want an average of 2.28 children. The difference is insignificant ($t=0.40$; $df=230$, $p=.692$, two-tailed test). About 4% of the women and 11% of the men indicated that they do not want any children.

The students were asked to choose their future lifestyles by indicating the relative importance to them of work versus family in deciding about life plans. A majority of both sexes chose the family as the number one consideration in their future decision-making; giving equal consideration to work and families was the second most common response. Some of the women felt that her job would have priority over her family, but 9.2% of the men felt that their own jobs

RESULTS

Lifestyles

An overwhelming majority of the respondents indicated that they wish to marry and have children, and a small proportion have already done so. Ninety-two percent of the women surveyed wish to marry, as do 80.8% of the men. Only 3.5% of the women and 8.3% of the men are already married. The number of respondents who favor marriage did not differ significantly between the sexes. A large majority of both sexes, 87.6% of the women and 80.8% of the men, wish to have children, and 1.8% of the women and 4.2% of the men are already parents. Women want an average of 2.34 children, and men want an average of 2.28 children. The difference is insignificant ($t=0.40$; $df=230$; $p=.692$, two-tailed test). About 4% of the women and 11% of the men indicated that they do not want any children.

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would (see Table 1.)

TABLE 1
DECISION-MAKING PRIORITIES

Sex	Job	Family	Equal	Total	n	Missing Cases
Male	9.6%	56.5%	33.9%	100%	115	5
Female	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	100%	108	5

TABLE 2
PRIORITIES CHOSEN FOR SPOUSE

Respondent's Choice	Job	Family	Equal	Total	n	Missing Cases
for wife	1.8%	68.8%	29.4%	100%	109	11
for husband	3.7%	48.6%	47.7%	100%	107	6

When asked to choose priorities for their future spouses, a majority of the men felt that their wives should put their families first, and 46.0% of the women felt that their husbands should do the same (see Table 2). If we compare cross-sex expectations with expectations for self, we see that 62.5% of the men think that their wives should put their families first, and 63.7% of the women think that they will do so. Agreement was not so close in the opposite situation, but was a more positive response for the family on the part of men. Only 46.0% of the women expect their future husbands to make their families first priority in

decision-making, but 54.2% of the men think that they will do so.

We also asked the respondents at which times during the family cycle they wish to work. Sixty percent of the men and 16.8% of the women want to always have a full-time job, while 5.0% of the men and 3.5% of the women never want to work full-time. This implies that 35% of the men and 79.6% of the women will interrupt their careers, mostly in order to raise children ($\lambda=.297$). A little over 74% of the women and 14% of the men want their spouses to always have a full-time job, and 73% of the men and 25% of the women expect their spouses to interrupt their careers to raise children (implied) ($\lambda=.479$). Stated more simply, men still expect and are expected to work; women expect and are expected to interrupt their work to raise children.

Division of Labor in the Home

We asked the respondents whom they expect to be primarily responsible for various chores around the house. The results are shown in Table 3. The women were more willing than men to share any of the chores, even the stereotypically male ones. If we look at the modal categories, we see that the men expect to share responsibility for only two of the six stereotypically female chores, grocery shopping and washing the dishes. They do not really expect to share the "male" chores. Cooking, cleaning the bathroom,

and laundry were predicted to be the woman's responsibility by both men and women, and household repairs and car maintenance were seen as overwhelmingly "male" activities.

TABLE 3
EXPECTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHORES

Chore	Males			Females		
	Me	Spouse	Both	Me	Spouse	Both
Household repairs	<u>77.5%</u>	0.8%	15.0%	1.8%	<u>57.5%</u>	36.3%
Car maintenance	<u>73.3</u>	0.0	13.3	0.0	<u>80.5</u>	15.0
Yardwork	<u>59.2</u>	0.8	31.7	3.5	30.1	<u>61.9</u>
Garbage	<u>54.2</u>	5.0	30.8	11.5	38.1	<u>46.0</u>
Cooking	7.5	<u>46.7</u>	37.5	48.7	3.5	43.4
Grocery shopping	6.7	33.3	<u>50.8</u>	36.3	1.8	<u>58.4</u>
Washing dishes	6.7	31.7	<u>47.5</u>	28.3	3.5	<u>63.7</u>
Bathroom	5.8	<u>46.7</u>	36.7	<u>50.4</u>	3.5	38.9
Laundry	5.0	<u>54.2</u>	31.7	<u>55.8</u>	1.8	35.4
Housecleaning	4.2	<u>43.3</u>	42.5	38.9	0.9	<u>54.0</u>

Modal response for each sex is underlined

Occupational Choice

The study examined two aspects of the respondents' future employment: prestige level and the respondents' main reasons for wanting the job. The modal prestige score was 50 for both men and women. The mean prestige score of jobs chosen by women was somewhat less than that of jobs chosen

by men, 54.85 points as opposed to 57.87 points ($t=1.91$, $df=188.28$; $p=.029$), a statistically significant difference.

The distribution of the prestige scores also differed between the sexes. The distribution of the women's scores fell in a normal curve pattern, whereas the men's distribution is rather bimodal, with the second mode falling in the 71-80 point range (Figure 1). Males have the advantage only in the top highest groups. If we consider the scores above 70 to be the high prestige scores, we find 27.9% of the men and only 9.9% of the women in this category, a highly significant difference ($z=3.486$; $p<.0005$). The respondents chose the following occupations in this category: physician, lawyer, physicist, architect, psychologist, coach, and bank officer. Interestingly enough, 50% of the women in this category wish to be psychologists.

When asked why they aspired to a particular occupation, the most common reason given by respondents of either sex was that they wanted to work with people. Only 26.7% of the men surveyed gave this reason, compared with 46.9% of the women, a highly significant difference ($z=3.201$; $p<.005$). The next three most common responses were, in descending order of occurrence, money, creative opportunity, and challenge (see Table 4). The male/female differences in these categories were not statistically significant.

FIGURE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF PRESTIGE SCORES

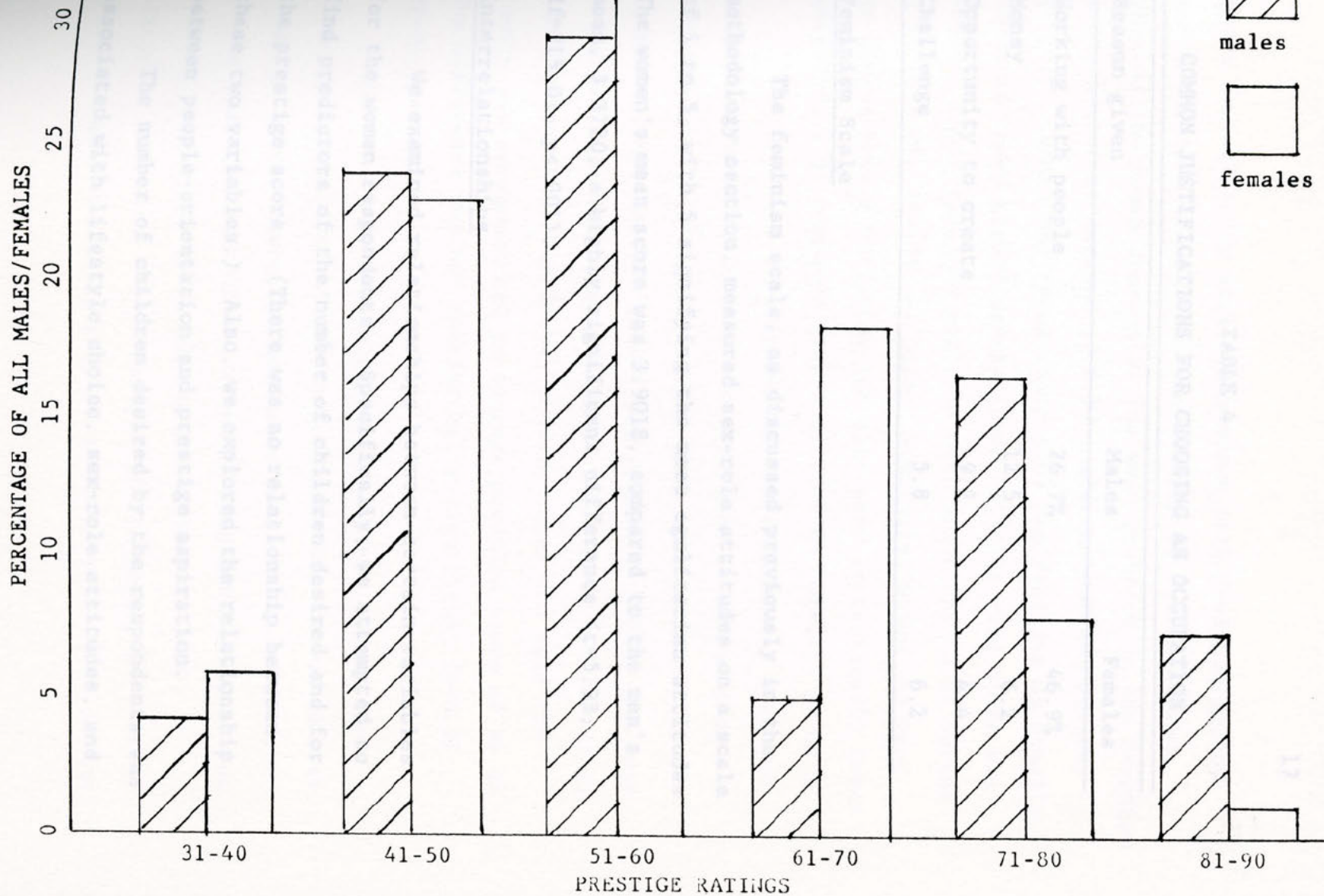


TABLE 4
COMMON JUSTIFICATIONS FOR CHOOSING AN OCCUPATION

Reason given	Males	Females
Working with people	26.7%	46.9%
Money	12.5	6.2
Opportunity to create	9.2	4.4
Challenge	5.8	6.2

Feminism Scale

The feminism scale, as discussed previously in the methodology section, measured sex-role attitudes on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 signifying the most egalitarian attitudes. The women's mean score was 3.9018, compared to the men's mean, 3.3780, a highly significant difference ($t=5.93$; $df=215.01$; $p<.001$).

Interrelationships

We examined relationships between certain variables for the women respondents. Specifically, we attempted to find predictors of the number of children desired and for the prestige score. (There was no relationship between these two variables.) Also, we explored the relationship between people-orientation and prestige aspiration.

The number of children desired by the respondents was associated with lifestyle choice, sex-role attitudes, and

plans for full-time work. The women with feminism scores above the mean (3.9) desire an average of 2.14 children, whereas the women scoring at the mean or below on the feminism scale desire an average of 2.57 children ($t=2.19$; $df=108$; $p=.015$). Women who rated their jobs and families as equally important want significantly fewer children than women who thought their families would be most important, 1.92 versus 2.54 ($t=3.05$; $df=105$; $p<.002$). Similarly, women who want to always have a full-time job also want statistically fewer children, 1.95 compared with 2.41 ($t=1.84$; $df=111$; $p=.035$).

The prestige aspirations of the respondents were not correlated with their sex-role attitudes as measured by the feminism scale ($r^2=.0152$). They were also not associated with the two lifestyle priorities chosen by women; the mean prestige score for women who rated their jobs and family as equally important was 54.34, whereas women who said the family was paramount had an average prestige score of 54.38. The difference was not statistically significant ($t=0.02$; $df=94$; $p=.494$).

The desire to work with people did not affect the prestige aspirations of the respondents, but the women with prestige scores above the mean were more likely to mention people than the rest of the women if they gave a reason for wanting their jobs ($\chi^2=6.003$; $p=0.143$; $\lambda=.205$).

Sixty-six and seven tenths percent of the women who scored above the mean mentioned people, compared with 41.2% of the

women with prestige scores of 55 (mean) and below ($z=2.45$; $p<.02$; two-tailed test).

We compared some of the responses from our sample to those from a study using a similar sample done by Jean Stockard et al. in 1972 and 1973.

Lifestyles

In the 1973 study, 86.5% of the women wished to marry, and 4.8% were already married, combining to indicate that a total of 91.3% of the women looked favorably upon marriage. This did not significantly change in the 1982 study in which 93.5% of the women favored marriage. Also in the 1973 study, 80.2% of the men said that they wished to marry, and 7.0% were already married. This 87.2% of the males with a favorable attitude toward marriage did not significantly differ from the 89.1% of the 1982 males who favored marriage, either.

In 1973, 80.9% of the females and 77.3% of the males said that they wished to have children, compared with 87.6% of the females and 80.8% of the males in the 1982 study. The changes are not significant.

Only 3.3% of the 1982 women never went to work full-time after marriage, and 16.8% went to always have full-time work, compared with 9.4% and 11.2%, respectively, of the 1973 women. In both cases, the change is statistically sig-

COMPARISON WITH 1973 GROUP

We compared some of the responses from our sample to those from a study using a similar sample done by Jean Stockard et al. in 1972 and 1973.

Lifestyles

In the 1973 study, 86.5% of the women wished to marry, and 4.8% were already married, combining to indicate that a total of 91.3% of the women looked favorably upon marriage. This did not significantly change in the 1982 study in which 95.5% of the women favored marriage. Also in the 1973 study, 80.2% of the men said that they wished to marry, and 7.0% were already married. This 87.2% of the males with a favorable attitude toward marriage did not significantly differ from the 89.1% of the 1982 males who favored marriage, either.

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Only 3.5% of the 1982 women never want to work full-time after marriage, and 16.8% want to always have full-time work, compared with 8.4% and 11.2%, respectively, of the 1973 women. In both cases, the change is statistically sig-

nificant (never, $z=1.81$; always, $z=1.70$; $p<.05$ for each). Five percent of the men in the 1982 study indicated that they never want a full-time job, compared with 14.9% of the men in the 1973 study. This is a statistically significant change ($z=2.919$; $p<.01$, two-tailed test). The proportion of men that want to always have a full-time job rose from 53.7% to 60.0%. The change is not significant.

Occupational Choice

The mean prestige level of the desired jobs for both sexes dropped slightly between 1973 and 1982. For men, the mean dropped from 60.27 points to 57.87 points. The women's mean prestige score dropped from 56.52 to 54.85. Neither change is statistically significant.

The proportion of students that said they wished to work with people dropped for both sexes. The proportion of males dropped from 32.6% to 31.4%, and the percentage of females that wished to work with people dropped from 56.6% to 46.9%. Neither change is statistically significant. The gap between males and females decreased by 8.5 points over the 10 year span.

Feminism Scale

The mean scores on the feminism scale (27.309 versus 24.968 on a range of 7 to 35) indicated that the women of 1982 hold more liberal attitudes towards women's roles ($z=4.59$; $p<.0005$). The difference is highly significant.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

As predicted, the sex-role attitudes of the women in the 1982 study were significantly more egalitarian than the attitudes held by the women in the 1973 study, and also more liberal than those of the men in the 1982 study. The women in the 1982 sample indicated more acceptance of non-traditional work roles for women, and the women's plans for work seem to indicate that the attitudes would be reflected in their own lives. More women plan to work full-time, and fewer wish never to have a full-time job.

Despite these attitude changes and increased expectations for labor force participation, there was no significant change in the number of women wishing to marry and have children, just as no change was found in the earlier study by Parelius (1974). We must conclude, then, that an ever-increasing number of women are planning to fill both work and family roles.

The results also indicate that filling both roles means interrupting work outside the home (at least cutting back to part-time) in order to raise children. Both sexes expect that women will do this. Men both expect to work and are expected to work by the women through the childcare years. In other words, respondents of both sexes expect and are expected by each other to play the traditional roles of the male provider and female childcare-giver, with one major

difference--the women expect to work outside the home, in addition to their traditional role.

A large proportion of women indicated that the family would be the number one priority in future decision-making, and none of the women considered her future job to be more important than her family. Over half of the men thought that their families would be the priority in decision-making, too, and nearly a third gave it equal consideration with their future jobs. This seems to contradict the finding that sixty percent of the men want to always work full-time, but it is easily explained when the traditional roles are considered. Men perceive working and providing as their way of taking care of the family, whereas women's work for the family much more actively involves physical and socio-emotional care in the home. For women, commitment to the family means actual time spent in the home.

The data on the expected division of labor in the home consistently showed one sex difference--more women than men expect the responsibility for chores to be shared. This was true for both "male" and "female" chores. Because most of the women plan to work full-time at some point, this expectation is consistent with the Petersen and Maynard study which found a positive relationship between women's earnings and expectations of shared housework. Most of the men expect their wives to work full-time at some point, yet fewer men than women seem willing to share responsibility. It is

impossible to know whose expectations will prevail until the respondents are actually in the shared living situation, but if there is indeed a gap between expectations and actual behavior, it is likely that the predictions of shared housework are more egalitarian than the actual experience will be.

Another interesting aspect of the predicted responsibility for chores is that men saw none of the typically male chores as a primarily shared responsibility, and women saw only two as primarily shared, garbage and yardwork. The remaining two, household repairs and car maintenance, were the most strongly male activities. Two possible explanations for this are either that these two chores are the most likely to be classified as hobbies, and therefore not easily relinquished because they are sources of pleasure and feelings of competence for the men, or that these chores have a "masculine mystique," which makes them seem difficult or nearly impossible for women to learn.

As expected, the number of children desired was negatively associated with egalitarian sex-role attitudes and plans which emphasize the increasing importance of the work role for women, although the number of children desired was always close to two. Women have not relinquished (or have not been allowed to relinquish) primary responsibility for childcare, but working women plan to decrease the amount of time spent at home in childcare by reducing the number of children to care for. Jobs are not more important than the

family, but they do affect the size of the family. The fact that we did not find a predictor for prestige aspiration among the sex-role related variables is problematic, because it seems to contradict previous studies in the field. Scanzoni (1980) found that sex-role attitudes were associated with status aspiration and status attainment, and Schwarzweller (1960) found that people-orientation was positively related to high status aspiration.

In the Scanzoni study, the sample consisted of white, married women with husbands present in the home. In the current study, we are dealing with a much narrower range of sex-role attitudes and occupational prestige levels because the respondents are, for the most part, fairly liberal women aspiring to jobs requiring a college education. The relationship between sex-role attitudes and status aspiration and attainment may hold for the population where there are larger differences in attitudes and occupational status, but it was not true for this fairly homogeneous sample of college women.

The Schwarzweller study's sample consisted of Kentucky high school seniors. Schwarzweller classified professional, semiprofessional, and managerial occupations as high status, and the remainder as low status. In the current study, most of the respondents are aspiring to jobs which Schwarzweller would classify as high status. The sample does not contain the people aiming for lower status occupations not requiring a college education who would normally be present in a high

school sample. Although there may very well be a positive relationship between people-orientation and status aspiration, we found no difference in the prestige aspirations of people-oriented and nonpeople-oriented women within the higher status group.

The finding that high prestige aspiration helped in predicting people-orientation was a surprising one. Wishing to work with people and wishing to help people are characteristically women's reasons for wanting a particular job. Because women's jobs are typically lower in prestige than men's, we expected the lower prestige rated jobs to be justified by altruistic motives. This was not the case. What we found may be a defense mechanism. Women who aspire to high status, nontraditional occupations may feel the need to redefine their hoped-for occupations so that they are in line with "feminine" roles in order to appear less threatening to the established status hierarchy (Stockard and Johnson, 1980:15), and also to reassure themselves of their femininity.

Although we could not predict the women's prestige aspirations from their sex-role attitudes or lifestyle priorities, another pattern in prestige scores emerged: the women's mean prestige score was significantly lower than the men's mean score, due to differences in distribution. Why are so few women aspiring to the highest prestige levels? The answer may lie in women's traditional responsibilities. None of the women saw her future job as more important than

her future family. Women must consider their family role as well as their occupational role when they choose an occupation (Psathas, 1968), whereas men's occupational role and family role are one and the same. The results of the current study show that women do consider their family in conjunction with the work role. The traditional family role is at least as important as the work role for these college women, if not more so. Because commitment to the family partially involves actual time spent in the home by women, even equality of the family and work roles means some compromising of the work role that men do not have to do. This will not change until housework and childcare become less heavily women's responsibility. Until then, women will be at a disadvantage in the competition for prestige.

their traditional family role when choosing their future jobs; this may narrow the range of occupations from which they may choose. Within this narrowed range, other occupational choice factors may function much as they do for men, but women are kept from the top prestige levels before these factors come into play.

Further study is suggested. Women who place their work before their families (if indeed they exist) and women at the highest prestige levels must be studied in order to discover how they made their choices. Also, repeat studies should be done at regular intervals in order to assess further change as it occurs.

CONCLUSION

College women's sex-role attitudes have become significantly more egalitarian over the past ten years, and today's women are more inclined to participate in the labor force. Yet women's anticipated role in the family as homemaker and primary childcare-provider has not changed. Even at the planning stage, there is a gap between the new attitudes and the implementation of those attitudes.

Women in college are likely to be aspiring to higher status occupations than those who do not go to college when the full range of occupations is considered, but within this relatively high status group, women do not yet aspire to the very top in significant numbers. Women seem to consider their traditional family role when choosing their future jobs; this may narrow the range of occupations from which they may choose. Within this narrowed range, other occupational choice factors may function much as they do for men, but women are kept from the top prestige levels before these factors come into play.

Further study is suggested. Women who place their work before their families (if indeed they exist) and women at the highest prestige levels must be studied in order to discover how they made their choices. Also, repeat studies should be done at regular intervals in order to assess further change as it occurs.

The attitudes of college women indicate that we are coming closer to a society based on the "symmetrical family," but we still have a long way to go before behaviors fully reflect those attitudes. We cannot achieve such a society until both the work and family roles of women and men are redefined.

APPENDIX THE QUESTIONNAIRE

KII

I AM DOING A SENIOR THESIS ON COLLEGE STUDENTS' ANTICIPATIONS ABOUT OCCUPATIONS AND LIFE STYLES AFTER COLLEGE. I WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR HELP IN FILLING OUT THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS HONESTLY AND ACCURATELY AS YOU CAN. IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO ANSWER A PARTICULAR QUESTION, FEEL FREE TO SKIP IT. ALL YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE COMPLETELY ANONYMOUS. DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, WRITE APPENDIX NO. 47, P.O. BOX 20127
EDMOND, OK 73043

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.

MICHAEL L. LEE
SENIOR, PSYCHOLOGY

1. What is your sex? male female.

2. How old are you? _____ years old.

3. Are you: single married separated divorced widowed?

HI!

I AM DOING A SENIOR THESIS ON COLLEGE STUDENTS' ANTICIPATIONS ABOUT OCCUPATIONS AND LIFE STYLES AFTER COLLEGE. I WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR HELP IN FILLING OUT THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE.

7. What kinds of work have you actually been thinking about going into? Be as

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS HONESTLY AND ACCURATELY AS YOU CAN.

IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO ANSWER A PARTICULAR QUESTION, FEEL FREE TO SKIP IT.

ALL YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE COMPLETELY ANONYMOUS. DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU CAN REACH ME AT: P.O. BOX 30122
EUGENE, OR 97403

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.

11. What was your mother's occupation while you were growing up? (while you were in high school).

MICHELE L. LEE
SENIOR, SOCIOLOGY

12. I expect that I will get married when I find _____

yes, definitely no, definitely

yes, probably no, probably

already married

13. Do you want to be a parent when you are older?

yes, definitely no, definitely

yes, probably no, probably

already as a parent

14. If you are considering having children, what is the ideal number of children that you would like to have?

_____ children.

1. What is your sex? male female.
2. How old are you? years old.
3. Are you: single married separated divorced widowed?
4. Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend/significant other? yes no.
5. What year are you in college? Freshman sophomore junior senior
 grad
6. What is your major in college? _____
7. What kinds of work have you actually been thinking about going into? Be as specific as you can.

8. Which of the kinds of work that you mentioned in the above question would you really most like to do?

9. Please write down what appeals to you about this kind of work.

10. What was your father's occupation while you were growing up? (while you were in high school).
_____ part time full time
11. What was your mother's occupation while you were growing up? (while you were in high school).
_____ part time full time
12. I expect that I will get married when I find the right person.
 yes, definitely no, definitely
 yes, probably no, probably
 already married
13. Do you want to be a parent when you are older?
 yes, definitely no, definitely
 yes, probably no, probably
 already am a parent
14. If you are considering having children, what is the ideal number of children that you would like to have?
 children.

15. Now assume that you are going to get married and are going to have children. Also assume that you would not absolutely have to work at any time to support your family.

At which of the following times would you like to have a full-time paying job outside the home? Check all responses that apply.

don't want a full-time job at any time after marriage

after I am married and before we have children

after my children are old enough to go to school

after my children get in high school

after my children leave home

would always want a full-time job after marriage

other (explain) _____

16. At which of the following times would you like your spouse to have a full-time paying job outside the home? Check all responses that apply.

No full-time job at any time after marriage

after we are married and before we have children

after the children are old enough to go to school

after the children get in high school

after the children leave home

would always want my spouse to have a full-time job after marriage

other (explain) _____

17. Assume again that you are going to get married. Which of the following best describes your anticipated life style? your spouse's life style?
(Check one for you, one for your spouse.)

me spouse

- ___ ___ My job is the most important part of my life. My spouse and my children are important to me, too, but my job will be the major factor in any life-style decisions that I make.
- ___ ___ My family is the most important part of my life. My job is important to me, too, but my spouse and children will be the deciding factor in any major life-style decisions that I make.
- ___ ___ My family and my job are equally important parts of my life. Both will be equally important factors in any major life-style decisions that I make.

18. Assume (for the last time!) that you will marry. Whom do you see as primarily responsible for the following household duties?

	<u>Me</u>	<u>Spouse</u>	<u>Other</u> (specify)
Cooking	___	___	___
Housecleaning	___	___	___
Cleaning the bathroom	___	___	___
Taking out garbage	___	___	___
Laundry	___	___	___
Grocery Shopping	___	___	___
Yardwork	___	___	___
Household repairs	___	___	___
Car maintenance	___	___	___
Washing dishes	___	___	___
Paying household bills	___	___	___

The following are some questions about roles of women. Some ask how you think things really are and some ask how you think they should be, and others ask how you really act. Please answer as honestly as you can.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. A woman has little to gain through participation in the present Women's Liberation Movement.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
*2. A woman should not sacrifice her work or her career to meet the needs of her family any more than her husband does.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
**3. The joys of motherhood do not make up for the sacrifices.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. By their very nature, men are more suited for positions of leadership and authority than women.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
**5. Jokes about women are made in good humor and aren't really insults to women.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. It would be wrong for a woman to work if her husband didn't want her to.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Motherhood and the family provide a woman with all she needs for a happy and productive life.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. It's not right for a woman to go into a field of work where she may take a job away from a man who has to support a family.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
*9. I would be willing to vote for a woman for president of the United States.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

*The scale for these two items was reversed in the coding process.

**These two items were omitted in computation of the feminism score.

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