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STABILITY AND CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF VOLUNTARILY CHILDLESS COUPLES

by
Meda Rebecca

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Psychology)
in The University of Michigan
1977

Doctoral Committee:

Professor Klaus F. Riegel, Chairperson
Associate Professor Robert Hefner
Professor Lois W. Hoffman
Assistant Professor Louise Tilly

DEDICATION

To my parents,

for their love and encouragement.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The topic of this dissertation is: stability and change in the lives of voluntarily childless couples, explored through the use of longitudinal group data and biographical case study. However, I intend to use this material to go beyond the topic of voluntary childlessness in order to address several issues critical to the field of developmental psychology, which may be understood in the context of doing research on developmental and sex-role aspects of voluntary childlessness. The purpose of this introduction is to spell out the issues under consideration in the remainder of the dissertation.

There are two basic assumptions critical to an understanding of my perspective. First, psychology has become increasingly alienated from its philosophical and historical roots (Sexton, 1976). The re-establishment of links between psychology and its roots is needed in order to promote the generation and growth of knowledge (in particular, psychological knowledge). Much of my thinking, then, derives from an exploration of these philosophical and historical roots. Second, I assume that any particular scientific endeavor is determined by the particular world view of the scientist (Gergen, 1975). The interpretation of data cannot be fully understood without due consideration

of the perspective of the scientist, including her implicit prescriptions for behavior and society. I will therefore make my own perspective explicit and show how it has grown out of the above mentioned philosophical and historical considerations.

Change

The concept of change provides a unifying principle by which to understand the coalescing of several lines of thought represented in this work. It seems obvious that developmental psychologists are concerned with change, since development is change. However, there are widely varying conceptualizations about the nature of change, how it takes place, the direction it takes, in what domains it occurs, for how long and at what rate. There are also differing degrees of recognition of the mutual impact of individual change or development and societal change or development. In a previous paper (Rebecca, 1975) I have outlined a number of differences between two major models of developmental psychology (Overton & Reese, 1973; Riegel, 1973a): the mechanistic or reactive organism model (e.g., social learning theory) and the organismic or active organism model (e.g., Piaget, Kohlberg, etc.). According to Overton and Reese (1973), the basic metaphor of the mechanistic model is the machine. This model characterizes the organism as

> . . . inherently at rest, and active only as a result of external forces. Cognitive activities such as thinking, willing, wishing, and perceiving are viewed as complex phenomena ultimately reducible to simple phenomena governed by

> efficient causes. Novelty or emergence--the appearance of qualitative change--is considered to be an epiphenomenon or reducible to quantitative change. (p. 69)

The basic metaphor of the organismic model is the living organism. In this model

> . . . the organism is inherently and spontaneously active; the organism is the source of acts . . . an organized entity, whose parts gain their meaning from the whole . . . change is given . . . new properties emerge, irreducible to lower levels and therefore qualitatively different from them. (p. 70)

Several of the differences between the two models revolve around change: whether it is quantitative or qualitative, continuous or discontinuous and whether it is behavioral or structural. These differences indicate the extent to which a particular world view (variously called model, metamodel, metatheory) influences what psychologists actually do. For example, the two schemas (mechanistic and organismic) represent distinct ways of looking at the world. On the one hand sex roles are imposed on the individual from outside--parents, society, education, etc.; growth is quantitative, continuous, and open-ended. On the other hand, sex roles derive originally from structures internal to the individual--growth is qualitative and closed. Each of the constructions of reality are disposed to certain forms of inquiry. On the one hand, the interest is on antecedent--consequent analysis in which variables are isolated. For example, does differential handling of infants, or media, or textbooks, or imitation, or some combination of these things (which? how many?) affect sex-typing? On the other

hand, inquiry is based on an analysis of structure and function in which purpose or form is primary and determinative. For example, in Kohlberg's (1966) theory, gender identity occurs first, followed by sex-typed interests, attitudes, and values, followed by imitation of same sex figures followed by attachment to same sex figures. I will return to these issues in more detail shortly.

It should be mentioned at this point that although the mechanistic and organismic models address the issue of individual change, both are ahistorical in that they do not consider changes in the milieu in which people develop. Both in the field of sex roles and in the field of fertility it is nothing less than irresponsible to ignore or deny historical change. Neugarten and Datan (1973) consider historical time as one variable which influences personality development. They define socialization as "the process of social learning or of training through which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, the needs and motivations, and the cognitive, affective, and conative patterns that relate them to their socio-cultural setting. The success of the socialization process is measured by the ability of the individual to perform well in the roles he takes on" (p. 56). Life time (ontological development), social time (the underlying age-grade system of society) and historical time (those conditions which create a changing set of age norms) all affect development. For example, for some segments of our society,

the age of economic maturity has been deferred for men, but not for women. Men have prolonged their education, while women have worked to put men through school. For other segments of society, men may drop out of high school to find a job or do so as soon as possible after finishing high school, while women may prolong their education. Thus, there are different historical trends for women and men which vary also for different subgroups of society. Emmerich (1973) points to "secular changes" or changes in the historical-cultural milieu which lead to mismatches between early sex-role socialization and later role requirements.

Additionally, historical-cultural changes are not manifested consistently in all spheres of society. For example, the Women's Movement has penetrated many aspects of society and has influenced all generations to a greater or lesser degree (Mason & Bumpass, 1975). However, there is a certain amount of cultural lag, for example in television commercials, textbooks, curriculum, etc. This inconsistency must certainly affect the outcome of socialization.

One of the critical shortcomings of traditional approaches to socialization--in both the mechanistic and organismic variety--is that socialization implies continuation of the status quo. Several people have offered definitions of socialization which do not take into account historical change. Although Bengston and Black (1973) define socialization as an attempt to ensure continuity of a social system over time (p. 208),

they also see it as a bilateral process. In other words, the parent generation and the child generation influence each other by negotiating those factors leading to change and those leading to continuity. Sociocultural change results from the confrontation of similarity and change between generations. Epstein (1974) makes a plea for more investigation of ongoing socialization in the form of life-cycle studies and studies of social control systems of society which "continue to lock women into traditional role behavior." When talking about cross-cultural research, Epstein criticizes the lack of attention to historical context. There is insufficient consideration of differing historical and cultural influences over time and across subgroups. Millman (1971), too, calls for a consideration of sex roles in relation to the larger social structure and social change. For example, she conceives of sex roles as a means for a social system to assign contradictory qualities to different characters, creating different spheres of influence (e.g., home vs. work). In this way, contradictions can be denied because everything runs smoothly. The fact that everything does not run smoothly attests to the inherent problem in abstracting human qualities from real life actions and interactions.

The theme of change and the variations on this theme can be discussed for the purposes of developmental psychology in terms of implications for both theoretical orientation and methodology. Insights from several different directions have helped to define the salient arguments which in turn illuminate

what we have to work with and what needs to be done. Three sources which have contributed to these insights are: life-span developmental psychology, critiques of prevailing models of psychology, and dialectical psychology.

Life-Span Developmental Psychology

The newly emerging interest in life-span psychology has prompted an examination of existing orientations and methodologies and the development of perspectives and techniques needed to fill the existing gaps. Before examining these new developments, I would like to raise the question of whether or not these developments are indeed new. This issue is related to one of my initial assumptions, that psychology is alienated from its historical roots. I think it is important to take this brief detour in order to demonstrate the usefulness of historical inquiry to growth in the field. In tracing the history of socialization theory and research, Clausen (1968) points out that there was an original and primary interest in adult personality and how it developed. This interest in the determinants of adult personality and behavior lead, in turn, to an intense interest in children. Together with the establishment of child welfare centers and a focus on psychological testing (e.g., Binet) and measurement, the interest in children resulted in a firm committment to experimental laboratory child psychology. Psychologists appear to have become entrenched in this committment to the extent that they have forgotten

the original intent of their work--the explanation of adult personality and behavior. The evolution of developmental psychology can be seen as an emergence of new orientations and methodologies from inherent contradictions in old forms. The principle of negation of the negation applies, in which a reaction (behaviorism) to the predominant mode (introspection) is itself changed in such a way as to affirm the first but at a "higher" level (social cognition). Thus, the final stage and the first stage may appear to be alike in some way, but the intervening process has changed the final stage significantly. The growth of psychology is a dynamic process rather than a linear one, with emergent trends rather than mere accommodation of old trends to new data.

In the case of life-span developmental psychology, the interest in adulthood and aging can be seen as a reestablishment of previous interest in light of the knowledge gained about development during the intervening reaction to that interest. How one perceives the development of psychology, then, and how one makes use of this history determines the course of future growth.

The life-span movement has addressed the issue of change on three levels: in the discipline itself (Riegel, 1973a, Havighurst, 1973), in the individual (Overton & Reese, 1973; Neugarten, 1968), and in the interactions of people with their historical cultural milieu (Riegel, 1975b, Nesselroade and Baltes, 1974). The issue of continuous versus discontinuous

change has been brought to the forefront by life-span developmental psychologists.

> It is not theoretically possible to predict adult behavior fully from childhood characteristics, because neither evolutionary-cultural-historical changes nor outcomes of ontogenetic change can be predicted with a high degree of accuracy. One must expect continuing change and continuing need for intervention, education and new forms of socialization throughout life. (Stein & Baltes, 1975, p. 3)

Mechanistic theories postulate continuous change in which development proceeds via gradual modifications of already existing behaviors--a quantitative accumulation of elements. New behaviors are seen as derived from previous ones. There is continuity, for example, between the play interests of children, choice of subject matter in school, and later adult life styles (Overton & Reese, 1973; Rebecca, 1975). At the descriptive level, organismic theories postulate discontinuity (Stein & Baltes, 1975). The stages of cognitive development as described by Piaget (1970) or moral development as described by Kohlberg (1969) are qualitatively different from each other. In terms of explanation, however, both mechanistic and organismic theories are continuous in that the mechanism or processes of development are invariant. Explanatory discontinuity would allow for the possibility of different antecedents or mechanisms depending on the time period (individual and historical) in question. Since life-span developmental psychology is concerned with long-term sequences and a changing historical-cultural milieu, it can provide both the orientation and

methodological advances needed to determine whether continuity or discontinuity is appropriate for a particular case without making a priori decisions based on a restricted world view. To reiterate, not only does behavior change acorss the life span, the antecedent determinants as well as the causal functions may change (Baltes and Willis, 1976).

The nature of causal relationships needs some further explanation since it, too, is influenced by a predisposition to a particular world view and influences the scientific process. Overton and Reese (1973) present a cogent summary of the four causal determinants proposed by Aristotle:

> The material cause of an object is the substance which constitutes the object. Granting historical changes in the scientific conception of substance, a present-day example of material causes would consist of the physiological, neurological, or genetic substrate that is a necessary condition for behavior. Efficient cause is the external agent, antecedent condition, or independent variable which moves the object. Formal cause is the pattern, organization, or form of an object. Thus, the specification of psychological structures, for example, constitutes a formal cause. Final cause is the end toward which an object develops. The attribution of an endpoint of development, such as differentiation and hierarchical integration, is an example of final cause. It should be explicitly recognized that the formal and final causes are openly teleological. (p. 75)

Much of psychology is restricted by limited definitions of causality; mechanistic psychologists rely on only material and efficient causes and organismic psychologists impose an end point on development. Few are open to a consideration of multiple causal relationships, or to the saliency of one over another changing over time and in different circumstances. And,

as Rychlak (1976) states, "We sometimes forget that even something so apparently pervasive as causation is nothing more than a theoretical construction, a paradigmatic scheme used to organize our descriptive understanding of things" (p. 4).

The orientation toward change which is fostered by life-span developmental psychology has implications for methodology as well. According to Stein and Baltes (1975), " . . . most of the traditional, experimental design methods in the psychological sciences are ill-suited for the assessment of long term chains and distal causes" (p. 11). Again, if one examines the history of methodological techniques in the study of development and socialization, it is evident that the precursor to laboratory experiments with children (from which new techniques will yet emerge) was biography. "Personality was seen as a dynamic process, to be understood in terms of the reconstructed biography of the individual" (Clausen, 1968, p. 38). The concept of biography as representing sequences of events in the development of the individual in light of the greatly advanced methodological technology produced by laboratory experiments has given rise to new methods of assessing development more consistent with the concept of a changing person in a changing world. Most significant is the reevaluation of the concept of age, removing it from the status of independent variable (Wohlwill, 1970).

> . . . if inter-individual differences regarding age-behavior change functions are large, it is not useful to focus on chronological age-change models as repre-

> sentations of intraindividual change patterns. On the contrary, such behavior-change functions can be better examined outside a chronological age framework, as a given class of behavior-change processes might occur at different age levels and periods for different organisms depending upon the unique schedule of life histories and the timing of critical life events. (Baltes & Willis, 1976, p. 12)

Sophisticated sequential strategies (combinations of cross sectional and longitudinal designs) have emerged which acknowledge the complex interactions of ontological development and historical change (e.g., Baltes, 1968; Nesselroade and Baltes, 1974; Schaie, 1965).

Critique of Models

As sophisticated as these methods are, they do not by themselves capture the essence of change and we need to probe still further. The second approach I will take focuses on the critique of existing models of developmental psychology as proposed by Gergen (1976). This critique is similar to others mentioned previously (Overton & Reese, 1973; Riegel, 1975b) in that it approaches the literature from a metatheoretical perspective, but is unique in that it focuses explicitly on change. Gergen proposes four criteria for theoretical evaluation: (1) comprehensive understanding, (2) prediction, (3) prescriptive valuation, and (4) scientific promise. Using these criteria, Gergen evaluates three theoretical templates (yet another word for model, meta-model, metatheory, etc.): the stability template, the template of ordered change, and the aliatory template. The

stability template maintains (and prescribes) simply that behavior patterns are stable over time. The template of ordered change (as represented by Piaget) recognized differences among distinct classes of behavior, but maintains that change is unidirectional and that forward change is good--at least until "maturity." Patterns of development are assumed to be reliable and replicable. The aliatory change template is quite different and, like the orientation provided by life-span developmental psychology, offers a conceptualization of change which is central to the understanding of human development. In this template, the ". . . confluence of potentially interacting factors or processes . . . may be viewed as a cross-time emergent" (p. 24). In other words, explanatory discontinuity is postulated in which any causal relationship is potentially unreliable. In this way, the scientist is encouraged to find and be "sensitized" to a wide range of determinants and causal relationships. Social change rather than social stability is prescribed, and a revision of the "scientific program" is called for.

Gergen addresses this call for revision in another paper (Gergen, 1975) in which he criticizes the use of experiment in social psychology. The criticisms are relevant also for developmental psychology and have implications for methodology. First, Gergen points out that although social events (and this includes development) are culturally embedded, most experiments are designed to isolate variables and thus alter or even destroy

their meaning. Second, social events are sequentially embedded, although extended sequences such as the development of intimacy or career trajectories are ignored in most traditional work. Third, social events are openly competitive. Fourth, social events represent final common pathways in which there are multiple reactions to a specific stimulus as well as confounds from the self-reflexive capacities of the human subject. And finally, social events are complexly determined. Gergen concludes that all reasonable hypotheses are likely to be valid and therefore experimentation is of limited use. On a more positive note, Gergen suggests that experimentation may be used to "unsettle our common understanding of the way things are . . . to generate a constructive self-consciousness, an enhanced awareness of various inequities or irrationalities built into our institutionalized ways of viewing things, or an increased caution before committment" (p. 31). Moreover, the scientist can <u>create</u> the event which unsettles.

Dialectical Psychology

Included in both the life-span developmental psychology literature and in Gergen's (1976) aliatory change template is an explicit recognition of dialectical psychology, a recent movement committed to exploring the issue of change as it applies to the orientation and methodology of psychology. More explicitly, Baltes and Cornelius (1976) have identified seven problems of developmental psychology which can be addressed

from within a dialectical perspective: (1) the nature of change, (2) the role of transitions and discontinutiy, (3) the nature of structure and structural transformation, (4) the nature of interaction and interactive relationships, (5) the relationship between ontogenetic and evolutionary perspectives, (6) the notion of contextual, multiple, and bidirectional causality, and (7) the notion of relative, non-absolute predictability and probabilistic models. Riegel (1972, 1973a, 1973b, 1975a, 1975b, 1976) has explored many of these issues.

In an article on dialectics and psychology, Buss (1977) describes Hook's distinction between (a) dialectic as an ontology or pattern of existential change, and (b) dialectic as a method of understanding change. Dialectics as an ontology is applicable to metatheoretical orientation in developmental psychology via three laws proposed by Hook and described by Baltes and Cornelius (1976). The law of contradiction focuses on internal sources of change--contradiction within a system fostering growth. The law of negation of the negation implies that "change or development is an incessant aspect of thought . . . or . . . things" (Baltes and Cornelius, 1976, p. 7). Finally the law of quantity and quality asserts that quantitative change eventually results in qualitative transformation. Thus, the very essence of developmental psychology--change--is made primary via a dialectical perspective.

A dialectical perspective can be juxtaposed to the perspective of logical positivism in order to illuminate the

implications for psychology. According to Buss (1977) positivism deals with existing states and is thus conservative, whereas dialectics presupposes the necessity of change. It can be seen that this latter perspective is consistent both with an aliatory change template (Gergen, 1976) and with the theoretical requirements of life-span developmental psychology. "As Hegel shows, in a world where facts do not present what reality can and ought to be, positivism amounts to giving up the real possibilities of mankind for a false and alien world" (Marcuse, 1954, p. 113). Given that the nature of reality is contradictory, dialectics is clearly superior to positivism as an ontology or existential description of change.

In terms of the prescriptive criterion of theoretical evaluation as proposed by Gergen (1976), Marxian dialectics has important implications, Whereas Kant distinguished between epistemic or cognitive knowledge and prescriptive knowledge, Marx merged the two in terms of theory and practice, fact and value, knowledge and doing (Buss, 1977).

> Marxism embodies an epistemology which adopts a criterion for truth which is quite different from positivism. Whereas the latter emphasized explanation and understanding the laws of the objective world as based upon the epistemic properties of factual confirmability and inter-subjective unanimity, a Marxian dialectical materialism adopts a criterion for truth based upon the practice of people. (Buss, 1977, p. 8)

In other words, a dialectical perspective (especially a Marxist interpretation) acknowledges the role of prescription--"what ought to be" is an important to study as "what is." The explicit

incorporation of prescription and value in scientific work is a necessary prerequisite for addressing the issue of social change (the mutual impact of individual and societal development).

The second part of Hook's distinction, dialectic as a method for understanding change, has been analogized by Buss (1977) to the notion of a dialogue. This analogy or application has been explored also by Riegel (1977), Harris (1975), and Freedle (1975). Dialogue involves response, reaction, challenge, questioning, and other conflict eliciting qualities and is seen by some (Riegel, 1977) as a paradigm for methods which can be used for understanding change. Others, however (Baltes & Cornelius, 1976), prefer to remain pluralists in terms of methodology, using methods derived from <u>any</u> model (e.g., mechanistic, organismic) depending on the nature of the problem. They prefer to distinguish between the value of scientific method for purposes of verification and proof, and theory construction which goes beyond scientific method. They assert that dialectics can not provide methods and indeed should not, but that dialectics "can lead to a specific class of metamodels which are unique in their defining assumptions and, thereby, permit different kinds of uncertainties" (Baltes & Cornelius, 1976, p. 14). The value of dialectics is seen only in orientation: what questions are to be asked, how data are to be interpreted and organized, what patterns of knowledge are to be pursued.

The distinction between dialectic as a method and as orientation has been criticized by Riegel (1973a) who asserts that there is no sharp separation between theory and method. In current psychology, in fact, method and theory are often inextricably intertwined: a cognitive-developmental study of moral development uses methods distinct from the methods of a social learning study of modeling moral behavior. However, method often dictates orientation (Rebecca, 1975) and becomes reified; and conversely, orientation often dictates method. Both Riegel (1973a) and Baltes and Cornelius (1976) find fault with this state of affairs. Baltes and Cornelius suggest that method should derive from the particular question that is asked and that a number of methods might be useful. What distinguishes this position from Riegel's position is, perhaps, lack of committment to a dialectical orientation: an orientation which allows true flexibility to pursue new questions in novel (or not so novel) ways. What is relevant from a dialectical perspective is the interpretation of the particular method used and the resulting data, rather than the choice of method itself. One could, for example, use a rather traditional survey instrument and code responses for discontinuity in development rather than depicting sequences of stable stages. It is possible that one could achieve the same end using the Baltes and Cornelius approach, but there is the distinct danger of misinterpreting, for example, a mechanistic method by using a

mechanistic perspective since the method and perspective have been (and still are) so closely associated.

Given Gergen's (1975) critique of the experiment and the above considerations of method and orientation, it seems that an even more basic and critical problem is: Which questions does one ask? What needs to be done is to free oneself from established methodologies at least to discover what questions should be asked. If we can operate, at this stage in the scientific method, free from the constraints of existing methods, then perhaps the methodological pluralism which is called for might actually emerge. In effect, I propose the dialogue as a metamethod which legitimizes the initial step in the scientific process--that of asking questions.

Summary

My major concern in the field of sex roles is change, both at the individual and societal level. All of the issues regarding change as discussed above are relevant to this concern: continuity and discontinutiy of development, the impact of historical change on development and vice versa, the adoption of a particular world view in terms of orientation and methodology, etc. My interest in fertility has further focused my work in terms of the relationship of sex role socialization to the still atypical pattern of voluntary childlessness. Whether the voluntarily childless are nontraditional in terms of sex roles is an empirical question. However, this particular group

of people are in a life situation characterized by confrontation and conflict due to the traditional patterns of sex role socialization, societal and historical variables (e.g., pronatalist economic policies, etc.), and personal decision making. Thus, this particular population is well suited to the study of the confluence of issues that are of concern to me.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the relationship between voluntary childlessness and sex role orientation especially from a developmental perspective. The choice of the voluntarily childless as the focal group to be studied is directly related to applying psychology to issues of social change, especially regarding sex roles. The voluntarily childless are seen both in the scientific literature and by the general population as deviant. This deviancy centers around the assumption that motherhood is integral to the role definition of women. Those women who deliberately choose not to be mothers are deviant in a very basic way.

Russo (1976) calls this set of circumstances the "motherhood mandate," a mandate that requires women to have a least two children and to raise them well. This concept has also been referred to as a "moral imperative" (Thompson, 1974) and "coercive pronatalism" (Veevers, 1974a). The motherhood mandate is embodied in both the psychological development of the individual in terms of sex role socialization and in the social structure as is manifested by sex discrimination and sexism. If the motherhood mandate and all of the attendant sex role stereotyping are to be challenged, where does one start?

The voluntarily childless may be seen as an avant garde group, not necessarily by self-definition, but by virtue of their presumed deviancy around this critical aspect of role definition. A study of voluntarily childless couples may yield clues as to what in the developmental history of these people and what in the social-cultural context as they construct it, or as it is constructed for them, have allowed them to make this decision.

In order to explore these interrelationships, I first present a theoretical perspective within which to view voluntary childlessness and the relation to sex role development including a consideration of methodological and empirical implications. First, I will consider sex roles, offering a developmental model of sex role socialization as developed with some colleagues in studying sex discrimination (Hefner, Nordin, Rebecca, Oleshansky, 1974; Rebecca, Oleshansky, Hefner, Nordin, 1976). Following this, I will discuss what little theoretical and empirical work has been done on voluntary childlessness. I conclude with a discussion of how the empirical work described here has grown out of these considerations.

Sex Roles

The state of the professional literature on sex roles can be seen as an outgrowth not only of a particularistic conception of science, but also of distinct meta-theoretical constructions of the social sciences. The treatment of sex

roles is an example of how meta-theories direct social science research. The development of the following model of sex role socialization, derived from a thorough analysis of these meta-theoretical propositions (Hefner, Rebecca, Oleshansky, Nordin, 1975; Rebecca, 1975) resulted in a reconceptualization of sex role socialization from a new perspective, unencumbered by some of the shortcomings of traditional approaches.

Emmerich (1973) has applied the classifications of mechanistic and organismic models to sex roles. "Environmental organizer theories," which fall into the mechanistic category, account for sex role socialization in three ways. According to Mussen (1969), sex typing results from the impact of societal forces which are constant and cumulative. Internalizations are consistent across social setting and developmental periods. A second theory representative of "environmental organizer theories" (Parsons and Bales, 1955) sees socialization as occurring from participation in social structures which are sequentially ordered and qualitatively different from each other. Sex roles become redefined at each stage. This particular theory has some of the qualities of the organismic model (e.g., structural and qualitative change), but still puts the emphasis on a reactive organism. The third set of theories in this category (Bandura, 1969; Mischel, 1970) sees socialization as producing either constancy or change depending on whether or not early behavior tendencies are reinforced reinforced throughout life. Two groups of theories which Emmerich (1973)

attributes to the organismic model are those represented by Kagan (1964) or LeVine (1969) and Kohlberg (1966) or Loevinger (1966). The first stipulates that basic personality characteristics are formed early. Development is seen as accommodation to changing life requirements. Deep personality structures are responsible for underlying consistency; environmental impact affects only superficial modification. The second group consists of the stage theories which attribute an individual's behaviors to changes in cognitive or "organizing" structures.

Although the mechanistic and organismic approaches make unique assumptions, underlying all approaches are the basic assumptions of polarization and female inferiority. They both stress one or a limited number of possible influences (e.g., the parents, the cognitive structure, hormones, etc.). No one theory has been able to integrate the myriad of processes which lead to sex role socialization as we know it today or as it might be conceived of in the future.

A major handicap which prevents this integration is the (mis)use of the concept of polarization. Dichotomies and polarities are ways in which human beings perceive and order the continuous world around them. The poles defined by each term in a dichotomy come to represent all aspects of individuals who are assigned to one or the other pole. This was once a shorthand way to discuss, classify, and cope with the myriad of individual differences. It is no longer a mere shorthand; the dichotomous perceptions have been reified.

No one can deny that people use the technique of polarization to organize and structure the world. However, this extreme sharpening process which emphasizes differences and deemphasizes similarities takes the entity or process which is to be described out of context. It would be very difficult to teach people to perceive the world differently, but relatively easier to illuminate a more complex interaction of each component of the polarity with each other and with other elements in the world. For example, masculinity and femininity are conceived of as opposite ends of a bipolar continuum. In the concrete world, however, men and women partake in a wide variety of concrete actions which cannot be classified as abstract traits clumping together easily at one or the other end of the continuum. Women as well as men can be placed along a continuum from independence to dependence. Men as well as women can be placed along a continuum from expressive to instrumental. Therefore, multiple dimensions can be constructed for each person. The degree of independence, nurturance, assertiveness, passivity, etc., will vary not only among individuals but also according to the situation. Summing or averaging measures on such dimensions, determined in a particular setting, obscures the variability that exists.

By considering the dynamic aspects of polarities--how disparate elements join together, change over time and across situations--more meaningful research would be initiated which would help us to understand the intricacies of human behavior.

This has not been done by current theories of sex roles. Most theoretical and empirical work on sex roles assumes the bipolar, unidimensional, negatively correlated configuration of masculinity and femininity.

Looft (1973) mentions two other considerations which are relevant to the development of a new approach to sex roles. One is Van den Daele's classification of how theories consider individual differences. According to this scheme development can be conceived of as a unitary (there is a single developmental track) or multiple (there could be a variety of tracks) process. It can also be simple (one can occupy only one developmental stage at a time) or cumulative (one can occupy more than one developmental level simultaneously). Related to this is directionality of development--whether development is unidirectional or multidirectional. Organismic models either deny or ignore regressive phenomena (thereby saying that development is unidirectional) whereas mechanistic and psychoanalytic theories can account for bi- or multidirectionality of development. The diversity of relations and roles which affect the daily life of people require different levels of participation. A woman will behave at different "levels" when in a intimate situation, a concrete situation (e.g., doing laundry) and a professional situation. Perhaps transactional analysis (e.g., Sameroff, 1975) comes closest of any existing theory or practice to acknowledging this phenomenon in the child-parent-adult construction of human interaction.

Finally, the universality or relativity of development needs to be discussed. Organismic theories assume or look for developmental universals. Mechanistic theories assume universal laws of learning. It is not necessary or desirable to posit universals. If one assumes developmental discontinuity, as I do, one would achieve more descriptive flexibility by conceiving of development as multiple, cumulative, multidirectional, and relative.

It has been demonstrated that very basic assumptions about the world influence the whole range of scientific inquiry. What is needed, in light of the crisis in our society revolving around sex roles, is an alternative model, one which, as Looft (1973) states it, offers: "a new view of reality, one that perceives human, social, and mental development as the confluence of many interrelated and changing systems and subsystems, including the biological, social, cultural, and historical" (p. 51).

A Model of Sex Role Transcendence

The model proposed here is patterned after the stage models of developmental psychology, for example, Erikson's (1963) model of personality development, and patterned more specifically after Pleck's (1975) three-stage model of sex-role identity development. It is also closely related to Hegel's theory of the history of rational thought (Lawler, 1975).

From our perspective, the activity within and between each stage is more important than the mere description of stages.

The stages themselves can be thought of as a temporary product of a certain type of thinking about certain issues. They are helpful in understanding where growth is coming from and where it is going. However, the movement itself is critical to a model when individual and cultural change is the focus.

Stage I: Undifferentiated. In this stage the child's thinking is characterized by globalness (Piaget, 1970); she is actively engaged in ordering the barrage of perceptual stimuli of the world, which are originally chaotic and confusing to her. The child learns that the world is composed of discrete objects and that there is figure and background. She has an undifferentiated conception of sex roles and sex typed behaviors in which she is unaware of culturally imposed restrictions on behavior according to biological sex.

This stage is equivalent to the primitive stage of rational thought in which there is a "primitive, naive, yet intrinsically correct conception of the world" (Engels, 1966, p. 26). The barrage of internal and external stimuli which passes through the child's perception is in fact reality--it is unorganized or only minimally organized by categories which order the adult's life. What is real is not that an adult woman or an adult man is tending to the child's needs, but the close affective, social and physical dialogue which is characteristic of the parent-child relationship.

This undifferentiated conception of sex roles begins to differentiate as movement through this stage continues. One of the earliest value laden distinctions which the child learns is the BIG-SMALL polarity. Erikson (1963) directly and Kohlberg (1966) indirectly suggest that this distinction becomes instrumental in the formation of further dichotomies and their concomitant values. As the child comes to associate bigness with power, maleness with bigness (and power) she makes an easy transition to a dichotomy which becomes the basis for future exploitation. Using the adult focus, the child learns that humans are either female or male, that one is a girl or a boy, and that there are appropriate and valued behaviors to be performed depending on that sex dichotomy.

The learning that takes place which leads to this polarized conception of sex roles is both quantitative accumulation of information and conflict elicited.

Stage II: Hyperdifferentiated. This stage was originally conceived of as a unitary phenomenon in which there is active acceptance of conventional sex roles in accordance with the child's sex of assignment and there is the equally active rejection of the opposite pole. In this stage, individuals view the fit to the stereotypes as necessary and as a major step in gaining entrance to adult society. Children learn, most strongly and critically in Stage II, that society has rules about sex role behavior, traits, and emotional expression and that values are differentially attached to them. We no longer

feel that this stage is a unitary phenomenon (Rebecca, Oleshansky, Hefner, Nordin, 1976) but that it can be further differentiated in several substages which reflect more accurately the empirical work in the field. There is also some evidence that males and females proceed through these substages in a different pattern.

The first substage (Stage IIA) can be conceived of as a transitional stage. Children have some sense of differing sex roles, but are not yet fully committed to one or the other, nor do they attach a differential value to one or the other. What most critically differentiates this stage from Stage I is the necessity imposed on children of behaviorally complying to their knowledge of sex role differences. In other words, this substage can not be defined in cognitive terms alone, but must be conceptualized as part of a social process.

The second substage (Stage IIB) is most similar to our original conceptualization of Stage II in which the child fully accepts the polarized, differentially valued view of traditional sex roles. Femininity and masculinity come to be seen as polar opposites and mutually exclusive.

It seems that it is functional and desireable that, in learning sex roles, children use the organizing technique of polarities and see discrete entities in order to make sense of an inherently continuous and interpenetrating world. The difficulty, however, is that our society reinforces and idealizes this form of perception, not as a temporary organizing device, but as the ultimate adult goal with regard to sex-role

learning and behavior. There is extensive evidence that instead of being functional, such a continuing rigid adherence to the feminine or masculine pole may be dysfunctional, maladaptive (Bem, 1976a; Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz, and Vogel, 1970; Mussen, 1961; Gump, 1972) and productive of sex discrimination in our society today (Scott, 1974).

It is useful to draw analogies between stages of sex-role development and other stage models. Kohlberg's theory of moral development (1964) and Piaget's theory of cognitive development (1970) see the intermediate highly differentiated stage as an advance over the first stage, but then go on to describe a third level. In their theories the third stage is a post-conventional, formal operational, stage in which thinking and decision making are symbolic and hypothetical. In contrast, the traditional theory of sex-role development (including Kohlberg, 1966) is truncated at the conventional, stereotyped level.

Stage IIB can be conceived of as a state of alienation in which masculinity and femininity are considered mutually exclusive conditions. Not only are men and women alienated from each other due to the difficulty of empathizing with qualities of the other, but men and women are alienated from those conditions within themselves which are contrary to societal norms. Many times a woman feels guilty for wanting to pursue a career or for putting her career above the needs of her family. Many times a man feels unnatural when experiencing feelings of nurturance.

The third substage (Stage IIC) is again a transitional stage in which the individual moves away from the narrowly conceived role definitions of Stage IIB. Although the concepts of masculinity and femininity are still salient for the person, she/he does not behave as if and/or believe that they are mutually exclusive. This more flexible conception of sex roles has been addressed in the literature on androgyny (Bem, 1974, 1975, 1976a, 1976b; Spence, Helmreich and Stapp, 1974).

Behaviorally, Stage IIA and Stage IIC may look alike. However, both cognitive and social components differentiate them. An androgynous self concept and behavior presupposes knowledge of appropriate sex role behavior and attitudes, the incorporation of these into a personal framework, and the recognition of the social necessity of this differentiation. This substratum provides a firm base from which the individual can then adapt situationally with the necessary combination of masculine and feminine attributes. Bem (1976b) suggests that androgyny may be accompanied by moral maturity (in Kohlberg's terminology) and higher self esteem. Speculatively, perhaps Stage IIB is only a temporary adjustment to the press of adolescent heterosexuality (as defined by our culture). If and when this press becomes less salient, the individual may be free to express those qualities which are not rigidly tied to a particular sex role.

Transition to Stage III. The precedent set in moral and cognitive development for a third, formal operational stage and

the parallel conception of androgynous sex role development [Stage IIC] does not completely fulfill the requirements of a dialectical theory of sex role development. Although Piaget (1964) insists that contradiction is basic to thought, that reality is itself contradictory, he also insists that only with equilibrium (and ultimately, a formal operational equilibrium) can one understand reality. Only by eliminating the contradictions by imposing arbitrary order on them can the contradictions be understood. This creates, however, an abstraction of reality--reality which is represented by something akin to a mathematical model in which contradictions are denied. Since a dialectical view affirms contradictions, some other formulation of a post-polar stage is needed.

Within Stage II, the foundation for further growth is laid. While learning sex-appropriate behaviors, the individual is learning sex-inappropriate behaviors and thus acquires considerable latent knowledge about many different ways of behaving (Lipman-Blumen, 1973). Additionally, with many more options available than at Stage I, decision making allows for many varied approaches to life and the direction of development starts to branch out.

An obvious conflict during Stage IIB, especially for women, is the sexual double standard in which women are granted more responsibility (but less freedom) in sexual behavior. A second obvious conflict is between interests or abilities and career counseling. There are innumerable examples of how women are

directly and indirectly counselled out of traditionally masculine occupations even though their interests and abilities are fully consistent with such occupations. The fault is not entirely with the counselor, of course. Counselors very often are reflecting the probability of success such a woman would have in our society today. This is just one example of the complex (and often circular) nature of economic, political, and intergenerational interactions which affect development.

The necessary prerequisites of the transition to Stage III evolve over a long period of time. As mentioned before, while learning the polar conception of sex roles [during Stage IIA] the individual learns the components of <u>both</u> poles. Actual performance as manifested in Stage IIB, however, depends on overt and covert environmental reinforcement. The individual in Stage IIB [and later in IIC] has a considerable amount of latent knowledge with which to work. The problem of how to use it in developing new skills, a new life-style, or a new approach to the world becomes salient only when the individual is confronted with contradictions or crises that force the issue. For example, a woman may have accumulated a certain amount of expertise in a traditionally male dominated occupation, but when she applies for a job, encounters many levels of discrimination. Depending on the accumulation of similar past experiences and on how striking this conflict appears to the woman she may begin to under go a transformation from Stage IIB to II C to Stage III.

How she fares depends on a number of personal and environmental variables. Our culture provides few environments in which a Stage IIC [a potential Stage III] person will "fit," few social roles that will actualize her potential and enable her to completely "feel at home" with a Stage III identity. More environmental supports for transcendent behaviors and the provision of more roles which would accommodate transcendent behavior would facilitate movement from Stage IIB to Stage IIC and ultimately to Stage III. Intervention at this structural level is necessary to enable more and more people to make the transition. The elimination of the cultural stereotypes and definitions of femininity/masculinity are also necessary for transition to III. As more people make the transition, more structural and definitional changes will ensue and vice versa.

Stage III: Sex-Role Transcendence

In this stage, the individual can move freely from situation to situation and behave/feel appropriately and adaptively. Individuals feel free to express their human qualities without concern for or even reference to retribution for violating sex role norms. This is a transcending of the stereotypes and a reorganization of the possibilities learned in Stage II in a more personally relevant framework.

Transcendence involves both situational flexibility and personal flexibility. When confronting a particular situation a person can adapt to the situation (situational flexibility)

by behaving appropriately to the situation (being assertive, passive, independent, nurturant, etc., as the situation requires). Alternatively, she can change the situation to suit her needs (she feels most comfortable being nurturant, assertive, etc., so she rearranges the structural aspects of the situation to accommodate her personal requirements). This is personal flexibility.

Transcendence, then, may involve situational and/or personal flexibility. The cumulative impact of individual and group changes happening in many different places in society will be a genuine cultural change. At the very least, we will have a pluralism in which alternative models of behavior are accepted.

It is this pluralistic conception, with genuine options available to all, which we believe is the logical consequence of our model.

The actual relationship, conceptually and developmentally, between Stage IIC or androgyny and Stage III or sex-role transcendence is still an empirical question, but one which must be addressed with an eye toward new methodologies. I will go into this more at a later point. At a hypothetical level, however, the relationship can be elucidated in terms of the constructs of masculinity and femininity. The differentiation between androgyny and sex-role transcendence becomes even more compelling from a social structural point of view.

In an androgynous conception of the person, masculinity and femininity are legitimate constructs which are valuable for certain purposes. However, the rigid divisions between them is damaging for the individual and unproductive for society. The new ideal is a blend of masculinity and femininity as is situationally appropriate. In sex-role transcendence, one goes beyond the present sex-specific behavior, personality, expectations, and formulations. Sex-role transcencence is not a time-sharing of masculine and feminine characteristics in the same person or the freeing of both males and females to be both masculine and feminine. It requires the invention of new ways of being that are not fusions of what we already know. Bem (1976a) expresses this quite well:

> . . . if there is a moral to the concept of psychological androgyny, it is that behavior should have no gender. But there is an irony here, for the concept of androgyny contains an inner contradiction and hence the seeds of its own destruction. Thus, as the etymology of the word implies, the concept of androgyny necessarily presupposes that the concepts of masculinity and femininity themselves have distinct and substantive content. But to the extent that the androgynous message is absorbed by the culture, the concepts of masculinity and femininity will cease to have such content, and the distinctions to which they refer will blur into invisibility. Thus, when androgyny becomes a reality, the concept of androgyny will have been transcended. (p. 60)

The twofold distinction between androgyny and transcendence is clear in this passage. First, whether a person is androgynous or transcendent depends on a personal conceptualization of masculinity and femininity. The current measures

of androgyny (e.g., the Bem Sex Role Inventory) do not assess whether the individual perceives her/his self concept as centering around the concepts of masculinity and femininity even in combination. Recently, Bem (1976b) has elaborated a hypothetical framework within which to conceptualize sex typing and androgyny. This elaboration has the potential for more finely differentiating post-polarized sex role development. Particularly relevant for this discussion is her concept of gender salience with is defined as "the extent to which an individual codes incoming information with respect to gender or masculinity/femininity" (p. 3). Once operationalized, this concept may provide a basis for differentiating between androgyny and transcendence.

The second aspect of the distinction between androgyny and transcendence has to do with social structure. Regardless of how non-salient gender may be for a person, current societal structure and practices prevent the full articulation of humanness without concern for gender. Chodorow (1975) addressed the nature of the relationship between sex typing and social structure especially regarding the motherhood mandate. According to her, social continuity depends on continued socialization (via sex typing) for reproduction. Women's role in the family defines their role in the public, social and economic world. Osmond and Martin (1975) also addressed the relationship of sex roles to social structural issues. They identified four com-

ponents which may be differentially related to sex role attitudes: (1) familial roles, (2) extrafamilial roles, (3) stereotypes, and (4) social change.

What is needed, then, to elucidate the relationship between androgyny and transcendence is not more refining of current androgyny measures (although this does serve some function) as has been done by some (Kinsell-Rainey, 1976; Gaudreau, 1975; Gilbert, Strahan & Deutsch, 1976). What is needed is a method of unearthing personal conceptions of the relevance of masculinity and femininity as well as an examination of how social structural features inhibit or enhance continued development.

Stage III is not an endpoint stage marking the end of development. Unlike the tendency of most developmental psychology to concentrate on childhood and adolescence, implying that development stops in adulthood, I am assuming continuous growth and change. Conflict continues even after Stage III is achieved--for example in job promotions, births and deaths, children growing up and leaving home, retirement, etc.

The main set-breaking function of our model as described so far is the proposal of a transcendent state of role functioning which developmentally replaces the stereotypic ideal of polarized sex roles and even replaces the concept of androgyny which still assumes the basic constructs of masculinity and femininity. Such a future-oriented perception is necessary to elicit new and revolutionary ideas, questions, and methodologies

for the study of sex roles (eventually, human roles). The model is responsive to cultural pressures for "humanizing" females and males and in turn has the potential of contributing scientific credibility to this rapidly spreading belief system and thus promoting extensive attitude change in the general public.

By describing a transcendent stage, our model calls for investigation of what happens after sex-typed behavior is learned. Such investigation is badly needed to abolish the abstract conception of what women and men are like.

As mentioned in the preceeding chapter, a life-span perspective on development opens up the field to new questions and methods. Very few people have discussed sex role development as it might proceed beyond adolescence as Erikson, Neugarten, Buhler, and others have addressed other aspects of adult development. Gutmann (1975) addresses the issue in terms of the "normal unisex of later life" when some sex role reversal occurs. However, he does not offer a theoretical perspective. Urberg and Labouvie-Vief (1976) do attempt a cross sectional exploration of sex roles using 7th graders, 12th graders, and adults ranging form 20 to 70. They did not find the age related relaxation of stereotypes that they expected, but did find evidence that the extent to which people subscribe to sex role stereotypes may be dependent on how these are assessed. In particular, an individual's perception of same-sex ideal roles is less differentiated than perception of opposite sex ideal roles. The

authors themselves recognize the methodological problems with the study, notably the wide age range in the "adult" category and the confounding of cultural and ontogenetic change by using a cross-sectional design. However, this is one of the few studies available which attempts to address the issues relevant here. (See also Halas, 1974, for another attempt to relate perceived early socialization with stereotypes in attitudes and behavior of adult women.)

There have always been people who do not fit the stereotypes (indeed, the majority). The concept of transcendence opens up the field to alternative ways of describing and explaining the behaviors of these people. An analysis both of the historical-cultural milieu and the complex relations mentioned earlier (between different roles, between people, and between the individual and her society) is needed, based on the assumptions that change is both internally and externally determined, that change is qualitative, quantitative, continuous and discontinuous, that behaviors emerge which cannot be accounted for by previous explanations and rules, that a person can occupy more than one stage at a time and can proceed along a variety of tracks, and that people are individuals, not to be accounted for by universal rules.

Sex Roles and Fertility

With the perspective given by this model of sex-role transcendence, the voluntarily childless can be viewed as undergoing

normal sex role development, merely with different consequences. In particular, it provides for alternative role definitions for women. A salient arena for exploring the juncture of sex roles and fertility is the family. According to Lopata (1971) the current view of a woman's life cycle is in terms of a sequence of inflexible stages: home of family of origin, work before and after marriage, children, care for retired husband, widowhood, and death.

Most of the literature on the family depicts family cycles in terms of stages defined by the presence and developmental status of children--particularly the last child (Glick and Parke, 1965). If childlessness is considered at all, it is usually defined as just another state of parity (Gustavus and Henley, 1971). Although Lansing and Kish (1957) regard stages of the family life cycle as an improvement over age as an independent variable, several authors have commented on the restrictive nature of a characterization which describes the family as a static unit in a particular time period. "The decision to analyze the life course as a sequence of stages forces evaluation of the constancy of the points dividing the stages" (Clausen, 1972, p. 461). Regarding fertility behavior in the family, Namboodiri (1972) has compiled a list of varibles representative of most of the work in the area; the variables fall under the general categories of: status and security, community and family background, interest in home and children, personality characteristics, and marital adjustment and hus-

band-wife dominance. Whatever combination of variables chosen is usually fit into an economic model such as cost benefit analysis, utility models, etc. (Scanzoni, 1975; Thompson, 1974). Hence, fertility decisions are reduced to quantitative formulae which do not fully reflect the confluence of the history, events, norms, roles, institutions, and historical processes.

In a critique of the static conceptualization of the family, Hareven (1974) defines the family as a process over time, avoiding the sociological categories which obsure this process. Both family and societal processes are in constant motion; the transitions in the family varying both by stages in the life cycles of its members and by differing ethnicity, racial group, occupation, etc. Elder (1977), too, has a process oriented perspective on the family which requries, according to him, the development of models which would represent change over time, event sequences and their patterning in and among the family members, and the cycle of generational exchange and succession. He also calls for a consideration of the interaction of the family with historical change. The concept of a "career" is defined as a patterned sequence of movements or roles through social networks and settings. By studying multiple careers within a family it becomes obvious that only with an acknowledgment of dissensus, nonconformity and conflict can one begin to understand the complex nature of family process including fertility decisions. As Goode (1960) points out, the numerous role demands of one person are overdemanding (in conflict).

In a system such as the family (where there are at least two people, each with their own set of over-demanding roles) decisions and bargains must be made in order to allocate scarce resources (e.g., time, emotional and physical energy, etc.).

Whereas the conflicting demands of roles such as parent, professional, spouse, child, etc., pose problems for the person involved, so too does the reverse situation (i.e., too limited a role). Ritchey and Stokes (1974) provide evidence which suggests that being childless and unemployed for a woman is socially unacceptable. Therefore the problem of role strain is even more complicated than Goode suggests, since there seems to be some degree of optimal stress (not too much or too little) which is necessary to be able to function adequately and with social support. Goode takes a view that is at odds with much of the work in family sociology which assumes consensus and integration. For him, the usual state of affairs is one of conflict. Similarly, Rossi (1968) speaks of a need for theory (other than theories of deviancy or pathology) to account for failure as well as success in enacting roles or going through role transitions. For example, there may be a discrepancy between public acknowledgement of the desire to have a child and private thoughts to the contrary. Failure to perform the culturally sanctioned role of mother either by remaining childless or in some way abdicating the maternal role must be accounted for in terms other than deviancy. Rossi (1968) has used the concept of role cycle stages and Goode (1960) and Cottrell (1942)

have used the concept of role conflict or role strain in order to come to terms with the complexity of family decision making. Although these conceptualizations are important, the method by which one could examine these processes is not spelled out.

Katz (1975) has explored four methods of coping with the conflict between career and family including structural role redefinition (e.g., hiring a housekeeper to take over part of the household tasks), personal role redefinition (e.g., setting up a system of priorities in terms of which role demands are more important), fluid personal role (e.g., try to do everything well), and rejection of role (totally abdicate one role: quit work, divorce, etc.). She hypothesized that women who had non-traditional sex role training would be more efficient in their ability to cope (i.e., they would use either structural role redefinition or personal role redefinition) than women who had a traditional sex role training. Her hypothesis was only partially supported in that women who had nontraditional backgrounds used structural and personal role redefinition; however the non-traditional women also used role rejection (one of the least efficient methods according to Katz). This result would not be as surprising as she found it if one assumes discontinuity and change as the basis of the family cycle. Movius (1976) suggests that for a woman committed to a career, voluntary childlessness is a career-facilitating factor. It seems intuitive (although an empirical question) that several manifestations

of role rejection require a committment to nontraditional sex roles. Divorce (especially with custody of children), nonmarriage, and childlessness as methods of facilitating career are three very different forms of role rejection, compared to quitting work (the primary definition according to Katz). (See also Bram, 1976, for a discussion of the conflict managing function of being voluntarily childless.) According to Chodorow (1975),

> "the structure of production and reproduction in which women are in the first instance mothers and wives requires and presupposes certain relational modes and types of relationship. An examination of the way the structure of gender personality is expressed in adulthood reveals how women and men create, and are committed to creating, the kinds of relationship which reproduce the family structure which has produced them." (p. 9)

Although this analysis considers the structural relationship between family life and work life, it fails to take into account the historical changes which disrupt the circular creation and recreation of the reproductive role. Maracek (1976) addresses the nature of these changes, including the increase in higher education for women, demographic trends of later age at marriage (and subsequently later age at birth of first child), smaller family size, and divorce. She concludes that a self conception of women which centers around motherhood will be increasingly discordant with womens' actual lifestyle (p. 11).

What I have outlined so far is a new conceptualization of sex role development which eliminates the "motherhood mandate"

from the role definition of women and allows for a rethinking of the relationship between family, career, and fertility or lifestyle in general. I turn now to the literature on fertility, focusing on the voluntarily childless.

Fertility and Voluntary Childlessness

> . . . we know too little to guess whether current childlessness represents uncertainty, postponed childbearing, or commitments to a childfree life style. Neither do we know how life without children affects married couples over time. Do they develop relationships or work patterns that encourage indefinite postponement of children, or do they simply "mark time"? . . . As they get older, do they use birth control more and more carefully or less carefully, having "planned not to plan"? (Silka & Kiesler, in press, p. 3)

This passage addresses several critical issues important to the study of voluntary childlessness, namely development and growth of the couple, the relationship between the decision and the decision making process itself, and the relationship of the decision to lifestyle. Although there is a wealth of literature on fertility behavior, virtually none of it addresses the special concerns of the voluntarily childless, particularly in relation to sex-role development. I will review the few pieces which are relevant, but concentrate, for the most part, on the literature directly related to voluntary childlessness.

Hoffman and Hoffman (1973) provide one of the few integrated theoretical models of fertility behavior, parts of which are relevant to this discussion. The model includes, among other things, the value of children to parents and alternative

sources of these values. The values are:

1. adult status and social identity
2. expansion of self
3. morality
4. affiliation
5. stimulation, novelty, fun
6. creativity, accomplishment, competence
7. power, influence or effectance
8. social comparison or competition
9. economic utility

The applicability of this model to the conceptualization of sex-role development becomes apparent if one examines the literature on employed women and fertility behavior (Hoffman, 1974; Thompson, 1974). Demographic data suggest a negative correlation between employment for women and family size. This implies that if there is a rise in employment for women, fertility will decrease. If, however, one examines which values are fulfilled by employment, a different picture emerges. Employment, except for the most highly prestigious positions, does not act as a substitute for the values that children provide the woman. Employment will really act as a substitute for childbearing and rearing only with far reaching changes in the definition of careers for women. The Hoffmans suggest that if careers were more acceptable for women (especially in terms of the role definitions of women) and opportunities opened up, then motherhood would not then be needed as an "antidote" for concerns

over femininity (or lack thereof).

This is a two-pronged problem--one of socialization of the individual and one of pronatalism as an ideology of the society. The model of sex role development presented here provides the basis for reconceptualizing sex roles to provide for alternatives (e.g., the transcending of masculinity and femininity as prescriptions for behavior). The model has the potential to affect the public sector as well for science can lend credibility to popular conceptions of the world and human beings. We need to know what needs the values promoting child-bearing address, why children fulfill these needs, why alternatives are not more powerful, and how to change any or all of these.

It has been fairly common in the fertility literature to examine demographic data in order to get a handle on the issues involved. Although there are continuing problems in interpreting the data, it is now generally believed that the cohorts born after 1910 who completed their fertility in the 1950's and 1960's were exceptional (Dawson & Bachrack, 1976). That is, the apparent decline in childlessness during this period is an artifact of the post World War II baby boom which obscured the gradual increase in childlessness over a longer time span. Aside from indicating this general trend, I will not go into the demographic studies since much of it is problematic with few significant findings (Beckman, 1976). As Bram (1976) states:

> . . . demographic theory has not developed sufficiently to explain fully the relationship between attitudes and behavior or sex roles and fertility, nor to comprehend the implications for social change of statisfically deviant phenomena. Methodological and conceptual problems in the demographic literature and the prevalence of the "error by omission" make it difficult for demographers to state with any confidence what the past or present incidence of childlessness is. There has been a tendency to dismiss voluntary childlessness, to interpret whatever childlessness is found as involuntary, and to infer negative attitudes from a low incidence of behavior. (pp. 16-17)

Research which directly focuses on voluntary childlessness is still in its infancy, but is a response to the negligence in other areas (e.g., demography, fertility, and family research) in accounting for the phenomenon. Veevers (1973a, 1973b, 1973c, 1974a, 1974b, 1975a, 1975b) has done the most extensive work in the area. Following is a summary of some of her findings.

Women in Veever's sample had difficulty explaining the decision, but several factors were found which predispose the woman to make the decision to remain childless. These included the quality of parents' marriage, interaction with siblings, intolerance of the idea of a working mother, economic costs, and exposure to a child-free lifestyle through perpetual delay of the decision for various reasons (e.g., to earn more money, finish school, etc.). Once having a child ceases to be a forgone conclusion, the probability of opting for childlessness is increased. This is a very significant finding in that it addresses both the impact of early socialization (including the motherhood mandate) and the effect of changing social

structural features which mitigate the charge given to women by the motherhood mandate (e.g., longer periods of education, economic recession, changing structural features of the marriage relationship, etc.).

Veevers has identified several properties of the situation of getting used to a child free alternative which she calls attrahent properties. Attrahent properties include an intense marital relationship, occupational committment, the quest for new experiences, preference for learning as opposed to teaching, and egalitarian role relationships.

Identification of these attrahent properties is but a first step--then it remains to determine how they might be instilled in people without having to experience years of adult life without children. This again speaks to a need for a reconceptualization of sex role development and a re-evaluation of societal prescriptions for fertility behavior. Silka and Kiesler (in press) were particularly concerned with part of this question. They sought to separate the effects of experience from the effects of early decisions. By comparing groups of subjects who were voluntarily childless, those who were delaying having children and those who were undecided, they examined the relationship of introspection, communication, and consideration of consequences to family size decisions. They found that the voluntary childless (i.e., early deciders) thought the longest and at an earlier point about the decision, but that

they did not think in qualitatively different ways than the other groups. What is needed now is a follow-up study to determine if the delays and undecided eventually did or did not have children and how their thinking about it evolved.

The second part of the question about the early articulation of attrahent properties concerns societal prescriptions for fertility. Several people have addressed this issue. Fawcett (1970), Veevers (1974), and Houser (1976) discuss pronatalist policies at all levels of society which delay or even prevent the articulation of values of a child-free lifestyle.

Given the constraints of early sex role socialization and a pronatalist ideology at the societal level, it follows that the decision to remain childless would likely follow a circuitous route and that the decision itself will induce development in novel directions. Silka and Kiesler (in press) and Kiesler (in press) suggest that such a decision may be a cause as well as an effect of attitude change. Kiesler uses consistency models as the theoretical basis for her work. She found that the greater the personal responsibility a person feels for her/his actions, the greater the subsequent justification for the actions and the greater the resistance to change. The decision to remain childless, then, depending on the circumstances, will result in attitude change.

Although it is far from common, several people have used the concept of normative life crises as a framework for studying

adult development (Datan & Ginsberg, 1975; Sheehy, 1976). This is a useful framework with which to organize one's thinking about the above phenomena. LeMasters (1957) and Bram (1976) discuss parenthood as a such a crisis. Bram (1976), as well as the authors mentioned above, also refer to childlessness as engendering such a crisis. And finally, as discussed earlier, childlessness may function as a coping mechanism for crisis or conflict. This perspective demonstrates that the decision to remain childless and the meaning of this decision for the individual and the couple is a dynamic and complex process. The relationship of childlessness to employment and fertility patterns in society are equally complex. It is not surprising, then, that many of the findings are contradictory. This is especially true regarding the relationship of sex roles and voluntary childlessness. Beckman (1976) discusses the wide differences in findings: both sex role traditionalism and sex role innovation have been related to smaller family size. Silka and Kiesler (in press) found no evidence that attitudes about women, sex roles, or marriage systematically varied across the different groups they studied (childless, delay, undecided). On the other hand, Lewis (1972), Bram (1974), and Cautley and Borgatta (1975) did find such differences.

In order to explore these contradictions, I turn now to the Bram (1974) study. I seek direction rather than solutions. Bram found that the voluntarily childless couples in her sample (compared to those who were delaying having children and parents)

had more egalitarian and companionate marriages. The division of labor among these couples reflected a convergence of sex roles or role reversal. Wife's employment did not account for the greater egalitarianism. Rather, an underlying value for sex role innovation was primary. Egalitarianism, companionship, freedom and spontaneity, and personal growth were seen as important reasons to choose and maintain a child-free lifestyle. Many of these reasons were interpreted as "proactive" reasons (similar to Veever's attrahent properties) which were seen as an embracing of a particular set of goals, values, and lifestyles rather than an active rejection of the normative role of the parent. Supporting this interpretation, Bram found that the early family life and the social life of the couple were not related to the decision. This latter finding is unsettling, however. It implies, like the interpretation of many of the demographic studies, that socialization is unrelated to parenthood and nonparenthood. There is a lack of a developmental perspective in which family background data are substituted for information about the socialization process--how these variables may relate to the development of the individual. According to Kirchner, et. al. (1976), individual psychological variables account for variation in fertility behaviors not related to demographic variables. Although in her later paper Bram (1976) recognizes the importance of a dynamic, conflict based framework, she does not use one in the design and inter-

pretation of her study. Her study, nevertheless, illuminates the necessity for such a framework and indicates the direction which must be taken.

Much of the literature reviewed in this section, in fact, leads to the conclusion that in order to come to terms with the complex nature of voluntary childlessness, especially in relation to sex role development as proposed by the model of sex role transcendence, it is necessary to revamp research strategies. This is indeed a problem since as Beach, et. al. (1975) state:

> [Researchers have] . . . a need to cover a broad range of possibly relevant questions, a need for quantitative data and a resultant inability to deal with individual subjects' qualitative expansions on their answer, and a need for a manageable list of items that is unlikely to cover everything of possible relevance to every subject. The usual solution is to maintain an abiding faith in the law of large numbers and to deal only with group data. (p. 9)

The following section explains how these concerns have lead me to choose the biographical method.

Biography as a Meta-Method

My interest in biography as a method derives from two sources: a commitment to explore meta-methodologies consistent with a dialectical perspective and a dissatisfaction with the state of research on sex role development and fertility. This dissatisfaction is aptly characterized by Dailey (1971) who says:

> The individual personality was entirely too intricate for direct understanding via the rather clumsy methods

> of nomothetic science; the attempt was rather like trying to repair a watch with a meat axe. (p. 180)

Much of the literature reviewed thus far points to the importance of discovering event sequences both for the individual and for the individual in interaction with other people and with society. The focus of this section, then, will be on biography as a method for identifying research questions especially in the interface among life events, the family and fertility. The following issues will be considered: (1) the life course as the unit of analysis; (2) issues of subjectivity, objectivity, and reality; (3) continuity and change (especially social change in its interdependence with life histories); (4) cohort designs in conjunction with biographical methods; and (5) the application of biographical methods.

Life Course

The use of life histories or biographical methodologies depends on the acceptance of the life course as the unit of analysis (Dailey, 1971). According to Elder (1977), the life course refers to "pathways through the age differentiated life span, to social patterns in the timing, duration, spacing, and order of events" (p. 5). This concept differs from much of what has taken place in developmental psychology and sociology. In the words of Jean Walker Macfarlane (1964):

> Some of us who are anal reductionists by temperament and training, firmly believe that, in time, by the piling up of data from studies of small segments of

> this complexity and by using methods neat and clean, the major variances and coherencies can be ascertained and that, like humpty-dumpty in the nursery rhyme, can then be reassembled. (p. 115)

Elder (1977) traces the impetus to study the life course to the early Chicago school of sociology which studied individuals and groups in concrete social situations within a historical context. Other influences on the study of the life course include family development theory (how families change over time), cohort analysis (the study of groups identified by their common experience at a given time, most commonly year of birth), and time allocation research (how people spend their time). All of these inputs are attempts to deal with the overwhelming complexity of human development when perceived in its totality.

Several authors have suggested ways of representing the life course in order to make it manageable. Clausen (1972) suggests four steps: (1) defining how a person comes to set goals, (2) identifying turning points, (3) examining how role priorities are established and role conflicts resolved, and (4) depicting a schematic representation (e.g., a time grid) of the life course. Dollard (1935) defines seven criteria for analyzing the life course:

1. The subject must be viewed as a specimen in a cultural series (the importance of socio-historical context).

2. The organic motors of action ascribed must be socially relevant.

3. The peculiar role of the family group in transmitting the culture must be recognized.

4. The specific method of elaboration of organic materials into social behavior must be shown.

5. The continuous related character of experience from childhood through adulthood must be stressed.

6. The "social situation" must be carefully and continuously specified as a factor (the importance of the concrete situation).

7. The life-history material itself must be organized and conceptualized (p. 8).

For the present perspective, the main points of these representations can be conceptualized within the framework proposed by Riegel (1975b) concerning four planes of development: the inner biological, individual-psychological, cultural-sociological, and outer physical. A 4 x 4 matrix can be devised which illustrates the interactions of these dimensions (e.g., inner biological with individual-psychological). Each of the intersections of the matrix is a representation of interacting event sequences. Several of these interactions may be relevant to the voluntarily childless couple. There may be an asynchronization between societal expectations that married couples should procreate (cultural-sociological) and personal desires to be free to travel (individual-psychological). There may be an asynchronization between a woman's past expectations that she will eventually become a mother and current expectations of professional advancement (both individual-psychological). There may be an asynchronization for a woman as she approaches meno-

pause between the declining biological capacity to bear children (inner-biological) and the realization that she may indeed want children (individual-psychological). These conflicts and their resolution speak to the role conflict models described above (Goode, 1960; Rossi, 1968; Cottrell, 1942). They also illustrate the use of the concept of the life course as interacting sequences of events.

If the life course is the unit of analysis, biographical methods obviously play a key role in tackling the problem. Several critical issues must be addressed when embarking on the use of biographical materials. We would do well to heed the opinion of Thomas & Znaniecki (1918-1920) that autobiographical material is the best material to study the subjective aspect of social life. Bukowski (1973) summarized the work in Polish sociology which develops the use of biographical material to an extent not as yet realized in the United States. Some of the underlying assumptions of the work on biography are points of contention in the psychology and sociology with which we are most familiar.

What is Real?

Concepts of subjectivity and objectivity, of what constitutes reality and for whom are handled in various ways. According to Dailey (1971), episodes, chronicles, and themes represent reality. An episode involves press (in Murray's terms, that part of the environment that is relevant to needs at a particular

moment), needs of a person, action relevant to the needs, and the outcome. The episode reveals the needs of the person, is located in historical time, and has a time and place index. It is the smallest unit in an organizational hierarchy of the life course which proceeds to larger units: learning sequences, particular themes or plots, recurring themes or plots, and molar divisions of life. Defining episodes establishes the relevant constructs which facilitate data collection. For Dailey, the " . . . aim should be not to seek objectivity, but rather to avoid the dangers of subjectivity without losing its creative and humane values" (1971, p. 25). He proposes predictive quality as a control on "runaway" subjectivity. Dailey distinguishes between what is real and what is merely credible. A precise, objectively established fact may tell very little about the life of a person.

There is strong resistance to this conceptualization of reality. Yarrow, Campbell, and Burton (1970) carried out an immense and intriguing study using both concurrent and retrospective data on early childhood experience, studying both the degree and direction of change in recall. They conclude that retrospections are suitable for subjective interpretations of of experience, but not for any approximation of objectivity. Others (Ryff & Baltes, 1976; Lieberman & Falk, 1971; Carr-Hill & Macdonald, 1973) try to bridge the gap between traditional conceptions of objectivity and subjectivity through some kind

of improved systematic, nomothetic procedure. The problem is not to reconcile the intuitive value of subjective data with the traditional nomothetic form of research, but rather to re-evaluate priorities of what type of data will facilitate understanding human development. Indeed, Bengtson and Lovejoy (1973) found that direct subjective experience was a prime predictor of value orientation among youth.

Several authors have started to explore alternative conceptualizations of the recall and reminiscence experience. In the area of memory research, Riegel (1973c), Meacham (1975), and Kvale (1975) have stressed the dynamic nature of memory as it changes over time and the importance of the changes themselves in the understanding of human beings. Riegel (1977) indicates the nature of this reconceptualization:

> When we recollect past events, we rarely reconstruct them with the aid of a temporal yardstick, such as the clock or the calendar. Various events will appear in our menory and provide some spontaneous markings. These events are not haphazardous collection, merely organized in terms of their simultaneity; they often appear in their temporal order and movements. Moreover, such a sequential organization does not occur along one single time series but within a set of different temporal orders illustrated, for instance, when we alternately reflect on our career in school, our vocation, our family, our friends, the political or economic situaiton, etc. The selection of critical markings differs between these sequences." (p. 8)

In spite of the reticence of psychologists to use subjective data, others besides Dailey (1971) have dealt with the issue of subjectivity and the role of subjective data in science in a way consistent with the above considerations. Dollard (1935),

Allport (1942), and Kelley (1955) all view subjective experience as forming social reality. The concept of "humanistic coefficient" as used by the Polish sociologists instructs investigators to see the social world as the partakers do. This concept has been used most notably in education by Freire (1971), Fader (1970) and Ashton-Warner (1963) who take as the only meaningful point of departure in the educational process, the reality of the people with whom they are dealing--their hopes, fears, and life experiences.

The probelm of subjectivity probably will never be solved to the satisfaction of the general scientific community. I am willing to regard subjective experience as an important variable in itself, without necessarily linking it to objective features.

Continuity and Change

Another issue central to biographical work in psychology is that of continuity and change in the lives of people. Much of the literature points to the way in which consistency is achieved for the individual in spite of major or minor changes in the life course. Clausen (1972) speaks of the continuity of identity in terms of perception of continuity via a restructuring of past events so that they are consistent with the present state of affairs. This perceived continuity is extended as well into the realm of psychology where it is assumed that, indeed, life is continuous. Macfarlane (1964) examined longitudinal data from the Berkeley Guidance Study and suggested

that observations of continuity and change depend on a number of things including the breadth and/or intensity of coverage, comparison groups, ages encompassed, time span covered, the nature of organizing variables and concepts used, and the impact of the investigation itself. Clausen (1972) also referring to the Berkeley study, observes that changes in orinetation and personal attributes occur enough to suggest discontinuity and variability rather than invariant stage sequences. Discontinuity can occur, for example, between roles (in terms of role strain discussed earlier), between expectations and opportunities via social mobility and via conscious decisions to change one's life.

A paradox emerges from all of this. On the one hand, "reality" is defined as subjective experience and it is the subjective experience of many people that the life course possesses a degree of continuity. This perception of continuity is, in part, a result of being embedded in a social-historical context which is predicated on the assumption that life is rational, continuous, and stable. On the other hand, I am suggesting that in reality, life is <u>not</u> continuous. I suggest that the answer to this paradox lies in yet another artifact of experimental design--the time of measurement. If one were to examine retrospective data at a time of crisis, conflict, or decision making, would one get a different subjective impression of the life course? As Macfarlane (1964) identified the determinants of observations of continuity and change on the part of

scientists, a similar set of determinants may be identified for the participants themselves. In any case, this issue serves to alert the life historian to a possible contradiction which must be handled cautiously.

Continuity and change in the larger societal framework is easier to examine although many social scientists also believe in the continuity of the social system (Goode, 1960). Dollard (1935) indicates the requisites of examing social change through the interdependence of individual career lines and societal institutions. Institutional forms are recreated through social interaction. Beyond this interdependence, the concept of time has been introduced by others (see Riegel, 1977, for a dialectical analysis of the concept of time). Elder (1977) identifies three modes of temporal interdependence: (1) an individual family's history and social history (societal changes), (2) family course (changes in the family over time), and (3) family course and other institutions (e.g., changes in the economy). Demographic, material, and normative factors shape both the temporal structure of the life course and its consequences. Hareven (1974) identifies family time (encompassing change in the family cycle) and social time (encompassing changing institutional conditions in the larger society). She, too, sees the family and society in constant movement and interdependent.

Cohort Design

One of the most fruitful advances in experimental design has been the introduction of the cohort as a variable. A cohort may be defined as the aggregate of individuals who experience the same event within the same time interval (Ryder, 1965). The concept of cohort links the above temporal considerations with the issue of continuity and change. In particular, cohorts can be seen to link social change and the life course (Elder, 1975). Modell, Furstenberg and Hershberg (1976) have addressed this issue in a historical consideration of transition from youth to adulthood. Within the family the presence of different cohorts affects each individual member. One direction of this process is represented in the traditional socialization literature which empahsizes the passing on of parental values and norms to the children (although it is rarely characterized in terms of cohorts). An equally important aspect of the process is the effect of youth on the parental cohort—as in the effect that the cohort going through the political turmoil of the 60's during adolescence or young adulthood had on the various cohorts going through this period during adulthood (i.e., their parents) [Clausen, 1972; Elder, 1977]. Note that an individual may belong to several different cohorts (e.g., those who were born in 1948; those who enter the job market in the 1960's; those who have a first child in 1972; etc.) and may be a typical member of one cohort, while a deviant member of another one.

According to Ryder (1965) social change involves change in the relative contributions of socializing agents. In this process, the cohort is identified as a social reality which effects and is affected by social change. More importantly, Ryder (1965) suggests that a direct and efficient measurement of the consequences of social change would be a comparison of composite cohort biographies. By linking small scale intensive longitudinal analyses with extensive surveys of society at a given time, a researcher can acquire valuable information regarding individual and societal development.

Bengtson and Lovejoy (1973) employed a cohort-historical interpretation of the age differences (age status was an index of marital status, parental status, job status, and economic dependency) in value orientation, and Uhlenberg (1974) used the concept of birth cohort variation in an analysis of life cycle experiences of U.S. females. More specifically, this latter study used the cohort in several different analyses: (1) examining social change by tracing the behavior of successive cohorts, (2) measuring intergroup diversity by looking at collatoral cohorts across groups (in this case, race), and (3) measuring change in intergroup diversity by comparing successive collatoral cohorts across groups. This study is of particular interest here since the topic was a comparison of the life courses in the area of marriage and childbearing. The patterns that were identified were: a "preferred" course (marriage, children, remaining with same spouse to age 50) and several

"deviant" courses including death before age 50, spinster, childless, and dissolution of marriage. Although these categories and their conceptualization (preferred or deviant) leave a lot to be desired, the study illustrates the use of cohort analysis in the particular area of marriage and fertility behavior. Elder (1977) too, points out the need for evidence on age norms and sanctions across historical time and place, in order to judge the significance of atypical sequences. The experience of different cohorts due to events such as wars, depression, and even "fads" in family size will influence fertility decision making and produce variant family and fertility patterns. These changes cannot be interpreted in the absence of such historical information. The importance of a historical perspective for biographical data is emphasized by Bukowski (1973).

The Application of Biographical Methods

In order to bring together some of these issues (subjectivity, retrospective data, continuity and change, etc.) it would be worthwhile to summarize the set of axioms and postulates elaborated by Dailey (1971) on biographical methods. Dailey's work is premised on Murray's life history model which takes a holistic view of the person, views the organism over time and during the "episode," and places importance on internal stimuli as they affect the rhythm of life. The criteria for evaluating the assessment of lives includes the location of the person in real time over a variety of settings (relevant to the person,

not the investigator), spanning a large portion of life, and the use of demographic and objective facts to help interpret the life course. Among the axioms and postulates are: (1) It is possible to develop a valid and empathic assessment system by using life histories. Identification of the investigator with the author of the document facilitates this assessment. (2) Social meanings, not technical knowledge, are the basis of assessment. Event sequences are the basis for valid prediction. (3) Life history assessment is a learning process in which accuracy of prediction increases as more events are known. In this way, confidence develops which may interfere with the process of acquiring more data. However, continual feedback postpones this learning plateau and develops an orientation to "knowing events."

Based on these assumptions, Dailey (1971) has developed a programmed case to instruct people in the use of life histories. His particular concern is the use of this material in assessment situations (occupation, education, mental health) so that the person being evaluated is no longer treated merely as " . . . a potential student, criminal, mental patient, employee, or any other inmate" (1971, p. 47). He argues that traditional assessment procedures are frequently unjust to certain groups (minorities, women, etc.) and that life history as a method of assessment can change this situation. Such considerations are especially relevant to the study of sex roles and fertility and especially of voluntary childlessness, which has heretofore been considered deviant.

Recently, others have used biographical materials in a variety of situations. Lowenthal and Chiriboga (1973) used life history protocals to evaluate social stress and adaptation. Back and Bourque (1970) used a "draw-a-graph" technique in which the person graphs the highs and lows of his/her life course. Additionally, there is increasing interest in trying to use biographical methods with large groups of people--a seemingly overwhelming task. Balan, Browning, Jelin, and Litzler (1969), Karweit (1973), and Carr-Hill and Macdonald (1973) discuss computerized storage and retrieval methods for handling the wealth of data.

Summary

The purpose of this extensive review was to explore the relationship between voluntary childlessness and sex role development from a developmental perspective and to suggest theoretical and methodological considerations relevant to that relationship. Following are the key points suggested by the review:

1. The voluntary childless are seen as deviant in the literature and by society because they reject the "motherhood mandate." This is especially true for women who are rejecting the basic definition of femininity (i.e., motherhood).

2. The professional literature on sex roles has been unable (and unwilling) to account for the voluntarily childless (or any other group of people who are nontraditional in sex

role orientation). This is due to particularistic and limited conceptions of science.

3. A model of sex role development is proposed which attempts to correct some of the shortcomings in the literature by considering sex role development as it might occur across the life span and by proposing post-conventional sex role orientation as a non-deviant developmental alternative.

4. Most of the literature on the family is unable to adequately account for the voluntarily childless because it depicts family cycles in terms of stages defined by the presence and developmental status of children.

5. It is important both in the consideration of sex role development and adult development in general to rethink the relationship of family, career, fertility, and historical context.

6. The literature on fertility in general and on the voluntarily childless in particular provides only a limited understanding of the childless. Many of the findings, especially regarding sex roles, are contradictory.

7. These concerns have led me to choose the biographical method. Biography as a method is amenable to the theoretical perspectives which are suggested:

   a. The life course is the unit of analysis;

   b. Subjective experience is an important variable in itself;

c. The issue of continuity and change in people's lives is directly incorporated;

d. Historical information can be incorporated.

Objectives

The following summary of the goals of this study is an attempt to bring together the literature reviewed, my own theoretical and philosophical perspective and the choice of biographical techniques of data collection.

Sex roles. A major gap in the literature on sex roles is the lack of a life-span perspective. Developmental models of sex role socialization (e.g., Kohlberg, 1969) typically assume that adolescence and polarized, sex-typed behavior mark the end of development. The literature on androgyny does not approach sex roles from a developmental perspective at all. In order to address sex role development from a life-span perspective, one must first decide what to look at over the life cycle and how to look at it (e.g., which behaviors and/or attitudes in what domains). The Model of Sex-Role Transcendence provides a basis for conceptualizing life-span sex role development. I will examine the data to seek ways to operationalize the model. I will seek out links between transcendence and androgyny, the contribution of situational variables, the relevance of personal perceptions of sex roles to sex role orientation, and the impact of historical context on sex role development.

Voluntary childlessness and its relationship to sex roles. So far, studies of voluntary childlessness have failed to achieve a genuine understanding of the phenomenon. Because so little is known about voluntary childlessness, it seems as if the data are conceptualized in arbitrary and limited ways. There is no consideration of what issues are salient for voluntarily childless couples and how this group of people may actually represent several distinct sub-populations. Therefore, many potentially meaningful variables (e.g., family background) are found to be insignificant in aggregate data because people are grouped together who may, in fact, be very different. Another problem in the literature is that many of the studies are conducted with women alone; or, if couples are studied, the two partners are considered independent of one another. Intuitively, it seems clear that fertility decisions involve at least some degree of mutuality even if the ultimate decision is made by one or the other partner. Therefore, I explore how to index the interactive nature of the husband-wife relationship (values, attitudes, and behaviros) as it affects the fertility decision.

The literature on the relationship between voluntary childlessness and sex roles is especially fuzzy. I will look at sex role orientation in different domains (e.g., occupation and divison of labor in the home) within the person and/or couple in order to understand the apparent contradictions in the literature. I will focus also on discrepancies between attitudes and behaviors. Most likely there is no simple causal relation-

ship between sex role development and voluntary childlessness. There is some evidence, however, that non-traditional sex role development may be either a cause or an effect of the decision to remain childless, depending on which group of childless couples one looks at (e.g., early articulators vs. perpetual delayers). Another objective of this study, then, is to explore this two-way relationship. Finally, I will explore voluntary childlessness in order to see if it serves a conflict managing function and if so, how this is related to other forms of conflict management when role strain is an issue.

General issues of development. I also intend to use the material in this study to explore more general issues of concern to developmental psychology. First, I will elucidate the relationship of conflict or discontinuity to change or development. In a life-span context, the literature on normative life crises (Datan & Ginsberg, 1975) is applicable to this issue. I hope to extend the conceptualization of normative life crises by embedding it in a developmental framework. More generally, I am interested in discovering who and/or what are the relevant socialization agents in adult life, including the role of children or lack of children in this process. This, of course, is not a task which can be accomplished within the scope of this dissertation. However, my interest, as indicated in the introduction, is to use biographical methods to discover which questions to ask, the first step in establishing the developmental

psychology of adulthood. Finally I will explore the feasibility of using events and event sequences via the interdependent biographies of the couple to study development.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Sample Selection

Original Sample. Since this study is, in part, a longitudinal follow-up of the work done by Bram (1974), her sample of voluntarily childless couples was used. Bram obtained her sample by soliciting participants from the population of married students living in Married Student's Housing at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Trained solicitors went door-to-door, calling on every fourth household (with the exception of households with Spanish or Oriental names since white, American-born couples were called for by her design) to collect some basic data in order to form the groups of subjects needed (childless, delays, parents). Her selection criteria were: age 21 years minimum, married at least one year, the voluntarily childless defined as "fecund couples who intend never to have children" (p. 30). The group of preliminary participants obtained in this way were told that they would become part of a pool of subjects from which the final sample was to be drawn. Since it was difficult to obtain the total sample of permanently voluntarily childless couples in this way (due to the statistical rarity of this group in the population at large) the group had to be supplemented from several sources: Zero Population Growth, the Faculty Wives' Club of the University of

Michigan, advertisements in the Ann Arbor News, and informal communication. Informal communication provided the largest source of childless couples (66.6%) as compared to the other two groups of subjects used by Bram (parents and delays) for whom the original solicitation was most adequate.

Follow-up sample. Of the 30 couples in the childless sample only 11 (22 individuals) responded to the follow-up questionnaire which was mailed out in 1976. We were able to find current addresses for 20 of the 30 couples, all of whom received a letter soliciting their help in the follow-up study followed by a phone call to confirm their willingness to participate and to determine if they would be willing to be part of a subsample of people to recieve an indepth interview. Of those contacted, 18 agreed to participate in the follow up and 5 of these agreed to participate in the indepth interview (we were limited to those still living in Ann Arbor for the indepth interview). Of the 5 couples who agreed to participate in the indepth interview, two were chosen at random and were interviewed in person (the other three couples were among those receiving the mailed questionnaire). Sixteen couples received the questionnaire by mail and were asked to return them in the provided addressed, stamped envelope. Nine couples responded in this way after two follow up post cards were mailed reminding them of their agreement to participate.

Data Collection

The data were collected by mail for nine couples and by personal interviews for two couples. These latter participants were interviewed in their homes simultaneously in separate rooms by trained interviewers (both women). The interviews ranged from four to eight hours (the participants were paid three dollars an hour) and were divided into two sessions. All participants were assured that the information was confidential.

Instrument

The mailed questionnaire and the interview schedule was adapted from the original (Bram, 1974) with slight modifications suggested by the results of that study. All subjects received this schedule. The indepth interview carried out with two couples in addition contained sections based on pilot work and on the literature relevant to the issues of concern to me (see Chapter I and II). The interview schedule is included in Appendix A.

Coding

Coding procedures followed exactly those of the Bram study for those parts that were the same. Those parts of the indepth interview which were amenable to coding were coded as similarly as possible to the original coding system. Since I coded all of the material, inter-coder reliability was not an issue. However, my judgments were confirmed (blind) by a colleague when questions arose.

Follow-up Sample Description

The final sample consisted of 11 couples (22 individuals). The length of marriage ranged from 5 to 11 years, with an average of 7.9 years. The ages ranged from 25 to 41 years (men, 26-39; women, 25-41) with an average of 31.5 (men, 32.1; women, 30.9). (All measures are for summer, 1976, when the data were collected.)

In order to get a more complete picture of what happened to the original sample of 30 couples and to see if the group of 11 couples was representative of the larger group, several procedures were undertaken.

Although much time and effort were spent trying to locate all of the couples, ten were impossible to track down. The seven couples who originally agreed to participate, but who did not respond were contacted by phone in order to obtain some limited information. Additional information was obtained informally about four other couples (from both those who would not participate and about some who were not contacted). Of these 11 couples, none have children; five are divorced or separated; six are still married and do not have or intend to have children. Of the 22 couples (including the 11 of the current sample) for which there is information, only one couple (in the current sample) is now expecting to have children.

In order to see if the group of 11 couples (used in the current study) was different from Bram's sample of 30 couples, several comparisons were made using the 1972 data (age, length

of marriage, employment status, the five year future, religion, attitudes about the Women's Movement, and marital happiness). Of these variables, religion and marital happiness seem to differentiate the subsample from the total group. The eleven couples appeared to have happier marriages in 1972, a fact substantiated by the number of divorces that have occurred for those not responding to the questionnaire. Among the eleven couples there were more Protestant men, fewer Jewish men and women, and fewer Catholic women (See Table 1).

The original group of 30 couples was not a random sample of any defined population. The subgroup of 11 couples in the current study differ from the original sample in the areas of marital happiness and possibly religion and presumably in ease of access. The available evidence indicates that there is no systematic difference between the groups on intention to have children, although the limited information prevents the testing of this directly.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF CURRENT SAMPLE (N = 22) TO ORIGINAL SAMPLE (N = 60) FOR RESPONSES IN 1972

	Original Sample		Current Sample	
Item	Women	Men	Women	Men
Marital Happiness[a]				
Happier	70.0	63.3	91.0	82.0
Average	26.7	26.7	9.0	19.0
Less Happy	3.3	6.7	0	0
Other	0	3.3	0	0
Religion				
Catholic	16.7	6.7	9.0	9.0
Protestant	50.0	73.3	55.0	91.0
Jewish	20.0	13.3	9.0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
None	13.3	6.7	27.0	0

Note: Numbers represent the percentage of women or men responding in each category.

[a]Compared to "most other couples"

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS: THE DECISION TO REMAIN CHILDLESS

Most of the data analysis in this and the next chapter is descriptive and qualitative due to the adventitious nature of the sample, the number of people involved (N = 22), and the categorical nature of the data. It was possible to do tests of significance for certain limited data sets in which the categories were amenable to such an analysis. These tests of significance (Fisher's Exact Test for 2 x 2 contingency tables) were based on post hoc decisions after perusing the data for possible applications. Therefore the significance levels achieved in these results should be viewed with a recognition of their selected nature and limited generalizability. These tests are supplements to what is basically a descriptive analysis.

Several components of the decision to remain childless are explored including the early history of the decision and how the decision has changed over the years, values and costs of children, and perceptions of how children would affect the lives of women, men, and the couple. The data are treated in several different ways: (1) longitudinal group comparisons examining what changes have occurred for the group in the intervening four years since the original study (Bram, 1974); (2) longitudinal comparisons for each individual in order to determine which people contributed to the group changes and what, if anything,

distinguishes these people; and (3) analysis of certain subgroups of people (e.g., those who might have children in the future, those who articulated the decision early, etc.) in order to explore the variation within the total group of childless couples. Given the qualitative nature of the data, the results and the discussion of the results will be integrated.

Evolution of the Decision

The data on the early history of the decision are derived from the original study, while the data on the evolution of the decision are derived from the present study and change scores between the two. As in the Bram study, several parts of the decision are explored:

1. The individual's desire or lack of desire for children before entering marriage.
2. The individual's desire or lack of desire for children early in the marriage (the first few months).
3. The desired family size at the two times of measurement.
4. The contribution of either spouse to the decision: whether the husband or wife was more enthusiastic about having children, or if it was about equal (and how this has changed).
5. The method of birth control (and any changes in birth control method).
6. The individual's perception of how her/his feelings have changed over the years as compared to contemporaneous data on current feelings at the two points in time.

7. The prospects for possible change in the future.

The original data on the 22 individuals indicate that six women and one man did not desire children before marriage (this sex difference is significant; $p = .041$). These seven people are identified as "early articulators" for other comparisons in the study. Of the six women, four moved toward the husband's pre-marital position early in the marriage. Of the two who remained consistent, one woman's husband moved toward her position early in the marriage. The one man who was an early articulator retained his desire for no children. Of the three women who did not know before marriage whether they wanted children, two remained stable and one became more negative about having children early in the marriage. Of the five men who did not know prior to marriage whether they wanted children, one moved toward the wife's position of not wanting children. Two women and five men expressed a desire for children prior to marriage. Both women moved in the direction of their husband's position early in marriage (one moving beyond her husband to a more negative position). All five men moved toward their wife's position. (See Table 2.)

The pattern of change is the most interesting feature of these data. Seven women and six men changed their position during the early years of marriage, the general direction of change reflecting an increasing lack of desire for children. No person who wanted children before marriage wanted any during early marriage and no spouse of one of these people changed her/his mind completely in that direction. One woman who was

TABLE 2

EARLY HISTORY OF THE DECISION
FOR EACH COUPLE

Couple	Prior to Marriage		Early in Marriage	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
1	W	U	N	D
2	N	U	D	D
3	U	N	D	N
4	U	W	N	U
5	N	U	N	D
6	N	W	D	D
7	N	U	N	N
8	W	U	D	D
9	N	W	N	N
10	N	W	U	D
11	U	W	U	D
Total				
not wanting children (N)	6	1 *	5	3
wanting children (W)	2	5	0	0
undecided (U)	3	5	2	1
delaying decision (D)			4	7

Note: Data collected in 1972.

*p = .041

an early articulator, changing to the delay category early in marriage, now wants to have a child within the next five years (and ultimately two children). Her husband is not as enthusiastic about this turn around as she is, but is reconciled to the idea (although he would prefer only one child). Two other couples are now entertaining the idea of having children, although both are still very ambivalent. Both of these husbands expressed a desire for children prior to marriage, one wife was an early articulator. Early in the marriage both wives and one husband expressed an explicit lack of desire for children, the other husband did not know. During the last four years, both partners of both couples have become more positive about children.

According to the responses on the questionnaire about the differential enthusiasm (between husband and wife) for having children, there was a large shift between the two points in time in the husband's perception of relative enthusiasm. There was a significant difference between men and women in 1972 ($p = .015$). (See Table 3.) Inspection of the individual change scores reveals that the husbands perceived less enthusiasm on the parts of their wives in 1976 than they did in 1972, a perception which corresponded more closely (than in 1972) to the wife's perception of her own enthusiasm.

Regarding birth control method, four of the 11 couples changed to a more effective method of birth control, including a total of three male sterilization operations (2 new ones) and

TABLE 3

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISONS OF PERCEPTIONS
OF ENTHUSIASM ABOUT HAVING CHILDREN

More Enthusiastic	1972		1976	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Wife	2	5 *	1	1
Husband	3	2	3	2
Equal	5	4	6	8
No answer	1	0	1	0

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses in each category.

*p = .015

one new female sterilization operation. One woman changed from the pill to diaphragm due to medical reasons.

Further information about the evolution of the decision can be obtained from comparing responses of retrospective perceptions of changes in feelings to contemporaneous responses at the two times of measurement. (See Tables 4 and 5.) The retrospective perceptions indicate that approximately half of the women and men expressed a change in their feelings about children. All of the women who changed reported that they became more positive while four of the five men reported that they became more negative ($p = .024$). Of the five women whose feelings became more positive, three of these reports are not corroborated by the contemporaneous comparisons (which did not indicate change). The two reports that were supported by the contemporaneous data were for two of the wives who are now entertaining the idea of possibly having children. Their husbands, however, report a change in the negative direction, a report which is supported by contemporaneous data. The reports of the two other men who feel a change in the negative direction do not receive support from the contemporaneous data. The one man whose feelings changed in the positive direction was the husband in the couple which definitely plans to have children (these feelings were supported by the contemporaneous data).

There could be several explanations for the lack of fit where it exists, between retrospective data and contemporaneous data, one of which is that some people simply forget how they felt in the past. A more speculative explanation is that the

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO PERCEIVED A CHANGE IN FEELINGS ABOUT HAVING CHILDREN (1976)

Change in Feeling	Women	Men	
None	6	6	*
More positive	5	1	
More negative	0	4	

*p = .024

TABLE 5

CONTEMPORANEOUS FEELINGS ABOUT HAVING CHILDREN: 1972 AND 1976

	1972		1976	
Feelings	women	men	women	men
never want children	9	8	6	7
delay having children	1	3	2	0
ambivalent	0	0	2	4
no answer	1	0	1	0

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses in each category.

women who report becoming more positive perhaps are more confident of their decision and free to express their positive feelings about children in general. The two men who report becoming more negative when, in fact, they do not seem to have changed, may be justifying their decision (in terms of dissonance reduction) since they were identified as wanting children prior to marriage, both moving toward their wife's position during marriage.

Are there indications, other than the one direct statement, that the nature of the decision will change in the future? Two questions were asked in order to obtain this information: (1) Can you see anything that might happen to change your mind? and (2) Do you think that if your spouse or your marriage were different you would want children? Of the eight women who answered the first question, six said nothing would change their mind. One said that if she got pregnant, she would consider having the child. (She has recently found out that she may be physically unable to have children and is a regular user of an effective birth control method. The possibility of becoming pregnant does not seem likely.) The second woman said that if she were married to someone who really wanted children, she would consider it. Of the nine men who responded to the question, four said that they would never change. Two said that if they were younger, they would reconsider; two mentioned achievement related changes (e.g., a less demanding career); and one said that if his wife really wanted children, he would

consider it. There is a significant sex difference ($p = .017$) showing that more men than women said they would change their mind.

About half of the men and women said that if something were different in their lives, they would consider having children. Three women and four men, again mentioned the desires of the spouse as relevant. The men who gave this response all had wanted children prior to marriage. The remainder of the reasons bordered on fantasy. One woman said that if she had been younger at the age of marriage, children might have been a possibility. Two women and one man mentioned extraordinary wealth as perhaps helping them change their minds. None of the responses to these two questions seem to be in the realm of possibility. They do show, however, the importance of the mutual interaction of the partners in the decision.

In general, it can be said that the decision to remain childless does evolve from the initial position. The most obvious shift is during the early years of marriage, representing a true dialogue of husband and wife. However, this dialogue continues, one influencing the other, refining perceptions of the other and reflecting the feelings of the other (positively or negatively). There is evidence that feelings about children continue to change over the span studied and that the perception of these changes on the part of the individual may reflect the true nature of the change or something quite different. Some of the reasons for these continuing changes will be explored later in the chapter.

Values and Costs of Children

Perceptions about the values and costs of children were assessed in two ways. Participants responded to two checklists (values and costs) by indicating the degree of importance of each value and cost. Second, they responded to open-ended questions about the values and costs of children to them. The answers to both sets of questions were evaluated according to the method Bram (1974) used, based on a values schema proposed by Hoffman and Hoffman (1973) and a costs schema developed by Bram on the basis of her data. The categories and examples are presented below: *

Value Category	Example
Adult Status, Social Identity	Wanting to feel like an adult
Expansion of Self, Immortality	Wanting to see the world through the eyes of a child
Mortality, Altruism, Good of the Group	Wanting to make a contribution to society
Primary Group Ties, Affection	Wanting to gain a sense of family
Stimulation, Novelty, Fun	Wanting to watch a child grow
Creativity, Accomplishment, Competence	Wanting the challenge of raising a child
Power, Influence	Wanting to influence another human being
Social Comparison	Wanting to feel like a respected member of the community

* See Bram (1974) for a complete list of interview items which are categorized according to the values and costs schema.

Cost Category	Example
Achievement	Children would interrupt my career
Structural	Children would restrict my activities (time, money)
Affiliative	Children would interfere with my marriage
Psychological (uncertainty, fear, self-image)	Not sure I'd make a good parent
Children per se	I just don't like children
Interferes with Life Style	Want freedom to do things spontaneously with my spouse
World Situation	Don't want to add to the population explosion

The responses to the checklists will be used to provide an overall picture of the salient values and costs for the whole group of childless couples in 1976 (Appendix B, Tables 14 and 15). The responses to the open-ended questions will be used for an indepth exploration of the issues.

Taking the group of women as a whole, the following values were rated as very important with the highest frequency: wanting to share new experiences with my spouse, wanting to watch a growing child, and wanting to help a child develop into a healthy human being. Those values rated somewhat important with the highest frequency were: wanting to fulfill myself, wanting to have a new source of companionship and affection, wanting to watch a child grow, wanting the challenge of raising a child, wanting to try out my skills as a parent, and wanting to have the experience of pregnancy and childbirth.

Men, as a whole, rated the following values as very important with the highest frequency: wanting to watch a child grow and wanting to help a child develop into a healthy human being. The following values were rated as somewhat important with the highest frequency: wanting to pass on the family name, wanting to leave a part of me on this earth, wanting to gain a sense of family, wanting to share new experiences with my spouse, wanting to have a new source of companionship and affection, wanting to influence another human being, and wanting to try out my skills as a parent.

It should be noted that although these values were mentioned as very important or somewhat important by the highest proportion of men or women, these frequencies ranged from 4 to 5 for 10 women and 4 to 6 for 11 men. In general, for women, the most relevant categories are primary group ties, affection; stimulation, novelty, fun; and creativity, accomplishment, competence. For men, the most important categories were: stimulation, novelty, fun and creativity, accomplishment, competence with secondary values covering a broader range of categories.

Women, as a whole, rated the following costs as very important (indicated with *) or somewhat important with the highest frequency: don't want to add to the population explosion, don't want to bring children into the world the way it is, don't like the responsibility of having a child*, want the freedom to do things spontaneously with my spouse*, children would interrupt my career*, my work is more important to me than having children*,

my spouse and I are too close to be able to spend time with each other and a child*, I would rather spend my money on other things, children interfere with sexual relationships, and having children would necessitate change in my life which I am not willing to risk*.

Men, as a whole, rated the following costs as very important (indicated with *) or somewhat important with the highest frequency: don't want to add to the population explosion, don't like the responsibility of having a child*, don't like the mess and inconvenience of having a child, want the freedom to do things spontaneously with my spouse*, children would interrupt my spouse's career*, children interfere with a man's work, children interfere with friendship with other adults, children interfere with sexual relationships, and children would necessitate change in my life which I am not willing to risk.

Achievement, affiliative, and life style seem to be the most salient cost categories for men and women. It is interesting to note that both women and men perceive that children interfere with the woman's career, but not the man's. A cursory examination of the group data in the Bram study indicates that concerns over parenting ability and education have diminished greatly in importance.

The open-ended questions about the values and costs of children were handled in several ways and provide in depth information on attitudes about children (primarily because the

number of items was more manageable). (Appendix B, Tables 16 and 17.)

The most frequently mentioned value for women was primary ties, affection (4), no change from the 1972 data. Men most frequently mentioned "nothing" (4), an increase from 1972. There was a decrease from 1972 to 1976 in the frequency with which men mentioned expansion of self and power, influence, effectance. In terms of costs, women most frequently mentioned lifestyle, an increase from 1972. Those costs which decreased for women since 1972 are achievement and psychological. Men as a group, seemed not to indicate the salience of one cost over another either in 1972 or in 1976. There is a significant interaction between sex and year ($p = .03$) indicating that more women than men mentioned achievement costs in 1972, while more men than women mentioned it in 1976.

The pattern of change in values and costs from 1972 to 1976 was assessed for each individual. The results are summarized in Tables 6 and 7. Entries in the diagonals of these tables indicate stability; entries outside the diagonals indicate change. This analysis offers a more complete picture of the nature of change. The most stable value categories are: expansion of self; creativity, accomplishment; and nothing. As many people added primary ties as dropped it. Stimulation, novelty and fun, and nothing were also popular categories to change toward. Expansion of self and power were the two categories away from which most people moved. The most stable

TABLE 6

PATTERN OF CHANGE IN VALUES OF CHILDREN

1972	1976									
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
(1) Adult Status										F
(2) Expansion of Self		F F	M	M		M M			M M	F
(3) Altruism										
(4) Primary Ties			M	F	F	M	F			F
(5) Stimulation				F	F					
(6) Creativity				M		F	M M		M	
(7) Power			M	M	F			M		F
(8) Social Comparison					F					
(9) Nothing									M M	F
				F F		F				

Note: Up to two responses were coded for each of the 22 participants: 11 women (F) and 11 men (M). Entries indicate movement from one category to the same or different category between 1972 and 1976.

TABLE 7

PATTERN OF CHANGE IN COSTS OF CHILDREN

1972	1976							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) Achievement	F M		F		M	F F	F F	F
(2) Structural	M	F						
(3) Relation to Spouse	M	F	M			F F		F
(4) Psychological		F	F	F F		M	M F	F
(5) Kids per se		M	M	M M		F	F	
(6) Interference with spouse		M				M	F	
(7) Lifestyle				M M	F		M	F
(8) World	M	M			M	M	F	F M M

Note: Up to two responses were coded for each of the 22 participants: 11 women (F) and 11 men (M). Entries indicate movement from one category to the same or different category between 1972 and 1976.

costs were psychological and world. Movement away from cost categories was most active for achievement (especially for women), relationship with spouse, psychological, lifestyle, and world. Movement toward cost categories was most active for structural, interference with spouse, and lifestyle.

The fact that there is more change than stability in attitudes about children is not captured by the group comparisons. Analysis of this individual level invites the generation of hypotheses regarding which subgroups of people are changing in which direction and why. These issues will be addressed after the presentation of the next set of results.

Effect of Parenthood

Attitudes toward children were further explored in the following questions:

1. How does having children change a woman's life?
2. How does having children change a man's life?
3. How does having children change a couple's relationship?
4. How would you be affected by having children?

The responses to these questions were coded for the presence or absence of certain themes (Appendix B, Tables 18-21). Both women and men at both times of measurement stressed structural restrictions when addressing the question about changes in a woman's life. Both men and women stressed negative psychological effects (e.g., the tendency to lose one's identity, diminished personal growth, etc.) in 1972, but not in 1976, (this decrease

was especially true for women). Men stressed positive psychological effects and achievement in 1972, but not in 1976. The overall evaluation is increasingly negative from 1972 to 1976.

Regarding changes in a man's life, again structural restrictions were mentioned most often for both men and women for both times of measurement. Positive psychological effects dropped off for both men and women. Again, the overall evaluation is increasingly negative. In 1976, more men than women believed that a woman's life changed more by having children compared to a man's life changing more or both changing equally ($p = .004$).

The one theme stressed for both men and women at both times of measurement regarding change in a couple's relationship is spearation of the spouses.

Structural restrictions, again, were most frequently mentioned by men and women when asked about how they personally would be affected by having children (although to a lesser extent). Women mentioned achievement to a greater extent in 1972 than in 1976. Men mentioned both positive and negative psychological effects more frequently in 1972 than in 1976. The overall evaluation was negative, with only one woman changing to a positive evaluation of the effects.

The pattern of change from 1972 to 1976 was assessed for each individual and summary tables constructed for each of the four questions as in the analysis of Values and Costs. Again,

entries in the diagonals represent stability of a particular theme, while entries outside the diagonals represent change (See Tables 8-11).

For the effects of parenthood on a woman, four themes represent most of the activity (structural, achievement, positive psychological, negative psychological), structural restrictions being both the most stable and the theme most growing in importance relative to other themes. Achievement and negative psychological effects were also relatively stable, the latter, however, both attracting and losing stress.

These same four categories represent most of the activity for the second question: the effect of parenthood on a man. Again, structural restrictions appears to be a stable theme and increasing in importance for men. There is some change toward and away from achievement as a theme, away from positive psychological effects and away from negative psychological effects.

Different themes are used to represent the responses to the question regarding change in the couple's relationship. More positive themes are included in the assessment, although these are rarely mentioned by this group of childless couples. Both structural changes and the separation of spouses are stable themes, although there is some movement into and out of these categories. There is very little movement around the other themes.

Responses to the fourth question regarding the effect of parenthood on self again demonstrates the importance of structural

TABLE 8

PATTERN OF CHANGE: EFFECT OF PARENTHOOD ON A WOMAN

1972	1976				
	Structural	Achievement	Pos. Psych.	Neg. Psych.	Other
Structural	1 6 *1* *6* 2 7 *2* *8* 3 8 *3* *10* 4 10 *5*	*4*		*4* *7*	
Achievement		4 9 *9* 11 *11*		*7*	
Positive Psychological			*4*	*7*	*6*	2 *3* 8 *5* 10 *8*
Negative Psychological	8 9 *9* *11*		4 5 *9*	1 *1* 6 *6* 11		7 *8* 8 *10* 10
Other	*9*	3 *4*	*9*	3 *4*	1 *1*	
	11		6			

Note: Up to 3 responses were coded for each of the 22 participants. The numbers refer to the couple (italics are the men) and indicate movement from one category to the same or different category between 1972 and 1976.

TABLE 9

PATTERN OF CHANGE: EFFECT OF PARENTHOOD ON A MAN

1972	1976				
	Structural	Achievement	Pos. Psych.	Neg. Psych.	Other
Structural	1 7 *1* *6* 2 9 *2* *10* 3 11 *11* 4 5	6	*4*	10	*4* *3* *7*
Achievement		*4* *9*		*11*	7 *6*
Positive Psychological	*8*	6 9	4 *9* *10*	*11*	3 7 *6* 11 *7*
Negative Psychological	8 *5* *8*		2 *2* *4*	1 *1*	*4*
Other	*5*			10	2 1
	9	4			5

Note: Up to 3 responses were coded for each of the 22 participants. The numbers refer to the particular couple (italics are the men) and indicate movement from one category to the same or different category between 1972 and 1976.

TABLE 10

PATTERN OF CHANGE: EFFECT OF PARENTHOOD ON A COUPLE

1972	1976				
	Structural	Separate Spouses	Joint Activities	Affiliative Bond	Growth of Marriage
Structural	6 *4* 8 *5* 9 *8* *11*		2		3 *2* 5 10
Separate Spouses	1 *9* 7	2 9 *1* 5 11 *3* 5 *10* 8 *11*		*9*	3 *2* 10 *4* *5* *7*
Joint Activities	*9*		11	4 *9*	10
Affiliative Bond		*6* *8*	*8* *10*		
Growth of Marriage					11 *4*

Note: Up to 3 responses were coded for each of the 22 participants. The numbers refer to the particular couple (italics are the men) and indicate movement from one category to the same or different category between 1972 and 1976.

TABLE 11

PATTERN OF CHANGE: EFFECT OF PARENTHOOD ON "YOU"

1972	1976 (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(1) Structural	3 *1* *8* 8 *2* *9* *4* *10*		5			4	7 *7*	1 *3* 6 *11*
(2) Physical Health								
(3) Marriage			1			*4*	*7*	3
(4) Achievement	9 *6* 11			2			11	3 10
(5) Social Life	11						11	10 *2*
(6) Positive Psychology	2 *6* 9		*1*		2	*10*	*5*	*9* *11*
(7) Negative Psychology			*1*			4 *4*	9 *7* *5* 5 8 *7* 11	10 *2* *3* *8*
				10				

Note: Up to 3 responses were coded for each of the 22 participants. The numbers refer to the particular couple (italics are the men) and indicate movement from one category to the same or different category between 1972 and 1976.

restrictions, increasing over time. Negative psychological effects are also very stable and increase over time. Achievement becomes less important (especially for women) as does positive psychological effects for men.

Except for the couple question, these data indicate, again, that there is more change than stability in the attitudes that people have about children over time.

In order to understand this pattern of change, it was necessary to look for variables which might distinguish certain subgroups of people or processes that might account for the change. Two factors emerged from a detailed comparison of all subjects across a number of variables. Change in employment status and husband-wife interaction together provide insight into the pattern of change.

Three men and five women (two couples are represented among these people) have changed from being full time students to full time employed. One woman changed from working part time to working full time; another woman changed from working full time to working part time. I will consider the student to employment shift first. The responses to attitudes about children (values, costs, effects of parenthood) reflect a shift away from achievement as an important consideration and, to a lesser extent a shift away from psychological effects. The only exception to this pattern is for the two men who are now considering the possibility of having children. Additionally, achievement concerns drop out the protocols of some of the

spouses of these people who have entered the work force for questions regarding the effect of parenthood for man or woman (which ever applies to the partner who changed in status).

A consideration of husband-wife interaction for some of the couples individually will shed more light on this phenomenon as well as some of the other changes that have occurred. Couple 2, who now expect to have children, exhibit evidence of conflict and accommodation to conflict. The fact that the wife picks up the ambivalence on the part of the husband (about having children) is reflected in her responses by the addition of the interference with spouse cost category. On the other hand, he becomes more positive in his evaluation of the effect of parenthood on the couple, and marriage drops out of his protocol as a concern. The conflict about children, then, is not perceived by the husband as threatening to the marriage.

Couple 3, in which the wife changed from student to employed, exhibit the above mentioned pattern. She has become less concerned about achievement and he drops achievement concerns from his responses to the effect of parenthood on women. Additionally, the wife drops social or affiliative concerns from her responses of values and costs of children (e.g., primary ties) and adds structural concerns. Couple 4, who is now considering children, reflect this change in their responses. Both partners add positive psychological effects to the values of children and the wife adds primary ties. The wife is the one woman who is still a full time student, a fact which is

reflected in the prevalence of achievement concerns in the protocols of both partners. The wife in Couple 5 changed from part time to full time work. In this case, structural issues become more salient for the husband, but not for her (in fact, structural issues drop out for her). The wife in Couple 7 changed from being a full time student to employed; the husband is the one man who is still a full time student. As predicted, achievement issues become less important for the wife, and less important in the husband's evaluation of the effects of parenthood on women. His responses reflect a decreasing concern about anything over time, the decision itself apparently becoming less salient in his life.

Couple 9 is considering the possibility of children. Both the husband and wife changed from being students to being employed. The woman has become less concerned about achievement for herself, but more concerned with achievement for her husband (as will be discussed later, she is more work oriented, he is more family oriented on a number of issues). Reflecting his wife's positive feelings about children (his feelings are at best ambivalent), interference with spouse drops out of his costs and positive psychological effects for women are added. There appears to be some conflict here, since marriage (positive aspects) and affiliation become more important for the wife, but less important for the husband. These differences in attitude and the mutual impact of one spouse's feelings on the other are especially striking if one considers the history of the

decision for this couple. The wife was categorized as an early articulator of voluntary childlessness who is gradually becoming more positive about children, whereas the man wanted children prior to marriage, but gradually became more negative about children. Not only is there conflict within the couple over these issues, the husband, himself, appears to be in conflict within the couple over his current desires and his past desires.

The wife of Couple 10 has changed from student status to employed status. Achievement drops out of her responses as a concern, but is added to the husband's. Concurring with her husband's increasing concern about achievement, the wife adds interference with spouse to her list of costs. This, however, reflects more than a straightforward consideration of the husband's achievement concerns. The reason the wife gives for adding this cost is that if they had children, her husband "would have to do everything" involving the household and child-care. He, incidentally, agrees with this prediction. The changes represented by Couple 11 give indirect support to the notion that change in employment status is related to changes in attitudes about children. Although both partners have been employed full time at both times of measurement, achievement drops out of the wife's protocol and is added to the husband's. By examining their employment history, one can discover why this pattern has occurred. The wife has moved from a position of overwhelming administrative responsibilities to one of more regular academic responsibilities. The husband is currently facing a tenure

decision so it should be obvious as to why he is increasingly concerned about achievement.

Discussion

The data on attitudes toward children highlight several important issues concerning voluntarily childless couples. Most important is the pattern of stability and change in the attitudes of these people. For all but one item (effect of parenthood on the couple) change predominates over stability. Supporting evidence for this pattern can be seen in the evolution of the decision: from feelings prior to marriage, to early in marriage, to (and between) the two times of measurement. These results suggest that perhaps the voluntarily childless can not be considered as one group of people having common attitudes which are stable over time. The analysis of change in employment status and husband-wife interaction illuminate other issues which may be more important determinants of attitudes and attitude change than something inherent to this group of people. The results are, of course, only suggestive and should be followed up with similar analyses for parents and couples who intend to have children to assess the patterns of stability and change for these groups.

In addition to the importance of considering situational variation to assess attitudes about children, there is some sketchy evidence that the broader cultural milieu and societal change influence these attitudes. Two responses (and changes

in these responses) suggest this. In 1972, concern about the population explosion and about raising a child in the traditional nuclear family were mentioned more frequently than in 1976. Political awareness about both of these issues and the salience of these issues have decreased since the late 60's and early 70's for many people. This broader societal change, then, is reflected in changes at the individual level. Although this evidence is sketchy, it suggests some interesting questions for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS: LIFE STYLE VARIABLES

This chapter will explore both the content and quality of the life styles of this group of childless couples. First, the overall satisfactions and dissatisfactions with marriage and life and their changes over time will be examined. Projections for the future (5 years and 25 years) will be used to add additional information about the state and direction of life-style. Second, more specific indications of the content and quality of life style will be examined including decision making in the home, division of labor in the home, attitudes about work and self descriptions. As in the preceding chapter, the data are treated in several ways: (1) longitudinal group comparisons, (2) longitudinal comparisons for each individual where appropriate, and (3) an analysis of certain subgroups. Where possible, sex role implications will be drawn from the data. Since the issue of sex roles was not a central focus in the Bram (1974) study, the interview schedule that she used and from which the current interview schedule was derived did not directly assess sex role orientation or development. The issue of sex roles will be more directly addressed in the presentation of the indepth case studies (Chapter VI). However, there are data from the larger group of subjects which can be used to address sex

role orientation to a limited extent as Bram did.

Marriage and Life Satisfaction

Two questions were asked which were relevant to the quality of the marriage: (1) What is the nicest thing about your marriage? and (2) What is the one thing you'd most like to change about your marriage? Responses were coded according to the method used by Bram (Appendix B, Tables 22 and 23).

As mentioned above, the group of 11 childless couples expressed a higher degree of marital happiness than the original group of 30 childless couples. In response to the first question (the nicest thing about your marriage) the categories companionship/company and ego support/understanding had the most number of entries for 1972 for both men and women. In 1976, the responses to ego support/understanding had fallen off somewhat. None of the categories had a majority of the responses; the only categories with no responses at either time being physical relationship and protection for women and men and common activities for women.

The dissatisfactions in marriage were again spread out over the categories except for men in 1972. At that time, a majority of the men were missing a more cohesive relationship (more time together, handle problems better). This desire has virtually disappeared in 1976 (only one entry remains in this category). There was some increase in 1976 for men for the category called spouses's qualities (personality and fulfilling of role). Although

the frequencies are small, there is some indication that cohesiveness diminished as a problem for women as well as for men.

Satisfactions in life showed more decisive trends than the results for marriage. Marriage and achievement were clearly the most satisfying things in life for men and women at both points in time (Appendix B, Table 24).

Dissatisfactions in life were more variable. Situational things (time, money, material possessions) were a stable, frequently mentioned category for men and women. Achievement showed an interesting reversal, mentioned by women less frequently in 1976 than in 1972 but more frequently by men in 1976 than in 1972 ($p = .04$). Leisure was mentioned by both men and women in 1972, but decreased in frequency in 1976.

Several of the above results suggested that the data should be looked at more closely. The decreasing frequency of responses in the ego support/understanding category of satisfactions in marriage and the pattern of change for achievement and leisure categories of dissatisfactions in life suggested again that there may be some interaction with change in employment status. Following is a more detailed account of the changing patterns of satisfactions and dissatisfactions in marriage and life for those people whose employment status changed.

The husband in Couple 2 indicates that marital satisfaction has shifted from ego support and understanding to companionship (family has dropped out of his dissatisfactions in life).

Qualities of the wife's role is indicated as something missing in his marriage (she, too, wants to equalize the power between them). Achievement has dropped out as a satisfaction in life.

According to the wife in Couple 3, the nicest thing about their marriage changed from ego support to communication. Leisure and situational things replaced adult status as satisfactions in life (the husband concurs about the leisure). Achievement and leisure are replaced by friends as dissatisfactions in life.

The wife in Couple 6 who changed from full time work to part time work added achievement as a dissatisfaction in life.

The wife in Couple 7 expressed no change in her opinions about the satisfactions (marriage and achievement) and dissatisfactions (situation and leisure) of life. The husband has added achievement to his dissatisfactions (he has retained his student status). The nicest thing about the marriage, according to the wife, changed from individuation to ego support and understanding (the husband changed from mentioning ego support to mentioning companionship). The wife's dissatisfaction with marriage changed from wanting more independence to wanting more time together (the husband changed from wanting more time together to feeling that nothing was missing from the marriage). This particular couple exhibits an incredible interaction of opinions and statuses, the status of both partners affecting the opinions of both in a complex and empathic way.

The husband in Couple 8 (there is missing data for the wife who also changed in employment status) substituted achievement

and situation for creativity and marriage as satisfactions in life. Leisure is dropped as a dissatisfaction. Being able to handle problems better was replaced by spouse's traits as the dissatisfaction with marriage.

Both partners of Couple 9 changed employment status. The woman substituted achievement and psychological factors for marriage as satisfactions in life; marriage and situation for achievement as dissatisfactions. The husband mentioned marriage at both points in time as a satisfaction and substituted achievement for leisure as a dissatisfaction (again note the husband-wife differences in achievement which are similar to the changing role achievement played in their attitudes about children). The nicest thing about the marriage for the wife changed from ego support to companionship; for the husband common activities replaced communication. The wife reports that there is nothing missing in the marriage now whereas in 1972 she was dissatisfied with her qualities. The husband has replaced being able to handle problems better with spouse's traits as something he would like to see changed in the marriage.

The wife in Couple 10 has replaced leisure with marriage as a satisfaction in life (the husband concurs); achievement has remained stable. Achievement as a dissatisfaction in life, however, has dropped out.

There are indications from these data that change in employment status may be accounting for some of the patterns of change in the satisfactions and dissatisfactions in marriage and life.

It is suggested that future research might address this question by comparing larger groups of people (both childless and others) who have and have not experienced change in employment status.

The impressions of the satisfaction and dissatisfaction in life can further be substantiated by an examination of future prospects. In 1972, achievement was the category mentioned most often by both men and women as what they would be doing in five years. Projections of five years into the future from 1976 indicate a reduction in the occurrence of achievement as a concern (although it is still a popular choice). (Appendix B, Table 25.) This trend is found for women when projecting 25 years into the future. In 1972, the majority of women mentioned achievement related activities as something they would be doing in 25 years. In 1976 achievement related activities were not seen as something to be doing in 25 years by most of these women. On the other hand, leisure increased (from 1972 to 1976) as something to be doing in 25 years.

Decision Making

The types of decisions that were explored are those about: food, car, where to live, where to take a vacation, where to spend an evening out, the job the husband takes, the job the wife takes (only for 1976), and whether the wife works. (Appendix B, Table 26.) Food and car decisions are traditionally the most sex-typed, food is the woman's domain while the car is the man's domain. In 1972, the majority of women and men indicated

traditional patterns for car (men thought the food decisions were more mutual than the wives did). In 1976, men reversed their pattern regarding car decisions (perhaps this indicates that there are more two car families in 1976), while the wife's perception did not change significantly. The women perceived a slight increase in the husband's input about food, but the husband's perception remained about the same. The next three items (where to live, vacation, spend an evening) are probably typically seen as mutual decisions, although where to live may depend on the husband's job which is traditionally seen as within his domain. All of the men and a majority of the women see vacationing as a mutual decision both in 1972 and 1976. The majority of the men and women in 1972, the majority of the women and all of the men in 1976 see evenings out as a mutual decision. The majority of all groups see where to live as a mutual decision.

The remainder of the items has to do with a different aspect of lifestyle: work. All of the women in 1972 and the majority of the other groups see the job husband takes as the husband's decision. The majority of men in 1972 and 1976 and the majority of women in 1972 see whether the wife works as the wife's decision. Women in 1976 were mixed, husband, wife and both receiving approximately equal ratings. The item, job wife takes, appeared only in the 1976 protocol. Slightly more men than women perceived that this was the wife's decision, the majority position.

It is difficult to tell whether this pattern of responses is more or less traditionally sex typed. The different groups of items (food and car; where to live, vacation and spend an evening; work) have different meanings in this context. It seems as if the first group of items (food and car) reflects a traditional division of decision making, that the work items reflect autonomous decision making and that the other three couple oriented items reflect mutual decision making. (It is unclear whether this should be considered nontraditional since normative data are not known.) If one considers sex-typing at an extreme, then husbands would make all decisions. The extreme innovative pattern would be for wives to make all of the decisions. The data were arranged by individual and scored according to the extreme innovative pattern (See Table 12). If the wife made the decision a score of 2 was assigned; if the decision was mutual, a score of 1 was assigned; if the husband made the decision, a score of 0 was assigned. The decisions were divided into home or couple oriented and work oriented. The maximum number of points for home decisions is 10 indicating extreme innovation (scores above 5 could be considered nontraditional). The maximum number of points for work decisions is 5 for 1972 and 6 for 1976, indicating extreme innovation (scores above 3 could be considered nontraditional). For home decisions, both partners of Couples 3, 5, and 11 are non-sex-typed in both 1972 and 1976. Couple 2 is added to this group in 1976. The husbands of Couples 7 and 9 perceive the decision making as

TABLE 12

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF INNOVATION
IN DECISION MAKING BY COUPLE
FOR TWO DOMAINS (HOME AND WORK)

	Home				Work			
	1972		1976		1972		1976	
Couple	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men
1	3	4	1	5	3	3	2	3
2	4	4	7	6	2	2	3	4
3	6	6	6	6	3	5	3	3
4	5	4	5	4	3	3	4	4
5	6	5	5	5	3	3	2	4
6	2	3	5	3	3	4	1	4
7	4	5	3	5	3	4	4	4
8	4	5	X	5	4	3	X	4
9	5	4	4	4	3	3	4	4
10	7	3	6	4	3	3	1	4
11	6	5	5	6	2	3	4	3

Note: For each decision, a score of 2 was assigned if the wife made it; 1 for a mutual decision; 0 if the husband made it. The numbers refer to the sum of these scores for each domain: the maximum points for home decisions is 10, for work decisions, 5 (extreme innovation).

nontraditional in 1972 and 1976. The wives of Couples 4 and 10 perceive the decision making as nontraditional. The wife in Couple 9 perceives this in 1972; the wives in Couples 2 and 6 perceive it for 1976. Finally, the largest discrepancy for husband and wife is seen in Couple 1 in 1976, the husband perceiving the decision making as nontraditional. In summary, approximately half the men and women in 1972 and slightly more than half the men and women in 1976 perceive decision making as nontraditional.

In the area of work decisions, a majority of men and women engage in nontraditional decision making patterns for both times of measurement, with a slight decrease in 1976. The couples to note here are Couple 3, the husband becoming increasingly sex typed in 1976; Couple 7, the wife becoming increasingly sex typed in 1976; Couple 11, the wife becoming increasingly nontraditional; and Couple 10, the husband becoming increasingly nontraditional while the wife becomes more traditional.

An interesting feature of these results is the lack of fit in some cases between the husband and wife. For example, the husband and wife of Couple 10 each perceives that he/she does most of the decision making. It would be valuable to do some observations to see who actually makes what decisions. It is unclear whether perceptions of decision making actually reflect sex role orientation, although the relationship may become more obvious when compared to other features of the couple's lifestyle. These comparisons will be presented later.

Division of Labor

Nine household tasks were presented to the participants who indicated whether the tasks were done by the husband, the wife, both partners, or if the task was not applicable to their situation (Appendix B, Table 27). Most of the tasks are traditionally in the woman's domain, paying of bills traditionally in the man's domain, with some overlap in dishes and heavy cleaning. In this group of people, the majority report that husbands pay the bills (there is a slight increase of wives paying bills in 1976). The majority of people report that the wife cooks dinner and does the ironing (where applicable). The following tasks are shared by a majority of people: laundry (except for the wife's perception in 1972), the dishes (predominantly the husband's perception especially in 1972), daily cleaning (with wife or not applicable as close seconds), heavy cleaning, and shopping (with wife a close second). The responses for breakfast are mixed (probably due to irregular schedules or eating habits of the couples). In general, then, it can be said that this group appears to share more of the household tasks than is the norm, with some traditional divisions remaining.

Again, it is enlightening to examine the husband-wife interaction as well as the differences in perception within the couple. I will explore several examples, at times relating them to other relevant information. As with the individual results for decision making, the individual results for division of labor will be tied into other features of the data at a later time.

The wife in Couple 5 changed from being employed part time to being employed full time. The husband now does the dishes (she still does everything else but pay the bills). The wife in Couple 6 changed from being employed full time to being employed part time. She perceived that her household tasks have increased, whereas her husband perceives that they have remained the same. (Note that I use the term perception when there is a disagreement between the spouse's reports.) The wife in Couple 7 has started work, while her husband remains a student. He is assuming more of the household chores (he perceived that he did more in 1972 than she perceived he did). In 1972, the husband in Couple 8 said that daily cleaning was not applicable for them, whereas the wife said she did it. This reflects either that they had different definitions of what daily cleaning is or, as is often reported in personal anecdotes, a different level of salience of certain household tasks for the two partners. Both the husband and wife in Couple 9 started work. The husband has increased the number of household tasks to the point where he does almost everything. And finally, in Couple 10, the husband perceives that the wife pays the bills, while she perceives that he pays them. (The question is, do the bills get paid?)

The Meaning of Work

The meaning of work for husbands and wives was not analyzed longitudinally since only the wives responded to this item in 1972. Table 13 presents the results for the wives (10) and husbands (11) in 1976. The items receiving most responses were:

TABLE 13

MEANING OF WORK FOR WOMEN AND MEN: 1976

Meaning of Work	Women	Men
dominant interest	3	1
important as family	1	4
complement to marriage	2	0
to help financially	0	1
source of stimulation	4	4
not part of plans	0	0

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses in each category.

source of stimulation outside the family for both men and women and work is as important as family for men. More women than men indicated that work was a dominant interest, while more men than women indicated that work was as important as family. This is an interesting reversal of traditional patterns. A cursory examination of the 1972 data for wives suggests that there could be an important change: the frequencies of responses for work as a dominant interest and work is as important as family seem to have reversed the latter being mentioned more frequently in 1972, the former in 1976.

Discussion and Integration

Since one of my primary interests is in sex role orientation and development, I conclude this section by trying to integrate some of the variables discussed in this and the preceding chapter within a sex role framework. In order to do this, I consider the couples individually, at a descriptive level. I also draw on several parts of the interview which have not been discussed as yet for various reasons (too many missing data, irrelevant to the major divisions of the chapter, uninteresting results in and of themselves, etc.). Included in this new set of results are the following: a checklist of characteristics, open-ended self description (listing 15 characteristics to describe yourself) summarized in Table 28, Appendix B, responses to situations (self generated) regarding masculinity and femininity, and attitudes about the Women's Movement. Since the majority of people

strongly approved of the goals of the Women's Movement, these results will be considered only where they are relevant.

Couple 1 can be considered fairly traditional compared to other couples in this sample (though not necessarily compared to the general population). The wife is the only person to slightly disapprove of the goals of the Women's Movement. The husband is assuming more of the decision making in the home, and the division of labor is a combination of traditional and shared responsibilities. This pattern of division of labor is fairly common in this sample and will be called transitional. Both the husband and wife describe themselves with a combination of traditionally masculine and feminine characteristics according to the checklist, also the typical pattern for this sample. Open-ended self descriptions reveal that nurturance and family are the most frequent categories listed for both spouses (evidence of a nontraditional pattern on the part of the husband). The woman regards work as a complement to marriage. This couple is in the older third of the sample.

The wife of Couple 2 is increasingly responsible for decision making and household tasks. The division of labor can be characterized as traditional. Although both spouses describe themselves with a combination of masculine and feminine characteristics on the checklist, the most frequent category listed in the self description for the wife is family. Responding to questions specifically about masculinity and femininity (see Section VI of Appendix A), the wife reveals

differential responses: femininity is associated with the couple's interaction, masculinity with work. The husband never feels feminine. It is clear that over the years, the woman has become increasingly home and family oriented and appears to have gone through a significant change (she was an early articulator and now wants children).

The spouses in Couple 3 share the decision making; the wife's share of the household tasks appears to be increasing (there were several discrepancies in their reports in 1972). Nurturance and recreation are the most frequent categories listed in the wife's self description, she always is comfortable with her femininity and feels masculine when around friends. The husband gives one of the most atypical response patterns, listing few or none of either the masculine or feminine traits as applying to him. Recreation was the most frequent category listed in the open-ended self description. He does not consider work as a part of his plans.

Couple 4 can be considered transitional in both decision making and division of labor. Work is very salient for the wife (a dominant interest) as reflected in several different parts of the interview. (She is still a student.) She is the only person (of both men and women) who describes herself as having all of the masculine traits, but none of the feminine traits on the checklist. The husband's evaluation of his own femininity and masculinity is situation specific. This couple is considering the possibility of having children (the wife was an early articulator).

Couple 5, in the oldest third of the sample, is fairly conventional in decision making and division of labor. The wife considers work as a complement to the family, the husband considers it in financial terms (very atypical for this sample). The wife is one of two women who think that a man is affected more by having children, although she was an early articulator.

Couple 6 can be considered transitional in decision making and division of labor, although the wife perceives that she does more of both. . In this case, the wife changed from being employed full time to being employed part time.

Couple 7 is fairly nontraditional in division of labor, the husband increasing the tasks that he does in the home (he is still a student, she has started work). Their perceptions of decision making are incongruent: he perceives that it is mutual, she perceives that he does more. Work is salient for both spouses and considered a dominant interest for the wife. The wife always feels comfortable with both her masculinity and femininity. The interaction of wife and husband that is evident from descriptions of satisfactions and dissatisfactions in marriage and life (described earlier) indicates a high level companionate marriage with room for independent pursuits for each spouse.

The most notable feature of Couple 8 is the discrepancy of perception regarding decision making and division of labor. Not much can be said about this couple due to missing data.

Couple 9 is moving toward a more innovative pattern of decision making and division of labor (the husband now does everything in the home). The wife is much more concerned with work and achievement than the husband (both have started work since 1972); her feelings about her masculinity are tied completely to work situations; she feels most comfortable with her femininity in the couple relationship. Work is seen as a dominant interest. The husband is much more oriented to home and family (nurturance is the most frequently mentioned category in his self description), although he reports that he always feels comfortable with his masculinity. Although the wife was an early articulator, the couple is now considering having a child. In general, this couple comes close to being sex role reversed and has experienced some degree of conflict over this situation (see descriptions of this couple regarding attitudes of children and general lifestyle issues).

The main conclusion that can be drawn from this is that sex role orientation, like attitudes about children and general lifestyle issues is not a stable, unitary phenomenon, but changes over time, across domains, and in interaction with other people.

CHAPTER SIX

CASE STUDIES

Introduction

A major purpose of using biographical case studies is to generate questions, problems, and hypotheses. In this particular study, the questions to be generated can be categorized as follows: (1) how can voluntarily childless couples be characterized, if at all, (2) what is the nature of adult sex role development, (3) how is sex role development related to voluntary childlessness, if at all, and (4) how can adult development be characterized and studied? Given the incomplete and contradictory results of previous work in the area, it is my premise that it is necessary to take a second, closer look at the phenomenon in order to gain new insights and find new directions to pursue. The analysis of the group data in the preceding chapters (which, itself, was mostly descriptive and qualitative) suggests some of these directions. These suggestions include: (1) an exploration of the changing nature of the decision to remain childless including changes in the reasons themselves as well as reasons for changing the nature of the decision (especially the mutual impact of the spouses given the changing life situation of each), (2) an exploration of the meaning of the results which indicate that there is more change than stability

in attitudes towards children (are the voluntarily childless one population distinguished from other groups based on this particular fertility decision?), and (3) an exploration of other events which may be more salient than the fertility decision to describing stability and change in the lives of these people. Still, there are notable gaps: (1) a lack of early developmental history including information about the socialization process, and (2) a lack of explicit assessment of sex role orientation and development.

The purpose of this chapter, then, is to try to fill those gaps as well as provide supplemental information about the issues that were suggested by the group data. The presentation of the cases (Couples 10 and 11 from the group data) will take the form of a narrative for each individual and for the couple as a unit, the data and the interpretation integrated where appropriate. A summary profile of these four people is presented in Appendix B, Table 29. The case material and group data are integrated in the concluding chapter.

Couple 10: Ann and Alan

Ann, 29 years old, married for 7 years, is now an attorney. She comes from a large family (7 children) in which she always felt a lack of privacy. Although always competent in school, she describes herself as having been very troubled during adolescence; her descriptions are characterized uniformly by indications of low self esteem. College was seen as an opportunity for exper-

ience, experimentation and, in general, opening up. It seems, however, that she graduated with no real committment to a particular future. She dropped out of graduate school (leaving behind a large fellowship) and wandered--traveling, working, and marrying. After having decided to go to law school, she seemed to become more sure of her direction in spite of some difficult years while in school. During law school, she seems to have undergone a dramatic change, in terms of identity, direction, and committment. Indications of low self-esteem have virtually been eliminated from her self descriptions. She is now sure of who she is, what she wants to achieve, and how she wants to live her life. (Achievement concerns in both marriage and life dissatisfactions have dropped out of her protocol since 1972.) Whereas her past is perceived as unstable and changing, Ann perceived her future as stable and continuous. She would like to round out her life with more extracurricular activities, first living in the country and eventually moving to an urban area to continue her work on race and sex discrimination, ultimately making a major contribution in her field. She forsees an integration or balance of career and avocational pursuits such as traveling.

The important features of Ann's current lifestyle center around her marriage, her career, and animals about all of which she feels very positively. She is dissatisfied only with their financial and living situation both of which are expected to improve soon. As a couple, Ann and Alan eat, go to movies,

listen to music, watch TV and occasionally visit friends and engage in sports or fantasy. Reading, hobbies, and outdoor activities are engaged in alone by Ann. Household division of labor can be characterized by sex role convergence or even reversal in some cases, but in general is shared by both partners. Decision making for the couple can be characterized similarly.

Attitudes about work, marriage, and children reflect the concrete world of Ann. She exhibits a strong feminist identity and considers her career as very important, a source of stimulation and interest, and a contribution to her personal growth and the growth of the couple. Children, for Ann, do not seem to fit into the picture at all. She explicitly states that she would never rearrange her life around the demands of the child. In considering the values of children to parents, Ann again expresses an instrumental orientation: to help it develop, seeing it as a challenge, to influence another. Expressive values also are revealed: children provide companionship, a source of affection, a sense of family. The costs of children are seen predominantly in terms of limitation of freedom, interfering with career (especially her husband's since he would be doing the childrearing), and changing the marital relationship.

To determine the relevant constructs or themes which organize Ann's perceptions of herself and her surroundings, it is useful to compare her self concepts with her descriptions of other people and over time. Ann describes herself with an interesting combination of feminism and nurturance; a free spirit and

yet serious. The themes which emerge from the various descriptions are: feminism, competence, openness and nurturance, all of which she values and sees herself as possessing. She also values confidence which she sees more in significant others (husband, close friend) than herself. Her husband is perceived as complementary and is described as possessing many qualities typically associated with femininity: gentle, romantic, as well as masculinity: strong, dependable. The nature of this complementarity accentuates the particular combination of qualities by which Ann characterizes herself. It also accentuates the importance of the marriage as the primary arena for interpersonal relationships. In general, Ann has become, in her own eyes, confident, competent, and a feminist. She hopes to become more confident in the future to enable her to feel more comfortable with these qualities and less frenetic.

In the area of sex roles, both the self descriptions and direct questions reveal that Ann is at least androgynous and perhaps even transcendent. Her personal conception of herself as well as most of her social interactions reveal little concern with sex roles. Her feminism requires that at a political level, she interacts with the world in terms of sex role stereotyping. In other social situations, it seems that sex roles become salient only when others assume a traditional femininity on her part such as in hitchhiking, in talking about mechanical repairs, and when young, in sports. She considers herself as having been a frustrated feminist for most of her life, experiencing numerous

asynchronizations between her abilities and expectations and opportunities for fulfilling these. Although in personal terms, she recognizes the conflict on which much of her development was based, she emphasizes external, environmental influences as being the major cause of sex role stereotyping. She obviously believes in and lives post-polarized sex roles. She is decidedly not cross sex typed, neither is she strongly imbued with a feminine identity. I would characterize her as woman-identified. In several places she characterizes herself as a "woman" qualifying it with "being involved with the women's movement" or "neither masculine or feminine."

Ann does not explicitly relate her childlessness to sex role development, although she believes that the two might be related for other people. Her entire lifestyle which is based on a particular, innovative sex role orientation and her attitudes about children seem to preclude having children. Ann can be characterized as an early articulator since she can remember no time during which she considered having children. Much of this is related to her feelings about her large family and having to care for her sister's children when she was fifteen, both of which she resented. Her current situation is seen as reinforcing her decision to remain childless, particularly her high valuation of her marital relationship, travel, and her profession. Additionally, she is "unimpressed" with her friends who have had children and speaks of friendships changing when children come into the pictute. She does feel pressure to have

children from her friends who have them (but not from family), but except for the changing the friendship itself, this is not an important consideration.

Alan, age 32, works as a photographer for a newspaper and is satisfied with his job, but not committed to it as a lifelong career. He is looking forward to changes in his life as a whole. Since Ann started law school, the couple has had to adapt to less than ideal living conditions for them. They both value material things, would like a nice home, privacy, and open space. They had this before she started school and hope to have it again.

Whereas Ann is intensely involved in her career, Alan is more concerned with the quality of their lives in general. Longitudinal data indicate that achievement and creativity have become less of a concern (see material on satisfactions and dissatisfactions with life and future plans), other aspects of life becoming more salient. His self concept and constructs by which he construes others reveal a deep concern about the happiness of people. He values the qualities of openness, satisfaction, and a general joie de vivre in others and in himself. The structure of the marriage promotes this attitude. Both lead independent lives, but have "togetherness" in the marriage. In 1972, companionship was seen as the nicest thing about the marriage, this has changed to individuation. Work is seen as a source of stimulation outside of the family (which includes multiple pets).

Alan's self description reveals little that could be characterized as "typically masculine." Even his entries of "man" and "husband" are qualified by the term "friend." Hobbies include both watching hockey games and doing needlepoint. Most important are feelings of warmth, consideration, and general concern for people, terms reflecting a communal orientation in Bakan's terminology. Creativity is another important construct, expressed both vocationally and avocationally.

This picture of Alan is quite different from how he perceived himself in the past. In fact, until his marriage and at times during it he described himself as moody, selfish, agressive, macho, and depressed. He hopes to become still less critical, more open and more understanding.

The marriage itself changed many things. His wife has helped him overcome some of his masculinity "hang ups." He now has a fairly sophisticated feminist ideology and lifestyle, and describes himself as feeling both masculine and feminine in everything he does. The one crisis in the marriage was precipitated by a prestigious job offer. He turned down the job deciding that he enjoyed his marriage and lifestyle more than having status in other people's eyes.

Alan's biography contains only one instance from childhood. He resents his father for being so engrossed in his work and for leaving all of the nurturance to his mother, in fact "relegating her to the household, period." He sees this as a significant precursor to his current sex role attitudes. The rest of his

biography concerns his work (first exposing him to the wealthy, then to the middle class and poor), marriage and his wife's career. He sees his wife's career as limiting their options in the short run (they returned to a one-salary family when she started law school), but opening them up in the long run. Pets and animals are also significant in many parts of the biography--losing some, getting new ones, getting more in the future. The future holds more material comforts, the out-of-doors, privacy, travel, or possibly totally new directions.

Alan does not see his childlessness as particularly related to his sex role orientation, although he sees a connection for his wife. Children represent a loss of freedom, creation of stress and tension, too much responsibility and general inconvenience (especially for the woman). His attitudes have become stronger since marriage (prior to marriage he wanted children) and he is not at all sure if he would be a good parent. His experience with children and with friends with children (e.g., the quality of their marriage and life) serve to reinforce his opinions. He could entertain the idea of having a child if "they came when they were eight years old." Among the values that he does see in children are: reliving his childhood and enjoying its accomplishments (primary ties has dropped out of his list of values). He experiences no pressure about these attitudes, or at least he doesn't care about it, but sees tension developing in some friendships about the issue.

The cases of Ann and Alan bring out several important issues relevant to this dissertation. In terms of sex role development, there is evidence (especially on the part of the wife) that transcendence is a reality for some people today and not just a future possibility. The importance of societal transformation for widespread transcendence was highlighted in the case of the wife. Her feminist activities seemed to free her from some of the social-structural constraints by allowing her to address them politically, separating them from her personal requirements. However, since this option is not widespread, others may not be able to cope with societal constraints with as much ease (although there may be other mechanisms that achieve this).

Both biographies brought out the importance of assessing personal conceptions of sex role orientation. To interpret "woman" or "man" as an indication of feminine or masculine identity without asking what those words mean for the subject would ignore relevant and important data. For both the husband and wife, in these cases, these words have very particularistic meanings. "Woman," for the wife, means being part of the Women's Movement. "Husband," for the man, connotes friendship rather than provider.

Given the very idiosyncratic combinations of "masculine" and "feminine" qualities for both partners it is not surprising that the literature on voluntary childlessness is so contradictory. Methods do not exist (or at least have not been used) which can tease apart the complex relationships. Perhaps self concept,

rather than behavior or attitude would be a more effective predictor. If approached idiographically, socialization and family background variables do seem to predict both sex role orientation and fertility behavior. This couple did not see any relationship between sex role development and voluntary childlessness for themselves, but thought that there might be one for other people. There is evidence, however, that voluntary childlessness did serve a conflict management function in terms of role strain and that this might fruitfully be explored in future research.

There is evidence, as well, of post-polarized sex role development being associated with the early articulation of a desire to have no children. The wife speaks of the importance of conflict in the development of her own nontraditional sex role orientation and the relationship of this to her decision. Conflict was mentioned by both partners as a force in their own sex role development. The husband treats their one marital upheaval as a real turning point (when he declined a prestigious job). This conflict was resolved rather atypically and seems to have had a decided influence on their current and future life-style.

The biographies of this couple can be seen as an extended dialogue between the two partners. The interpenetrating nature of events and event sequences is brought out particularly well. There are strong interactions between situations (landlord selling country house from under them; wife starting law school) feelings

and desires (what they want out of life and the future) and changes of these over time (the short and long run consequences of wife's career). Both experienced changes in terms of self concept: his as a result of marriage and martial conflict; hers as a result of defining herself as a lawyer and feminist. The fact thay they lead "double lives" in terms of independence and interdependence is connected to their particular sex role orientations. Work (career) is more salient for the wife, the general quality of life is more salient for the husband. Their perception of the future (their lives together and apart) revolves around these decisions. Both perceive much discontinuity in their past development, but the husband anticipates more for the future.

In general it seems particularly important to get at the critical nodes (points of conflict, critical events) of the individual and couple in order to assess the variables related, for them, to growth and development.

Couple 11: Bill and Betty

Bill, age 35 and married for 10 years, is an assistant professor of English at a large state university. This year he is facing a tenure decision, an event which colors much of his thinking about himself and his world (he adds achievement as a cost of children). His major concerns currently are his work, his marriage, and his avocation, music. Competence and positive social relations are the two main constructs which define his life. He both values competence in others and considers himself

competent in his profession and avocation (he has recently published a major article on a musical instrument). These feelings of competence are intermingled with negative feelings of pressure to achieve, which abated only temporarily when he finished his dissertation. Although he admires a colleague who seems to get along without kow-towing to the academic rat race, he would like to become more compulsive and hard-working in the future. On the other hand, he is looking forward to a more relaxed pace in the future. His striving for competence and dislike of pressure are continually intermingled throughout the interview. In contrast to this are descriptions of being child-like, spontaneous, etc. In terms of social relations, he considers himself a humanitarian in many respects: compassion, warmth, friendliness, sensitivity. This is especially true regarding his family and wife.

Two other minor constructs seem to be important to Bill: being open-minded and unconventional. These emerge particularly when talking about people he likes or doesn't like. His self image is different from the image he thinks his parents have of him: successful, respectable and dependable, mainly in contrast to his siblings who have had difficulties of one sort or another. He believes his colleagues also perceive him as more conventional than he really is.

Bill believes he has changed a great deal from past years, especially in terms of competence, confidence, and skill at social interaction (he drops creativity as a dissatisfaction in life

and adds marriage as a satisfaction). He perceives less change in the future, but still talks about increased security and being "useful" professionally (he adds achievement as a dissatisfaction in life).

Most of his biography is concerned with competence. In college, he experienced growth in terms of social skills and an identity crisis in terms of future career (he started out in engineering). Except for mentioning his marriage in 1965, the main part of his biography begins when the couple moved to the Midwest from New York to begin their respective jobs (1970). Bill finished his dissertation in 1972; when pressure eased up on him, he spent a good deal of time "consoling" his wife who had just taken on added responsibilities of administration in her department. The couple next bought a house and had their first real vacation. The biography continues in 1974-75 (Bill seems compelled to structure time in terms of the academic year) when he took a leave of absence without pay which resulted in the completion of two grant proposals (successful). Back at work he had a "major step forward" when he decided to set aside blocks of time from his teaching responsibilities in order to do research. If he would have predicted the last five years, five years ago (retrospective prospects) he would have predicted a more "normal" course of teaching and research, no leave, and being up for tenure earlier (he would also have finished his dissertation a year earlier). Given the discrepancy between past predictions and what really happened, Bill still projects

the future as rather continuous: finishing a major project, publishing articles, and of course, getting tenure. The tenure decision is seen as crucial and the one element that might lead to a significant discontinuity in his life. If he gets tenure, he sees himself as becoming more involved in department and university affairs; if not he might change professions altogether and become a historical librarian. Bill plans an early retirement involving, perhaps, restoring an 18th century New England house, opening a bookstore, playing music and/or buying a farm.

Bill exhibits still more sharp contrasts at home. Whereas he describes himself as intensely involved with his work, he also describes himself as easy-going, "doing things he likes." There is a fairly traditional division of labor in the house, which he feels guilty about (although not really willing to change), although most decisions and other activities are shared. In terms of sex role development, he appears to be androgynous at times and sex typed at times. Most of the qualities with which he describes himself are not perceived to be sex role related for him, although he recognizes that many of them are for society (for him the only ones that are related to masculinity are: sense of humor, easy going, competent and rational). He recognizes many of the opportunities easily accessible to him because he is a male (education, career) and feels comfortable with his masculinity because he was "raised traditionally and likes it." He feels feminine when interacting

with children (which he likes) and when doing dishes (which he dislikes). He acknowledges his "problem at home" but feels he is "liberated" in other areas. His attitudes about the Women's Movement are fairly supportive and he attributes this to his interaction with his wife who has taken on "traditionally masculine" pursuits.

Bill feels that parents and early environment are the most important determinants of sex role development (not really acknowledging his growth because of his wife at this point) and have implications for everything including fertility decisions. His childlessness is seen as a perpetual delay, being further reinforced with time (he indicated that he wanted a child prior to marriage). Children would interfere with the marital bond, career, energy, early retirement, and general lifestyle. They provide few positive rewards (he would value watching it grow, the affection and companionship involved), but many severe limitations. This is seen to be even more true for his wife (in his perception) whose career demands "keeping current" (i.e., she would not be able to take time off without drastic set backs). Bill was more "pro-family" during high school, and at the time of marriage the couple assumed they would have a "typical family" (according to 1972 data, he wanted to delay, she was unsure). Then the delay started, the couple getting more used to their lifestyle while at the same time observing the negative effects of children on their friends, some of whom would "never do it again."

Betty's biography reveals a distinct separation between her personal life and professional life, and like her husband, work concerns and social relations are the two major areas which define her perception of herself and other people. She defines herself as both conventional and unusual at different points in the interview. She is conventional in her attitudes about roles, especially her role as wife. This is reflected in a fairly traditional division of labor in the house. She is "unusual" in that she feels like an outsider when it comes to other women: she doesn't know what most women are like, and does not feel representative of them. These feelings are reflected in her day to day work as a professor in the medical sciences. Comparing herself to other women, she indicates that she is both very independent and dependent; independent in pratical matters and dependent emotionally. She perceives that this dependence has increased since her marriage and feels that she would not be able to cope if her husband died. In contrast to this, she also describes herself as competent, intellectual, competitive, and dominant at work. Competence is the key concept which emerges when comparing her self descriptions over time to those of people she likes (competent) and does not like (incompetent). These feelings of competence, however, are intermingled with an "inferiority complex" and never quite reaching her expectations of herself. Again like her husband, Betty feels quite pressured by her work, describing herself as compulsive,

and would like to be able to lead a more balanced life in terms of outside pursuits (lack of leisure time is added to dissatisfactions in life). She believes that this is a much greater problem for her; her husband is the one balancing influence in her life. However, her biography (as a whole) reflected much less concern about pressure than her husband's biography. This is probably due to the saliency of the issue for him since he is up for tenure currently.

Since both partners are intensely involved in their work, Betty values highly the things that they are able to do together such as reading the newspaper, talking before dinner (this is almost an institutionalized time for communication for them), gardening, going out to eat and visiting friends. His interest in folk music has become another activity for the couple to jointly pursue. It is almost a vocation for him (he is increasingly integrating it into his profession, i.e., teaching folklore) but her long-standing latent interest in music has been revived. The folk music world is seen as a new opportunity for social interaction with other people as well. Betty engages in very few extracurricular activities on her own--just occasional craft projects such as needlepoint. She perceives the marital relationship as providing very well for this combination of work involvement and togetherness. Both partners, being similarly involved in their work, understand each other very well. They don't have to "explain their motivations to each other" (having common values replaces communication as the nicest thing in marriage).

This, however, makes for little "romance" in the relationship. Since neither of them are impulsive, there is less adventure than Betty would ideally like.

One of Betty's goals in life is to help others realize their goals. She feels she can most easily do this through her teaching at which she is very conscientious. This value, among others, is seen as an extension of a very strong training in Protestant Christianity. Although she no longer practices religion in any organized form, it was "drilled" into her to such an extent that it governs much of her life. She speaks of her adult life as revolving around the Protestant work ethic. This orientation is apparent in many parts of the interview.

Betty's life line begins with high school. She spent three of her high school summers at a music camp at which the attitude of being "happiest when I'm working hard" was officially molded. She had no teenage fantasies about settling down. Boyfriends were important and she even fantasized about marrying each of them (each new boyfriend was "the one"), but she never pictured herself as having children. There are some apparent contradictions regarding her earlier love life. At times she remembers the importance of her boyfriends to her while at other times she speaks of never having wanted a close interpersonal relationship with anyone. She always wanted to be a doctor and approached this dream with a "religious fervor" as if it were her "calling" in life. This dream lasted until a

serious boyfriend in college convinced her that she would rather be a nurse. This particular relationship was the one significant event remembered from college years which were described in general as an awakening for an "only child away from home for the first time" (obviously her summers at music camp were not regarded as a break from home). Betty did, indeed, enter nursing school which was a major trauma for her. She dropped out feeling extremely guilty about not meeting a committment, feelings which are with her to this day. She married and started graduate school at the same time, both events contributing to an increase in self confidence.

The biography continues with the couple's move to the Midwest, new jobs, and a new house. Betty began work in a new discipline (related to her biology background) and enjoyed her work and her new professional contacts. Two years later she accepted an administrative position which was extremely stressful and overwhelming, but had the positive side effect of bringing her closer to her father (as confidant in business matters). During this time she talks about her husband's increasing committment to folk music which brought them new social contacts, his leave of absence, and their first real vacation. There appears to be a certain amount of asynchronization between her life and her husband's life at this juncture. She was entering a period of stress while he was on a leave of absence. These circumstances provided the opening for exploring alternative arrangements within the household, the husband assum-

ing much more of the traditionally female chores such as cooking. The household has since gone back to "normal," but the residues of this experience remain (e.g., he helps prepare some of the meals, stirs a pot, etc.). Simultaneous with the added responsibilities at work was an improved social life (new friends) and family interaction (with her father, as mentioned earlier). Betty finally returned from administrator to research scientist and teacher, experiencing new relationships with students, promotion, and tenure.

Recently (this year) Betty experienced another change in her family relations when she discovered that her mother had heart trouble and speaks of the death of her parents as being a critical event in her future, both emotionally and practically. Her parents intend to leave them some farm land so some of their future plans include the prospect of this land.

The near future revolves around her husband's tenure decision and a sabbatical to be spent in an Eastern university. They will then resume what they have been doing (and remodel their house) or move. She would like to see them both teaching at a small New England college. Like her husband, Betty mentions retiring early, restoring an old house (she says 17th century), opening a bookstore or doing something new. Both her family (including in-laws) and close friends are important considerations which will determine, in part, how their future will look since they plan to incorporate these people in their lifestyle if necessary.

In terms of sex role development, Betty considers herself "mature," but not yet in perfect balance. She feels she still must get to know herself better and develop more confidence. This applies, especially, to her dependency on her husband. She agrees with the model of sex role transcendence intellectually in that she does not think of herself as female or male first when she looks at who she is (indeed, her self descriptions start out with "teacher" and "scientific researcher"). However, she acknowledges her conventional upbringing and considers herself "old fashioned" in some of her ideas. She does not consider these attitudes correct, necessarily, but realizes how entrenched they are in her personality. Betty seems fairly defensive, or perhaps guilty, about her traditional attitudes about her marriage and household as well as about her noninvolvement in the Women's Movement. In an imaginary role playing situation she accuses herself of being an "Uncle Tom" regarding the Movement. While she strongly approves of the goals of the Movement, she is ambivalent or wary of some of the more activist groups. She has not had the need to "complain" as much as some of the involved women seem to need to do. However, she describes herself as feeling "exhilarated" when speaking about her science to an all-woman organization--a very different feeling than when speaking to other professional groups with mixed audiences. She also feels that the Movement has to do certain things to realize their goals such as consciousness raising, law suits, etc., but sees herself as contributing in her own way. Regarding her con-

tribution, she feels that her professional work represents women well and that she provides a good role model for other women. She also has some decision-making power in terms of admissions and is very conscious of affirmative action issues. Although she tries to combat "chauvinism" in her colleagues, she does not feel that she is very successful. Additionally, she is quite conscious of historical trends which have put her cohort in the precarious position of trying to "make it" without having the required background.

Again, the division between her professional and personal roles becomes apparent. In intimate or social situations her femininity is very salient and she feels comfortable with it. In work, however, the fact that she is a woman is seen as detrimental and it is in this context that her feminist consciousness is being raised.

Betty does not feel that her sex role development is related to her childlessness, although she feels less of a "need to be a mother" than other women with more traditional orientations; that women in Stage II, who are happy with their roles, would make better parents.

A number of things has influenced her decision to remain childless. She seems to represent someone who is both an early articulator and a perpetual delayer. Her friends and family were significant influences. She had a PhD advisor who had to marry a pregnant lover; the couple was happy, but would have preferred no children; other friends who had a happy family of

grown children said that if they had to do it over they would not have children; still other friends had problem children or had to compromise their careers because of the children; her inlaws regret having had as many children as they did; and finally, a close colleague brings his infant to work and keeps it in a filing cabinet (under Z so it won't have far to fall) which is a source of irritation to her. The lives of her friends present a conflict. On the one hand, their experiences often reinforce her decision to not have children. On the other hand, their friends are increasingly having children and she feels "left behind" socially. She feels that her friends must think she is dull because she no longer has the same interests. And she is not particularly interested in "talking baby talk" during an evening out. She feels, sometimes, that she may be missing out, but does not think of her childlessness as any different from any other fun activity which she voluntarily chooses not to do (e.g., travel extensively).

In terms of the values of children, she thinks children would be fun; that it would be exciting to watch them grow (she compared this with her pets); that they would bring her closer to her friends and family; and that it would be something to share with her spouse. The costs, however, far outweigh the benefits. She feels her whole lifestyle would change: children would interfere with the marital bond, her career, and their spontaneity. Although she is not against the idea of a working mother, she feels so overtaxed at work already that she would

just not be able to cope with the additional burdens of child-rearing. She is not against children per se, since she and her husband agreed to be legal guardians for a cousin's child if necessary, but children simply do not fit into their lives as they are living now and as they anticipate the future.

The biographies of Couple 11 illuminate several important issues regarding sex role development. Both partners stress the importance of early socialization experiences, continually referring to their conventional upbringing. However, throughout the interview they offer evidence of continued development during adult years and expectations of continuing development. Among the things which seem to influence adult sex role development are situational and structural aspects of their lives. For example, the combined leave of absence for the husband and assuming of administrative responsibilities for the wife altered the rather traditional division of labor in the household (significantly for that year with residual effects following that year). On the part of the wife, her personal internal confrontation with the Women's Movement has created a conflict which has resulted in much thought and perhaps some consciousness-raising regarding sex roles. This is especially evident in her recall of the experience of talking in front of an all-woman audience. Her experience at work, on committees, with colleagues, with secretaries, has again confronted her with issues regarding sex roles. These confrontations with herself, her work situation,

and her husband (e.g., Who does the dishes?) have encouraged growth on her part. Her husband's sex role orientation seems to have changed predominantly because of his wife's situation of being in a rather nontraditional profession.

The couple believes that gender is not particularly salient for them: they don't rely on it heavily in self descriptions nor does it seem to be an important personal construct for them. However, the situational variation in their sex role behavior is very revealing. I would imagine that they would score androgynous on the Bem Sex Role Inventory, but their behavior seems almost polarized at home and in social interaction. This situational specificity addresses explicitly one difference between androgyny and sex role transcendence. Situational specificity of the kind exhibited here can be integrated into an androgynous conception of people, but not in a transcendent conception in which variability is possible, but not tied so tightly to sex. The wife indicates that her further growth depends on getting to know herself better. The assumption that identity formation and change continues through the adult years may lead to fruitful investigations concerning the process of life span development including sex role development.

The biographies of Couple 11 offer some indirect evidence concerning the relationship of sex role development to voluntary childlessness. The wife's decision can be seen as both an early articulation of the desire to have no children as well as a response to the attrahent properties of a child-free lifestyle.

Given her current lifestyle, the childlessness can be thought of as serving a role-conflict management function in terms of role rejection as outlined by Katz (1975). Since work and achievement along nontraditional lines has been so important throughout the life of this woman, there seems to be an indirect relationship between non-traditional sex role orientation and childlessness.

However, how can this relationship be reconciled with the descriptions of having a conventional upbringing? Again, there appears to be a discontinuity between achievement related activities and interpersonal relationships. This discrepancy indicates one reason which would account for the contradictory nature of previous studies concerning the relationship between sex role orientation and voluntary childlessness. The studies may have been looking at different manifestations of sex role orientation (e.g., attitudes about sex roles, division of labor in the house, professional pursuits, etc.). Neither an androgynous nor a transcendent conception of sex roles assumes stable behavior in all domains. Only through a careful exploration of the pattern of differing sex role orientation would one be able to make generalizations if, indeed, patterns exist with any regularity. Our model postulates that something similar to décalage in the Piagetian sense is the norm rather than the exception in development. It may therefore be fruitful to study systematically how polarized and post-polarized sex role orientation <u>in different arenas</u> predict the decision or follow from

the decision.

Looking for discontinuity or conflict in protocols is a process which distinguishes a dialectical orientation from others (except, of course, for those explicitly looking for pathology). The process is very enlightening. Using Riegel's four planes of development as an organizing device reveals the critical nodes in the biographies of Couple 11. There are several instances of conflict between the inner-biological plane and the individual-psychological plane. On the light side, the wife was a "perpetual dieter" in 1962 and a "lover of good food" in 1976--obviously some kind of resolved conflict, either physically or psychologically. More seriously, the knowledge of her mother's heart condition has changed the nature of her relationship with her family. This is conflictual at several levels. First, at an emotional level, she is confronted with the eventual death of her parents. Second, death itself has implication for their future lifestyle in terms of the property they have been willed. A third conflict involving the inner-biological plane was the discovery that the wife has a medical problem which might prevent conception if she wanted to become pregnant. Although this discovery was made after the decision to remain childless, it revived the issue for a while, and rather than reinforcing the decision led the couple to consider adoption as a possibility--just in case. Once comfortable with this possibility they were able to again reaffirm their decision as truly voluntary.

Many of the other conflicts have already been mentioned and I will only briefly review them here. They involve, for the most part, conflicts between the individual-psychological plane (of one or both of them) and the cultural-sociological plane. Included in the list are the wife's differing attitudes about her role at work and at home, her relationship with the Women's Movement, the conflict for both of them between competence and pressure, and the conflict between the positive and negative aspects of their relationship to friends with children. In addition to eliciting conflict in the couple, their close friends bring out strong feelings of nurturance which do not come out when speaking about children. The woman's family situation highlights some interesting conflict reducing mechanisms. Whereas the couple recognizes that children would serve to bring the family closer together (this has already been mentioned as particularly important), this closeness has been achieved through other means: health concerns and common professional interests (i.e., the business confidente father).

Both the husband and wife indicate conflicts concerning self perceptions. The wife's contradictory descriptions of her approach and avoidance behaviors toward boyfriends (she wanted to be a doctor all her life; she wanted to marry "the one" man for her) which came to a head in the nursing school trauma are similar to her inconsistent sex role orientation in her current lifestyle. The husband perceives conflict between his definition of himself and how other people define him. All of these conflicts

shed light on those areas of adult life which might be important for continuous development. It is a wealth of material to incorporate into an approach to adult development, considering that the couple does not have children and that most approaches to the family life cycle address development of the parents in terms of the development of their children.

The final area I want to consider regarding the biographies of this couple is the usefulness of using event sequences to study adult development. The development of each partner can not be addressed without consideration of their intertwining careers (in Elder's terms). Before meeting, the two people had very different backgrounds with some interesting similarities. The husband was oldest of five children; the wife was an only child. According to the literature on voluntary childlessness, using aggregate data, few trends have been found relating position in the family to the decision ot remain childless. However, of these trends, being the oldest of many children is positively correlated with the decision. In the present example, the importance of the husband's position in his family of origin to the decision to remain childless can only be considered in relation to the wife's position and over time. The husband considers being the oldest of five as having different effects over time--first predisposing him to <u>have</u> children of his own and later serving to make him feel that he would not be missing anything if he did <u>not</u> have children. The fact that the wife was an

only child and had very little experience with children has created for her a certain amount of anxiety about her ability to raise children. The ultimate decision, then, can be seen only as a dynamic interaction of these experiences and not merely as the additive effect of certain demographic factors.

Proceeding with the life lines, the wife had an early interest in music which then lay dormant for many years until her husband became actively interested in music in recent years. In terms of their careers, the ups and downs of one has definite implications for the lives of both, although they try to coordinate their efforts (e.g., both taking a sabbatical at the same time). The independence, dependence, and interdependence of the couple is revealed in their committment to work, to each other, and a particular life style. Although they have managed so far to balance the needs of one or the other, the upcoming tenure decision may involve drastic changes for both, again throwing them into the job market to find mutually satisfying positions.

Both partners predict ordered change in the future, their lifestyle being determined by the job market as well as the life course of their families and friends. They recognize the possibility of discontinuity in the future as in the past (through their retrospective prospects) and perhaps this recognition weighs heavily in their decision to remain childless.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

The three areas of inquiry explored in this study are voluntary childlessness, sex role development, and adult development in general. In this concluding chapter, I will summarize the results, integrate the results of the group data with the case study material, and relate these findings to the literature in the field and to my theoretical perspective. I will spell out the questions and hypotheses which were generated from this study and indicate directions for future research.

Summary of the Results

The Decision to Remain Childless

The analysis of the decision to remain childless included data on the evolution of the decision, the values and costs of children, and the effects of parenthood. There is clear evidence that the decision to remain childless evolves during the early years of marriage, and continues to change throughout the course of the marriage. Whereas having a child would, in effect, end the decision making process regarding childlessness (although not for the decision to have additional children), not having a child permits continuing changes in attitudes about the decision as each partner and the couple together, grow. Not only do actual feelings change, but perceptions of these feelings change

indicating situational, interpersonal and intrapsychic determinants.

Attitudes about the values and costs of children give additional insight into the changing nature of the decision. In response to a checklist, the most frequently mentioned values for women were in the categories of primary group ties, affection; stimulation, novelty, fun; and creativity, accomplishment, competence. The most frequently mentioned values for men were in the categories of stimulation, novelty, fun and creativity, accomplishment, competence. According to open-ended questions, the most frequently mentioned value for women was primary ties, affection (no change from 1972); men most frequently mentioned "nothing" (an increase from 1972).

In response to the checklist of costs, men and women most frequently mentioned those items which had to do with achievement concerns, the affiliative bond of the marriage, and interference with lifestyle in general. According to the open-ended questions, women most frequently mentioned lifestyle (an increase from 1972); the men, as a group, did not indicate the salience of one cost over another. However, more men than women mentioned achievement costs in 1976.

In order to obtain a more complete picture of the nature of change in the values and costs of children, the pattern of change from 1972 to 1976 was assessed for each individual. It was found that there had been more change than stability in

attitudes about children, a pattern which is not captured by the group comparisons.

In response to the questions of the effect of parenthood on a woman, a man, the couple, and the person her/himself, both men and women mentioned structural restrictions most often. Separation of the spouses was the most frequently mentioned concern about the effect of parenthood on the couple. Overall, there was a decrease in concern about achievement (especially for women) and about psychological issues (especially for men).

Again, the pattern of change was assessed for each individual. The importance of structural restrictions (e.g., time, money, activities) is substantiated and some interesting patterns for achievement and psychological issues are discerned which are similar to the patterns of change for values and costs of children.

In order to understand the pattern of change, a detailed comparison of all subjects on a number of variables was undertaken. It was found that change in employment status and husband/wife interaction together provide insight into the pattern of change. In general, where there was a shift in employment status (usually from full time student to full time employed) achievement dropped out as a concern regarding the impact of children. The fluctuations around this issue take the form of one of several patterns: change in employment status of a spouse, concerns over achievement for spouse as part of an overall lifestyle issue for the couple, change in the feeling of one or both partners about the desirability of

of having children in the future (represented by one couple who is intending to have children and two couples who are entertaining the idea), and changes in feelings about the impact of children on the marriage itself.

These results suggest that the voluntarily childless cannot be considered as one group of people having common attitudes which are stable over time. Rather, other events in the lives of these people, individually and as a couple, seem to influence attitudes and attitude change. These events and event sequences indicate the issues which may be fruitful to explore for an understanding of adult development and the variation in development for different groups of people.

Lifestyle Variables

The analysis of lifestyle variables includes analyses of marriage and life satisfaction, decision making in the couple, division of labor in the home, and the meaning of work. The most notable result regarding the satisfactions with marriage is the decrease in number of responses for the category ego support and understanding. Regarding the dissatisfactions with marriage, there is an indication that cohesiveness diminished as a problem for women and men.

Marriage and achievement were clearly the most satisfying things in life for men and women at both times of measurement. Dissatisfactions in life centered around situational concerns such as time, money, and material possessions. Leisure decreased

in frequency as a dissatisfaction. Achievement was mentioned less frequently by women, but more frequently by men over time.

These data indicate, again, that change in employment status may be accounting for some of the patterns of change in the satisfactions and dissatisfactions in marriage and life, a pattern which is substantiated by projections of the future and changes in these projections.

The analysis of the more global lifestyle variables was supplemented with an analysis of more specific variables (decision making, division of labor, meaning of work). The different items assessed for decision making (food, car, where to live, vacation, spend an evening, and work) reflect different domains which vary according to separate, mutual, and autonomous patterns typical of normative trends. The predominant pattern for this group of people was mutual decision making for most items (increasingly so for those items typically sex-stereotyped) or autonomous decision making (for work items). The most notable finding, however, was the lack of fit between the perceptions of husband and wives as to who made which decisions. This indicates that if it is important to know who acutally makes decisions, a more direct assessment would be needed. However, the perceptions of people in this sphere of life are important in and of themselves and could be valuable sources of information regarding the marital relationship.

The analysis of the division of labor in the home reveals that, for the most part, these couples can be considered transi-

tional in that some tasks are divided up in traditional patterns (e.g., the wife cooks dinner; the husband pays the bills) whereas others are shared or divided nontraditionally. An examination of the lack of fit between husband and wife perceptions and husband/wife interaction reveals still more about the lifestyle of these couples. The pattern of household division of labor and the perceptions of these patterns vary according to situational changes (e.g., change in employment status) as well as according to changes in a more general configuration of values and attitudes on the part of one or both partners.

The analysis of the meaning of work for these people was the one clear cut indication of nontraditional sex role orientation. The items receiving most responses were: source of stimulation outside the family for both men and women and work is as important as family for men. More women than men indicated that work was a dominant interest.

Since there was only minimal direct assessment of sex role orientation for group data, a profile for each couple was constructed based on the pattern of responses on a number of broader categories. The main conclusion is that sex role orientation is not a stable, unitary phenomenon, but changes over time, across domains and in interaction with other people. This conclusion, along with the data on attitudes about children and general lifestyle issues, indicates not only the presence of continuing development in adulthood, but the complexity of that development and the value of assessing event sequences as

a mechanism for understanding and describing that complexity. These issues will be explored further in the next section, in which I will attempt to integrate these data with the case studies.

Integration of Group Data and Case Studies

I will approach the integration of the group data and the case study material in several ways: by substantiating impressions derived from the case studies with results from the group data, by exploring the results of the group data in more depth by using the case studies, and by comparing the information obtained from the two forms of data collection. These three approaches will be integrated in the discussion of the substantive material.

One of the most striking features of the study in general is the frequency and nature of change in the lives of these people and how they perceive this change. Macfarlane (1964) found that people strove for consistency in how they perceived their lives, whereas Woodruff and Birren (1972) found that people believed that their personalities had changed significantly relative to memories of how they had been in the past. The case studies under consideration here indicate that both of these processes are going on. Both Ann and Alan perceive that they are significantly different from what they were like in the past. The future, however, is perceived to be more continuous and stable. Betty and Bill feel that they are

basically the same people that they always were with minor fluctuations in self concept and with the recognition of discontinuities in their past and predicted future which might significantly change their lifestyle, but not their personalities. The perceptions of continuity and discontinuity seem to be very much tied up with events and experiences at the particular time in question. For example, five years ago, Ann was in a situation in which she was living day to day, dissatisfied with her job and with no particular direction to pursue. Change, then, would have been the one predictable feature in her life. Now, she is established in a profession, has well articulated goals and expects to continue her lifestyle (with structural improvement) until retirement. The group data substantiates these impressions. There is evidence of change in many of the variables that were measured including the values and costs of children, the effect of parenthood, satisfactions and dissatisfactions in marriage and life, decision making, and household division of labor. Again, perception of change varied; some people perceiving change (or more change than actually occurred) and some people perceiving stability. The acutal changes and the changes in perception can be accounted for by several things. The continuing dialogue or interaction of husband and wife served the function, in some cases, of aligning perceptions more closely to reality (e.g., the increasing accuracy in the husbands' perceptions of the lack of enthusiasm of their wives about having children).

There was evidence of continuing realignment of values and attitudes determined by the predicament or feelings of a spouse or of a particular situation. Additionally, the structure of the life space of one or both partners seemed to have a significant impact on many aspects of their lives as evidenced in the relation of change in employment status to change in attitudes and perceptions. These results can be interpreted to form a compelling argument that transactions or event sequences are primary in people's lives and as Meacham (1977) states, " . . . individuals and their characteristics are derived from the basic transactions" (p. 9). The data on decision making and division of labor provide further supporting evidence. Both of these domains are influenced by the particular marital relationship and by the current situation (e.g., during certain times of stress, the completion of certain household tasks is simply not relevant).

The group data on decision making and household division of labor are points of departure for evaluating sex role orientation and development. As a group, these people seem to depart (to some degree, at least) from more typical or traditional sex role stereotyped patterns. Again, however, there is more variation than consistency which is especially evident in the lack of fit in the perceptions of husbands and wives. Many of the couples are transitional in that some of the areas reflect a traditional pattern, while others reflect a nontraditional pattern. There appears to be an even greater gap between behavior

and perceptions in the areas of couple related activities and behavior and perception about work. Attitudes about work (especially for the women) showed the clearest departure from traditional patterns. This result, coupled with the confusion represented by the home related activities, indicates that the evaluation of sex role orientation and development should incorporate these inconsistencies rather than averaging them out (as is the tendency in much sex role research). The case studies illuminate some of the possibilities. The division between couple related activities and work related activities is apparent in both couples, but takes different forms. Betty and Bill have a very traditional division of labor in the home. This was changed briefly due to situational constraints, the change itself having an enduring (but limited) impact. However, both are nontraditional regarding the primacy of Betty's career. Sex role development for each has been the result of different forces. Both had conventional upbringings, although the influence of the Protestant work ethic in Betty's life mitigated some of the traditional consequences for a woman. From this point, Betty's development has been the result of internal and external conflict in and around her work situation and her relation to the Women's Movement. Bill, however, recognizing his advantage as a male in the area of career, has undergone sex role development on the coat tails, as it were, of Betty--having to adjust and adapt because of Betty's career trajectory. Within the personal relationship of the couple, Bill exhibits many traditionally feminine

qualities such as nurturance (sex role reversal) whereas Betty feels most comfortable with her traditionally feminine qualities (sex role stereotyped).

Ann and Alan present a different picture. The division in this case is not between work and home for each of them. Each has assumed the major responsibility for one of these domains: Ann's primary interest and orientation is toward her work whereas Alan's primary interest and orientation is toward the quality of life for the couple. At first glance, this appears to be a case of sex role reversal and indeed, it is innovative relative to the typical pattern, but each pursues her/his particular domain without apparent regard to sex role prescriptions at all. This suggests the importance of assessing personal perceptions of behavior rather than merely labeling the outward manifestation of a particular orientation. In many ways, Alan's sex role development was influenced by Ann's career trajectory, but this interaction does not have the same quality as that of Bill and Betty. In this case, Alan's feelings about masculinity were not as closely tied to his career as to his interpersonal interaction. The marital relationship itself was the arena which aroused and resolved conflicts about masculinity. Ann's political work has served an important function for her sex role development, freeing her to extricate herself from sex role trappings in her personal life.

The indepth exploration of the current and past experiences of these two couples has both corraborated the results of the

group data and suggested possible interpretations of the data. Sex role development continues in adulthood and is determined not only by intrapsychic or perceptual changes, but also by changes in other people, in the life situation of the person (and of the couple), and in the general historical-cultural milieu. A complete evaluation of sex role development must take these influences into account as well as the apparent discontinuities in different spheres of life. This complex of variables is, perhaps, not as elegant as some of the current conceptualizations of sex roles, but ultimately more useful in evaluating and creating individual and societal change.

The case studies indicate in a number of other areas what may lead to more fruitful investigation of the issues surrounding the voluntarily childless couple. Many of the changes that took place over time were articulated more clearly in the case studies; especially, as just mentioned, regarding change in sex role orientation. This occurred, also, in two other areas: family background and influence of peers. Both couples felt the impact of early family background (family size, responsibility in the family, ambience in the home, religion) to be an important determinant of their ultimate decision in conjunction with the experiences in adult life. Thus, it is important to not only collect demographic data, but determine the meaning of these data for the people and index how this data impacts on later experiences. The life line questions seem to be effective methods for establishing these connections. Regarding the influence of peers,

the group data indicate a decreasing concern about pressure to have children. However, the impact of peer pressure, as articulated in the case of Betty and Bill, may be much more convoluted. An asynchronization occurs because the issue of children is becoming less salient to the childless couple, but more salient to peers who are having children. Although direct pressure may decrease along with concern about this pressure, growth among peers is revolving around different issues and diverging in different directions. The impact of this change may affect the childless couple in areas of life totally unrelated to children, leading to increasingly divergent lifestyles.

Discontinuities such as these are apparent throughout the case studies and useful for interpretation of many of the results. It has been shown in previous chapters that the group data became more meaningful when analyzed in detail, exploring, for example, the mutual impact of wife and husband in interaction with their immediate and historical circumstances. The case studies further illustrate the value of examining the lives of people from a perspective which assumes that transactions or activities are primary and that conflict and conflict management are basic processes of growth. In this way, a more complete and accurate picture of the voluntarily childless is achieved. There is the beginning of an understanding of the contradictions in the literature regarding sex role development, and indications of what may fruitfully be explored in order to understand adult development.

Discussion

The questions raised by this study are more compelling than those answered. This, of course, was the intent. I will enumerate the issues that were raised, discussing them in terms of the relevant literature and suggest strategies by which one could approach these problems.

One interpretation of the data (both longitudinal and retrospective) suggests that activity and change in particular arenas are primary and that these affect the course of future change. Meacham (1977, pp. 6-7) presents a cogent conceptualization of this issue:

> . . . a continuing problem with interactional models has been the tendency to focus too much on either the individual (heredity) or the context (environment) to the exclusion of the other, ignoring that each depends upon the other . . . interactional models assume stability and seek to explain change; transactional models assume change and seek to explain momentary stabilities.

Other studies report data in support of this interpretation. Kiyak, Liang, and Kahana (1976) found that young people considered work-related events as requiring more change than older people. "Given the fact that college students are expected to become economically productive in a few years, work-related events are more salient to them. Thus, it may lead the young people to perceive those events to be more stressful" (p. 14). Prescott, Csikszentmihalyi, and Graef (1976) found that the meaning of work and home related activities changed as people passed through the 20's and into the 30's; work being less

relaxing, more boring and less friendly for younger people while home was more friendly and more relaxing. Additionally, they concluded that common sex stereotypes were not as important as the setting of the professional experience as determinants of experience. For this group of professionals, work was central to their lives. The results of the current study which indicate change in achievement concerns as a function of change in employment status are consistent with these two studies. Taking these studies together, there is evidence that for some people, at critical points in their lives, work or career is the area of activity which determines a wide range of experience. This is particularly important given the literature on the family cycle which either assumes that adult development is determined in large part by the developmental status of children in the family or uses the developmental status of children as proxies for a more generalizable life sequence that cannot be conceptualized in other terms. It would be useful to see if career is differentially salient for different groups of people (e.g., parents and non-parents) and what other events may play the same role in the lives of different groups of people. It would also be useful to see how these activities or events determine the future course of change and which events become more or less salient over the life course.

By taking career trajectory as a focus and operationalizing individual and interacting (e.g., husband and wife) career time-

tables, it would be possible to transcend the bias (i.e., focusing on the development of children) in the fields of developmental psychology and family sociology. The lives of the voluntarily childless couples in this sample (albeit not a representative sample) indicate which variables would be interesting to pursue. It would be important to investigate perceptions of career timetables, projections into the future and evaluation of progress along these lines. Both the career trajectory and the perception of career timetables would most likely vary according to number of years employed, number of years in present job, and number of years not employed. This latter variable (number of years not employed) would have different implications depending on when it occurred and for what reason. For example, it is probably quite different for a woman to be unemployed at the beginning of her career trajectory for reasons of pursuing an advanced degree, for bearing and raising children (or doing both), or because of an overloaded job market in a time of economic recession. It would be different for a man to be unemployed at the beginning of his career (for pursuing an advanced degree or for raising children) as opposed to the height of his production (by being layed off due to economic recession). All of the variables, of course, would be subject to historical trends (i.e., a cohort analysis would be required) and normative expectations of a particular cohort, class, reference group, etc. The synchronization or asynchronization between the hus-

band's and wife's career trajectories along these dimensions would also impact on the career trajectory of each as well as the relationship of the couple.

In this formulation of the life cycle, the role of children or lack of children would be removed as a primary variable and assume the status of one variable among many. Attitudes about children could, in fact, become a dependent variable determined by the configuration of other salient features of adult life.

Implicit in the current study is the importance of the perception or meaning of various activities and experiences for the people who are living through them. If activity is of prime importance, and if work is one activity which defines a critical node in the life course of some people, how is this perceived and how is it related to other activities? Looking at the sex role patterns, especially for the women in the current sample, this question takes on a new dimension. Nevill (1974, p. 2) hypothesizes that " . . . perhaps, rather than being bound by an existing stereotype, people tend to view each other idiosyncratically and to base judgements on their own reactions rather than on existing norms of appropriate behavior." Perhaps, those women who define work as central to their lives do not regard it as relevant to normative sex stereotypes but regard it "idiosyncratically" as Nevill suggests, based on their own experience. It would be informative to discover if other activities of varying salience are perceived as

more or less relevant to normative sex stereotyping as is suggested by the data on decision making and division of labor.

The literature on person perception and personal construct theory suggests methods which would be useful in the analysis of these issues. According to the person perception literature, experience is composed of raw feelings, verbally described experience, and scientific experience. It is believed that people form implicit personality theories to account for these experiences, their own behavior, and the behavior of others.

Ability, motivation, and effort are the three aspects of our perception of people which lead to the attribution of causes of behavior, and are variously ascribed to internal or external forces (e.g., failure from lack of motivation is more reprehensible when judging others than failure from lack of ability). Kelly (1955) has used the idea of implicit personality theories in a slightly different way. He uses the term personal construct to depict the underlying basis from which a person construes the world and acts upon it. A constellatory construct determines how someone will be construed in different realms (e.g., if gender is constellatory much of a person's behavior will be seen in terms of his/her sex). A propositional construct has no further implications (e.g., if gender is propositional for a person it means that others will be seen as male or female, but that sex has no further connotations in other spheres of life). Saavedra (1976) has found the concept useful in describing the presence of absence of "sexism" in children (presence of

sexism implies gender is constellatory, absence implies that it is propositional). Saavedra's work exemplifies the critical links between person perception theory and the model of sex role development presented in Chapter II. In the person perception literature, stereotypes are seen as an " . . . inevitable consequence of our needs as perceivers to make sense of the world" (Hastorf, Schneider, and Polefka, 1970). There is an active striving for consistency and continuity. By assessing personal constructs or implicit personality theories we would begin to see when and for whom this need for consistency results in sex role polarization. By assessing these constructs over time, we begin to get a feel for the process. The basic method for the personal construct research is a free-response method described in detail by Rosenberg (1976).

This method corrects some of the shortcomings of fixed format designs and fulfills some of the requirements of developing measures consistent with my theoretical perspective. However, it is necessary to be able to assess a person's perception of situations in which his or her constructs are operative or inoperative. Sex role transcendence involves both situational and personal flexibility--in other words being able both to adapt to a situation and to adapt a situation to personal needs. If gender is constellatory for a person, does this vary across situations?

Pervin (1975) adopts a different strategy for understanding personality which is in terms of the pattern of stability and

change, in feeling and behaviors, in relation to defined groups of situations. In particular he wants to find out about the dimensions people use to perceive and organize situations; about the person-situation interaction. Pervin used factor analysis to establish the degree of stability and change in the life situations of these people. For example, individuals may differ in the behaviors on which they are stable or varying or in the kinds of situations in relation to which their behavior varies. This is different both from a simple personality trait determinism and from a simple situational determinant explanation of people.

Following the leads of Pervin, Rosenberg, and Saavedra, techniques could be developed which would measure both personal and situational flexibility without resorting to either trait stability or situational determinism as the sole conceptual basis for method. This could be achieved either through an expansion of the Bem Sex Role Inventory to include an assessment of implicit personality theories around the issue of sex roles or through the development of original techniques based on the work of the above authors.

The importance of considering the person-situation transactions has been stressed as well as the importance of considering the perception or meaning of these transactions for the people involved. A final issue is the conceptualization of the nature of conflict as a means of understanding the life course. The literature on role strain (e.g., Goode, 1960) is especially relevant here since this is one type of conflict that recurs in

considerations of sex role development and change. According to Komarovsky (1976, p. 225),

> . . . a case of role strain: 1) involves certain components of roles, i.e., norms, beliefs, values; 2) exemplifies a particular mode of difficulty . . .; 3) occurs in a given structural, institutional, or situational context . . .; 4) is experienced as an intrapsychic or an interpersonal conflict with particular role partners; and 5) exhibits various degrees of intensity.

Additionally, Komarovsky relates role strain to social change (as both a cause and effect) suggesting that " . . . discontinuities between successive statuses the individual occupies from one stage of life to another may create conflict" (p. 238). She demonstrates the value of integrating psychological and sociological measures in order to evaluate and demonstrate the individual/environment interaction. Her data and demographic trends indicate that the men in her study will probably marry women who are more feminist than the men are themselves which will lead to conflict. The case studies reviewed earlier support this prediction and further suggest that this conflict leads to growth. The salience of the conflict determines the power it has to change events and is, in part, situationally determined (Neugarten, 1976).

The salience of activities or events (in the current study, work was very salient), perceptions of these events, and the conflict generated by them vary according to the person (including early socialization), the situation and the historical context (e.g., the Women's Movement). Some suggestions as to how

to tease apart and integrate these interactions have been offered. However, the general value of biographical techniques to document the events of a life course and to answer more specific questions such as those raised in this study must be stressed. Allport (1942, p. 185) waxes eloquent on this topic:

> Some recent discussions of scientific method (and of the unity of science) have produced a ritualism that seems to say that the language of science is more important than its purposes. Our position, on the contrary, is that *if the language of personal documents can be shown to enhance understanding, power of prediction, and power of control, above the level which man can achieve through his own unaided common sense, then these documents must be admitted as a valid scientific method.* No loyalty to an operational, to logical, or mathematical creed should prevent it.

As demonstrated by this study, the biographical method is a most important tool in establishing a process-oriented analysis, integrating the past with the present and the present with the future.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

PLEASE NOTE:

Print in appendix A is
very small and indistinct.
Filmed in the best way possible.

University Microfilms

I. Introduction - As you know, this study is a continuation of another study you took part in some years ago, dealing with the lifestyles of couples with and without children.:

a. Do you remember the study?

b. What are your recollections of the experience?

c. Have you had any thoughts about the study since then?

d. Off hand, can you think of any answer you gave then that you would change if asked that question?

II. The first part of our study is a direct follow-up of the 1972 study, and therefore we would like to ask you some questions which are very similar, and in some cases identical to the ones asked you as part of that study. The main purpose of this part of the study is to assess change and stability in your situation over the last few years.

1. How old are you? ____
2. How long have you been married?____
3. What do you do now?_____
   _____
4. How satisfied are you with that occupation?
5. Do you have any children now? _____
6. If yes, how many?_____
7. Do you expect to have (more) children in the future?_____
8. How many children would you like to have altogether?_____
9. Thinking of a women's life, how do you think a woman's life is changed by having children?
10. Thinking of a man's life, how do you think a man's life is changed by having children?
11. How do you think a couple's relationship is changed by having children?
12. Overall, how do you think you would be affected by having children?
13. Do you have any reason to believe that you are physically unable to have children?
14. If yes, why?
    1. medical problem (explain)_____
       _____
    2. sterilization operation (explain)_____
       _____
15. Have your feelings about having children changed in the past five years? If so, how?
16. At this point what are your feelings about having children?
17. What are your spouse's feelings about having children?
18. If you definitely plan to remain childless, can you tell me how this decision came about?

19. Can you see anything that might happen to change your mind?

20. Have you ever thought of adopting a child? (If yes) Have you looked into it?

21. Do you think that if your spouse or your marriage were different you would want children?

22. When was the last time you can recall seriously thinking about the possibility of having children with your spouse? with another person? Tell me about these thoughts and feelings.

23. Have you and your spouse discussed having or not having children recently? When? What/how was it discussed?

24. Overall, who is more enthusiastic about having children, you or your spouse, or is it about equal?

25. When you've thought about having children, what things did you look forward to?

26. Look at the list of factors that people have said influenced them to have children and tell me if they were important to you? If so, were they very important or somewhat important?

27. What are the things that have made you hesitate, delay, or not want to have children?

28. Now look at the list of factors that people have said influenced them <u>not</u> to have children and tell me if they were important to you? If so, were they very important or somewhat important?

29. What birth control methods do you use? (Check all)
    a. foam
    b. condom
    c. pill
    d. rhythm
    e. IUD
    f. diaphragm
    g. jelly
    h. male sterilization
    i. female sterilization
    j. other (what?)_____

30. Look at the list of some of the things that people do in their leisure time. Could you check which of these things you are likely to do in a typical week: whether you usually do it alone, sometimes together, or usually together.

30. Look at the list of common household tasks and tell me who usually does them: you, your spouse, or both.

31. How were these divisions made? Were they conscious or natural?

32. Very often, in family decision-making one person gets the final say even though couples work together on a decision. In your case, who would you say makes the final decision in the following areas?

	husband	wife	both
a. food expenditures			
b. car expenditures			
c. where to live			
d. where to go on a vacation			
e. where to go out in an evening			
f. job husband takes			
g. job wife takes			
h. whether or not wife would work			
i. other (what?)_____			

33. What would you say is the nicest thing about your marriage?

34. What is one thing you would most like to change about your marriage?

35. Do you ever feel that others are interested in your having or not having children?

36. Do you feel that your friends - with children - without children are concerned about your childlessness?

37. Do you feel that your family is concerned about your childlessness?

38. How often does it come up?

39. (If felt pressure) Has the social pressure changed: been more intense or less intense over the last few years?

40. Now I'd like you to refer to the list of characteristics on this sheet and compare yourself to most other women (men) on the traits listed.

41. Look at the list of sentences in your booklet and tell me which one of them best describes your feelings about working?

42. What are the most satisfying things about your life now?

43. What is missing?

44. What would you like to be doing in five years?

45. In twenty-five years?

III.

1. What do you think are the goals of the women's liberation movement?

2. What is your opinion of the aims of the women's liberation movement?

Do you:

a. strongly approve of their goals
b. slightly approve of their goals
c. indifferent
d. slightly disapprove
e. strongly disapprove

3. What is your opinion of the following statements: Do you agree strongly, agree slightly, disagree slightly, or disagree strongly?

Agree Strong	Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Strongly	
___	___	___	___	a. Males and females should be encouraged to be equally independent from birth.
___	___	___	___	b. Men and women should take equal responsibility for housekeeping.
___	___	___	___	c. Men and women should take equal responsibility for child care.
___	___	___	___	d. Raising a child provides many rewards, but can't keep a woman as satisfied as a full time job.
___	___	___	___	e. Women have to be better qualified than men to get equal treatment in hiring and promotions nowadays.
___	___	___	___	f. Women should take increasing responsibility for leadership in in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.
___	___	___	___	g. The initiative in dating should come from a man.
___	___	___	___	h. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.
___	___	___	___	i. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.
___	___	___	___	j. It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause in the marriage service.
___	___	___	___	k. It is unrealistic to expect a woman to run a locomotive and a man to darn socks.
___	___	___	___	l. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set by men.
___	___	___	___	m. The intellectual equality of woman with man is perfectly obvious.
___	___	___	___	n. Most women need and want the kind of protection and support that men traditionally have given them.
___	___	___	___	o. Women with children should not work outside the home if they don't have to financially.

IV. Now we'd like you to tell us who you are. Down the left hand side of the page are fifteen spaces. Write a single word or very brief phrase that says who you are in each space. Or, if you'd rather you can tell me and I'll write them down. Try to put the most important first, but don't be too concerned about that--just list fifteen things. As you think of a word or phrase that tells us who you are we would also like you to give a situation that would bring out that part of you.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

V. Write a brief paragraph in the space below. Say what you do, what you are all about, your values, goals, the things and people that are especially important to you.

Write a brief paragraph or give a brief self-description but write it as if someone important to you (spouse, parent, work supervisor, etc.) was writing it.

(Interviewer can pull out additional "who am I" information while the person is talking and add these to the original list. If person gives written responses a couple of minutes can be spent together on this)

Our behavior or reactions are often influenced by the expectations placed on us by others, or by how we perceive others. Since we are especially interested in role perceptions, we would like you to go back to your responses to Who Am I and list those responses which have sex role implications to you.

We'd like you to name a person that you have or have had frequent contact with, but who you feel you don't understand or feel very alienated from.

Now list as many words or short phrases that you can think of that describe that person or tell who he or she is.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.

Who is one person that you think really has it together and you like where he or she is at?

Now list as many words or short phrases you can think of to describe that person.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.

VI. Now we would like to give you some situations or settings. If you have ever been faced with them, we'd like to know when, how you acted. how you felt. If you have never been in a particular situation, imagine that you are, and then state how you think you would feel and act. Males should respond to all statements within ( ) and females outside ( ).

	Situation	How you felt	How you acted
1. Time you most resented being a woman (man)			
2. Time you were glad you were a woman (man)			
3. Time you felt most comfortable with your femininity (masculinity)			
4. Time you fantasized being the opposite sex			
5. The time you felt most masculine (feminine)			
6. The time you felt most comfortable with the idea of being masculine (feminine)			
7. Time you went through greatest identity crisis			
8. Time you felt being female (male) made a situation more difficult or was detrimental			

VII. We are interested in people and the changes in their lives--what they think about, where they've come from in the past and where they are going in the future. People and the society around them change all of the time. We want to get a picture of what these changes are like for you. The next page is a time line, a graphical way of looking at a ten-year time period in your life. We want you to use this time line to show us what the important events and periods were for you over the past five years, and how you think things will be for the next five years.

Time Line

1971

1972

1973

1974

1975

1976 (past)

1976 (rest)

1977

1978

1979

1980

Clearly, the five year time period we have picked is somewhat arbitrary. If something happened to you more than five years ago which influenced your life, and it is still important to you or has had a lasting effect, we would like you to tell us about it. If you feel there is a particular period that was very important in terms of personal growth and change, please indicate it on the time line. In the same way, if you have plans beyond the next five years which have a major influence on your life now or will have, tell us about those plans also.

19__

19__

19__

19__

19__

19__

19__

Future

Now I would like you to think about where you were five years ago. If you had filled out a time line in 1971 for the next five years how would you have projected them?

1971:

1972:

1973:

1974:

1975:

1976:

VIII.

Usually major decisions in one's life are not made quickly and then forgotten. Rather, there are steps, perhaps unconscious ones, which lead up to the decision as well as future ramifications of the decision. Here again we might not think of the connection unless we were questioned about it. We'd like you to think about your decision to remain childless. Looking at the life-line, at what points was your decision to remain childless influenced by other factors or situations? When did the subject come up? Don't just think about the final decision but rather incidents, situations, or people that influenced you either before or after marriage.. (What we are really asking you to do is to trace the history of your childlessness.) Include not only those factors or situations that led to your remaining childless, but also those decisions or situations that were influenced by your decision to remain childless--Go back to the lifeline of the past on the two previous pages.

Now we'd like you to think about the future. I imagine that there will be times in your future that this decision will have more impact or be of more importance to you than at others. On your future life-line mark those places or times where you see your childlessness as relevant to your plans. (For example, where would you need or want to change your goals or plans if you were to have children?)-- go back to the future life-line on the two previous pages.

IX.

Thinking about the you of the past and the you of the future as you have indicated on your lifeline, do you think your description of yourself (responses to Who Am I) are relevant for the past and future?

Below try to tell us who you were at either an important transitional stage or stages that you mentioned in your lifeline and also describe the you of the future.

Who I was in _____	Who I was in _____
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.
11.	11.
12.	12.
13.	13.
14.	14.
15.	15.

How I see myself in the future in_____

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

X.

The way we interact with others often can tell other people a great deal about ourselves. To help us see if we have gotten a correct impression of you, and especially your ideas and attitudes towards childlessness, we would like you to pick out an issue on sex roles or on voluntary childlessness that is relevant to you and then decide on someone important in your life with whom you would be likely to discuss this issue. Discuss the issue as you think such a discussion would go in real life- what you would say and what the other person would say. Then I would like to tell you what I have heard you saying throughout the interview to see if you think I have gotten an accurate picture.

XI.

I would like you to tell me your ideas of sex role develoomen-
how people come to think of themselves as women or men, how these
self images change throughout their lives, why, and the implications
of these conceptions for how they live out their lives.

Where are you personally in terms of your own sex role development?

How did you come to this point and where do you see yourself going?

Do you like where you're at in terms of sex roles?

How would you like to change?

Now I would like to describe our three stage model regarding sex roles and then ask you some questions about it. (on following page)

1. What thoughts do you have on this idea?

2. Does it relate to any of the sex role or voluntary childlessness issues we have talked about? (list them)

3. Where do you stand in this picture?

4. Could there be a relationship between transcendence and voluntary childlessness one way or the other?

I would like to tell you about some of the work we are doing on sex role development and then get your reactions to it. We have a general model of sex role development which asserts that sex role development proceeds through three stages.

Stage I is characterized by an undifferentiated conception of sex roles. Through physiological and cognitive growth and interactions with her environment (including salient people) the child begins to learn that humans are either male or female and that there are "appropriate" and valued behaviors to be performed depending on that sex dichotomy.

Stage II is characterized by a polarized conception of sex roles in which there is active acceptance of conventional sex roles in accordance with the child's sex of assignment and there is the equally active rejection of the opposite pole. A static conception of this is the "ideal" stage for society today.

Stage III involves sex-role transcendence. Choice of behavioral and emotional expression is not determined by rigid adherence to "appropriate" sex-related characteristics. Inherent in a Stage III approach is an orientation allowing and fostering adaptation to varied occupations, life styles, and expressive roles. It is hypothesized that this third stage is not the end of a process, but the beginning of an orientation to life which is in continuous and dynamic flux. Thus, sex-role transcendence implies flexibility (over time, over situation, and over personal moods), plurality, personal choice, and the development of new or emergent possibilities once we move away from present oppressor-oppressed sex-roles. In essence, we would all be human beings first and males and females second.

There seems to be confusion about whether abolishing the present sex-role stereotypes will mean a unisexual society with no differentiation along sex lines or a more flexible and pluralistic society in which differentiations are still present, but not rigidly linked to biological sex and not differentially valued.

We have an emergent pluralist conception of a future society in which there are good ways to live which have not yet been discovered, and some of the good ways may come from a merger of ideas now regarded as male and female. It is pluralistic in the sense that we do not assume that there is one right way. Newly emerging values may exist side by side with existing masculine and feminine values.

Interview Hand-Out

Name _____

How important were the following factors in your own thinking about having children?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1. Wanting to feel like an adult.			
2. Wanting to fulfill myself or wanting my wife to fulfill herself as a woman.			
3. Wanting to feel like a member of the community.			
4. Wanting to pass on the family name.			
5. Wanting to leave a part of me on this earth.			
6. Wanting to make a contribution to society.			
7. Wanting to gain a sense of family.			
8. Wanting to fulfill my religious obligations.			
9. Wanting to share new experiences with my spouse.			
10. Wanting to have a new source of companionship and affection.			
11. Wanting to watch a growing child.			
12. Wanting to help a child develop into a healthy human being.			
13. Wanting to see the world through the eyes of a child.			
14. Wanting to influence another human being.			
15. Wanting the challenge of raising a child.			

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
16. Wanting to try out my skills as a parent.			
17. Wanting to have an impact on the world.			
18. Wanting to see if I could do as good a job as my parents.			
19. Wanting to have something in common with other women I know.			
20. Wanting to have the experience of pregnancy and childbirth.			
21. Wanting to pass on my and my spouse's traits.			

How important were the following factors in your thinking about <u>not</u> having children?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1. Don't want to add to the population explosion.			
2. Don't want to bring children into the world the way it is.			
3. Don't want to repeat my parents' mistakes.			
4. Not sure I'd make a good parent.			
5. Not sure my spouse would make a good parent.			
6. Don't like the responsibility of having a child.			
7. Don't like the mess and inconvenience of having a child.			
8. Want freedom to do things spontaneously with my spouse.			
9. Children would interrupt my education.			

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
10. Children would interrupt my career.			
11. Children would interrupt my spouse's education.			
12. Children would interrupt my spouse's career.			
13. My work is more important to me than having children.			
14. My spouse and I are too close to be able to spend time with each other and a child.			
15. I don't care for helpless individuals.			
16. I just don't like children.			
17. Pregnancy makes a woman less attractive.			
18. I want to avoid the experience of childbirth.			
19. I would rather spend my money on other things.			
20. Women who become mothers lose their attractiveness.			
21. A man needs peace and quiet when he comes home from work.			
22. I don't want to raise a child in a standard nuclear family.			
23. I don't want to share the care of my child with a baby-sitter or day-care center.			
24. Children interfere with a man's work.			
25. Children interfere with friendship with other adults.			
26. Children interfere with sexual relationships.			
27. Having children would necessitate change in my life which I am not willing to risk.			

Leisure-Time Activities: Which of the following activities are you likely to do in a typical week: do you usually do them alone, sometimes do them together, or usually do them together.

	I usually do alone	Sometimes together	Usually together
1. Read			
2. Watch TV			
3. Listen to music			
4. Rest at home			
5. Go to a movie			
6. Go out to eat			
7. Visit friends			
8. Creative hobbies			
9. Crafts			
10. Sports			
11. Outdoor activities			
12. Engaging in fantasy			
13. Other _____			

Household Tasks: Who usually does the following household tasks: husband, wife, or both?

	Husband	Wife	Both	Not Applicable
1. Cooks breakfast				
2. Cooks dinner				
3. Washes the dishes				
4. Laundry				
5. Ironing				
6. Daily cleaning				
7. Heavy cleaning				
8. Grocery shopping				
9. Paying bills				
10. Child care				

Characteristics: Compare yourself to most other (men) women on the following characteristics:

	Very	Some-what	A Bit	Not At All
1. Good looking				
2. Friendly				
3. Intellectual				
4. Attractive to the opposite sex				
5. Skilled socially				
6. Competitive occupationally				
7. Sensual				
8. A good companion to spouse				
9. Dominant				
10. Conventional				
11. Sensitive to others' needs				
12. Dependent				
13. Nervous or moody				
14. Competent				
15. Independent				
16. Good with children				

Which one of these statements best describes your feelings about working?

1. I think of work as my dominant interest.
2. I think of my work as an important part of my life - as important as marriage and family.
3. I think of work as a complement to my marriage - making me a better wife.
4. I think of work as primarily a help to family finances.
5. I think of my work as a source of stimulation and interest for myself, outside of my family life.
6. I do not think of work as part of my life plans.

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL TABLES

TABLE 14

VALUES OF CHILDREN, RATED FOR IMPORTANCE

	Very Important		Somewhat Important		Not Important	
1. Wanting to feel like an adult.	0	0	0	0	10	11
2. Wanting to fulfill myself or wanting my wife to fulfill herself as a woman.	1	0	4	2	5	9
3. Wanting to feel like an member of the community.	1	1	1	0	8	10
4. Wanting to pass on the family name.	1	1	0	4	9	6
5. Wanting to leave a part of me on this earth.	1	1	3	4	6	6
6. Wanting to make a contribution to society.	0	0	3	1	7	9
7. Wanting to gain a sense of family.	2	0	3	5	5	6
8. Wanting to fulfill my religious obligations.	0	0	0	0	10	11
9. Wanting to share new experiences with my spouse.	4	2	3	4	3	5
10. Wanting to have a new source of companionship and affection.	2	1	4	5	4	5
11. Wanting to watch a growing child.	4	5	4	3	2	3
12. Wanting to help a child develop into a healthy human being.	5	5	3	3	2	3
13. Wanting to see the world through the eyes of a child.	3	2	3	2	4	7
14. Wanting to influence another human being.	2	1	3	4	5	6
15. Wanting the challenge of raising a child.	1	2	4	2	5	7

TABLE 14 (CONTINUED)

	Very Important		Somewhat Important		Not Important	
16. Wanting to try out my skills as a parent.	2	0	5	6	2	5
17. Wanting to have an impact on the world.	0	1	1	0	9	10
18. Wanting to see if I could do as good a job as my parents.	1	0	2	2	7	9
19. Wanting to have something in common with other women I know.	1	0	0	2	9	10
20. Wanting to have the experience of pregnancy and childbirth.	3	0	4	3	3	8
21. Wanting to pass on my and my spouse's traits.	2	0	3	1	5	10

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses to each category of importance for each item. The first column of each importance category is the responses of women; the second is the responses of men.

TABLE 15

COSTS OF CHILDREN, RATED FOR IMPORTANCE

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1. Don't want to add to the population explosion.	1 3	8 6	1 2
2. Don't want to bring children into the world the way it is.	1 3	7 3	5 2
3. Don't want to repeat my parents' mistakes.	3 1	2 2	5 8
4. Not sure I'd make a good parent.	3 2	2 4	5 5
5. Not sure my spouse would make a good parent.	0 2	4 4	6 5
6. Don't like the responsibility of having a child.	6 6	3 4	1 0
7. Don't like the mess and inconvenience of having a child.	4 4	4 6	2 1
8. Want freedom to do things spontaneously with my spouse.	8 9	2 2	0 0
9. Children would interrupt my education.	4 2	1 2	5 7
10. Children would interrupt my career.	4 2	3 2	1 5
11. Children would interrupt my spouse's education.	1 2	2 1	5 6
12. Children would interrupt my spouse's career.	2 6	1 0	5 3
13. My work is more important to me than having children.	4 3	0 3	4 3
14. My spouse and I are too close to be able to spend time with each other and a child.	2 4	4 2	2 3

TABLE 15 (CONTINUED)

	Very Important		Somewhat Important		Not Important	
15. I don't care for helpless individuals.	1	1	1	1	6	7
16. I just don't like children.	2	3	2	2	4	4
17. Pregnancy makes a woman less attractive.	0	0	2	2	6	7
18. I want to avoid the experience of childbirth.	1	0	0	2	7	7
19. I would rather spend my money on other things.	1	2	5	3	2	4
20. Women who become mothers lose their attractiveness.	0	0	1	2	7	7
21. A man needs peace and quiet when he comes home from work.	2	3	2	3	4	3
22. I don't want to raise a child in a standard nuclear family.	1	0	0	0	7	9
23. I don't want to share the care of my child with a baby-sitter or a day-care center.	0	0	0	2	8	7
24. Children interfere with a man's work.	2	1	1	4	5	4
25. Children interfere with friendship with other adults.	3	2	1	5	4	2
26. Children interfere with sexual relationships.	2	1	5	4	1	4
27. Having children would necessitate change in my life which I am not willing to risk.	4	3	3	6	1	0

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of response to each category of importance for each item. The first column of each importance category is the responses of women; the seocnd is the responses of men.

TABLE 16

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF
VALUES OF CHILDREN
MENTIONED IN OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

	1972		1976	
Values	Women	Men	Women	Men
Adult Status	1	0	0	0
Expansion of Self	3	6	2	3
Morality, Altruism	0	0	0	1
Primary ties, Affection	4	2	4	1
Stimulation, Novelty, Fun	2	0	3	2
Creativity, Accomplishment	1	3	3	3
Power, Influence, Effectance	2	4	0	1
Social Comparison	1	0	0	0
Nothing	1	2	3	4

Note: Numbers refer to frequency with which each category was mentioned. Up to two responses were coded for each participant.

TABLE 17

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF COSTS
OF CHILDREN MENTIONED IN
OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

	1972		1976		
Costs	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Achievement	6	2	1	3	*
Structural	1	1	3	3	
Relationship with Spouse	4	2	1	2	
Psychological	6	3	2	3	
Kids per se	0	1	1	1	
Interference with Spouse	0	2	3	2	
Lifestyle	2	4	5	2	
World	2	4	1	2	

Note: Numbers refer to frequency with which each category was mentioned. Up to two responses were coded for each participant.

*p = .03

TABLE 18

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF THE EFFECT OF PARENTHOOD ON A WOMAN'S LIFE, A MAN'S LIFE, AND YOUR LIFE

	1972		1976	
Category	Women	Men	Women	Men
Woman's Life				
Structural Restrictions	8	9	10	9
Achievement	3	5	4	3
Positive Psychological	3	6	3	2
Negative Psychological	9	6	3	3
Health	1	1	0	0
Marriage	1	2	0	1
Social Life	0	0	0	0
Man's Life				
Structural Restrictions	10	9	9	8
Achievement	1	4	3	2
Positive Psychological	6	7	2	4
Negative Psychological	3	3	2	2
Marriage	0	3	1	1
Social Life	1	0	1	0
Your Life				
Structural Restrictions	7	9	5	7
Achievement	5	1	2	1
Positive Psychological	2	6	1	2
Negative Psychological	3	4	2	0
Marriage	2	2	2	2
Social Life	2	1	1	0
Conflict	4	3	4	2

Note: Numbers refer to frequency with which each category was mentioned. Up to 3 responses were coded for each participant.

TABLE 19

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF THE
EFFECT OF PARENTHOOD ON THE COUPLE

	1972		1976	
Category	Women	Men	Women	Men
Structural Changes	7	5	5	5
Joint Activities	3	1	2	2
Affiliative Bond	0	2	0	0
Growth of Marriage	1	1	1	1
Separates Spouses	10	9	6	6
Social Life	2	0	1	1

Note: Numbers refer to frequency with which each category was mentioned. Up to 3 responses were coded for each participant.

TABLE 20

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE EFFECT OF PARENTHOOD

	1972		1976	
Evaluation	Women	Men	Women	Men
Woman's Life				
Positive	0	0	0	0
Mixed	3	6	2	3
Negative	2	2	9	7
Ambivalent	6	3	0	1
No Answer	0	0	0	0
Man's Life				
Positive	0	0	0	0
Mixed	6	4	2	3
Negative	4	4	9	8
Ambivalent	0	1	0	0
No Answer	1	2	0	0
Your Life				
Positive	0	0	1	0
Mixed	2	1	1	1
Negative	7	9	7	7
Ambivalent	0	0	0	0
No Answer	2	1	2	3
Couple's Relationship				
Positive	0	1	1	0
Mixed	4	4	1	5
Negative	7	6	7	5
No Answer	0	0	2	1

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses for each category.

TABLE 21

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF WHO CHANGES MORE (MEN OR WOMEN) BY HAVING CHILDREN

	1972		1976		
Who Changes More	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Woman	4	4	3	6	*
Man	0	1	2	0	
Equal change	1	1	6	5	

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses in each category.

*p = .004

TABLE 22

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF
SATISFACTIONS WITH MARRIAGE

	1972		1976	
Category	Women	Men	Women	Men
Companionship, Company	4	3	4	3
Common Activities, Growth, Sharing	0	1	0	2
Common Values, Tastes	0	1	1	1
Physical Relationship	0	0	0	0
Communication	1	1	1	0
Ego Support, Understanding	3	4	2	3
Individuation, Separate Identities	2	1	1	2
Protection	0	0	0	0
Spouse	1	0	0	0
No Answer	0	0	2	0

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses to each category.

TABLE 23

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF
DISSATISFACTIONS IN MARRIAGE

	1972		1976	
Category	Women	Men	Women	Men
Relationship				
sex	0	0	2	0
more time together	1	4	1	0
more independence	1	0	0	0
equalize power	2	0	0	0
cope better	2	4	0	1
spontaneity	1	0	0	0
Spouse				
personality	0	0	1	2
way spouse fulfills role	0	1	0	1
should take more responsibility	0	0	0	1
My Qualities				
personality	1	0	0	1
my power	0	1	0	0
Situational	1	0	0	0
Nothing	1	1	2	4

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses to each category.

TABLE 24

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISONS OF SATISFACTIONS AND DISSATISFACTIONS WITH LIFE

Category	1972		1976	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Satisfactions				
Marriage	5	8	6	7
Family	0	1	0	0
Achievement	4	6	6	6
Creativity	1	2	0	0
Friends	2	2	0	2
Situational	2	0	1	2
Leisure	1	0	1	1
Psychological	1	2	3	1
Power	0	0	0	0
Morality	1	0	1	1
Dissatisfactions				
Marriage	1	0	1	0
Family	0	1	0	0
Achievement	4	1	1	3 *
Creativity	2	2	0	0
Friends	3	1	1	1
Situational	5	4	6	6
Leisure	4	6	2	0
Psychological	0	1	1	0
Power	1	1	0	0
Morality	0	0	0	0
Nothing	0	0	1	1

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses to each category. Up to two responses were coded for each participant.

*p = .04

TABLE 25

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISONS OF
FUTURE PROJECTIONS

Category	1972		1976	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
5 Year Future				
Marriage	0	0	0	0
Achievement	8	8	4	5
Creativity	0	1	0	0
Family	0	0	1	0
Social Life	1	0	0	0
Leisure	0	0	1	0
Situational	2	1	1	0
Psychological	0	1	1	0
Morality	0	0	0	1
Same As Now	0	0	2	5
25 Year Future				
Marriage	0	1	0	0
Achievement	6	3	2	3
Retire	1	3	2	1
Creativity	1	1	0	0
Leisure	1	0	4	2
Freedom	0	0	1	0
Adult Status	0	0	0	1
Impact on World	0	1	0	0
Morality	0	2	0	1
Situational	1	0	0	0
Other	1	0	0	0
Same As Now	0	0	0	3

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses to each category.

TABLE 26

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF DECISION MAKING

	1972		1976	
Decision	Women	Men	Women	Men
Food				
Husband	0	1	2	1
Wife	7	4	6	5
Both	4	6	2	5
Car				
Husband	7	8	5	4
Wife	0	0	0	0
Both	4	3	5	7
Where to Live				
Husband	4	2	3	2
Wife	0	0	1	0
Both	7	9	6	9
Vacation				
Husband	1	0	2	0
Wife	1	0	1	0
Both	8	11	8	11
Evening Out				
Husband	1	1	1	0
Wife	2	1	2	0
Both	8	9	7	11
Job Husband Takes				
Husband	11	6	7	7
Wife	0	1	0	0
Both	0	4	3	4
Job Wife Takes				
Husband			1	0
Wife			5	7
Both			4	4
Whether Wife Works				
Husband	0	0	3	0
Wife	9	8	4	8
Both	2	3	3	3

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses to each category and indicate perceptions of whether each decision is made by the husband, the wife, or both.

TABLE 27

LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS
OF DIVISION OF LABOR IN THE HOME

	1972		1976	
Task	Women	Men	Women	Men
Breakfast				
Husband	3	4	3	2
Wife	2	2	1	2
Both	5	2	5	5
Not Applicable	1	3	2	2
Dinner				
Husband	3	1	2	2
Wife	7	9	7	6
Both	1	1	2	3
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0
Dishes				
Husband	5	1	3	3
Wife	5	3	4	2
Both	1	7	4	6
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0
Laundry				
Husband	3	1	0	0
Wife	4	4	4	3
Both	4	6	7	8
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0
Ironing				
Husband	2	0	1	0
Wife	3	5	6	6
Both	1	1	0	1
Not Applicable	5	5	4	4
Daily Cleaning				
Husband	1	2	0	0
Wife	5	2	4	3
Both	4	5	5	5
Not Applicable	1	2	2	3

TABLE 27 (CONTINUED)

Task	1972		1976	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Heavy Cleaning				
Husband	0	2	1	0
Wife	3	2	1	0
Both	8	7	7	10
Not Applicable	0	0	2	1
Shopping				
Husband	2	1	1	2
Wife	4	4	4	4
Both	5	6	6	5
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0
Bills				
Husband	8	8	7	6
Wife	2	2	3	4
Both	1	1	1	1
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0

Note: Numbers refer to frequencies of responses to each category and indicate perceptions of whom does each task.

TABLE 28

FREQUENCY OF CATEGORIES MENTIONED IN SELF DESCRIPTIONS

	Nurturance		Work		Family		Recreation	
Couple	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
1	06	05	02	03	05	04	02	01
2	01	00	02	01	04	00	02	01
3	06	04	01	00	02	01	04	08
4	01	01	06	03	01	00	04	04
5	00	X	01	X	02	X	03	X
6	03	X	01	X	02	X	08	X
7	00	01	03	02	01	01	01	00
8	X	01	X	02	X	02	X	05
9	02	02	02	00	01	00	01	00
10	03	05	02	01	01	02	02	05
11	03	02	06	03	02	02	02	02

TABLE 29

SUMMARY PROFILE OF CASE STUDIES

Attitudes about Children

Person	Values		Costs		
	1972	1976	1972	1976	Other Comments
Ann	primary ties power	primary ties	psychological achievement	lifestyle interference with spouse	Husband would raise children if they had any. Related to sex roles for other people. Early Articulator.
Alan	primary ties creativity	expansion of self creativity	lifestyle psychological	psychological	Related to sex roles for his wife. Wanted children prior to marriage.
Betty	primary ties stimulation	stimulation creativity	achievement psychological	lifestyle relation with spouse	Childlessness functions to cope with role strain. Marital bond important. Experience of friends important.
Bill	creativity power	primary ties	structure interference with spouse	achievement interference with spouse	Wanted children prior to marriage. Family background important in ultimate decision. Marital bond important. Early retirement important.

TABLE 29 (continued)

Self Concept and Lifestyle

Person	Constructs	Couple	Important Events and Conflicts	Future
Ann	feminism competence openness nurturance	individuation but marriage is primary arena for interpersonal relationships	start law school frustrated feminism early in life dropping out of grad school	important work in field more comfortable better balance
Alan	nurturance joie de vivre openness creativity	see above	declines prestigious position marriage	material things open space creativity leisure pursuits
Betty	competence conventional and unusual	very companionate major social outlet	nursing school trauma, administrative responsibilities, friends' lives, mother's health	teach in small New England college early retirement
Bill	competence positive social relationships openminded unconventional	very companionate	leave of absence, tenure decision wife's career committments developing avocation	see above music, opening bookstore

TABLE 29 (continued)

Sex Roles

Person	Domains		Salience	Change	Other Comments
	Home	Work			
Ann	sex role reversal	"male" field	salient only in political activities and when confronted with sexism	increasing feminism	Strong feminist identity. Possibly transcendent. Being a woman is not tied to femininity. Innovation not tied to masculinity.
Alan	sex role reversal very nurturant	secondary to quality of life, outlet for creativity	masculinity and femininity not salient	more innovative via marriage, used to be "hung up" about masculinity	Wide variety of traditionally masculine and traditionally feminine pursuits.
Betty	traditional	"male" field androgynous	femininity salient in couple, masculinity in work	her work is eliciting consciousness raising	Combination of traditional and innovative background. Strong conflicts over role at home and with Women's Movement.
Bill	traditional	humanities dominant interest	aware of advantages as male	more conscious of sex role issues due to wife's profession	Conventional upbringing. Has both positive and negative feelings about his femininity.

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