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Career/home conflict, career indecision, and Holland type: An exploration

Peters, Sue Ellen, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1991

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CAREER/HOME CONFLICT, CAREER INDECISION, AND HOLLAND TYPE: AN EXPLORATION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Sue Ellen Peters, M.A.

* * * *

The Ohio State University

1991

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To Courtney, my most precious
Home/Career Conflict
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FIELD OF STUDY

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The field of vocational psychology is over 70 years old, but it is only in the last 20 years that we have seen a specific focus on the career development of women as opposed to "career development," which had been assumed to apply to both men and women equally (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1983). Many reasons have been given to justify a focus upon women's career development as a process different from that of men (Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980; Osipow, 1983), including the fact that women have been seen as having to make two separate choices--whether or not to work at all, and then what career field to choose.

However, most young women today express the intention to combine a career and a family (Bridges, 1987). As Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) note, the woman who is not planning to work outside of the home is fast becoming the exception to the rule. Yogev (1983) reports data indicating that attitudes about the psychological health of women wishing to combine careers and family have changed notably since the early sixties when the topic first began to be studied. A conflict has been assumed to
exist for women. One early study (Matthews & Tiedeman, 1964) found that women experiencing home/career conflict felt guilty and/or depressed. Wallston (1973) cited evidence that working women were by definition thought to be neglecting their children, especially if the children were young. Tittle and Denker (1977), after an extensive review of the literature, state that home/career conflict is indeed an important mediator of women's career choice, but that its exact effect is not clear. Farmer (1978) found lower career salience and home/career conflict to be related.

In contrast to earlier opinions about the abnormality or maladjustment of career-oriented women (Surette, 1967; Vetter & Lewis, 1964; White, 1969), contemporary views now hold them to be happier and more mature than women who function only in the role of housewife and/or mother (Yogev, 1983). Komarovsky (1982) cites evidence that traditional college-aged women intend to have both careers and families. Of the freshmen women interviewed concerning their future plans for careers, 48% were classified as "career" [oriented] and 52% were classified as "noncareer" [oriented]. Knaub, Eversoll, and Voss (1983) found that 95% of the young women in their study expected to become parents, but that they expect parenthood to be
delayed, allowing time for the development of a career. Parelius (1975) found that an increasing percentage of college women (when compared to a 1969 sample) intended to have an uninterrupted work pattern, meaning that they intended to work even during the time they had pre-school children. Of the women intending to combine both family and career, 62% intended to work all of their adult lives.

Knaub et al. (1982) state that a woman's crucial decision today is not whether to work, but whether to work while she has pre-school children. However, in their study, they found that only 10% of female respondents planned on having an "uninterrupted" career pattern. Greenglass and Devins (1982) found that while college women expressed a significant amount of career salience, their priority was the family. These findings, when considered with those like of Parelius' (1975), seem to indicate that while career salience is increasing in women, the desire to have a family and children also remains quite strong--and possibly stronger than the desire for a career.

Differing methodological procedures may account for some of the disparity seen in these studies. Another possible explanation is that women are making plans for
careers while formulating "contingency plans" that may allow for a family. Whatever the "true" percentage of women expecting to combine career and home, however, it may be seen that the nature of women's participation in the work force still differs in a meaningful way from that of men. The majority of women in the Greenglass and Devins (1982) study did not expect to devote more than one-half of their time to their career, regardless of the age of their children.

So, while the sheer number of women who work outside the home is climbing, and popular belief may state that it is now easy for women to "have it all," women still earn less money than do men, work at jobs that are lower in status, carry more of the responsibility for the ongoing needs of their families as compared to men, and plan to interrupt careers for childrearing more often than do men (Barret, 1987; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Eccles, 1987; Greenglass & Devins, 1982). Despite increasing intentions to have a career, women still appear to be considering issues that men usually do not face.

While research on family, background and personality variables has been conducted to formulate a picture of the working woman and her choices and plans, Perun and Bielby (1981) note that since most contemporary women in
all marital and parenthood categories intend to work outside the home, the former strength of family and environmental variables in predicting women's work involvement may be weakened. In another example, Beilby (1978) discusses results of a study attempting to establish a relationship between a woman's career salience and environmental variables such as the presence of a working mother. She states that other factors, more contemporary in a woman's life (such as childbearing, per se, or the presence of a husband) bear more directly upon career salience than do past determinants. Parsons, Frieze and Ruble (1978) also found attitudinal factors to be superior to socialization variables as predictors of women's career aspirations. With changing role models, family and economic structures, and seeming different expectations for personal and economic fulfillment, today's women may be making choices from a different set of values and expectations about their professional lives than did women twenty years ago. The question is, do values keep pace with changing behaviors?

Other writers have addressed the question of whether research done in the 60's and 70's, in the field of women's career development, is still relevant to the young women of today. White, Kruczek, Brown and White
(1989) noted the seeming unevenness of the progress of women as a class of workers and professionals. Their research sought to determine whether the occupational stereotypes found by Shinar (1975) are still operational in contemporary populations. It was found that the stereotypes do continue to exist, although some have declined in strength.

Fitzpatrick and Silverman (1989) also state the need to "update our notions of women's career development frequently in these times of major changes in societal attitudes and women's behavior in regard to 'women's work'" (p. 276). In their own study, they found that background differences between women choosing "traditional" careers and those choosing "nontraditional" careers may not be as great in the 1980's as past research has suggested.

Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) state that the major assumption underlying their book, The Career Psychology of Women, is "That the perceived philosophical incompatibility of the biological role of wife/mother with the social role of worker is the most salient factor in women's career development..." (p. 203). Certainly the assumption that women have difficulty choosing between home and career has been widely accepted in the
literature on women's career development and choice (Farmer & Bohn, 1970; Farmer, 1978; Tittle & Denker, 1977).

One example may be seen in the work of Farmer (1984) who describes an attempt to develop a measure of home/career conflict in women. She understands this conflict to be experienced by women when both the homemaking and career roles are viewed as salient—and incompatible with each other.

O'Leary (1977) gave the name of interrole conflict to the experience of women who attempt to both work and to have a family, and explained that the conflict arises when two roles present conflicting demands. O'Leary further states that the conflict is primarily psychological in nature. Further support is given to this idea of psychological conflict by Coser and Rokoff (1971) who show that conflict occurs in women trying to balance demands of both the mother/wife role and the worker role because the values underlying both roles are seen as being contradictory. Professional women are "expected" to be committed to their work, and wives and mothers are "expected" to give priority to the needs and wants of their families, even at the expense of their own needs and desires.
Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) accent the importance of the above described philosophical conflict and then state: "Although it is certainly plausible to argue that interrole conflict most likely exerts a deleterious effect on women's career development, the focus here [in their book] is on the data documenting the more practical aspects of this incompatibility--what O'Leary referred to as *role overload*" (p. 204). They then go on to mention Parkinson's Law, which says that work will expand to encompass the time available, and state that women suffer more from this "law" than do men, since data still show that the majority of work in the home/family arena is still done by women--working outside the home or not.

In her interviews with traditionally-aged college women, Komarovsky (1982) found "a certain lack of realism about problems likely to be encountered in combining a demanding career with family life" (p. 303). Thus, while women who are actually in the work force may experience both philosophical and physical strain resulting from balancing demands of competing roles, it is not certain that all traditionally-aged college women of today experience this philosophical incompatibility and base their career decisions upon it as is indicated by Betz and Fitzgerald (1987), or whether this "perceived
philosophical incompatibility" has disappeared as other research seems to indicate (Bridges, 1987; Fitzpatrick & Silverman, 1989). Further, it would seem relevant to know whether the young women who do experience a philosophical incompatibility between home and career roles are basing career decisions and plans upon their perception.

While it may readily be observed that more and more women are involved in the workforce, and are searching for various ways to cope with multiple roles demands, the present research was conceived to explore the more psychological (as opposed to pragmatic) aspects of the incompatibility of home/career roles. Yogev (1983) states: "The reader should not conclude that professional women no longer have problems and that the situation is all rosy. This would be too simplistic a conclusion. The problems women now face are still subtle and complex, as current research shows us" (229). The term "philosophical incompatibility" of roles, taken from Betz and Fitzgerald (1987), implies an inner conflict--one of roles, of "shoulds" or of "oughts."

Based upon the preceding discussion, it seems that the question of home/career conflict, and its effect upon women's career development, is still very timely. Some of the initial research about career/home conflict is
over 20 years old. In order to deal most effectively with the needs of contemporary women, it would be helpful for counselors and educators to know if, and how, the career/home conflict affects career plans.

Therefore, the proposed research will begin by operationalizing the career/home conflict, which may be thought of as a psychological, or internal conflict, through use of the Salience Inventory (Nevill & Super, 1985) and then will seek to determine whether relationships exist between an exhibited conflict (or lack thereof) and variables such as career decidedness, Holland type, level and type of aspiration, congruence of Holland type and aspiration, and certain specific items on the Career Decision Scale.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Career Salience.

Career salience has been defined in numerous ways (Almquist & Angrist, 1970; Greenhaus, 1971, 1973; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969; Masih, 1970). The concept has been summarized as "reflecting a good occupational choice, a personality-career fit, and the perception of career as an integral and satisfying part of one's life" (Sekaran, 1982, p. 112). Sekaran opens her comments on the career salience of women by citing a 1971 study by Poloma and Garland which reported that even highly trained and professionally employed married women had little interest in their careers. According to Sekaran, the topic of women's career salience (or lack of it) is vitally important to both individual women and present-day corporations. If women do not feel that their careers are of prime importance to them, organizations may hesitate to expend resources in hiring women or in training them for positions of upward mobility.

Douce and Hansen (1990) also emphasize the importance of career salience in the study of the career development of women, and Watson and Stead (1990) write that an
individual's culture may define work role salience for its members. Since the career development of women and men has been determined to differ in important ways (Osipow, 1983), it is important to determine how the experience of being a woman may interact with the importance of career salience in the career process.

Attention to the career interest and salience of women, and the differences between women and men, is not new however. The earliest study to look at differences between career and home oriented women was done by Hoyt and Kennedy in 1958. Women were separated into two groups, based upon their responses to a questionnaire dealing with the relative importance of career and family roles. Responses of the two groups on the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (Women) were compared, and differences between the career and home oriented groups were observed. Career-oriented women scored higher on such scales as artist, lawyer, physical education teacher, psychologist, and physician, while home-oriented women scored higher on the housewife and traditionally female occupational scales such as secretary, nurse, dietician, and home economics teacher. Other studies later replicated and extended these findings (Hoyt and Kennedy, 1965; Munley, 1974; Rand, 1968; Vetter & Lewis,
As a more contemporary follow-up to the above type of research, Tinsley and Faunce (1978) contacted women who had completed the SVIB-W 13-21 years previously and classified them as "career" or "homemaker" oriented, based upon the actual life experiences of the women. Interests, as had been expressed earlier, were expected to predict actual subsequent behavior, and this was found to be the case. Career-oriented women scored significantly higher than did the homemaker group on Holland's investigative and artistic occupations; homemaking women scored significantly higher on the enterprising and conventional scales. There were no significant differences on the realistic and social occupations.

Other relevant findings from the above study are that, overall, the mean scores of the career and homemaker women differed significantly on about half of the 44 SVIB scales that were available for comparison. Interests of the homemaking women showed more similarity to women in business, nonprofessional, and home economics fields. Interests of career women were more similar to women in the fields of verbal-linguistic, verbal-scientific, and scientific occupations (Tinsley and
Tinsley and Faunce summarize by saying that career oriented women tend to have interests in fields requiring higher levels of education. They scored significantly higher on the academic achievement scale, earned a significantly higher GPA, and graduated from college in significantly greater numbers than did the homemaking women. Using Holland's theory, career oriented women might be expected to be "thinking and understanding" rather than "dominating or persuading" (1978, p. 335).

Komarovsky (1982) designed a study to try to determine what distinguished career-salient students from those students not committed to an occupation. The study explored factors such as gender orientation, perceptions of psychological sex differences, attitudes towards sex roles, ideals of femininity and masculinity, and views about the women's movement. The measure of salience used was based upon Angrist and Almquist (1975). Based upon the findings yielded by this instrument, students were placed into dichotomous groups of "career" or "noncareer" students. Forty-eight percent of the freshmen were classified as "career" and 52 were classified as "noncareer." Of the career-salient women, 98% hoped to be married and 86% planned on having children.
Thus virtually all of them seemed to be planning to combine home and career roles in some manner in their future.

As compared to the noncareer-oriented women, career-oriented women endorsed more egalitarian sex roles, did not hold as negative stereotypes concerning the feminine psyche, and viewed the women's movement more favorably. Komarovsky comments that this latter difference was not as large as might be expected, however, and she offers the speculation that the young women of today do not see the need for major social reforms in order to accomplish their goals. She calls this a "manifest lack of realism" (1982, p. 311).

In an attempt to get a more realistic picture of the working woman's experience, Sekaran (1982) studied the career salience of women and men already in the workforce, using dual-career families recruited from business organizations, hospitals, and universities in the St. Louis area. Mean ages of the men and women in the sample were 38 and 36, respectively.

Multiple regression analyses were performed for both men and women, regressing independent variables (self-esteem, job involvement, sense of competence, self-esteem from work, and whether or not the participants planned
for a dual-career family) against career salience. No significant differences between women and men on four of six correlates were found. (The fifth, general self-esteem, was not significant for either men or women). The most significant finding of the study appears to be, according to the author, that planning for a dual-career family before the marriage, and discussing this with the prospective spouse, is an important factor in the career salience of women but not of men. She suggests factors not tapped by her study which also may affect the career salience of women, including the legitimization of the career role and approval of significant others besides the spouse for being a career person. She ends by saying that, while the working women in her study appear to be equal in career salience to the men in the study, "career women have perhaps not yet completely transcended their own traditional attitudes toward their careers" (p. 119).

Farmer (1984) attempted to develop a measure of home/career conflict. Her methodology was similar to that used by Horner (1978) in her study of fear of success in that Farmer developed story cues about working women with children and asked subjects to write responses. Of these college women's responses, 42% had negative emotional consequences, 19% had denial themes,
and 34% had neutral themes. Only 5% had positive emotional consequences for the working mother. Some predictive validity was found for the measure for its effect on career motivation. In the first of her studies, Farmer found high negative affect scores, indicating negative feelings about working mothers, related to low career motivation. It was also found that women in traditional and non-traditional majors combined home and career roles differently. Farmer says that additional research, in which women who experience difficulty as a result of the conflict are separated from those who do not, is needed.

In closing this discussion of career salience and women's career development, methodological issues may be considered. Greenglass and Devins (1982) offer the observation that most studies of women's career salience have dichotomized the participants into "career oriented" or "homemaker oriented" classifications and then examined the personalities and interests of the two groups. They cite a common problem of eliminating from studies the women who express a strong interest in both career and family, pointing out that a combination of the two roles appears most likely for college-educated women. The present study attempts to correct this lack in the
literature by examining the career plans of women high in both career and home salience to see whether differences exist when these women are compared to women high in only one area--career or home salience.

Research on Undecidedness

Numerous efforts have been made to empirically identify antecedents of vocational indecision and to describe characteristics of vocationally decided and undecided students. Crites (1969) traces the earliest research on undecided college students back to 1927. Slaney (1988) organizes the early research by classifying it into two broad areas: questions dealing with what percentage of college students were actually undecided and questions dealing with how decided and undecided college students differed on a myriad of personal and demographic traits.

Reviewers of research in this area have concluded that the data are conflicting and confusing, and that an empirical basis has not been provided for the reliable differentiation of decided and undecided students based on personal, social, or academic characteristics (Harman, 1973; Gordon, 1984; Lunneborg, 1975, Holland & Holland, 1977; Slaney, 1988). While undecided students may not be subject to easy description, there is broad agreement that they exist in large numbers on the campuses of today
(Astin, 1977; Lunneborg, 1975; Grites, 1981). Perhaps the only point of agreement is that both decided and undecided students are heterogeneous populations and thus cannot be described. While some differences in the two groups have been found, they have not usually been deemed significant enough to be predictive of future indecision.

Despite the widely endorsed statement of heterogeneity of both decided and undecided students, a substantial body of literature exists which does attempt to clarify ways in which vocationally/educationally decided and undecided students may differ. This section of the review first provides an overview of literature in the general area of career indecision. Then, the approaches used to measure vocational indecision will be reviewed. An overview of issues specifically affecting the career decision-making process of women will conclude the review.

The undecided student has been viewed from a developmental perspective (Gordon, 1981). This approach views undecided students as normal, growing, predictable individuals moving through various stages of cognitive and vocational development, and not necessarily as having personality or ability differences as compared to decided
students. Using the models of Super, Perry, and Tiedeman, Gordon outlines stages of development and shows how they may be helpful in counseling and teaching the undecided student. Grites (1981), citing the complexity of the college and vocational environment, and danger of identity foreclosure as a result of making a premature vocational decision, goes so far as to say that being undecided may be the best decision that a college student could make.

Other researchers say that a large percentage of all entering college students are undecided, even the ones who declare a major (Foote, 1980; Titley & Titley, 1980). A study by Foote (1980) compared populations of Arts and Sciences students who had chosen majors and those who had not yet chosen. In his study, a "determined" group was comprised of students who had entered the university in the fall of 1975 and who had not changed their majors as of the fall of 1977. The undetermined students were those who did not have a stated major.

Findings indicated no differences on the variables of age, state residency, ethnic group, marital status, or veteran status. However, significantly more students from the determined group remained in school. A sex difference was also found between the two groups, with
women being more likely to be in the determined group than men; 70% of the women, as compared to 54% of the men, had specified majors. Determined persisters were more successful in coursework, achieving higher grades and completing more courses. This leads Foote to suggest that motivational factors, as they are related to undecidedness, might be interesting to explore.

To support the assertion that a majority of new students could be viewed as being undecided, Foote shows that less than 13% of all students who entered the university in 1975 with a stated Arts and Sciences major persisted in that major for more than two years. The "determined persisters" comprised less than 8% of the total freshman class, so it is possible, according to Foote, that over 90% of entering freshmen were unsure of their major. He proposes that differences may be difficult to see in freshmen, but that they may show up more clearly as the student progresses in school.

Titley and Titley (1980) studied college-bound students attending an orientation program and later at a two-year follow-up stage. The students attending the orientation were classified into one of three categories, based upon their initial declaration of major: General Studies (a temporary declaration used by those unsure),
College Undecided, (where students choose one of four university colleges, but who are undecided as to particular major) or Specific Major. Students in the GS and CU groups were assumed to be experiencing some degree of undecidedness about selecting a major.

Degree of certainty was measured by a questionnaire assessing subjective judgments about the person's status concerning major choice. A two-year follow-up found that about 17% of the supposedly "decided" group had changed majors, and that another 11% of this group had withdrawn from the university. Since this group of students had comprised less than 20% of the incoming freshman orientation class initially, Titley and Titley suggest that only a very small proportion of incoming college students are both subjectively certain of their initial major choice and continue in that major through a two-year period. This is said to hold true even for those students who choose a specific major and who claim a high degree of certainty about that choice.

While the developmental perspective attempts to identify and use differences between decided and undecided students in advising and counseling, the main emphasis is not so much upon how differences distinguish decided and undecided students, but upon how expected differences
fall into a developmental pattern. Other investigators have sought to delineate characteristics which would set undecided students apart from those who are decided, and it is this literature which will now be reviewed.

Ashby, Wall and Osipow (1966) compared three groups of entering college freshmen, those who were Decided, Undecided, and Tentative. Data collected from these groups sought to establish differences on a variety of personality, background, and college performance characteristics. Significant differences were found on only two variables: high school grades and dependence scores on the Bernreuter Personality Inventory. The authors conclude that undecided students are capable enough, but that they may need extra support and encouragement.

Evidence was also gathered in support of the academic superiority of both the Decided and Undecided groups over the Tentative group. The Tentative group had been comprised of students who had some educational/vocational goal in mind when they entered the university, but who did not pursue that goal immediately because of some reservation about it. Their fears that they would do poorly seem to be borne out by the findings cited by Ashby et al.

Commenting upon the results of this study, Slaney
(1988) observes that the above finding, that undecided students have higher scores in the dependency scale of the Bernreuter Personality Inventory, is often quoted out of context in order to imply that it is a significant finding about undecided vs. decided students. His point is that while statistically significant findings may emerge in some of these studies, they are often misused in the attempt to lend credence to a particular point. Rather than attributing this state of affairs to "careless, capricious, or cavalier" researchers (p. 36), he merely uses this one example to show the unwieldy and confusing state of the indecision literature.

An element of motivation has been hypothesized to enter into relationship with decidedness. Chase and Keene (1981) conducted research with the hypothesis that students who have declared a definite major are more highly motivated than students who have not declared a major. To assess the relationship between declaration of major and motivation, this study followed an entering freshman class through five semesters by assessing differences between declared and undeclared students each semester. Possible differences in talent factors between the two groups were controlled for by statistical means. Motivational indicators were operationally defined as GPA
and number of accumulated credit hours. Academic talent indicators were SAT scores and rank in high school graduating class. Data were collected for 2,425 students who completed five semesters.

Results suggested that the earlier that students selected a major, the more likely they were to assume a full course of study and do well in it. Students in the nondeclared group seem to have a history of low levels of involvement, suggested by high school rankings which were lower than those of the declared group. The authors conclude that lack of clear academic goals is associated with reduced levels of academic pursuit. It is hypothesized that a general academic motivation factor is involved in the superior performance of the decided students, but Chase and Keene say that more work would be required for validation of this hypothesis.

The findings cited above, showing some differences between decided and undecided students, lend some support to the statement by Foote (1980) that there may be a subgroup of undecided students that differs from the general population of students. Some findings have suggested that when compared with college students as a whole, the members of this subgroup of the undecided population seems to enter college with lower pre-college
achievement scores, to accumulate fewer hours while in college, and to earn a lower GPA. This group of students seems more likely to leave college before graduation, often as a result of low academic achievement (Elton & Rose, 1970; Lunneborg, 1975; Rose & Elton, 1971). However, in compiling and interpreting these results, it is necessary to be mindful of Slaney's (1988) caution, above, against interpreting significant statistical pieces of research and making assumptions about the larger whole.

In a longitudinal study, Rose and Elton (1971) compared the undecided freshman who stayed in college to graduate to his (subjects were all males) classmates, also undecided, who had left college by the end of the fourth semester. Mean Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI) scores and American College Test (ACT) Composite Scores were compared for two groups--85 undecided students who had persisted to graduation (Group I) and 88 randomly selected students, chosen from the group that had left college (Group II).

Undecided students from the second group--the dropouts--were found to be significantly more masculine in their roles, more conforming, and less academically able than undecided students who persisted in college.
Similarities between the two groups included levels of academic aspiration, family income, and non-academic achievement.

A study which failed to find personality or ability differences was conducted by the same researchers (Elton & Rose, 1971) evaluating college seniors at graduation to see if there were personality or ability differences between students who had been classified as being undecided as freshmen and those who had declared a major. All men graduating from the University of Kentucky in the classes of 1969 and 1970 comprised the sample population.

Subjects were divided into three groups: those who had said they were undecided as freshmen and who remained undecided as seniors, those who had been undecided as freshmen but who had made a decision before graduation, and those who had maintained their original decided status throughout college. Again, factor scores from the OPI and the ACT were independent variables. Analysis of the data led to no statistically significant differences in personality or ability between the two groups.

Rose and Elton concluded from the above results that undecided students are a diverse group: that "undecided" constitutes too much of a "mixed bag" for a general description to be possible or useful. They do propose,
however, that perhaps all entering freshmen experience some identity confusion, and that those who make a vocational choice may be presumed to have a fairly firm personal identity. Those who are initially undecided, but able to persist in college to make a choice, are on their way to establishing personal identity, while those who drop out may be experiencing what Erickson has termed acute identity confusion.

Baird (1969) completed two extensive studies attempting to find characteristics distinguishing decided and undecided students, and was unable to find significant differences between the two groups. In the first study, 6,289 male and 6,143 female college freshmen were administered the American College Survey (ACS), an assessment device which consists of 118 scales and ratings which yield data about student interests, achievements, competencies, backgrounds, personalities, attitudes, self-descriptions, goals and aspirations. Baird failed to find significant correlations between these factors and undecidedness and concluded that there is no reliable difference between the decided and the undecided student.

In a second study, (Baird, 1969) the sample considered was made up of 59,618 college-bound students
who took the American College Test (ACT) while still in high school. Of this total, 13,695 students reported vocational indecision. Independent variables in the study included the ACT composite score, high school GPA, and expressed goals for college achievement. Results showed that no difference in ACT scores or high school GPA's existed between decided and undecided students. The only difference of possible significance was that undecided students tended to emphasize developing their minds and intellectual abilities in college more than did decided students.

In another study, Harman (1973) took as a sample students who had requested and received vocational counseling for career indecision. All subjects (33 females, 30 males) completed the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB). Scores on the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI) and the American College Test (ACT) were also available for each subject. A follow-up was conducted within a year of the counseling received; at this time, Harman found 13 of the males and 18 of the females were still undecided.

No significant statistical differences were found on the SVIB, OPI, and ACT measures between females who were either decided or undecided at the time of the follow-up.
For males, there was no significant difference between ACT scores and SVIB scores in decided and undecided groups, but there was a significant difference on the Response Bias Scale of the OPI, with decided males scoring higher. Low scores have been interpreted as indicating subjects who have more difficulty in concentrating on a problem for an extended period of time. Harman suggests that undecided males may have problems concentrating for a long enough period of time to solve their problems with vocational indecision.

Lunneborg (1975) sought to find predictors and correlates of vocational indecision in a longitudinal study using 1622 college juniors. Differences were assessed in pre-college and college measures of personality, interests, and achievement between students who had declared a major by their Junior year and those who had not. Fifty-three variables, including high school GPA in various subjects, College GPA, college credits earned, planned college major—if declared, and standardized test scores were known for each subject.

A correlational analysis indicated that undecidedness was most positively correlated with college GPA, college credits earned, a planned major in engineering, outdoor interests; and business interests. The best predictor of
vocational indecision proved to be low academic achievement. Based upon these results, Lunneborg delineated the undecided student as being less achieving in academics, less interested in outdoor activities, possessing poorer English skills, and less interested in business than the more decided students. However, Lunneborg concluded that these differences were not a strong enough basis for predicting future indecision in individuals.

A major review of the vocational decision/indecision literature was undertaken by Holland and Holland (1977). Along with this review, a study was executed to clarify the controversy about characteristics attributed to decided and undecided students. Like other researchers, Holland and Holland ended up reporting equivocal results.

The sample consisted of 1,005 high school juniors and 692 college juniors given a battery of tests and inventories of personality, decision-making ability, interests and vocational aptitudes. In all, a total of 24 independent variables was measured for each subject.

Results indicated that decided and undecided students were alike on most of the measured variables. However, the measures of identity, vocational attitude, and artistic orientation produced statistically significant differences for males and females at the high school
level. At the college level, measures of interpersonal competency and identity showed differences. The identity scale was the only measure to replicate across all four groups, leading Holland and Holland to conclude that undecided students lack a clear sense of identity.

Holland and Holland suggest that discarding the notion of an "undecided type" of student is in order. Instead, they propose that undecided students may be comprised of at least three subtypes: those for whom there is no sense of urgency about the decision (50% of their sample); those who are slightly to moderately deficient in levels of maturity, interpersonal competency, and who possess anxiety and alienation (25% of their sample); and those who possess the above traits to a moderate to severe level (25% of their sample).

These traits—lack of maturity, lack of interpersonal competency, anxiety, and alienation—create what the authors call an "indecisive disposition," the probable result of a life history of failing to acquire the necessary cultural involvement, self-confidence, tolerance for ambiguity, sense of identity, and self-and-environmental knowledge to cope with vocational decision making as well as with other common problems.

This second problem, indecisiveness, has been
considered longer lasting and more difficult to treat (when compared with simple indecision) (Slaney, 1988). Holland and Holland (1977) suggested that only a small percentage of career undecided students were actually indecisive, and suggested that the personal histories of these indecisive students would suggest a problem with making decisions at "culturally-approved times." Slaney (1988) states that it is important to use caution in suggesting that "indecisive" students have personal problems. He calls for a clearly operationalized definition of indecisiveness and research to indicate whether or not the construct actually contributes some unique variance.

Like Holland and Holland (1977), Jones and Chenery (1980) also attempted to delineate subtypes of vocational indecision. They suggest that the slow progress to date in understanding and treating vocational indecision is due to a rather simple conceptual model which dichotomously views a person as either decided or undecided. Citing the work of Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, and Koschier (1976) and Holland and Holland (1977), Jones and Cherney agree that it might be more useful to view vocational indecision as comprising multiple subtypes rather than a single type.
They developed a model of vocational decision status, based upon three questions: "How decided is the person about choice of occupation or career?" "How comfortable are they with where they are in making this choice?" and "For what reasons is the person decided or undecided?"

Then, the Vocational Decision Scale (VDS) was developed, consisting of 38 items which assessed the dimensions of decidedness, comfort with level of decidedness, and reasons for being either decided or undecided. Along with the VDS, measures of career salience, anomy, identity, and choice stage were administered to 224 students in an introductory psychology course.

The results supported the reliability and construct validity of the decidedness and comfort scales. A factor analysis of the reasons dimension yielded three factors: self-uncertainty, choice/work salience, and transitional self. Decidedness was found to be associated with choice stage, identity, and career salience. Thus, Jones and Chenery reiterate that viewing vocational indecision as consisting of multiple subtypes may result in a clearer picture of the true situation.

More recently, a slightly different approach has been taken by Taylor and Betz (1983) who have applied Bandura's self-efficacy theory to the analysis and
possible treatment of career indecision. Their study involved the development of a measure of career self-efficacy expectations in regard to 50 tasks or behaviors relevant to career decision-making. The relationship of career decision-making self-efficacy to several components of vocational indecision was explored. The Career Decision Scale (Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, & Koschier, 1980) was administered, and Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Test scores were available for subjects.

Results indicated that college students on the whole expressed confidence in their ability to complete the tasks necessary for a career decision to be made. However, the strength of students' career decision-making self-efficacy expectations was strongly and negatively related to overall levels of career indecision. In particular, career decision-making self-efficacy was related to the component of indecision described as a lack of structure and confidence with respect to career decisions. There was a negligible relationship between academic ability and career decision-making self-efficacy. Based upon these findings, Taylor and Betz suggest that the concept of career decision-making self-efficacy provides a useful framework for further under-
standing of vocational indecision.

A more drastic statement, implying difference and pathology, is made by Fuqua and Hartman (1983). They say that the developmental model is not adequate to explain the situation of all undecided students, adding that they have "consistently confirmed that career indecision [in some students] is related to serious psychological problems, including situational and characteristic anxiety, self-perceptual problems, and externalized attribution" (p. 28). They state that the chronically undecided student seems to suffer from serious identity problems, as measured by Holland's Identity Scale, and disagree with Salomone (1982), for example, who says that the category of "indecisive" should be reserved for adults 25 years or older.

A longitudinal factor analytic study of career indecision executed by Hartman, Fuqua, & Hartman (1983) distinguished between developmental and situational indecision, as opposed to the more chronically indecisive types of factors on the Career Decision Scale (Osipow, et al., 1976), in high school and graduate students. Based upon these findings, Fuqua and Hartman advocate mobilizing efforts focused on identifying chronically undecided students as soon as possible and instigating appropriate
treatment for underlying psychological problems.

Like others, they maintain that the distinction between "decided" and "undecided" is a rather simplistic one when it comes to remediation. They cite the need of a comprehensive, expanded diagnostic system for the problem of career indecision which would be both reliable and valid in indicating treatment approaches to be used with individual clients.

In summary, the literature on career indecision is a "mixed bag," to borrow a phrase from Rose and Elton. Some writers have portrayed undecided students as merely expressing different levels in a normal developmental process, while others have labeled them in need of psychological help. A larger majority of theorists seem less sure of the actual differences—or whether these differences (if they do exist) actually matter. Many studies have found some differences in personality or ability, but the conclusion has usually been that the differences are not significant enough to warrant classifying the decided or undecided students into groups of differing background, ability, or personality factors. None of the differences seem to support predictions of indecision.
Women and Vocational Indecision

The literature on women's vocational choice is vast, and is perhaps most effectively reviewed and organized by Fitzgerald and Betz (1983). They begin by examining variables which have been used differentially to describe women's vocational decision-making behavior, stating that because of the implicit assumption that a woman's life would revolve around homemaking and childrearing, the question of whether she intended to work at all, and, if so, determining the strength of her commitment, necessitated the consideration of variables not pertinent to the career development of males.

They summarize this aspect of the literature by defining major dependent and independent variables. The dependent variables identified are "Homemaking versus career orientation," "Variables describing career orientation" (i.e., classifying them according to the extent to which they were traditional or non-traditional for women--pioneer, innovator, and nontraditional), and "Career patterns" (i.e., whether a woman pursues her career without interruption through marriage and childbearing or takes "time off").

Summarizing independent variables used, Fitzgerald and Betz (1983) state that while many of the variables
studied are the same as those used in the study of male career development (i.e., family background, abilities, interests), again the unique situation of women has made it necessary to consider several additional variables. These are marital/family status, sex-role attitudes, and role conflict.

While the factors summarized above all affect women's career choice, and thus affect decision and indecision, the specific question of career indecision in women is not addressed. A search of the literature revealed very little research dealing with this area specifically, and findings were inconclusive. Some findings indicate that males are significantly less undecided (Gordon & Osipow, 1976; Westbrook, Cutts, Madison, & Arcia, 1980), while other findings indicate that females are less undecided (Taylor, 1979). Other research suggests that there is no difference in level of decidedness between males and females (Cellini, 1978; Limburg, 1980; Niece & Bradley, 1979; Osipow, Carney, and Barak, 1976; Sutera, 1977).

Strange and Rea (1983) sought to discover whether a relationship existed between choosing a nontraditional major (i.e., one dominated by the opposite sex) and sex role self-concept. Additional exploration focused on questions of the importance of sex-role considerations in
major choice and upon whether males and females chose nontraditional majors for different reasons.

Findings indicated that for males, the relationship between sex role self-concept and major was not significant; however the relationship was found to be highly significant for females. That is, for females in the sample, those enrolled in female-dominated majors were primarily feminine, and those in male-dominated majors were masculine.

One finding of this study was that both males and females chose their major—whether it was masculine-typed or feminine-typed for very traditional reasons. Male-dominated fields were chosen for status and potential material gain, while female-dominated fields were chosen for their focus on service and interpersonal skills.

Stockton, Berry, Shepson, and Utz (1980) also addressed the question of whether males and females enter traditional and non-traditional majors differently in terms of their self-assessed gender-roles. They hypothesized a relationship among sex, gender-role, and choice of major. Findings indicated that college students with androgynous gender-roles do not disproportionately select nontraditional majors. Fifty-seven percent of the females with an androgynous gender-role were found to be
in female-dominated majors, with the remainder in male-dominated fields. Androgynous males tended to choose male-dominated majors. Stockton et al. (1980) comment that this finding appears to replicate the finding of Yanico, Hardin, and McLaughlin (1978) which found that women with an androgynous self-concept were as likely to choose a traditional field as a nontraditional one. This supports Bem's notion that androgynous individuals can engage in behaviors which have been culturally defined as "masculine" or "feminine" with equal ease.

More broadly, Stockton et al. (1980) conclude that there is a complex relationship between gender-role and choice of major, but that this relationship seems to function differently for college males and females as they are distributed in male- and female-dominated majors. Having a masculine or feminine gender-role does little to affect the proportion of males in male- or female-dominated majors, while at the same time having a masculine gender-role does significantly increase the proportion of females in male-dominated majors.

When the distributional patterns of persons with androgynous or undifferentiated gender-roles are compared with the sex-typed ones, again significance is found for females and not males. The differences in proportions of
men with sex-typed and non-sex-typed roles is small. It is large for women. Stockton et al. (1980) conclude that some support is offered for the ability of the Bem Sex Role Inventory to predict major type by sex role, when mediated by considerations of gender. The predictive power of the masculine gender role is particularly strong for both sexes; possession of a masculine gender role points to the choice of a male-dominated field for both men and women. However, males with feminine sex roles do not seem to choose nontraditional majors. Stockton et al. (1980) comment that a reason for this may be the low status and financial reward accorded to occupations traditionally defined as female.

Marshall and Wijting (1980) investigated two career orientation factors, Career Centeredness and Career Commitment in women. Both were predicted to relate differentially to gender-role identity and achievement motivation, with Career Centeredness expected to be more characteristic of masculine women and to correlate more highly with achievement motivation.

Results did support the expectation that Career Centeredness and Career Commitment varied with gender-role identity and achievement motivation (Marshall & Wijting, 1980). Career Centeredness was defined as an
orientation which places career ahead of other life activities, such as recreation or family, as a source of satisfaction. Career Commitment concerns the intention to steadily pursue a career throughout all of life.

Support for the prediction that Career Centeredness, being less consistent with the socially defined roles for women, would be more related to sex role identity, was obtained. Women with masculine gender roles were found to be higher in achievement motivation and were more likely to direct this motivation into careers rather than into more socially stereotypic areas. Women with mixed gender-role identities (androgynous and undifferentiated) were not found to be necessarily highly career oriented, suggesting to the authors that strong career orientation is more characteristic of women with predominantly masculine self-concepts (Marshall & Wijting, 1980).

In a longitudinal study of the occupational decision-making process of women college students, Tinsley, Kass, Moreland, and Harren (1983) sought to investigate causal relationships which may exist among gender-role attitudes, cognitive complexity, progress in vocational decision making, and actual occupational decisional status. In their study, they focused on specific year in college as a relevant variable. Findings suggested that
the causal relationships among factors under study changed as a function of age and one's year in college. A different causal model was developed for each class level.

For freshman women, important issues included gender-role self concept, how subjects thought about men, women, and work, questions of gender-role appropriate behaviors for both sexes, and facing the question of choosing an appropriate occupation. Sophomore women, while increasing the range of behaviors considered appropriate for women and men, struggled more with occupational decision-making. Tinsley et al. (1983) suggest that as these women become more liberal in their gender-role attitudes as linked to vocations that the choice of major or vocation actually becomes more difficult—or at least more time-consuming—as more and more options are considered. Additionally, an increase in androgyny was found to cause an increase in cognitive complexity in these sophomore women.

Reciprocal causal relationships were seen between the cognitive complexity and decision-making status of junior women, suggesting to the authors (Tinsley et al., 1983) that as a woman increases the number and complexity of constructs used to evaluate occupations, she moves closer
to making an occupational decision which satisfies her. Since the causal impact of the woman's attitudes toward gender-role appropriate behavior for women on her attitudes regarding the gender-role appropriate behaviors for men was observed (as was seen with freshman and sophomore women), Tinsley et al. (1983) suggest that the developmental issue of greatest importance for junior women may be the relationship between the sexes concerning gender-role appropriate behaviors and the resolution of the occupational decision-making process.

Patterns of relationships observed for senior women indicate that the occupational decision-making process may be largely completed during the junior year. Interestingly, deciding upon an occupation seems to cause a decrease in androgyny in these women. The authors comment that this finding is consistent with the fact that most women at this time were choosing to enter female-dominated occupations. Results suggested that as the senior women used a greater number of constructs, along with constructs of increasing complexity, to think about occupations, they began to regard a narrower range of appropriate behaviors for women while increasing the range of behaviors considered appropriate for men (Tinsley et al., 1983). The authors comment that this is
consistent with theoretical notions of Dawis and Lofquist (1976, 1978), Harren (1979), and Tiedeman and O'Hara (1963) who have all posited a postdecisional stage during which people attempt to accommodate themselves to their occupational choice by changing their attitudes and behaviors.

To summarize their research, Tinsley et al. (1983) state that the only group for whom a causal relationship between gender-role attitudes and career choice was observed was sophomore women. They suggest that liberal gender-role attitudes and an androgynous self-concept may slow down the decision-making process, stating that persons holding stereotyped views may experience less doubt and confusion in making an occupational decision. Perhaps they are able to select an occupation that is consistent with their gender role and their self-concept, one that is dominated by their own sex, and thus experience greater cognitive consistency. They state a need for more research in this area.

A search of the literature revealed virtually no research addressing the relationship between home/career conflict and career indecision. This question is addressed in the present study as Positive Conflicted women are compared with Home Salient and Work Salient on
career indecision.

Research on Holland Types

Holland, (1973, 1985) has developed a multidimensional view of personality, and the fit between personality type and occupational type. His theory says that most people can be categorized into one of six personality types: Realistic (R), Investigative (I), Artistic (A), Social (S), Enterprising (E), or Conventional (C). Holland has developed the Self-Directed Search (1977, 1985) and the Vocational Preference Inventory (1985) to classify individuals into "types" by assigning each individual a three-letter summary code based upon his or her stated interests. The three letters are determined by taking the top three of the six scales (R, I, A, S, E, or C) in ascending numerical order.

In a similar manner, Holland has measured occupational environments, assigning them a three-letter code, using the Environmental Assessment Technique. The EAT first takes a census of the occupations, training preferences, or vocational preferences of a population, and then categorizes those preferences or occupations according to the criteria for belonging to a specific profile (Holland, 1985). Finally, the absolute numbers
for each type are then converted to percentages of the total population for the particular environment or institution.

Five constructs have been developed to operationalize his model (Holland, 1985). They are: (1) Consistency, (2) Differentiation, (3) Identity, (4) Congruence, and (5) Calculus. Consistency may be defined as "the degree of relatedness between personality types or between environmental models" (Holland, 1985, p. 4). In other words, some "types" are more closely related to each other than to others; a "Realistic" and "Investigative" type would have more in common than a "Realistic" and an "Artistic" type. Holland says that degree of consistency affects vocational preference, with a person who exhibits a more consistent profile being more predictable than a person whose two top letters are widely divergent.

Differentiation is the degree of definition exhibited in a profile. If a person most closely resembles a single type and shows little resemblance to other types, he/she is said to be highly differentiated. The third construct, Identity, provides an estimate of stability. Personal identity is present when the person has a clear and stable picture of his/her goals, interests, and talents. Environmental identity may be said to exist
when the same is true for an environment or an organization.

These first three constructs—consistency, differentiation, and identity—all deal with the clarity, definition, or focus of the types and environmental models, and may represent three techniques for assessing the same concept, according to Holland (1985). The fourth concept, Congruence, is separate. This construct springs from the idea that different personality types are happiest in environmental types that "match" their personality. For example, Artistic types are happiest in Artistic-type environments, Conventional types are happiest in Conventional environments, etc. Congruence, then, is said to occur when the personality type and environmental type of current or proposed occupation are closely related. Specific models for determining congruence have been proposed, and will be discussed below.

Finally, the construct Calculus deals with the relationships between and within types or environments, which are "ordered according to a hexagonal model in which the distances between the types or environments are inversely proportional to the theoretical relationships between them" (Holland, 1985, p. 4). Thus, this
geometrical model of the hexagon provides explicit definitions of both consistency and congruence, according to Holland (1985). In this particular study, the concepts of differentiation and congruence will be utilized, and thus the operationalization of these two will be discussed more fully in the Methodology section.
CHAPTER III

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects for this study were 307 undergraduate women who were enrolled in Psychology 100 classes at the Ohio State University during the Autumn quarter of 1990. The mean age was 18.76, with all but seventeen women being either 18 or 19 years of age. Their participation was voluntary although they received course credit toward partial fulfillment of a departmental requirement for their participation in the study.

Procedure

Subjects participated in groups of 40-50. All participants were administered a personal data questionnaire which requested information about age, year in school, major, job aspiration, total years of education planned, and amount of income expected to earn at first job after education is totally finished. Each subject completed a battery of pencil and paper instruments consisting of Holland's (1985) Vocational Preference Inventory, Neville and Super's (1986) Salience Inventory, Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico & Koschir's (1976) Career
Decision Scale, and an informal questionnaire exploring their attitudes toward having children and the problems inherent in having both children and a career. See Appendix A for a copy of these questionnaires. Total time required for subjects to complete all instruments was one hour or less.

Before data collection began, subjects were told that participation was voluntary. Upon completion of all the instruments, subjects had the option to remain and hear more about the study. At the beginning of each session, subjects were simply told that the purpose of the research was to investigate college students and their careers. Subjects were given the phone number of the investigator so that those who desired further information could enquire later about their own personal results and/or about the findings of the study in general.

Instruments

The Salience Inventory (SI) (Nevill & Super, 1986) consists of 170 items and takes 30-40 minutes to complete. It is scored for participation in, commitment to, and value expectations of five major life roles: Student, Worker, Homemaker (including spouse and parent), Leisurite, and Citizen. The inventory is appropriate for
use with persons in upper elementary grades through adulthood.

The Salience Inventory has been shown to have internal consistency, with alpha consistencies above .80 for all three populations tested (high school, college, and adult). Test-retest reliability was less than .70 for ten of the fifteen scales. Nevill and Super (1986) speculate that, since reliabilities became increasingly lower as the test progressed and subjects complained of the repetitiveness of the previous version of the SI, fatigue or boredom could have caused random guessing by subjects. Reliabilities on the Work Salience scale for a college population who completed the instrument, as in this study, were .79, .70, and .61 for the scales of Participation, Commitment, and Value Expectations respectively. Similarly, test-retest alphas for the three measures for Home and Family Salience were .73, .68, and .69 for the three categories (Nevill & Super, 1986).

The Career Decision Scale (Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, & Koschir, 1976; Osipow, 1987) was developed, based upon experience with clients, as a measure of antecedent difficulties to making a career decision. Identification of any of the 16 antecedents of indecision
are postulated to reduce the individual's ability to make a career decision. The total scale is comprised of 18 items. Of these 18, the last 16 items are used to obtain an index of Total Undecidedness. The first two items indicate the degree to which the individual is decided. Subjects are asked to answer each item by responding on a four-point scale ranging from "exactly like me" to "not at all like me."

Reliability, studied by using an undergraduate population at The Ohio State University, yielded a test-retest correlation for the total indecision scale of .90 and .82 for the two separate samples (Osipow, Carney, & Barak, 1976). Internal consistency reliability has been consistently high, with r's in the .80's (Hartman, Fuqua, & Hartman, 1983; Hartman, Utz, & Farnum, 1979).

Validity of the CDS has been studied by several researchers. Osipow, Carney, and Barak (1976), comparing 94 undergraduates in two vocational/educational exploration groups, found a significant reduction in the Total Undecidedness score as they compared pre-and post-treatment scores on the CDS.

Sutera (1977) reported that undergraduates in a sixteen week residential career planning program had significantly lower scores on the CDS upon completion of
the program. The fact that students' scores on the Career Maturity Attitude Scale (Crites, 1973) were significantly increased during the same period provided concurrent validity for the CDS. In a similar, though non-resident, study of a career exploration class, Carney (1977) compared pre- and post-test scores on the CDS and found that the group total score was significantly reduced upon completion of the course.

Hartman, Utz, and Farnum (1979) studied the validity of the Career Decision Scale for a graduate student population. They found performance of the instrument to be similar to what it had been in an undergraduate population. Only test-retest reliability, based on a Pearson product coefficient which yielded $r = .61$, over a one-week period, was considered marginal. Pearson correlations of $r = .43$ and $.44 \ (p < .01)$ were found in studies of validity in which a student's CDS score was compared with independent ratings of a career decision paragraph.

The CDS has also been validated for use with continuing education students (Lowe, 1980) and with returning women students (Illfelder, 1980). Osipow (1987) cites numerous other validity studies in the *Career Decision Scale Manual*. 
The Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI) is a "personality-interest inventory" consisting of 160 occupational titles (Holland, 1985, p. 1). Participants complete the inventory by marking "Like" or "Dislike" for each occupation. According to Holland (1985), the inventory is useful for assessing vocational interests, yielding a three-letter code, or "Holland Code," comprised of three of six occupational areas: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional.

The inventory has eleven scales: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional, Self-Control, Masculinity-Femininity, Status, Infrequency, and Acquiescence. Holland states that the inventory has four main uses: (1) a brief personality inventory, (2) an addition to a battery of personality inventories, (3) an interest inventory, and (4) an assessment technique for the investigation of career theory (Holland, 1985).

The VPI is self-administering, usually taking from fifteen to thirty minutes to complete. All scales except the Acquiescence Scale are scored by counting the indicated responses using a scoring stencil.

The internal consistency of the VPI for a sample of
males and females ranges from .85 to .91 for the six interest scales. This indicates that these scales are relatively homogeneous. Exceptions are the Masculine, Status, and Infrequency scales, which according to Holland (1985) are composed of relatively heterogeneous occupations.

Test-retest reliability is presented by Holland (1985) for samples of college students and older women. The VPI has moderate to high reliability, with alpha coefficients ranging from the mid-.60's to the mid-.90's for the six interest scales. Holland cites other data (Holland, 1968) which show similar reliabilities, with a median of .71 for samples of college juniors for a 3-month interval.

Concurrent validity studies have produced positive results with a wide variety of populations (Abe & Holland, 1965a, 1965b; Holland, 1966). The VPI has been shown to discriminate among students with different choices of college major and occupation. Scott & Sedlacek (1968) found that the VPI distinguished between students in physical sciences and engineering as compared to other groups. Williams (1972) used the VPI to discriminate among graduate students in different fields.
In addition to concurrent validity, the VPI also demonstrates predictive validity over intervals of two year periods for college students (Holland, 1962; Holland & Lutz, 1968). The efficiency of these predictions ranged from 35-60% accuracy. The data cited by Holland (1985) for predictive validity equal or exceed those for the concurrent validity of the SCII theme scales for a sample of college seniors.

Independent Variable.

Based upon their responses to sum of the "Commitment" and "Values Expectation" sections of the Salience Inventory, subjects were divided into four groups: 1. High on Home Salience and low on Work Salience (Home Salient), 2. High on Work Salience and low on Home Salience (Work Salient), 3. High on both Work and Home Salience (Positive Conflicted), and 4. Low on both Work and Home Salience (Negative Conflicted). The Salience Inventory also includes a "Participation" section which was deemed irrelevant to the study at hand, and thus was omitted at the time the instruments were administered.

High Work or Home Salience was defined as a score greater than or equal to one fourth standard deviation above the mean of that particular scale. Similarly, Low Work or Home Salience was defined as a score less than or
equal to one fourth standard deviation below the mean.

Nevill and Super (1986) report that college women received a mean score of 33.54 on the Work scale of the "Commitment" section of the inventory, with a standard deviation of 5.25. The same women received mean and standard deviation scores of 35.30 and 5.25 respectively on the Home scale of the "Commitment" section. In the "Value Expectations" section, college women obtained mean and standard deviation scores of 44.80 and 8.11 on the Work scale and 44.44 and 8.27 on the Home scale.

Data from subjects whose scores fell within plus or minus one fourth standard deviation from the mean were not analyzed in this study since these subjects do not have a clear salience pattern, and therefore are not relevant to this study.

**Dependent Variables.**  
1. Differentiation. Holland (1985) has defined differentiation as the absolute value of the difference between the highest and lowest numerical values for the six scales---R, I, A, S, E, and C. However, other models have been proposed which are thought by their presenters to be more accurate. Iachan (1984 a,b) has designed a family of differentiation indices which he claims replace both the original Holland one and its modifications. These
indices are favored by Greenlee, Damarin, and Walsh (1988) who state that since more of the information in the profile is used with Iachan's $L(1)$ and $L(2)$ it is more likely to ascertain subtle differences in shape. For this reason, they were utilized in this study.

2. Congruence between career aspiration type and VPI type. Congruence is defined by Holland (1985) as being when "the high-point interest inventory code and the code of the current aspiration belong to the same category" (p. 136). More specifically, Iachan's $M$ (1984) was used to operationalize this construct. When successive letters in the Holland Code were tied in numerical value, $M$ scores for each variant were computed and averaged to obtain the final $M$ score for that profile.

The method used to compute Congruence ($M$) was taken from Iachan (1984) where $M$ is computed by following a chart which allots a certain number of points for matching letters between Holland code from the VPI and Holland code of the subject-provided vocational aspiration. For example, 22 points are awarded if the first letters of each match; if the first letter of one code matches the second letter of the other, then 10 points are awarded, etc. $M$ equals the sum of all points awarded by this system. $M$ can range from 28 (perfect
congruence) to 0 (no congruence at all).

3. Holland Code as defined by VPI type.

4. Vocational Aspiration Type. Vocational aspirations were given a three letter Holland code using the Occupations Finder of Holland's Self-Directed Search.

5. Level of Educational Aspiration. Subjects were asked to indicate which of the following categories best represented the number of years they expect to take finish their education: Associate Degree (two years), Bachelor's Degree (four years), Master's Degree (six years), or Ph. D. or professional degree (eight or nine years).

6. Level of Financial Aspiration. Subjects were asked to indicate which of the following categories best represented the initial salary they expected to earn upon completion of their entire education or training: $15,000-$25,000 per year; $26,000-$35,000 per year; $36,000-$45,000 per year; more than $45,000 per year.

7. Career Indecision. Scores on this variable were the sum of items three through sixteen on the Career Decision Scale.
Hypotheses and Data Analysis.

1. The number of subjects in the Positive Conflicted group will be greater than in any of the other three groups. A chi-square test for significant differences in group membership percentages was performed.

2. Women in the Career Salient group will obtain significantly higher differentiation scores than will women in the other three groups. An Analysis of Variance was performed.

3. Significantly greater numbers of Career Salient women will exhibit congruence between their VPI profiles and career aspiration type than will women in the Conflicted Group. An Analysis of Variance was performed.

4. More Home Salient women will be Artistic, Conventional and Social Holland types (as measured by the VPI) than will women in the other groups. This was tested using a chi-square analysis.

5. Significantly greater numbers of Home Salient women will have Vocational Aspiration Types of Artistic, Conventional and Social than will the other groups. This was tested using a chi-square analysis.

6. Women in the Positive Conflicted group will be significantly more career undecided than women in the Work Salient group. This was tested using Analysis of
Variance.

7. Certain items of the CDS will discriminate between Conflicted women and women with a Home salience, namely:

   a. Items 8, 10, and 18 will reflect more indecision for Conflicted women than for Home Salient women.

   b. Items 3, 5, and 6 will reflect more indecision for Home Salient women than for Conflicted women.

These hypotheses were tested by performing an Analysis of Variance for each separate item.

8. On both measures of aspiration (education and financial) the Work Salient group will have higher scores than the Conflicted group, which will have higher scores than the Home Salient group.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

A total of 311 subjects completed the test battery. Four subjects' questionnaires were incomplete and were not analyzed, leaving a total of 307 usable subject protocols. Table 1 provides descriptive information about the entire population by presenting the means on Home Salience, Work Salience, Indecisiveness, Congruence, and Differentiation for the entire population.

Table 2 illustrates the frequency and percentage of subjects in the full sample in each of Holland's six vocational types. This information was derived from the Vocational Preference Inventory. Subject profiles in which two or three letters "tied" for first place were placed into separate categories. Table 3 gives a listing of job aspirations given by subjects, again for the entire sample, grouped by first letter of the aspiration's Holland type. Frequencies and percentages for each type are shown.

Nevill and Super (1986) report low correlations between the Work Salience and Home Salience scales in a college population (.37 for "Commitment" and .48 for
Table 1

Full-sample means and standard deviations on work salience, home salience, congruence, differentiation, and career decidedness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Salience</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>79.37</td>
<td>12.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Salience</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>82.60</td>
<td>12.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congruence</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>17.27</td>
<td>7.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation (Iachan's $L_1$)</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation (Iachan's $L_2$)</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Decidedness</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>29.98</td>
<td>9.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

Frequency and percentage of subjects in entire sample in Holland's six vocational types (grouped by first letter only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holland Code</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent of Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt; 1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigative</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>13 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>22 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>31 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprising</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>18 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-letter tie</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-letter tie</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 307
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocational Aspiration Code</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigative</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprising</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 307
"Value Expectations"). In this study, the correlation for the total Work Salient and Home Salient scales was .41, indicating that the two scales are not highly similar and thus justifying using this division in the present study.

Four groups (Work Salient, Home Salient, Positive Conflicted and Negative Conflicted) were formed by using the means for the Home and Work scales and either adding or subtracting one quarter standard deviation from the mean for each scale to its respective mean to obtain high and low cutoff points. Subjects who fell within one quarter standard deviation of either mean were eliminated as they were not seen as expressing a clear preference.

Thus, the Work Salient group consists of subjects who scored above 82 on the Work Salient scale and below 80 on the Home Salient scale; the Home Salient group consists of subjects who scored above 85 on the Home Salient scale and below 77 on Work; the Positive Conflicted group consists of those who scored above 82 on Work and 85 on Home; and the Negative Conflicted group are those subjects scoring below 77 on the Work scale and below 80 on the Home scale. The above grouping led to a total of 211 usable subjects in the final sample, divided as follows: Positive Conflicted, 114; Negative
Conflicted, 45; Home Salient, 32; Work Salient, 20.

The first of the main hypotheses of this study was that the number of subjects in the Positive Conflicted group would be larger than that of any other of the three groups. A Chi-Square analysis showed a significant difference in numbers of subjects in the four groups ($\chi^2 = 43.53, p < .005$).

A second hypothesis dealt with differentiation scores. It was expected that the career salient group would have significantly higher differentiation scores when compared to the other three groups. This hypothesis was not supported. Differentiation was computed using both of Iachan's (1984) formulas, $L_1$ and $L_2$, following the procedure favored by Greenlee, Damarin, and Walsh (1988). The formulas are:

$$L_1 = \frac{1}{2} \left[ X(1) - \frac{X(2) + X(4)}{2} \right]$$

$$L_2 = \frac{1}{3} \left[ X(1) - \frac{X(3) + X(5)}{2} \right]$$

Neither method of computing differentiation yielded significant results. $L_1$ yielded an $F$ value of .89, $p < .45$, and the $L_2$ formula yielded an $F$ value of 1.93, $p < .13$. 
The third hypothesis of this study was that Career Salient women would exhibit more congruence between their Holland VPI types and the Holland type of their job aspiration than would the Positive Conflicted group. This hypothesis, tested by using an Analysis of Variance, also did not receive support (F = .28).

The next two hypotheses dealt with specific Holland types projected for women in the Home Salient group. Specifically, it was hypothesized that these Home Salient women would be Artistic, Social, or Conventional VPI types in significantly greater numbers than would women in the other three groups, and that these Home Salient women would also have vocational aspirations, as measured by the VPI, of A, S, or C in significantly greater numbers than the other three groups.

Both of these hypotheses were tested using a Chi-Square analysis, and neither one of them was supported. For hypothesis four, that Home Salient women would be A, S, and C VPI types, $\chi^2 = 6.06$. The analysis was performed using only 184 subjects since the undecided subjects did not give a career aspiration and therefore could not be given an aspiration "type." The Chi-Square analysis for hypothesis five, that Home Salient women would have vocational aspirations of A, S, or C (first
Holland code letter) yielded a $\chi^2$ value of 3.48, also not significant. Again, only the 184 decided subjects were included in the analysis.

Table 4 presents the frequencies of VPI and Vocational Aspiration Holland Codes for the four groups, collapsed by A, S, or C versus E, R, or I initial letters. Although neither hypothesis comparing the VPI and aspiration types of Home Salient versus Conflicted women was supported, it is interesting to note the percentages of women in each category who have a Holland code with the first letter of A, S, or C, or who are choosing A, S, or C-typed vocations. Of a total of 32 Home Salient women, 25 subjects (78%) had A, S, or C in the first position of their VPI Holland code. Of the twenty-seven Home Salient women who stated a job aspiration, seventeen of them, or 63%, aspired to a vocation with a Holland code in which the first letter was A, S, or C. Of the 114 Positive Conflicted women, 79 (69%) obtained Holland codes which had A, S, or C in the first position. Of the 99 subjects in this group who stated a vocational aspiration, 60 (60%) were A, S, or C-typed vocations.

The sixth hypothesis was that women in the Positive Conflicted group would be more career undecided than women in the Career Salient group. This hypothesis was
Table 4

Artistic, social, and conventional Holland codes and aspiration of selected sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pos. Con.</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neg. Con.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Sal.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
tested with an ANOVA and the $F$ value of $2.62$, $p < .0517$ showed a very nearly significant difference among the four groups.

The seventh hypothesis looked at specific items on the Career Decision Scale and compared the responses of Home Salient women and Positive Conflicted women, using Analysis of Variance. First, Conflicted and Home Salient women were compared on items 8, 10, and 18. It was hypothesized that for these three items, Positive Conflicted women would show more indecision than the Home Salient women. A separate Analysis of Variance was performed for each item. See Table 5 for the means and $F$ values for the Home Salient and Positive Conflicted groups on the selected CDS items.

On item eight, "I feel discouraged because everything about choosing a career seems so 'iffy' and uncertain; I feel discouraged, so much so that I'd like to put off making a decision for the time being," an ANOVA indicated a significant difference among the four groups ($F = 3.49$, $p < .05$). A Duncan means test indicated a significant difference between the means of the Positive Conflicted ($M = 1.74$) the and Home Salient ($M = 2.31$) women, with Home Salient women showing more indecision. This significant difference was in the
opposite direction from the one that had been hypothesized. Also, there was a significant difference in the means of the Home Salient ($M = 2.31$) and Work Salient ($M = 1.55$) groups. A hypothesis had not been made concerning these groups.

A significant difference among all four groups on the CDS item # 10 was found through the use of ANOVA ($F = 3.68, p < .01$). Again, however, differences were not as expected. The Duncan means test showed that the Work Salient group ($M = 1.45$) was significantly more decided than the other three groups on this item: "I want to be absolutely certain that my career choice is the 'right' one, but none of the careers I know about seem ideal for me." It was hypothesized that Positive Conflicted women ($M = 1.98$) would express more indecision on this item than would Home Salient women ($M = 2.40$); however, these groups were not significantly different on the Duncan test.

Positive Conflicted women and Home Salient women were compared on item 18 of the Career Decision Scale, the hypothesis being that Positive Conflicted women would be more undecided than Home Salient women. The item reads: "I think I know what to major in, but I feel I need some additional support for it as a choice for
Table 5

Means of selected Career Decision Scale items and F values of comparisons between Home Salient and Positive Conflicted group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CDS item</th>
<th>Work Salient</th>
<th>Home Salient</th>
<th>Pos. Con.</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 +</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 +</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 +, #</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>3.49*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 +</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>3.68*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05

# indicates a significant Duncan means test between the Home Salient and Positive Conflicted groups

+ indicates a significant Duncan means test between the Work Salient group and other groups made about these two groups.
myself."

An ANOVA conducted on all four groups did not yield significant differences.

The same two groups, Home Salient women and Positive Conflicted women, were compared on three additional items of the CDS (3, 5, & 6). On this set of items, in contrast to the first set of three, it was hypothesized that Home Salient women would reflect more (rather than less) indecision than the Positive Conflicted women.

An Analysis of Variance on item 3, "If I had the skills or the opportunity, I know I would be a ______ but this choice is really not possible for me. I haven't given much consideration to any other alternatives, however," did not show significant differences among the four groups.

Item 5, "I know I will have to go to work eventually, but none of the careers I know about appeal to me," was also expected to reflect more indecision for the Home Salient women than for the Positive Conflicted women. An Analysis of Variance, computed on all four of the groups, did not show significant differences among them.

The ANOVA on question # 6: "I'd like to be a ______, but I'd be going against the wishes of someone who is important to me if I did so. Because of this, it's
difficult for me to make a career decision right now. I hope I can find a way to please them and myself," was not significant ($F = 1.59, p < .19$).

A final pair of hypotheses was that the Career Salient group would have the highest levels of vocational aspiration, measured both by expected financial earnings and years of education planned. The Positive Conflicted group was expected to have the next highest level of career aspiration, followed by the Home Salient women. The Negative Conflicted group was not of interest in this question; thus, no hypothesis was made about this group.

Separate-Chi Square analyses were performed for both financial aspiration and the planned years of formal education, and neither analysis yielded overall significant differences among the groups. The Chi-Square analysis of expected earnings was $\chi^2 = 4.06, p < .07$, and the Chi-Square analysis of years of education planned was $\chi^2 = 4.06, p < .67$. Tables 6 and 7 display these results.

In addition to the main hypotheses of this study, several post-hoc analyses were performed on data collected from a career values questionnaire (see Appendix) which addressed attitudes toward combining family and career. Overall, very few statistically significant
differences were found. Tables 8 and 9 display the frequencies in each group on several questions: Are you currently partnered? How many children do you have? Do you plan to marry or to be in a long-term partnership? How many children do you intend to have? How long do you intend to stop working with the birth of your children? Has the issue of marriage and children changed your career plans? How difficult do you think it will be to combine marriage and career?

While not many significant differences were found, there are some interesting trends in the data. These will be summarized here, with further comments to be made in the Discussion section of this document.

Since this is an undergraduate population, not many of the participants are currently married or living with a partner in a long-term committed relationship (N = 18, or 8.5% of 210 subjects responding). However, all but 7 subjects expressed plans to be in a long-term partnership, meaning that 96.6% of the women state intentions to be living with or married to a partner in the future. Interestingly, the Home Salient group, with 12% partnered, has the largest percentage of all the four groups (Negative Conflicted = 4%; Positive Conflicted = 9%; Work Salient = 5%). Also, in what appears to be
Table 6

Vocational aspiration levels, expressed by percentages in each group, of the four groups as reflected by earnings expected in first job after completion of formal education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Income</th>
<th>Home Salient</th>
<th>Negative Conflicted</th>
<th>Positive Conflicted</th>
<th>Work Salient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$15,000-$25,000</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$26,000-$35,000</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$36,000-$45,000</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater than $45,000</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100% 100% 100% 100%
Table 7

Vocational aspiration levels, expressed by percentages in each group, of the four groups as reflected by number of years expected to spend in preparing for ultimate vocational position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral/Professional Degree</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8

Frequencies for the four groups on present partnership status, plans for partnership in the future, present number of children, and intent to have children in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnered now</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not partnered</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intend/partnered</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not intend to be</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partnered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have children at</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No children</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intend children</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not intend children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desired</td>
<td>3.2#</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.4#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Denotes a significant difference between these found on the Duncan means test
Table 9

Frequencies for the four groups on opinion on difficulty of combining family and career, amount of time intending to stop work with birth of children, influence plans to have a family on career plans, and age at which planning to have first child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty combining home/career</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10 = Very Hard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Quite Easy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop work less than 3 years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop work until youngest child is adolescent</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop work until all child rearing are over</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue of family has influenced career plans</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue of family has not influenced career plans</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age to have first child</td>
<td>26.06</td>
<td>26.31</td>
<td>26.10</td>
<td>29.25#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#: denotes a significant difference found between these on the Duncan means test.
paradoxical, the Work Salient group is the only group of
the four in which none of the subjects stated an intent
not to be partnered.

As would be expected in an undergraduate population,
only a few of the women currently have children (N = 9 or
4%). It was interesting to note that none of the work
salient group members has children; members of all the
other three groups do: (Home Salient = 2 (5%); Negative
Conflicted = 1 (2%); Positive Conflicted = 6 (5%).
Virtually all of the subjects stated an intention to have
children (N = 202 or 96%). There were some interesting
breakdowns by groups on this item, however. Of the Home
Salient women, none stated an intention to be childfree.
The Work Salient women were at the opposite end of the
continuum with 15% stating an intention not to have
children. The Negative Conflicted women (4% not planning
children) and the Positive Conflicted women (3% not
planning children) are basically at the 4% level of
subjects intending to remain childless expressed by the
entire sample.

A significant difference between the Work Salient
women and the Home Salient women was found on the number
of children desired. An ANOVA on all four groups
approached significance at $F = 1.76$, $p < .15$. A Duncan
means test showed that the means of the Work Salient ($M = 2.4$ children desired) and the Home Salient ($M = 3.2$ children desired) were significantly different.

Another significant difference was found in the stated age at which a woman intended to have her first child. An ANOVA among the four groups yielded an $F$ value of $4.71$, $p < .01$. The Duncan means test showed that the Work Salient group ($M = 29.25$ years old at age desiring to have first child) was significantly older than all three of the other groups' ideal ages for beginning a family (Home Salient = $26.06$ yrs.; Negative Conflicted = $26.31$ yrs.; Positive Conflicted = $26.10$ yrs.).

Women in the entire sample fell into the "somewhat hard" category when asked how hard they thought it would be to combine marriage and children with career. There were minimal differences among the groups on this item, but some differences could be observed in the stated intentions of the women in each group to stop working after the birth of a child. Beginning at the most extreme end, very few of the women intended to not work outside the home until all major childrearing responsibilities were fulfilled. Only 8 subjects, or 4% of the women, planned to stay at home until the last child graduated from high school. Broken down by groups,
the percentages for the three groups—Home Salient (6%), Negative Conflicted (2%), and Positive Conflicted (4%)—are quite similar. Perhaps not surprisingly, none of the Work Salient women planned to remain out of the work force for this longest period of time.

An intermediate category was that of remaining out of the work force until the youngest child was an adolescent. Here, some differences could also be observed, most especially between the Home Salient and the Work Salient women. Forty-six percent of the Home Salient women intended to remain out of the work force for this length of time as opposed to only 17% of the Work Salient women. Twenty-five percent of the Positive Conflicted group and 30% of the Negative Conflicted group fell into this category.

In all groups except for the Home Salient group, the largest percentage of women plan to stop working for three years or less. Sixty-six percent of the Negative Conflicted women, 69% of the Positive Conflicted women, and 82% of the Work Salient women fall into this category. Forty-three percent of the Home Salient women are planning to take off this shortest amount of time. Within the Home Salient group, the largest percent of women intend to stay out of the work force until the
youngest child reaches adolescence, although at 46%, this percentage is not greatly different from the 43% noted above for the 1-3 year hiatus planned by the Home Salient group for childrearing.

Finally, subjects were asked whether considerations of planning to have a family had influenced their career plans in any way. Eighty-four women, or 40% said that they had. Some of their narrative comments will be shared in the Discussion section. This obviously leaves 60%, or more than half of young college women, saying that they have not altered career plans to accommodate marriage and/or children.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

The data presented in the preceding chapter provide support for the first hypothesis of the study; the number of subjects in the Positive Conflicted group is greater than in any of the other groups of college women. However, hypotheses concerning differences among three groups of women (Work Salient, Home Salient, and Positive Conflicted) on the dependent variables of differentiation, congruence of VPI type and vocational aspiration, career decidedness, and levels of vocational aspiration were not supported.

This chapter consists of a narrative presentation and consideration of these data. Results of each hypothesis test are discussed, followed by a presentation of the possible implications of the data. Concluding the chapter is a discussion of the possible limitations of the study and recommendations for future research directions.

The idea that a majority of young women today expect to work outside of the home is now almost universally
accepted in the literature on the career development of women. Statements cited earlier to this effect (Bridges, 1987; Betz and Fitzgerald, 1987; Komarovsky, 1982; Knaub et al., 1983) are examples of such literature and provided the basis for the first hypothesis of the study. Since the Positive Conflicted group in this study (N = 114) was significantly larger than either the Home Salient group (N = 32) or the Work Salient group (N = 20), it can be seen that the hypothesis was supported. Further, if the 20 Work Salient and the 114 Positive Conflicted (high on both Work and Home Salience) are added together, it may be seen that a total of 134 women out of 211 usable subjects (64%) have expressed high career salience as a part of their value system.

However, the literature has gone beyond only documenting the fact that women intend to, and do, work outside the home. A conflict has been assumed to exist for women, torn between the demands of family and career (Matthews & Tiedeman, 1964; Tittle & Denker, 1977; Farmer, 1978). Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) make this statement even more strongly as they say: "That the perceived philosophical incompatibility of the biological role of wife/mother with the social role of worker is the most salient factor in women's career development,..."
Thus, this study was formulated to move beyond merely documenting sheer numbers of women who planned to work outside the home. It attempted to discover whether these women who were placing value on having a career and family were at the same time formulating their career plans to also accommodate for a future family, as suggested by Betz and Fitzgerald (1987).

While indicating some intuitively-expected trends, the results did not support hypotheses which would have differentiated women high on both Work and Home Salience, defined as Positive Conflicted, from either Home or Work Salient women.

The second hypothesis proposed that Work Salient women would have Holland codes, as assigned by the VPI, that were more differentiated than those of the remaining women. The underlying assumption was that the Work Salient women, being more committed to their careers, would also be more focused on a specific field or vocational interest. This hypothesis was not supported.

However, an ANOVA did find a significant difference in the number of vocational choices endorsed on the VPI by each group ($F = 4.69, p < .05$). The Work Salient group ($M = 20$ vocations) endorsed significantly fewer
items than did any of the other three groups (Positive Conflicted $M = 30$ vocations; Home Salient $M = 26$ vocations; Negative Conflicted $M = 23$ vocations). This would indicate that the Work Salient group may be more focused, but not necessarily on specific areas of vocational interest. The mean number of vocations endorsed by the sample as a whole was 25. Even though the Work Salient group is expressing significantly fewer interests, they were not shown to be more differentiated. At first, this may appear to be a paradox, because fewer interests could appear to suggest greater differentiation. However, it must be realized that differentiation addresses the distribution across the six Holland types and not sheer numbers of interests.

Work salience, per se, may not be related to interest in any one specifically-defined vocational field. Not only is there a great deal of evidence documenting the working woman in the professional literature, but depictions of working women abound in the cultural mythology as well. Popular women's magazines and television programs provide two examples of ways in which women are given role models of the new "superwoman."]

The portrayals carry a certain "imperative" and, in addition, tend to glamorize the life of a working woman.
(The television show, Roseanne, is one of the few perhaps realistic portraits of the life of a blue-collar working woman).

In addition, and perhaps more important, economic considerations are primary in determining whether women work. This is as true for partnered women as it is for single women (Betz and Fitzgerald, 1987). Thus, most women may desire to work, or may realize that it is necessary for them to do so, and at the same time may not have decided upon a particular vocational field. Thus, it is possible that they could have high Work Salience and low differentiation scores.

For the entire usable sample of 211 subjects, Iachan's (1984b) two differentiation indices both yielded similar mean scores for differentiation. Since a subject with perfect differentiation (endorsing all 14 items on one scale of the VPI and none on any other scale) would receive a differentiation score of 14, both means ($L_1 = 2.30$ and $L_2 = 3.10$) are fairly low, indicating that the sample as a whole did not display a great deal of differentiation. This low differentiation is likely to be a function of the population consisting of undergraduate women in an introductory-level class. Since the literature states that even a large percentage of college
students who state a vocational preference often make at least one change in the course of their studies, these low differentiation scores could just be reflecting this common lack of focus.

The third hypothesis was that Work Salient women would have vocational aspiration types that were more congruent with their VPI Holland codes than would the other women in the sample. Again, this hypothesis was based upon the underlying assumption that Work Salient women would also be more clearly focused upon one vocational area, and that that one area would accurately be reflected in their stated vocational interests. The hypothesis was not supported, possibly for reasons discussed above. Work Salience may not necessarily be related to clear focus on a specific vocational area.

Being in their late teens and early twenties, the present sample has limited experience with the world of work. It could be that both increased differentiation and greater congruence of Holland type and aspiration type accompany maturation and increased experience with, or knowledge about, actual vocational fields. In retrospect, it might have been desirable to include an instrument like the Career Maturity Index to measure the overall career maturity of the sample.
The fourth hypothesis, that greater numbers of Home Salient women would have VPI codes of A, S, or C than would women in the other groups, was based upon the literature suggesting that women most traditionally have received Holland codes including these three letters (Prediger and Hanson, 1976). This finding of past research was partially replicated in the present study. Out of 307 completed subject protocols, the Social category had the largest number of subjects in it \( N = 95, 31\% \), followed by the Artistic category \( N = 67, 22\% \). The third highest category represented in this sample was Enterprising \( N = 56, 18\% \). In this particular sample, the Conventional category was not widely endorsed, having only 9 members \( 3\% \). An explanation for this latter finding could be that in a college population, self-selected at least to some extent for being oriented to pursuing a more "professional," as opposed to a blue collar occupation, that Conventional interests might not be as widely represented as they would be in a more heterogeneous population.

Although 66% of the entire sample had an A, S, or C in the first position of the VPI code, the hypothesis that the letters A, S, and C would predominate in the Home Salient group (to a greater degree than it does in a
group of women generally) was not supported by Chi-Square analysis.

A related hypothesis, that Home Salient women would hold A,S,or C-typed vocational aspirations was also not supported by Chi-Square analysis. Though not significant, the Home Salient group has the largest percentage (63%) of subjects aspiring to A,S, or C occupations, followed by the Positive Conflicted group (60%), the Work Salient group (45%), and the Negative Conflicted group (40%).

In comparing the percentage of Home Salient women with A,S, or C codes (78%) to the percentage of these women that aspire to A,S, or C jobs (63%), it is interesting to note 15% of the women apparently are aspiring to jobs which have E,R, or I in the first position of the code. This trend is true for the Positive Conflicted and Work Salient women as well, but the differences are smaller (9% for the Positive Conflicted and 10% for the Work Salient). It could be that the subjects see the more traditionally female jobs as having less status and/or as paying less and thus are "crossing over" to jobs which are not as congruent with their own VPI types, and thus the overall congruence for the sample could be lower than might be expected.
A sixth hypothesis stated that Positive Conflicted women would be more career undecided than would Work Salient women. This hypothesis did not reach statistical significance. The fact that the Positive Conflicted and Work groups did not quite differ significantly on decidedness may suggest that the conflict felt does not have as much to do with knowing what career is desired, but rather, more with two competing emotional paradigms: Home and Work.

The next set of hypotheses dealt with specific items on the CDS and compared the Home Salient women to the Positive Conflicted women. On three items, 8, 10, and 18, Conflicted Women were hypothesized to be more undecided than Home women.

Item 8, "I feel discouraged because everything about choosing a career seems so 'iffy' and uncertain; I feel discouraged, so much so that I'd like to put off making a decision for the time being" proved to be significantly more endorsed by Home Salient women, just the opposite from what had been hypothesized. In proposing the hypothesis, it seemed that the Positive Conflicted women could have been pulled in both directions more so than the Home Salient women, who supposedly had made an emotional commitment to the Home arena. For this reason,
it seemed that the Positive Conflicted women might be more undecided than the Home Salient women. However, it could be that indecision as an experience is not the same as being "conflicted" over choices. Indecision may be an inability to decide on an option; the Positive Conflicted women have decided—they want and value both Home and Work.

Another possibility, given the finding that Home Salient women are more undecided on this item, could be that at least part of the reason that the Home Salient women are choosing Home is because it is too threatening to make a career decision in light of the values clash involved in doing so. Perhaps they feel pushed to decide by significant others or by cultural pressures, but resist doing so at some level.

Item 10 on the CDS, also hypothesized to reflect more indecision for Positive Conflicted women than for Home Salient women, says: "I want to be absolutely certain that my career choice is the 'right' one, but none of the careers I know about seem ideal for me." In making this hypothesis, the Positive Conflicted woman was seen as perhaps trying to satisfy both her Home and Work values and thus vacillating between choices. Again, a significant difference was found, but the Duncan means test
showed that it was between the Work Salient women and the other three groups, not between the Positive Conflicted and Home Salient women as proposed. The Work Salient group was significantly more decided than each of the other three groups. Again, it may be that since career is of primary importance to the Work Salient women, that in order to reduce cognitive dissonance, they convince themselves that they have chosen the "right" career—even if they do end up changing it later. Or, it could be that the Work group, with their commitment to work, is genuinely more decided. Again, this intuitively seems at odds with the finding that the Work group was not more differentiated than other groups.

Item 18, "I think I know what to major in, but I feel I need some additional support for it as a choice for myself," was the final item on which the Positive Conflicted women were hypothesized to differ from the Home Salient women. There were no significant differences found on this item. However, it is interesting to note that the means of all four groups were on the low end of the scale, ranging from 1.9 to 2.3. This would seem to indicate neither the Home Salient group or the Positive Conflicted group feels the need for additional support: the Positive Conflicted
group because it's not a matter of making a decision—they value both home and career, but may not be specifically conflicted about vocational field, and the Home Salient because they, likewise, already know what is most important to them and feel the conflict more about how to honor this importance of home, as opposed to the question of which job to choose.

A second set of questions from the CDS (items 3, 5, and 6), were also the basis of hypotheses concerning the Positive Conflicted and Home Salient groups. On these three items, however, the Home Salient group was expected to be more undecided.

An Analysis of Variance on item 3, "If I had the skills or the opportunity, I know I would be a ____, but this choice is really not possible for me. I haven't given much consideration to any other alternatives, however," did not show any significant differences among the four groups. This hypothesis proposed that the Home Salient women would be more undecided on this item than the Positive Conflicted women. It was thought that Home Salient women, being more conventional in their interests, might feel that they lacked the skills or training for a wide variety of careers or might feel that the opportunity for a certain career did not exist
because of all the other demands that home and family, of primary importance, would impose.

An ANOVA on item 5, "I know I will have to go to work eventually, but none of the careers I know about appeal to me," yielded no significant results. It had been hypothesized that Home Salient women, with their value of home, might be more reluctant to enter the work force or might not be attracted by a career.

Item 6, "I'd like to be a ______, but I'd be going against the wishes of someone who is important to me if I did so. Because of this, it's difficult for me to make a career decision right now. I hope I can find a way to please them and myself" was hypothesized to reflect greater indecision for Home Salient women than for Positive Conflicted women. It was felt that perhaps the Home Salient woman was feeling pressure from significant others in her life (either real, or imagined to exist in the future) and felt that she would need to be dividing her energies between career and the needs of these others (family). Therefore, she was seen as being unable to make a career decision. This hypothesis was not supported.

The final two main hypotheses of the study concerned vocational aspiration, defined in terms of amount of
money expected to earn on first job upon completion of all training, and in terms of number of years willing to spend in training for one's ultimate vocational goal. It was thought that the Career Salient group, in theory having the highest level of dedication to a career, would also be willing to commit the most to career achievement in terms of education willing to obtain and would expect the most out of their career in terms of earning potential. The Conflicted Group, seen as having to divide their energies between home and career, were thought to be second highest in aspiration level, followed by the Home Salient group, which was thought perhaps not to be as committed to work as the first two groups, and, thus, to be the least willing to invest in years of education for the sake of a career and expectation of financial remuneration from that career.

Chi-Square analyses on both of these hypotheses did not yield significant results ($p < .07$). However, it is interesting to note that at the upper levels of aspiration, 18% of the Home Salient women expect to earn between $15,000 and $25,000 per year at their first job after completion of all training. In contrast, only 5% of the Work Salient women expect to be earning this income, the lowest category.
At the upper levels of financial aspiration, only 15% of the Home Salient women expect to earn more than $45,000 per year at their first job, while 25% of Work Salient women expect to earn this amount. This is either a reflection of the high-power positions these Work Salient women intend to occupy or an example of the "certain lack of realism" noted by Komarovsky (1982). Interestingly, the Positive Conflicted women in this sample are endorsing the highest expected salary category in even greater numbers than are the Work Salient women. At 31%, almost one third of them intend to enter the job market at a salary of greater than $45,000 per year, while only 20% of them expect to obtain a Ph.D. or professional degree.

Turning to level of educational aspiration, it may be seen that only 15% of Home Salient women expect to earn Ph.D. or professional degrees, while 20% of the Positive Conflicted women and 25% of the Work Salient women expect to do so. Again, this is in the direction hypothesized. The percentages among all the groups are much more similar at the Bachelor's level, with 47% of the Home Salient women, 41% of the Positive Conflicted women, and 50% of the Work Salient women stating the B.A. as their end goal. It may be that college is seen as being as
necessary, or automatic, today for one's vocational success as high school was 50 years ago, and that most students who are entering assume that they will complete a B.A. degree. It may be in pursuing the higher degrees that the persons who are more committed to work—the Work Salient and the Positive Conflicted people—become more predominant.

In addition to the formal hypotheses tested in this study, post hoc analyses were done on answers to a questionnaire designed to ascertain plans for, and feelings about, combining family and career. Even though the questionnaire was not standardized, and very few statistically significant results were obtained, the results did contribute some interesting demographic data and suggested some trends describing women and their plans for combining family and career.

As found by other researchers (Bridges, 1987; Komarovsky, 1982; Knaub et al., 1983), most women express the desire to have a partner and to have children. Virtually all women (96.5%) plan to be partnered in a long-term committed relationship, and 96% intend to have children. A Chi-Square analysis on whether there was a significant difference in the numbers of women in each group intending to have children was not significant (p <
An interesting observation is that in all of the groups except the Home Salient group, a small percentage of the women stated an intention to remain childfree. Not surprisingly, all of the Home Salient women, however, expressed an intention to have children. Also of note is that 15% of the Work Salient women said they do not intend to have children. This percentage is much higher than the 3% for the Positive Conflicted women and the 4% for the Negative Conflicted women.

An ANOVA on the question of how many children women in the separate groups wanted to have was not significant (p < .15), however, a Duncan means test showed a significant difference between the number of children desired by the Home Salient women (M = 3.17) and the Work Salient women (M = 2.41). In addition, the Work Salient women intended to start their families at a significantly older age (M = 29.25) than did the other three groups who had an average mean of 26.2 years on this question.

On the questionnaire, subjects were asked whether they had changed their career plans because of family issues, but were not asked whether they had changed their family plans for the sake of their career. The above findings seem to indicate that they have. Some subjects turned this question around and did address the question
of how their plans for family had been affected by career goals. One Work Salient subject, who answered that she had changed her family goals, said, "I want to work and I don't want kids because of this. I feel if you have children, you should stay home and take care of them until they are least reach Junior High school." One Negative Conflicted woman, who aspired to be a Clinical Psychologist, was very clear about her intention, saying: "It hasn't altered my career goals. Rather, my plans for a family have changed. I'm no longer sure if I would have sufficient time for a husband or children."

It is interesting that this woman falls into the Negative Conflicted category. The total number of Negative Conflicted subjects in this study (N = 45, or 20% of the usable sample), is larger than was expected. It could be possible that the Negative Conflicted women are simply expressing their Home/Career conflict through indecision, anxiety, or apathy. If this is the case, they may not express strong preferences in any area, but could actually be reacting to the same stresses that the Positive Conflicted women are.

Greenglass and Devins (1982) state that while college women express a great amount of career salience, their greatest priority seems to be the family. Both
statistically-standardized and demographic data collected in this study could suggest that their statement has some validity. In looking at the entire sample of 307, before subjects were eliminated to form the four groups, it may be seen that only 20 out of the total 307 completed subject protocols, or six and one half percent, were classified as Work Salient. One hundred and fourteen additional subjects expressed Work Salience, but expressed high Home Salience as well. If we were to consider these 114 subjects, along with the 20 "pure" Work Salient subjects, we have a total of 134 women, or only 43% of the original sample, for whom Work was given primary importance. When the four groups were formed, eliminating subjects who fell within one quarter standard deviation from the mean on the Home and Work scales, the Positive Conflicted group was the largest, again attesting to the valuing of both home and career among these women.

When asked, "Has the issue of considering marriage and children influenced your career decision plans in any way?", 40% of the sample as a whole said "yes" and 60% said "no." With 50% of the group responding affirmatively, the Home Salient group appears to be the most influenced by family considerations when considering
career. They are followed by the Positive Conflicted group, with 43% claiming that they had been influenced by this issue, and then by the Work Salient group, with 35% claiming to have taken the issue of family into consideration in making their career plans.

The majority of women in the sample responded by saying they intended to have both family and career. The 40% who claim to have altered career plans for this reason gave reasons which can be categorized into some main groups. Some women have decided that the career they originally intended to pursue requires too many years of education and, thus, would push back to an unacceptable degree the time for starting a family. One Negative Conflicted woman, seeking a Master's degree in Psychology or Engineering, said, "I thought I wanted to be a medical doctor. I am now aware that twelve years of my life will be out the door. Trying to start such a demanding occupation, marriage, and children at the age of 30 would be too late to begin it all!!"

Relationships with other people are the reasons given by some women for changing their career plans. One Positive Conflicted woman was influenced by her fiancee to switch from Chemistry to Elementary Education, saying: "I want a family, and I want to be home during the summer
when my kids are home. I originally wanted to do chemistry, but I want to be with my family more. A lot of thought has gone into my decision to be a teacher. I discussed this situation with my future husband and we worked it out together."

Another Positive Conflicted woman said, "I've wanted to be a pediatrician ever since I was young. But now that I'm in a serious relationship, I feel that this career choice would take away too much family time. I have chosen to be a pharmacist, which will hopefully end up being a 9-5 job. Another thing against being a pediatrician is [sic] the long UNCERTAIN hours, disrupting my family life and time."

Yet another Positive Conflicted woman planning to pursue an M.A. in Industrial Engineering, in anticipating having a family, said, "I really want to achieve a Ph.D., but I'm only planning to go up to the M.A. level since I don't see the reason why I should study my life away then possibly having to stop working when I have children, or even when I get married. (I really want to work after having a family, but if my family doesn't want me to, then I want to make them happy and do as they say.)"

The comments by women who wanted to enter the field of teaching almost all mentioned choosing elementary
school teaching so that they could be home when their children were off from school. A second often-mentioned reason for choosing teaching is that the woman could help her own children with their schoolwork. One Home Salient woman said: "I had intended to go into business, but that would be hard to have family or maternity leave and be able to pick it up in a few years. That's why I'm thinking education. A teacher has good hours and holiday breaks to be with the children. Plus, the income is reasonable for a second salary. This latter statement reflects an underlying assumption evident in some of the women's writings that they would all be in a partnership while raising their children and would not necessarily be responsible for their own support and that of their children.

Other adjustments to career plans, in order to accommodate family responsibilities, included changing from originally-intended majors because the job would require too much traveling to fit with family life, and the desire to have a vocation which would allow the women to only work part-time. One woman viewed Pharmacy as a desirable occupation because she could work part-time, and also still earn a substantial "second-income." Also, mentioned frequently was choosing a career which would allow
the worker to stop working for several years while caring for young children.

Sixty percent of the women in the study said that considerations of marriage and children had not influenced their career plans in any way. Fifty percent of the Home Salient groups said they had not; 57% of the Positive Conflicted and 65% of the Work Salient women agreed. However, some examples seemed to belie their words. One woman answered "no" to the question of whether her considerations of family had influenced her career plans, and then went on to describe how she wanted to work at home while her children were young. She was a Philosophy major, hoping to earn a Ph.D. degree. A Home Salient woman also said that her career plans had not been affected by family considerations, but wrote: "I will be a Psychologist so that I can stop and go back to it, when my last child is older." Another woman, also a member of the Home Salient group, who responded "no" to this question, said: "I am confused about my career plans for many reasons, marriage and family being one of them. I want to be very successful, yet I want a family too. I think both are very difficult to juggle."

Bem (1976) speaks of the "power of a nonconscious ideology." Perhaps some of these women don't even
realize that they are formulating their career plans to accommodate marriage and children, even when they seem to be stating outright that they are doing so. It could be that this aspect of women's lives has been so taken for granted as to have become "invisible" even to women themselves.

A small number of women answered this question by saying that they really had not given the matter much consideration. Perhaps this is the ultimate testimony to the "invisibility" of the issue!

A final area of consideration on the questionnaire was the amount of time that a woman planned to take off from her career to care for children. To summarize the trends observed in this study on the issue, it can be seen that the percentages do indicate that a larger percentage of Work Salient women intend to take off the smallest amount of time from work for childrearing, followed next by the Positive Conflicted women, and last by the Home Salient women, who expect to be away from their careers for more years. (Negative Conflicted women, about whom no hypotheses were made, also fall into the middle range with the Positive Conflicteds).

The demographic and narrative data collected in this research support much of the thinking about women and
careers which led to the proposal of the main hypotheses of this study, most of which were not supported. Possible reasons that this could be so have been discussed and are further explored in the limitations section below. It does seem clear that it is not a simple matter to ascertain all the many factors which contribute to feelings and decisions about combining home and career. Perhaps one good observation found in the narrative comments is this Positive Conflicted woman's final sentence explaining her dilemma in deciding how best to balance home and career: "It's a very touchy and complex subject."

Limitations of the Study.

In any research, a limitation is encountered when an attempt is made to measure and quantify relatively "nonconscious ideologies" (Bem, 1976) such as the value placed on home and work, or the degree of conflict experienced when values clash. In addition, there is always a question of subject fatigue when there are several paper-and-pencil instruments to be completed. In this study, the Positive Conflicted women were women who scored at or above a cut-off point which was one quarter standard deviation above the mean on both the Home and Work scales on the Salience Inventory (Nevill & Super,
1986). Since these were women who expressed strong values in both home and career areas, they were called "conflicted" for the purposes of this study.

However, it is not possible to know whether, or to what degree, the women in question actually feel conflicted within themselves. When asked how difficult they thought it would be to combine home and career, the Positive Conflicted group as a whole ($M = 6.97$) felt that it would be "somewhat hard" to do so. Only 43% of them, or less than half, answered "yes" to the question of whether the issue of family has influenced their career plans, and they do not differ significantly in the number of children they plan to have as compared either to the Home Salient or the Work Salient group.

While the above indicators would suggest that the Positive Conflicted women really don't feel that conflicted, other findings suggest that they might. For example, the Positive Conflicted women fall between the Home Salient and the Work Salient women on all of the demographic variables measured in this study (based upon percentage of subjects in each group endorsing a given item, or upon the mean of the given item): Presently in a partnered relationship; Intend to be partnered in the future; Have children at present; Do not intend to have
children; Number of children desired; Difficulty in combining home and career; Amount of time intending to stop work with the birth of children; Amount of influence the issue of family has had on career plans; and desired age at which to have first child.

The fact that on every one of the above-listed variables the Positive Conflicted women obtained values that are between the values obtained by the Home and Career Salient women suggests that they indeed are conflicted, trying to find a way to express both sets of values and unwilling to be so extreme as to endorse one set to the exclusion of the other. If these trends can be observed in the data, why were there so few significant results in the study?

To answer this question, we may return to the idea of the "invisibility" of the concept we are attempting to measure, or to the possible inability to operationalize the construct of career/home conflict. Just as Rose and Elton (1971) referred to undecided students as "a mixed bag," it may be possible that women experiencing home/career conflict may also be a "mixed bag." There are probably many individual and esoteric ways that women feel and express career/home conflict.

Another limitation of the study is that it is asking
women to project themselves into the future to ask how they will handle home and career, and since very few of the women are in this situation yet, most women don't experience the conflict on a daily basis. At a mean age of 18.7 years, the question of home/career conflict is highly hypothetical to most of these subjects. Even though they have high salience in both home and work areas, their daily experience may not call upon them to resolve these issues.

Related to the above point is that most college undergraduates have limited sustained contact with the world of work. Their knowledge and/or expectations about certain careers or their knowledge and awareness of their own talents and interests may still be in the formative stages. Thus, congruence of VPI and vocational aspiration, for example, could possibly become stronger as people gain more experience with the world of work.

Implications and Suggestions for Further Research.

Having made the point above about the abstractness of the home/career conflict being a possible limitation of the study, a partial disclaimer will now be offered. The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions and opinions of college women concerning work and home. No attempt was made to predict future attitudes or
behavior, either of which may change with further experience. While the responses of subjects in this study are not based upon daily experience in combining home and career, it is important for career counselors, teachers, and others who work with young women to understand how young women are viewing this issue.

It would be interesting to do a study which looked at the same variables as this study did with women at various ages and stages of career development to see whether some of the proposed differences among the different groups of women became more evident in older, more career/home "experienced" samples. Also, it would be interesting to compare males on the same issues.

In future research, it could be enlightening to include a measure of career maturity along with variables examined in this study. The fact that some of the women replied on the demographic questionnaire that they hadn't yet given much thought to combining home and family responsibilities could indicate a certain lack of awareness and/or planning.

Future research on this question should be carried out using diverse samples. Subjects in this study were not classified by race or by economic background, so no statements as to the effects of these variables can be
made. It may be found that the "philosophical incompatibility of home and work roles" may be a luxury afforded only to middle-class women. (All working women are expected to feel the stresses and strains of multiple roles, but may frame their experience of this struggle differently, based upon their expectations of what "should" happen within the family and work situations.)

For example, one subject in this study said that she wanted to have a career, but that she would have to stop working after the birth of her children until the last one entered junior high school. She did not phrase this as an imperative being placed upon her from someone else, but, rather as an internalized "should." A woman who had been raised to expect that she would always work probably would react quite differently.

Finally, it would be interesting to study the women who comprise the Negative Conflicted group further. These women were not considered in the hypotheses of the present study. As was observed earlier, it was not expected that these numbers would be as large as they were. It could be that these women were high on one or more of the scales on The Salience Inventory which were not tabulated in this study (Community Service, Leisure Activity, and Study). If this is the case, it could
explain why they are not expressing interest in either home or career. The idea that these Negatively Conflicted women may also be reacting to the home/career dilemma was not considered in the hypotheses of the present study, but, as suggested, these women could be reacting out of anxiety, apathy or indecisiveness by being low on both whereas the High Conflicted women are acting out the "superwoman" role, wanting to have satisfaction in both roles.

Coming back to the Betz and Fitzgerald statement that provided the impetus for the present study, "That the philosophical incompatibility of the biological role of wife/mother with the social role of worker is the most salient factor in women's career development," (p. 203), it must be asked whether this statement can be supported. The empirical data of the present study do not offer much support. There do not seem to be differences when the Positive Conflicted women are compared to others. However, the narrative data suggest that these issues are still strongly affecting women's perceptions of their career opportunities and choices. Problems in clearly operationalizing this conflict may make it difficult to obtain statistical support for this statement. As long as women want and need to work, and consider issues of
childbearing and childcare along with demands of career, this issue will not easily be put to rest.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper is to report results of a study which examined relationships among home/career conflict, career decidedness, Holland type, congruence of Holland type and vocational aspiration type, level of vocational aspiration, and certain specific items on the CDS. Before describing the study and discussing the results, it will be useful to place the issues in a broader perspective.

The literature on women's career development has traditionally emphasized that women have had to make two career choices: first, whether or not to pursue a career, and, second, what vocational field to choose?

The assumption that women feel conflicted when faced with the choice between home and career has long been made in the literature. Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) state emphatically that this conflict is the most salient factor in women's career development. The present study was designed to explore whether undergraduate women of today experience this conflict and, if they do, whether they are altering their career plans because of it.
Home/career conflict was operationalized through the use of the Salience Inventory (Nevill & Super, 1985). Subjects scoring above one quarter standard deviation above the mean on both the Home and Work scales were classified as "Positive Conflicted." These women were then compared to women classified as Home Salient and Work Salient on the variables of career decidedness, Holland VPI type, career aspiration, congruence of VPI type and vocational aspiration, and certain items on the CDS.

A total of 311 subjects completed the test battery which included the Salience Inventory, the Career Decision Scale, the Vocational Preference Inventory, and two demographic questionnaires. Usable subjects were divided into four groups, based upon their Salience Inventory results: Positive Conflicted (114), Work Salient (20), Home Salient (32), and Negative Conflicted (45). The remaining 96 subjects were not included in the study because they did not fall into any distinct category.

The first hypothesis, that the number of subjects in the Positive Conflicted group would be greater than in any other group was supported. However, other hypotheses concerning differences on the dependent variables were
not supported. While these hypotheses did not receive support, some other significant findings did emerge. The Work Salient group was found to be more decided than the Home Salient group overall, and also on some specific items on the CDS.

Some post hoc analyses suggested some trends in the data and yielded some significant findings. Home Salient women desired significantly more children than did Work Salient women, and the Work Salient women wanted to begin their families significantly later than did women in any of the other three groups.

Based upon the results of this study, empirical support was not obtained for the idea that the home/career conflict is the most salient factor in women's career development. The problems inherent in trying to measure an ideology which may be "nonconscious" were discussed, along with the difficulty in trying to operationalize this value conflict with salience measures. Some narrative remarks from the demographic questionnaires were cited as examples in which subjects seemed to contradict themselves by circling "no" in response to the question about whether family considerations had affected their career plans, and then proceeded to write an explanation of how they had done so!
It could be that the college women of today do place importance on both home and career, but do not feel the conflict at their stage of development because they are optimistic about their ability to have both home and career. It would be interesting to follow them over the next twenty years to see whether their experience of this issue changes as their life circumstances change.
APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC AND HOME/CAREER QUESTIONNAIRES
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE # 1

Sub. # ___________

1. Your age__________

2. Year in school (please circle one):
   Freshman  Sophomore  Junior  Senior

3. My major at OSU is:____________________

4. The "college" my major is in is:____________________

5. The job I am preparing myself to do when I graduate is:

6. How many years do you intend to spend in school/professional training in order to finally be trained to do the job you are aiming at? (For example, if your current major is History, but you intend to go on to Law School for 3 years after the B.A. so that you will ultimately be a lawyer, your final answer would be 7 years.)

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION PLANNED:

   a. Associate Degree (2 years)
   b. Bachelor's Degree (4 years)
   c. Master's Degree (2 years after B.A.; total 6 yrs. of college work)
   d. Ph.D. (doctorate or professional school; 4-5 years or more after B.A.; total of 8 or 9 years of college work)
7. How much money do you expect to earn when you get your first job after all your schooling is completed? (For example, if you intend to become a brain surgeon ultimately, don't tell me what you expect to earn after your B.A. is completed. What salary do you expect when you finally have all of your education finished?)

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE:

a. $15,000-$25,000 per year
b. $26,000-$35,000 per year
c. $36,000-$45,000 per year
d. more than $45,000 per year
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE # 2
PLEASE COMPLETE THIS PAGE LAST

As they think about their career plans, many women consider how they will manage the demands of career, spouse, and/or children. One of the purposes of this study is to get your opinions on these issues.

1. Are you currently married or are you living with a partner in a long-term committed relationship?

Please circle one: YES   NO

Number of years married or living together

2. Do you have children? YES   NO

3. How many?

4. If not yet partnered, do you intend to marry or to be in a long-term committed partnership?

Please circle one: YES   NO

5. If you don't yet have children, do you intend to have them?

Please circle one: YES   NO

6. How many children would you like to have?

7. At what age would you like to have your first child (if you are planning to do so)?
8. When the child is born, what affect will this have on your career? Please circle one:

a. Stop work forever
b. Stop work until last child graduates from high school
c. Stop work until last child is a teenager
d. Stop work until last child enters school
e. Stop work for less than 3 years
f. Stop work for less than one year

9. How difficult do you think it will be to combine having children and having a career? Please circle one number; 10 means the most hard, one means no problem.

(Very hard) (Somewhat hard) (Pretty easy)
(Quite easy)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

10. Has the issue of considering marriage and children influenced your career plans in any way?

Please circle one: YES NO

11. Please explain how it has influenced your thinking about your career. Have you changed your career goals or plans in any way to accommodate having a family?

If you would like to know about the findings of this study, please call me at 927-2905. I will arrange to share the results with you when the study is completed.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.
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