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CASE STUDIES OF THE MEANINGS AND EXPERIENCES OF LEISURE IN THE LIVES OF WORKING WOMEN WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

DISSERTATION

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

By

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To My Parents, My Sister, and My Nephews
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Leisure is important. It is an important sector of the economy, a significant dimension of the culture, and a major element of the interlocking social institutions of society. Further, leisure is central to the meaning of life throughout the journey from birth to death (Kelly & Godbey, 1992, p. 1).

Leisure is a part of human existence and an important element in an individual's life, and as such everyone has a right to leisure (Kelly, 1990). However, leisure has been described by Gregory (1982), as "... culturally defined and constructed" (p. 48), making leisure a political issue, inseparable from the social and economic contexts within which it exists (Green, Hebron, & Woodward, 1987b; Green, Hebron, & Woodward, 1990; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988). Within a capitalist society, dominated by patriarchy and gender stereotypes, leisure has become a site of hegemonic struggle (Woodward, Green, & Hebron, 1989). Therefore, even though everyone has a right to leisure, it is not equally accessible or available to all people (Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw, & Freysinger, 1989).
History and socially approved gender roles serve to formulate the environment in which women experience their work and leisure. A fundamentally Western, patriarchal society functions in such a way that women share a subordinate economic and social position (Green et al., 1990). As stated by Andersen (1993), patriarchy refers to "... the hierarchical system of social relations among men that creates and maintains the domination of women ... (it) patterns and shapes relations among men and women" (p. 15).

Women's material position, in association with the prevailing social definition of masculinity and femininity, has had an effect on how women live out their lives (Green et al., 1990). According to Woodward, Green, and Hebron (1988) leisure constitutes one of the aspects of gender relations characteristic of patriarchal capitalism. It is argued that leisure is a site of hegemonic struggle and as such serves to limit women's access to it and enjoyment of it (Green et al., 1990; Shaw, 1994). Much of the research relating to leisure has focused on the preferences and participation patterns of the dominant group within western, industrialized society, middle-class, white men, with the assumption that women's leisure follows the same pattern (Green et al., 1990; Henderson, et al., 1989; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988). The androcentric
nature of leisure research, and the sexist assumptions and biases within it, have limited the exploration of leisure and its meaning in the lives of women (Bella, 1989). Recent research on female leisure time and activities has suggested that gender is a differentiating factor in leisure experiences (Chambers, 1986; Shaw, 1985).

As noted by Hargreaves (1989), "There is an undeniable link between income, cultural power, and gender relations. Women have been economically subordinated to men and this state directly affects attitudes and access to leisure" (p. 134). Therefore, the leisure experiences of women need to be understood within the social structure in which they exist.

This situation necessitates the examination of women's roles in association with the social construction of gender roles and as part of the political and economic structure within which they operate. These social factors affect the meaning and experience of leisure within women's lives. Therefore, in order to gain an understanding of the female leisure experience it is imperative to examine it within its social context. As stated by Stanley and Wise (1993), "Without knowing how oppression occurs we cannot possibly know why it occurs, and without knowing how and why it occurs we cannot find out how to avoid its
In recent years societal expectations of women and their role in society have developed into many different avenues (Henderson et al., 1989). This is particularly true in relation to women's participation in work outside the home. According to Moen (1992), changes in the economy, including a shrinking labor force, a rising cost of living and increasing beliefs of gender equality have made women's employment both essential and desirable. Therefore, women, in addition to their traditional roles of care-giver and homemaker, are increasingly involved in work outside the home.

Schor (1991) indicated that there are now more women involved in paid work outside the home. In the first half of the twentieth century women with children tended to return to the work force after their children were grown (Moen, 1992; Schor, 1991). According to Moen (1992) between 1950 and 1960, 25% of women with children held paying jobs. During the seventies, eighties, and nineties mothers in America were returning to employment more quickly or, alternatively, had never left. By 1990, 51.3% of women with infants and 59.4% of women with preschool children were involved in paid work outside the home. It is evident from these figures that working women with children are
the rule rather than the exception. Moreover, this increase occurred across the social spectrum, to include all income categories and a variety of family patterns (Moen, 1992; Schor, 1991).

Despite their work in the public domain, societal expectations of women have been slow to change (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1986). The sexual division of labor in a capitalist society has resulted in women still having primary responsibility for the maintenance and functioning of the home and its family members. (Deem, 1982; Henderson et al., 1989; Stanley, 1987). Moen (1992) noted, "The family work of childcare, husband-care, housework, and emotional "work" still preoccupies and restricts women's lives" (p. 12).

Not only have women become more involved in the work force, but their working hours have also increased. According to the estimates of Schor (1991), between 1967 and 1987, the working hours of women increased by 305 hours per year. This increase amounted to an additional 38 days on the working year.

These statistics are of particular concern for working women since they are still expected to fulfil the role of primary caregiver and homemaker. This expectation necessitates women fulfilling a dual work role (Green et al., 1990; Hochschild, 1989). In addition to the 40 or more hours women work outside the
home, studies have found that they do 25-40 hours per week in the home, in the form of unpaid labor (Schor, 1991). This dual role, combining unpaid work in the home with paid work outside the home, has a potentially significant impact upon women's leisure and ultimately, their quality of life (Henderson et al., 1989; Henderson, 1990a, Shaw, 1985).

This study examined the effect of the dual work role on the leisure lives of women with an infant, toddler, or preschool child. The impact of these roles on the meaning and experience of leisure were examined. In addition, constraints to leisure were examined as they relate to women's social roles.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the meaning and experience of leisure for working women with an infant, toddler, or preschool child. Because of the limited research attention given to women's leisure, this study was exploratory and descriptive in nature. It was concerned with filling the gaps in knowledge regarding the leisure experiences of a selected group of women and the impact of their social status upon them.
Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Explore and describe the meaning of leisure and the role it plays in the context of the lives of the working mothers in this study.
2. Identify and examine the constraints on leisure experienced by working women with an infant, toddler, or preschool child who were part of this study.
3. Examine the impact of women's work, both paid and unpaid, on their experience of leisure.
4. Examine ways in which employers and leisure providers can facilitate the leisure experiences of women with an infant, toddler, or preschool child.

Significance of the Study

Henderson (1991b) stated, "...women have an experience that is different to men, and this experience should be acknowledged and valued" (p. 372). This study will contribute to an increased understanding of women's social and economic lives and work towards redressing the balance of the androcentric nature of research in general, and leisure research in particular (Henderson et al., 1989; Stanley & Wise, 1993). This study will enable the leisure experiences of the research participants to be understood within the social contexts of their own lives i.e., as working
women with an infant, toddler, or preschool child. The existing body of knowledge warrants expansion to facilitate improved understanding of women within different social contexts. The examination of life circumstances and situations such as class, parenthood, and race will contribute to greater understanding of leisure experiences (Henderson, 1994a; Henderson et al., 1989).

Addressing the problem from a feminist perspective placed the female experience at the forefront of the study, making it its focus (Lather, 1991). Approaching the research from a feminist perspective gave the women participants the opportunity to speak of their experiences in their own voice (Lather, 1986b; Stanley & Wise, 1983). As noted by Lincoln and Guba (1985), this approach and focus facilitates the construction and acknowledgement of multiple realities. Therefore, the examination and understanding of leisure should take place within the context of the women's total social experience.

Sky (1994), proposed that a theoretical base without a feminist perspective is "... incomplete, or represents a limited perspective and therefore ... sets down an unfinished version of the truth" (p. 89). The stance is supported by Henderson et al., (1989) in their statement that "... until leisure research
addresses the unique experiences of women, and builds theory upon this information, a comprehensive understanding of leisure behavior will be lacking" (p. 151). The examination of leisure as a facet of women's lives will contribute to feminist scholarship, increasing understanding of the female experience.

An examination of the constraints experienced by working women with an infant, toddler, or preschool child may contribute valuable knowledge to the research participants. This examination may encourage the participants to be self-reflective and gain a deeper understanding of their own situation (Lather, 1991). This understanding and realization may, in turn, empower women to make changes in their lives relating to their leisure choices and leisure experience.

In addition, the research will contribute information to leisure providers, enabling them to create strategies to assist in the alleviation of both internal and external constraints for working women through programming and marketing. An understanding of the total experience and the constraints experiences by working women with infant, toddler, or preschool children will help leisure providers reduce or eliminate obstacles to leisure involvement (Henderson et al., 1989).
Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this research the terms listed below are defined as follows:

**Gender:**

those social, cultural, and psychological aspects linked to males and females through particular social contexts. What a given society defines as masculine and feminine is a component of gender. (Lindsey, 1994, p. 4)

**Gender Roles:**

those expected attitudes and behaviors which a society associates with each sex. (Lindsey, 1994, p. 4)

**Leisure Constraint:**

anything which inhibits a person's opportunity to participate or spend more time in a leisure activity. (Jackson, 1987)

Organization of the Study

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter I is a general overview of the study. It includes an introduction, a discussion of the study's purpose and objectives, and justifications for the need for the study.

An examination of the background literature is presented in Chapter II. This presentation lays the background for the study both in terms of theoretical background and past research.
The focus of Chapter III is a discussion of the research design and methodology. Discussion related to the research design addresses methodological assumptions, the selection of participants and the interview process and methods. Issues of trustworthiness, data analysis and the ethics of the research design and methodology are also addressed.

Chapter IV is a presentation of the analysis of data. The data are presented in the narrative form. The data are analyzed both within and across cases to facilitate the development of themes between cases.

The study is concluded with Chapter V. This chapter includes a summary of the study as well as a discussion of its findings. The findings are then considered in relation to their implications for current practice and future research.
Chapter II

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of the background literature which provides a theoretical framework for the study. While the review is not intended to be comprehensive of all relevant literature, four topics related to the inquiry will be addressed.

This chapter examines the literature relating to (a) the (in)visibility of women's leisure experiences (b) feminist perspectives related to research on women's leisure; and (c) research findings relating to the nature of women's leisure experiences; and (d) research paradigms.

The (In)visibility of Women and their Experiences

... although women are frequently massively present within whatever is being studied, we rarely appear in the end product of this .... This may be because women are simply not "seen" by researchers, are ignored by them or else our experiences are distorted by them (Henderson et al., 1989, p. 17).

The acknowledgement, or lack of it, of women's leisure experiences by leisure researchers has
evolved through a number of phases in the past 40 years. In order to examine the representation of women in leisure research, Henderson (1994a, 1994b) adapted Tetreault's (1985) Feminist Phase Theory. Feminist Phase Theory was originally developed to examine the inclusion of women in past educational curricula. Within the framework originally identified by Tetreault (1985), 5 phases were generated relating to the consideration of women in research studies: (a) Male Scholarship; (b) Compensatory Scholarship; (c) Bifocal Scholarship; (d) Feminist Scholarship; and (e) Multifocal or Relational Scholarship. These phases were respectively renamed by Henderson (1994a, 1994b) as Invisible (Womanless) Scholarship; Compensatory (Add Women and Stir) Scholarship; Dichotomous (Sex Differences) Scholarship; Feminist (Woman-Centered) Scholarship; and Gender Scholarship. This framework offers a means by which the inclusion of women's leisure experiences in the general leisure research may be examined and evaluated.

Invisible/Womanless Scholarship

Research identified as Invisible/Womanless Scholarship focuses on the male experience of the world. Westkott (1990) argued,

The concept of the human being as a universal category is only the man writ large. Woman is
considered an abstract deviation of the essential humanity; she is a partial man, or a negative image of man, or the convenient object of man's needs (p. 59).

This view was also applicable to research conducted on leisure.

Initially, in order to deal with the concept of gender in leisure research, assumptions were made by researchers that the male and female experience of leisure was the same - a universal experience - with women's leisure mirroring that of men (Anderson, 1993; Henderson, 1994b; Stanley & Wise, 1993). Henderson (1994b) stated, "... leisure scholars seemed to assume that the male experience was universal, representative of humanity, and constitute a basis for generalizing about human beings" (p. 123). This position highlights the notion of Invisible/Womanless Scholarship. Moreover, this form of scholarship not only excludes women but also excludes any social category of people outside of the dominant group of white, middle class males (Anderson, 1993; Henderson, 1994b).

Predominant outcomes of Invisible/Womanless Scholarship include the marginalization, and therefore, devaluation of women's leisure experiences (Hargreaves, 1989; Henderson, 1994b). A masculine analysis of the male experience results in rendering the female leisure experience invisible. Moreover, it was considered unnecessary to study women's leisure experiences since
they were considered to be of little value to leisure researchers (Green et al., 1990; Henderson et al., 1989).

Leisure viewed as part of a work-leisure dichotomy also serves, to exclude women from consideration in research studies. In studies where leisure is considered to be a discrete sphere of life and defined in contrast to work, work has commonly been defined as "employment" (Green et al., 1990; Sky, 1994). The unpaid labor of women is not embraced by this definition. Therefore leisure, when examined in contrast to male-defined work, results in limited contributions to the understanding of the female leisure experience. Moreover, according to Sky (1994), "... paradigms reliant on work/leisure binary opposites are powerless to describe women's circumstances" (p. 94).

According to Green et al., (1990), the work of Parker (1983), is an example of the negation of women's leisure experiences. Parker's (1983) work suggested that women's leisure patterns only differ from the mainstream if women do not work outside the home. The issues of leisure for women who work only within the private sphere of the home are covered in his book in a chapter on "The Unwaged". This standpoint is indicative of the marginalization of women's work and a
failure to acknowledge the ways in which women experience leisure.

**Add Women and Stir Scholarship**

When researchers recognized that the female experience was missing from their analysis of leisure, Invisible/Womanless Scholarship was followed by Compensatory Scholarship, otherwise identified as "Add Women and Stir Scholarship" (Henderson, 1994a, 1994b).

According to Andersen (1993), the methods and modes of analysis for these studies "... attempted to fit women into preestablished modes of thinking" (p. 11). Even then they were only acknowledged if they diverged from the "universal experience", i.e., that of white males. Hargreaves (1989) noted, "... there is a tendency to insert women into previously constructed pictures of male leisure (p. 131) in ways considered by Stanley and Wise (1993) to be "... distorted and sexist" (p. 127).

Therefore, assumptions that modifications of the male model would enable women to be taken into account were heavily criticized (Green et al., 1990). This recognition resulted in the inclusion of women on the basis of being exceptions to the universal male experience. Quintessential male experiences served as the source of comparison for women's leisure
experiences. Therefore, to be worthy of consideration, women's leisure experiences were expected to meet these male standards.

**Dichotomous/Sex Differences Scholarship**

The study of sex differences as they relate to leisure are the focus of Dichotomous/Sex Differences Scholarship. Recognition that women are, in some ways, different from men in their experience of leisure and the role it plays in their life precipitate this form of research.

There are differing viewpoints as to the value of this research. On one hand the study of differences can be useful in describing behavior. However it can also be considered divisive, serving to reinforce the status quo (Henderson, 1994a; 1994b).

Dichotomous/Sex Differences research has increased the visibility of women's experiences. It has been considered a good starting point when contemplating women's leisure experiences. Therefore, despite the limited descriptions generated by the studies, the findings may be used as a catalyst for the development of future research directions (Henderson, 1994; Stanley, 1980 in Wimbush & Talbot, 1988).

At the outset women were given minimal, if any, consideration in leisure research. Their presence was
rarely acknowledged or included in the end product (Stanley & Wise, 1993). Alternatively, their presence was as anomalies that "mess up" the research findings (Green et al., 1990; Henderson et al., 1989). Moreover, in the past, instead of women opening up avenues for researching leisure they "... have been viewed as a problem rather than a means of directing research in new directions" (Stanley, 1980 in Wimbush & Talbot, 1988, p. 9).

**Feminist/Woman-Centered Scholarship**

Prior to the mid-1980s women's leisure was not a visible topic in mainstream feminist literature (Henderson, 1991b). Since then the work of many researchers both in the United Kingdom (Deem, 1982, 1986; Green et al., 1987a; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988) and the United States (Bialeschki & Michener, 1994; Bialeschki & Henderson, 1986; Freysinger & Flannery, 1992; Henderson & Allen, 1991; Henderson & Bialeschki, 1991) has put women and their experiences at the center of the research. Researchers implementing a Feminist or Women-Centered Approach examine leisure experiences as they relate to the lives of the women they are studying, not in comparison to those of others. This research challenges the androcentric research prevalent in the years prior to the 1980s. Henderson (1994a)
noted that the Feminist/Woman Centered Approach, "... has been, and continues to be, central to understanding the breadth and depth of women's leisure experiences" (p. 2). Moreover, it demonstrates how the inclusion of traditionally excluded groups contributes to the revision of traditional concepts and theories (Andersen, 1993).

**Gender Scholarship**

In contrast to Feminist Scholarship, Gender Scholarship, as described by Henderson (1994a, 1994b) examines how the first four phases are linked to create a broader picture of women's and men's leisure experiences. According to Henderson (1994a, 1994b) the development of a comprehensive understanding of leisure requires the experiences of both men and women to be considered in relationship to one another, focusing specifically on socialization and gender relationships. Gender provides the theoretical structure for the study of women and their leisure experiences. Andersen (1993) referred to gender as "... the socially learned behaviors and expectations that are associated with the two sexes (p.31). She went on to define the concept of gender as "... a primary category of social relations" (p. 32). Moreover, the social, political and economic relations between women and men are guided by the
gender roles of men and women within a specific culture (Andersen, 1993).

Gender Scholarship has the potential to provide knowledge related to male and female experiences in society and how they are intertwined. However, "... feminism can still provide the ideological lenses" for the study (Henderson, 1994b, p. 130) in order that women do not become invisible within the research.

Feminism

Feminism is a politics. It is a politics directed at changing existing power relations between women and men in society. These power relations structure all areas of life, the family, education and welfare, the worlds of work and politics, culture and leisure. They determine who does what and for whom, what we are like and what we might become (Weedon, 1987, p.1).

The androcentric nature of the early phases of leisure research warranted correction, leading researchers to implement a feminist approach, rather than adding women to the existing theories and research practices (Stanley & Wise, 1993). This change resulted in women's experiences being a central focus of the research.

However, Hall (1985) noted, "Feminism and feminist are not monolithic concepts, there is no one feminism" (p. 27). There is a broad spectrum of feminist theories including; liberal feminism, radical feminism and socialist feminism. Despite the differences in
their philosophies, they have an ideological starting point and goals in common. According to Weedon (1987), feminists take their starting point to be "... the patriarchal structure of society" (p. 2). Weedon (1987) went on to define patriarchy as "... power relations in which women's interests are subordinated to the interests of men" (p. 2).

The diversity of contemporary feminisms have varying ways of placing women in the world and a range of solutions to the problems presented by patriarchy. Therefore, according to Fox (1992), there is no agreement on the identification and description of the issue, the analytical framework or conclusions. Despite this, however, a united front is presented, with the view that the oppression of women has implications for women's everyday lives. Stanley and Wise (1993) noted, the issue of women's oppression is not open to debate for feminists. The over-arching goals of feminism are identified by Henderson and Bialeschki (1991b) as (a) to make women's lives more visible; (b) to redefine existing social systems; and (c) to enable every women to have equity, dignity, and choice to control her life and body, outside and inside the home (p. 52). One of the global goals of feminism is the empowerment of women. This focus gives women the opportunity to speak for themselves, an opportunity to control their own
activities, to be taken seriously and finally, to redefine the elements of their world, based on their own terms and values (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1991).

Although feminism focuses on the experiences of women, and is representative of their interests, it is an oversimplification to assume that all women's experiences are the same. Female experiences are mediated by other social factors including class and race. These social factors serve to accentuate inequalities (Amott & Matthaei, 1991; Andersen, 1993). Therefore, due to the intersection of gender, race, and class, among other social factors and power relations, it is erroneous to assume that there is a universal female experience (Green et al., 1990; Hargreaves, 1989; Weedon, 1987). According to Weedon (1987), "... it is too simple unless we believe in essential womanhood, common to all women, suppressed or repressed by patriarchy" (p. 10). Consequently, diversity exists in the lifestyles of women creating variations, as well as commonalities, in women's experiences (Henderson et al. 1989; Shaw, 1994; Weedon, 1987).

According to Stanley (1987), leisure does not make sense on its own and cannot be understood in the abstract. Consequently, it has to be understood as part of the interests, needs, skills, and obligations in an individual's life. Comprehending the array of
women's life experiences necessitates implementing research methodologies which place the female experience at the center of the inquiry. Dubois (1983) noted, in attempting to redress the balance of androcentric leisure research, "... feminist scholars are like archaeologists as they discover and uncover new perspectives on women's lives and new facts about women's experiences that have previously been invisible and distorted (cited in Henderson & Bialeschki, 1991, p.53).

To increase the visibility and augment the opportunity to enhance the understanding of women's leisure experiences requires the implementation of feminist research methodologies (Woodward et al., 1988; Henderson et al., 1989; Lather, 1991). Feminist research seeks to empower women, by recognizing and redefining the value of women's lives so that they may become more visible in society (Henderson et al, 1989; Lather, 1991). Consequently, feminist studies have made a significant contribution to this understanding.

Research within a feminist framework strives to put the experiences of women at the heart of the research. One goal of research within a feminist framework is on women discovering them "power to" in the world (Henderson et al., 1989). It is important to consider the leisure experiences of women as they
intersect with other facets of women's lives, both social and political (Deem, 1988; Green et al., 1987a; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988). Moreover, based on the concept that women are not a homogeneous group, it is imperative that the research and its methodologies be "... attentive to all aspects of social reality and all participants in it" (Stanley & Wise, 1993, p. 31).

Feminist Research on Leisure

Until recent years most analyses of leisure have been written by men, about men. Women have been marginalized or rendered invisible (Hargreaves, 1989, p. 131)

All feminist research involving women and their experiences of leisure seeks to set the experiences within a wider social context of cultural and social factors within patriarchal, capitalist society in the late twentieth century (Woodward et al., 1988b). The complexity of women's leisure is portrayed by Green et al., (1990) as, "... a highly personal and subjective mix of experiences. In women's day-to-day lives its definition shifts, is never static, but blurs into and out of other areas of life. Simultaneously it is also a highly political concept" (p. 166). According to Green et al., 1987a), "At the level of culture "leisure" is inseparable from the social and political
context within which it is produced and reproduced ..." (p. 26).

The contextual nature of the definition and experience of leisure for women requires it be considered as a component of a whole set of social practices, framed within women's lives (Green et al., 1990; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988). This focus emphasizes the importance of recognizing women's lived experiences and how they make sense of their lives (Weedon, 1987).

In recent years there have been attempts by feminist researchers, in both the United States and in the United Kingdom, to increase the understanding of women's leisure and their unique experience(s) of it. The driving force behind this research is the goal of facilitating of positive change in the social position of women (Wimbush & Talbot, 1988).

The Meaning of Leisure

Leisure has a chameleon-like quality, changing its skin in relation to surroundings, context and the seriousness of competitors (Green et al., 1990, p.1).

According to Lee, Dattilo and Howard (1994), "... leisure is not a unitary concept, but is often composed of many characteristics " (p. 209). Leisure is a multi-dimensional, amorphous concept which manifests itself as a constantly changing experience (Lee et al., 1994;
However, many of the varying definitions of leisure, as used in research and theory development, have served to exclude women and their experiences.

**Leisure as Time**

The definition of leisure as "time" focuses on the work-leisure dichotomy, with its historical roots in industrial society. There is a clear demarcation between men's work time and their leisure time. Since men are viewed in the role of breadwinner and provider for the family, their work outside the home is perceived by society as essential (Cross, 1990). By virtue of their working role outside the home, the perception is that they have earned leisure (Lenskyj, 1988).

Wearing and Wearing (1988) suggested that leisure defined as time has not been appropriate for women. As a result of the well documented notion of women's dual work-role, both in and out of the home, leisure for women cannot be equated with time away from work (Green et al., 1990; Henderson, 1990b; Henderson et al., 1989; Lenskyj, 1988). For women time away from work does not necessarily mean leisure since they have other roles and responsibilities to fulfil. Women seldom find blocks of time for leisure. They steal
"free" time as they can (Deem, 1988; Wimbush; 1988). Moreover, considering leisure to be in contrast to paid employment renders women's experiences "... irrelevant, peripheral, or merely difficult to study". (Green et al., 1990, p. 13). This concept, in association with the notion that women should always be available to take care of the needs of the family, means that it is very difficult for women to schedule leisure activities on a regular basis (Lenskyj, 1988).

Leisure as Activity

Leisure has also been equated with activity. Defining leisure as activity relates to the recreational pursuits done during free time. This concept is often used interchangeably with leisure (Henderson, 1990b; Wearing & Wearing, 1988). Henderson (1990b) noted that this definition does not fit with women's leisure experiences since there are different perceptions of what constitutes a leisure experience. Research has shown that women's leisure is highly fragmented, with women frequently experiencing work and leisure simultaneously, in both the home and the work environment (Deem, 1986; Henderson, 1990b; Henderson et. al., 1989; Green et al., 1990). According to Henderson et al., (1989) leisure defined as an activity does not fit with the female experience and research
focusing on activities does not capture the extent of activities considered by women as leisure.

**Leisure as Experience**

Recognition of the significance of gender has begun to add another element to the problem in defining leisure (Wimbush & Talbot, 1988). According to Henderson (1990b) leisure as an experience is more fitting with the female definition of leisure. Women's own determination of what constitutes a leisure experience is evident in this description of leisure.

Definitions associated with the female leisure experience, have been found to include freedom of choice, intrinsic rewards, and a sense of enjoyment (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1987). Having the chance to recuperate or "just do nothing" are also perceived by some women to be leisure (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1991). For most women the quality of the experience is paramount (Green et al., 1990). In studies of women's leisure completed in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia feelings of enjoyment and pleasure, relaxation, freedom, and the opportunity to "please oneself" were associated with leisure (Bialeschki & Michener, 1994; Green et al., 1987b; Hunter & Whitson, 1991; Shaw, 1988b).
Studies of women and their leisure experiences have demonstrated that women have difficulty in describing leisure, and therefore motivations for their participation (Green et al., 1987a; Henderson & Rannells, 1988). Green et al., (1987), noted difficulty for women in defining the concept of leisure because they viewed it as a "... vague and amorphous concept" (p. 76). However, women do find meaning in a number of aspects of their lives that might be considered to be leisure (Henderson, 1990b).

Leisure Constraints

Many factors contribute to the oppression of women in society and consequently, their oppression in relation to leisure: (a) women's performance of unpaid labor in the home; (b) the ascribed role of homemaker and childcare provider; (c) generalized oppression of women by men, politically, economically, and ideologically; and (d) the sexual and social control of women (Henderson et. al., 1989).

Much of the feminist research on leisure has focused on the leisure constraints experienced by women. Leisure constraints are defined by Jackson (1987), as "... anything which inhibits a person's ability to participate in a leisure activity or spend more time in that activity" (p. 204). Constraints also
stand in the way of the ability to take advantage of leisure services or achieve the desired level of satisfaction from participation (Jackson, 1987). Within a feminist framework of analysis, constraints are divided into two groups and identified as Antecedent or Intervening depending upon their origin. Antecedent constraints affect leisure preferences while Intervening constraints affect leisure participation (Henderson et al., 1989). Green et al., (1990) concluded that constraints to leisure experienced by females are numerous, unique, and distinct from those of men.

According to Lenskyj (1988), aspects of women's oppressive gender roles constrain the quantity and quality of their leisure. Women fulfilling their prescribed gender role are situated within the "endless workday" (Lenskyj, 1988, p. 235). It is assumed that these tasks can be done without any attention to scheduling. They can be done in a very short time leaving women with extended periods of leisure in the home. Alternatively, it is thought that women have a few tasks which they allow to take up their whole day (Lenskyj, 1988).
Women and The "Second Shift"

... a man works from sun to sun but a woman's work is never done (anonymous, cited in Henderson et al., 1989, p. 122).

Social and historical factors, in addition to the economic and technological status of the historical period, contribute to the extent to which women have leisure and the form that leisure takes (Cross, 1990). According to Stanley and Wise (1993), the family plays a central role in the development and continuation of women's oppression. Dominant social expectations and constraints also impact women's use of time and the degree to which they have access to discretionary time (Henderson et al., 1989). Andersen (1993) stated, "Although the family and the economy are usually perceived as separate institutions, they are, both in history and in the present, intertwined through the activities of production and reproduction" (p. 109). According to Moen (1992) American women have been part of the work force since before the turn of the century. However, it is now more common place for mothers of young children to be employed outside the home. Therefore, understanding current societal expectations of women with regard to work and the family, requires an examination of past experiences.

Prior to 1810, the beginning of the industrialization in the United States, society was
agrarian (Cross, 1990). During this period all family members worked predominantly in the home. Through the growing of crops and crafting goods for household use, the family was self-sufficient. Men, women and children participated in the running of the household, resulting in a lack of separation of work time and family time (Cross, 1990). Tilley and Scott (1978 in Andersen, 1993) identified this time as a period of "family-based economy".

Transformation to a "family-waged economy" occurred as a result of industrialization (Tilley & Scott, 1978 in Andersen, 1993). Changes in the mode of production, from home based to factory based where the emphasis was on the production of goods for an outside market, had a profound impact on the lives of people at that time (Cross, 1990). As the demand from the outside market grew, the output of goods had to be increased, resulting in the mechanization of production (Cross, 1990). The labor of men, women, and children contributed to the household income (Andersen, 1993; Cross, 1990). The change in the location of production resulted in wages being earned outside the home.

Movement of production from the private sphere of the home to the public sphere of the factory had repercussions for women's perceived social role and their contributions to family life (Cross, 1990). An
individual's worth was determined by their financial contribution to the household budget. Women's contribution was limited by the low wages paid to them by factory owners (Cross, 1990).

The change from an agrarian economy to an industrial economy meant that demands were now being placed on women from both inside and outside the home. These demands influenced the nature of women's work, resulting in the development of women's dual work role (Andersen, 1993; Cross, 1990). There is a social and economic necessity for the work done by women in the home. However, since this work does not contribute to the household income, it is not accorded any value (Andersen, 1993; Cross, 1990; Henderson et al., 1989).

The third period of economic change was identified by Tilley and Scott (1978 cited in Andersen, 1993), as the "family-consumer economy". This period was considered to be an extension of "family-wage economy". This period saw women entering the work force in increasing numbers. However, since societal expectations are slow to change regarding the expectations of women they continue to have the responsibility for home and childcare. Many women are expected therefore, to take on both roles. According to Moen (1992) when women began to combine employment with the mothering of young children, "... the cross-
pressure in women's lives, intensified" (p. 125). This expectation results in women fulfilling a dual work role otherwise described by Hochschild (1989), as the "second shift".

The traditional or economic definitions of work as paid employment outside the home does not consider essential parts of the female experience. Stanley (1987) rejected the narrow economic view of it as paid work, encouraging viewing it as all obligations of women. In support of this definition Green et. al., (1990) advocated the use of the word "work" as an "elastic" term (p. 5) when studying women's leisure. This enables consideration to be given to both paid work outside the home in addition to the unpaid work done by women inside the home (Andersen, 1993; Green et al., 1990, Stanley, 1987).

No value is placed on work inside the home, a private service which women provide for men and children (Andersen, 1993; Deem, 1982). The diverse demands of housework were described by Andersen (1993) as, "... the physical work of doing tasks as well as the mental efforts of noticing and remembering the chores that need doing, mentally arranging the tasks that need doing, and keeping track of the work to be done" (pp. 110-111).
As a result of women's dual responsibilities, research has shown that it is difficult for women to set aside time solely for leisure (Deem, 1986, Green et al., 1990). Hargreaves (1989) noted that the worst situation is experienced by mothers with young children who also work outside the home. For these women distinction between work and leisure is blurred. Moreover, according to Sichtermann (1988), women working both inside and outside the home also bear a third burden in their lives. This burden is described as the representation of ways in which the conflicting demands can be met. Sichtermann (1988) stated, "In reality women are crushed between job and housework and they exhaust themselves in their effort to unite the two ..." (p. 278).

Research has demonstrated that the multiple role demands of women, imposed by social expectations, result in a very different experience of leisure (Henderson, 1991b; Green et al., 1987a, Green et al., 1990). The social construction of gender, in addition to social factors such as race and class, serve to differentiate the multiplicity of experiences of women. It is, therefore, essential to consider the social, historical, and cultural contexts of women's lives in order that there may be a deeper and more insightful
understanding of their experiences (Green et al., 1990; Henderson et al., 1989; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988).

Work, whether in the home or in the work force, acts as a constraint to leisure for women. However, women’s labor in the public sphere can bring both advantages and disadvantages. Deem (1982) identified a number of advantages to female involvement in the work force. First, involvement in a socially valued institution brings social prestige and increased social status. It also brings economic benefits, including the ability to purchase household services and labor saving devices, as well as potentially increasing discretionary income and facilitating participation in leisure activities outside the home (Deem, 1982). Employed women had more leisure interests than non-employed women as a result of the increased availability of money and the availability of time due to planning for family, work and personal leisure (Allison & Duncan, 1987; Deem, 1986). Moen (1992) added to the benefits of paid work by including the promotion of self-esteem and the creation of opportunities for future generations of women.

There are, however, disadvantages associated with involvement in paid work outside the home. Not only must time be committed to work, but women still retain the major responsibility for home and childcare.
According to Moen (1992), "... the combination of work and family roles is more stressful for women than for men. Men are expected to concentrate on their work while women must take on work over and above their domestic obligations. Even when men contribute it tends to be "helping" their lives rather than taking major responsibility for household tasks" (p. 63). As previously explained, this situation has the effect of forcing women to work a "double shift"—outside and inside the home. The social expectation of the female as primary caregiver, even if she is involved in work outside the home, serves to limit the time and energy available for leisure (Deem, 1982; Green et al., 1990; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988).

The multiple roles fulfilled by women contribute to the fragmented nature of their leisure experience (Deem, 1986; Green et al., 1990; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988). The description of leisure for women as a "Relative Freedom" is precipitated by the many factors which impinge and constrain leisure involvement (Wimbush & Talbot, 1988). Within the home many women double-up on activities, engaging in what could be considered as a leisure activity while completing some aspect of work (Deem, 1986). This occurs both in the home and the work place. The fragmented and spontaneous nature of women's leisure time also serves
to prohibit effective planning of leisure activities, since there are limited numbers of time "blocks" available (Green et al., 1987a, 1990). There is no notification of time off and as a result the distinction between work and leisure is blurred (Hargreaves, 1989). Therefore, due to household obligations and family commitments, women are at a disadvantage with regard to the extent and availability of time for leisure (Shaw, 1994).

Based on societal expectations working mothers are expected to fulfill a dual role. In addition to working outside the home gender role socialization promotes their responsibilities for the care of the home and the family. These dual roles interact to constrain the leisure experiences of women.

The impact of these responsibilities on leisure is exacerbated by women putting the needs of others before those of themselves.

The Ethic of Care

Gilligan (1982) in her book In a Different Voice examined the way in which women talk about their lives. She examined the development of women, to facilitate increased understanding of identity formation and moral development in adolescence and adulthood (Gilligan, 1982). The notion of the ethic of care is demonstrated
in the study by women's definition of themselves and their concept of self-worth in association to their relationships and roles in the lives of others. Their ability to care for and protect other people in their lives is the vehicle for their identity. As Gilligan (1982), stated "... identity is defined in a context of relationship and judged by a standard of responsibility and care" (p. 160).

Societal structures and ideologies inhibit many women in their leisure experiences (Green et al., 1987, 1990; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988). As a result of gender role socialization females are expected to fulfill the home making and caring role within the family.

The ethic of care has been identified by Henderson et al., (1989) as a constraint to leisure that is unique to women. It is associated with women's roles as primary care givers within the family. As noted by Hunter and Whitson (1991), "... caregiving is rarely shared on anything like an equal basis" (p. 223) with women more likely to take the responsibility. This factor contributes to the understanding of why family commitments and family structure constrain women's leisure (Shaw, 1994). The ideology of familism, in its reification of women's central care giving roles, demonstrates the effects of the ethic of care in
constraining women's leisure experiences (Hunter & Whitson, 1991).

For women, leisure frequently comes second to family and/or work responsibilities, particularly when children are dependent. It has been found that mothers in particular seem to expect to subordinate their own leisure and defer to the needs of the family members often under the guise of ethic of care (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1991; Henderson & Allen, 1991). According to Henderson (1990) mothers perceive themselves as family members first and individuals second.

A qualitative study conducted by Bialeschki and Michener (1994) with fifty three women nearing the end of active mothering focusing on women's leisure from life course/life span and family life stage perspectives supported this notion. Women in the study recognized their own leisure experiences being interrupted because of family needs, but according to Bialeschki and Michener (1994), they also gained a sense of pleasure from meeting those needs. The researchers also found that research participants acknowledged the prioritizing of family needs until after the children were grown. Self-oriented leisure activities were suspended during active mothering. The women in the study perceived that a lack of autonomy
was inevitable until later life when their roles would become less restrictive (Bialeschki & Michener, 1994).

The notion of an ethic of care can also be related to women doing something for leisure that involves "taking care of themselves" (Gilligan, 1982). Leisure can be used to care for the self. It is a means of coping with the stress associated with everyday life and promoting a self of well-being (Bialeschki & Michener, 1994).

Shank (1986) examined the ethic of care as it relates to taking care of the self. From the study he developed 4 typologies to address this issue. The typologies show a sequential movement towards recognition of the role that leisure can play in their lives, and effectively incorporating it into their everyday life (Shank, 1986). Typology A, "Insignificance", identified the stage in which the women trivialized the topic of leisure in their life. Becoming aware of the impact of limited discretionary time and wanted to increase personal leisure but were not taking action to do so was identified as Type B, "Insight". Typology C, "Transition", was the stage in which the women began to make changes regarding leisure in their lives which were more self directed. A further development of this notion is demonstrated by the women in Shanks' (1986) study who recognized the
importance of personal time. Typology D was labeled by Shank (1986) as "Integration". By incorporating leisure into their lifestyle, as an integral part of the many roles that they play, women in his study acknowledged the importance of leisure and the essential role it played in their lives. Moreover, Shank (1983) noted that women who take care of themselves are better equipped to nurture others. He stated "... self-nurturing leisure can become a means by which working mothers can cope more effectively with role-overload" (p. 66). As such leisure was advocated as an important means for women to cope with the many roles they are expected to fulfill.

Sense of Entitlement

The ethic of care, as it relates both to others and self, in association with the social role of women in society, are contributory factors to women's perception to their right to experience leisure. As noted by Gilligan (1982), the psychological development and being of women focuses on their relationship with others rather than their rights as individuals.

This factor impacted women's perceptions of their entitlement to leisure. An exploratory study of 21 women interviewed with open-ended questions, produced two typologies relating to the research participants'
sense of entitlement; (a) "Of Course ...", and (b) "Yes, But ..." (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1991). While the women in the first group emphatically stated their right to leisure in their life, the responses of the second group were followed by a clarifying statement. Further investigation showed that despite their responses, in reality leisure did not appear to be a priority. The responsibilities of work and family preempted their own leisure experiences (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1991). Despite indicating that they felt deserving of leisure, the research participants did not invest time in ensuring that they had leisure. Some dissonance occurred between the perception and the reality of their leisure experience occurred.

Despite the contradictions in the findings of Henderson and Bialeschki (1991), the research demonstrated that women felt a sense of entitlement to leisure. The work of Griffith (1982) in the United States and Deem (1982) in the United Kingdom demonstrated that women in these studies felt that they were less deserving of leisure than was shown by the recent study. Henderson and Bialeschki (1991), noted that this change may be the result of the changing attitudes and roles of women in the past decade. In addition, Henderson and Bialeschki (1991) speculated that women today may believe that they are making
greater strides towards equality than is actually occurring.

From the limited research in this area it is evident that the ethic of care and a sense of entitlement, both singly and in combination, act as constraints to women's leisure.

The Social Control of Women's Leisure

All of the research pertaining specifically to the restrictions on this aspect of women's lives has been completed in the United Kingdom (Green et al., 1987; Green et al., 1990). Despite limited feminist analysis of the social control of women's leisure, it can be seen that this aspect of women's lives is one of the areas where women's behavior is most closely regulated (Green et al., 1987b, 1990).

According to Green et al., (1990), the social control of women's leisure is predicated upon gender role expectations and perceptions of femininity within society. Restrictions such as economic dependence and assumptions regarding the appropriate behavior of women both act as a means by which women are controlled in their leisure behavior (Green & Hebron, 1988; Green et al., 1990).

The social control of women can take place both inside and outside the home. Although it is generally
carried out by men, other women can also contribute to the control of the leisure experiences of other women (Green & Hebron, 1988; Green et al., 1987b). Women who buy into this model of controlling women's experiences play a role in its implementation. Their opinions and innuendos also serve to control the ways in which women spend their leisure time and the activities in which they become involved.

According to Green et al., (1987b), the restriction of women on a day-to-day basis occurs within structures of patriarchal capitalism, serving to maintain the status quo of male dominance and female subordination. This regulation is manifest in various forms. First, control can occur in negotiations with individual men in the private sphere of the home (Green & Hebron, 1988, Green et al., 1987b, 1990; Woodward & Green, 1988). Being a good wife and good mother are noted by Green et al., (1987b), as ways in which women are constrained in their leisure. The social definition of these roles results in women being "on call" for the demands and needs of their family.

Green et al., (1987b) noted ideologies regarding appropriate female behavior also influence the ways in which women can spend their leisure outside of the home. Leisure experiences separate from their partner can create conflict, particularly if it takes place
outside the home. The disapproval and displeasure of males towards women going out drinking as a means of leisure is related to definitions and attitudes toward female sexuality. Other means preventing women from engaging in certain behaviors outside the home are based on making women feeling guilty because of their responsibilities in the home (Green & Hebron, 1988; Green et al., 1987).

Green et al., (1990), suggested that becoming a mother is a pivotal point in women's lives. The increased responsibilities and change in status in addition to material circumstances, produce changes in their leisure patterns. Their leisure patterns become more home centered and family oriented. Because of gender role expectations it is the women's "responsibility" to take care of the home and the family. Having to ask partners to take care of the child/children, to enable involvement in a leisure activity to occur is another means by which men can control the leisure experiences of women (Green et al., 1987b).

Outside of the home, males have traditionally implemented a number of subtle and overt strategies to communicate to women that they are not welcome in certain places. These strategies range from joking and ridicule to sexual innuendo. Displays of open
hostility and the threat of physical harm also communicate a message to women that they are not welcome at a particular public place (Green et al., 1987b; Green et al., 1990).

The social control of leisure can be seen as "policing" of one gender by another (Green et al., 1990). These actions serve to constrain women's leisure experiences.

Research Paradigms

... all research is informed by deep philosophical assumptions and commitments that shape the manner in which individuals and groups conceptualize both the nature and purpose of the research enterprise (Sparkes, 1992, p. 2).

Patton (1990) described a paradigm as "a world view" or a "general perspective" (p. 37). It has also been described by Bogdan and Biklen (1992) as "a way of looking at the world, the assumptions people have about what is important, and what makes the world work (p. 33). Paradigms serve as lenses through which to see the world allowing it to be made sense of in different ways. In effect, they shape how we think and act (Sparkes, 1992). In support of this notion Stanley and Wise (1993) described paradigms as a "... theoretically derived world view which provides the categories and concepts through which we construct and understand the world" (p. 153).
The acceptance of a paradigm means that the researcher, operating within that paradigm, approaches the investigation and reports the findings of the investigation in a particular way. Therefore, according to Sparkes (1992), research strategy and design cannot be separated from the paradigm within which the research is situated.

Although there are numerous definitions of paradigms, they are divided into two principle groups - positivist and post-positivist. The distinction between the two relates to the philosophical premise upon which they operate. The positivist paradigm centers around the world being composed of "observable, measurable facts" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 6). It is assumed that there is a real world in which there are hard, tangible facts that are capable of being quantified by observation and measurement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sparkes, 1992). Therefore, the objective of positivist research is prediction and control in order that findings can be generalized to the larger population. The emphasis is on value free research from an etic or objective perspective (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The nature of positivist research design and methodologies has significant implications for the study of women. According to Jayarante and Stewart
the translation of individual experiences into categories, predefined by researchers, as frequently occurs in positivist research, distorts the female experience and leads to the silencing of women. Therefore quantitative methods, as associated with positivist research, "... may never produce the kind of richly textured "feeling for the data" that qualitative data can produce" (Jayarante & Stewart, 1991, p. 93).

Alternative paradigms are covered by the umbrella term of post-positivist. This term can assume many different lenses through which the world may be viewed. The ontology of these paradigms is that the world is socially constructed encompassing multiple realities which are complex and ever changing (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Within the post-positivist tradition, the researcher becomes the major research instrument as they formulate and ask questions, in addition to interacting with the research participants. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) within post-positivist paradigms, "... the knower and the known are inseparable" (p. 37). Since interaction between the researcher and the researched is advocated there is no claim of objectivity either within the research design or in the analysis of data.

Post-positivist paradigms include the interpretive paradigm and the critical paradigm. Within the
interpretive paradigm the researcher not only observes the social world but also interprets it. The emphasis is on social knowledge within a historical context. Therefore, according to Westkott (1990), "... truths are historical rather than abstract" (p. 61). Interpretation and understanding, rather than prediction and control, is one of the significant differences between positivism and post-positivism. There is a concern within post-positivist research to understand the world as it is based on the multiple experiences of those who are part of it. As noted by Sparkes (1992), "... truth ... is what we make it to be based on shared visions and common understandings that are socially constructed (p. 31).

The critical paradigm goes beyond the descriptive level of meaning making through interpretation. The actions and experiences of individuals or groups are given consideration in the context of wider social, historical, political and economic movements. The researcher "... digs beneath the surface of historically specific, oppressive social structures" (Sparkes, 1992). Therefore, it is an assumption of the critical paradigm that power relationships, within an oppressive societal structure, have an impact upon the way in which individuals or groups of people experience the world. The critical paradigm also assumes that
there are groups in society who hold power and there are also those without power. This power imbalance is perpetuated by social institutions. Moreover, those individuals or groups who have power and privilege have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo (Griffin, 1990, cited in Sparkes, 1992).

Research within the critical paradigm focuses on the importance of raising individual and group consciousness to the oppression in order to work towards social change. According to Lather (1991),

... critical inquiry is a fundamentally dialogic and mutually-educative enterprise. The present is cast against an historical background while at the same time the naturalness of social arrangements is challenged so that social actors can see both the constraints and the potential for change in their social situation (p. 63).

These differing world views have precipitated a paradigm debate within the social sciences. This debate surrounds research methods and theories, the researchers role and, in addition, their interaction with the research participants.

Summary

In summary, this chapter presented a review of the background literature and provided a theoretical framework for the study.

Past research on leisure has given limited attention to the experiences of women. It was not
until the 1980s that feminist research began to examine the experiences of women. Prior to this the focus was on the male experience of leisure. This androcentric research did not facilitate the investigation of the ways in which women's social position results in their unique experience of leisure. The meaning of leisure and the constraints to leisure experienced by women, such as the impact of the gender role expectations, ethic of care, and a sense of entitlement, were found to be important considerations in examining women's leisure. Research within a feminist framework allowed women's experiences to be understood within the complete social context of their lives.

Statistics have shown that mother's with young children are returning to the work place in unprecendeted numbers. Moreover, gender role expectations mean that working mothers are expected to fulfill two demanding roles. The meaning and experience of leisure for these women warrants investigation.

In order to explore the experiences of women it is important that women are the focus of the study. Therefore, research within a post-positivist paradigm and from a feminist perspective is important when studying women's leisure.
Chapter III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The central purpose of the research was to examine the meaning and experience of leisure for working women with an infant, toddler or preschool child. The study focused on leisure in the everyday lives of the six participants.

This chapter will include (a) a description of the interpretive paradigm; (b) the research design and data collection; (c) establishing trustworthiness; and (d) the data analysis process.

Design Choice

**Interpretive Paradigm**

The ontology of post-positivist research, including the interpretive paradigm, is based on the premise that the world is socially constructed. Moreover, complex multiple realities exist and are ever-changing (Sparkes, 1992). According to Henderson (1991a), assumptions relating to interpretive research
include: (a) multiple realities, relationships, connectedness, wholeness, and inclusiveness; (b) an emphasis on induction and grounded theory; (c) organic processes that focus on meaning; and (d) subjectivity and perspectivity (p. 23).

Therefore, the goal of the interpretive paradigm is the understanding of social reality from an individual's own perspective and in a particular situation (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). There are a range of research traditions within the interpretive paradigm including phenomenology, case study and ethnography (Sparkes, 1992).

The assumptions of the interpretive paradigm, together with those associated with conducting research from a feminist perspective, had implications for the choice of research design and methodologies implemented in this study.

**Methodological Assumptions**

As stated by Sparkes (1992),

... all researchers make assumptions of some kind or other in relation to issues of ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology and that these assumptions tend to cluster together and give coherence within the framework of particular paradigms. What this means is that we cannot, and do not, enter the research process as empty vessels or as blank slates that data imprints itself upon (p. 14).
A feminist perspective will be assumed throughout the study. This has implications for the objectives of the research as well as its design.

Feminist research has an important role to play in changing and correcting the invisibility of the female experience and the search for social change, leading to a preferred future for women (Henderson, 1990a). Lather (1986) noted, "... the overt ideological goal of feminist research is to correct both the invisibility and the distortion of the female experience and find ways relevant to ending women's unequal social position" (p. 68).

Harding (1987) identified two feminist epistemologies; feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint. The former, developed out of a feminist critique of the social sciences, is a response to the sexist assumptions and biases within research. Feminist empiricist research identifies the androcentric nature of social science research and then designs research to address this issue. In contrast feminist standpoint epistemology seeks to explore feminist knowledge by focusing on women's experiences and their understanding of the world. As such the catalyst for the research is the female experience of everyday life. In acknowledgement of this the power within the research relationship changes, with the
research participant being the "knower in the everyday world", and the researcher relinquishing the role of knower of all things (Scraton & Flintoff, 1992, cited in Sparkes, 1992).

Research from a feminist standpoint has significant implications for research design and data collection, as well as the role of the researcher and researched within the study (Harding, 1987). Stanley and Wise (1993) encouraged thinking of theory as "maps". As such it provides "paths and footholds" in the process of creating women's liberation (p. 71).

There is no claim of neutrality in feminist inquiry. There is a recognition that the researcher's cultural beliefs and behaviors shape the research and their analysis of it (Harding, 1987). Consequently, the result is openly ideological research in which there is no claim of objectivity since the researchers values are central to it. Stanley and Wise (1993) stated, "... the presence of the researcher as an ordinary human being with the usual complement of human attributes, cannot be avoided" (p. 150).

The power relationship between researcher and researched, as seen in traditional positivist research, is challenged (Scraton & Flintoff, 1992, cited in Sparkes, 1992). The research design is based on collaborative research between the researcher and the
participants, emphasizing cooperation between rather than power over. Features of research conducted within a feminist perspective include the goal of shared power, ownership of the information by everyone in the study and a rejection of the traditional notions of objectivity, and are features of research conducted within a feminist framework (Stanley & Wise, 1993). The women's experience and their perception of it are at the center of the research. Consequently, Fay (1975) noted, critical inquiry of which feminism is a part is a "... fundamentally dialogic and mutually educative enterprise" (cited in Lather, 1986b, p. 277).

It should be noted that it is not the intent of this study to generalize the findings to all women. The data will be specific to the women involved in the study, giving meaning and explanation to leisure as a part of their total life experience.

By working with the women participating in this study I wanted to explore and describe the meaning and experience of leisure for them. This would enable me to gain an understanding of the meaning of leisure in their lives and the factors which influence their experience of it. Therefore, the study is interpretive, enabling a base of information to be produced, involving "thick description" of the research participants leisure lives. The exploratory nature of
this study and the data gathered was designed to enable me to identify more focused topics for future research.

However, since the research is framed by a feminist perspective, it is inevitable that there are elements of the critical paradigm within it. One such element of critical research is the goal of change or "praxis" (Lather, 1986b). The scope of this study does not allow for the praxis element of critical inquiry as discussed by Lather (1986b). However, increased recognition and awareness of their own situation as a result of the research process, may empower them to make changes themselves within their own social situation.

Up until the last fifteen years, leisure research has represented and focused primarily on the preferences, participation, and experiences of the dominant (white, male, middle class) groups (Green et al., 1990; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988). In contrast, according to Henderson et al., (1989), "... women's experiences have been ignored, distorted, and misrepresented" (p.231). The choice of research design was based on the need to develop an understanding of how the social events and expectations of working mothers impacted the meaning and experience of leisure in their lives. The design choice enabled an in-depth description of these experiences in their own words.
To facilitate this examination it was decided to implement a multiple case study approach.

Case Studies

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) defined a case study as a "... detailed examination of one setting, or one single subject, or one single depository of documents, or one particular event" (p. 62). According to Stake (1988) a case is something or someone that is considered worthy of close examination in order to gain an understanding of its complex nature.

The case study design facilitated the examination of leisure in the context of the lives of six working mothers.

Generalizability

The frame of reference for generalizability within post-positivist research changes from that of positivist research. Reference to the number of research participants, in order that the results can be applied to a similar site and subjects, is not a concern for research within the interpretive paradigm. In contrast, the objective is to develop an understanding of human actions and events, and the interpretation of these events and actions within the socially constructed world (Lincoln & Guba, 1985;
Patton, 1990). As noted previously, it is not the intent of this research to generalize the findings to all women. The data will be specific to the women involved in the study, giving meaning and explanation to leisure as a part of their total life experience.

By working with the women who participated in this study I sought to explore and describe the meaning and experience of leisure for them as working mothers. This focus enabled me to gain an understanding of the meaning of leisure in their lives and the factors which influence their experience of it.

Transferability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Patton (1990), in post-positivist research transferability replaces the term generalizability. Transferability is associated with how the individuals studied are representative of those to which the results may be generalized (Henderson, 1990). However, Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated, "... it is not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability; it is his/her responsibility to provide the data base that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of the appliers" (p. 359).

Transferability is claimed by the reader of the study rather than the writer. I have addressed this
aspect of trustworthiness by presenting "thick description" of the data (i.e., wide in scope and detailed in depth) in the presentation of the research. The findings are presented in narrative form. Direct quotations from the interviews are used to illustrate the development of themes. This method was used to enhance the feeling for the reader that it is possible to contemplate a transfer.

The Role of the Researcher

According to Lather (1986a),

Once we recognize that just as there is no neutral education there is no neutral research, we no longer need to apologize for unabashedly ideological research and its open commitment to using research to critique and change the status quo (p. 67).

According to Denzin (1989) the researcher brings perceptions, experiences and interpretations to the problem, regardless of the methods used. He went on to say that "value-free interpretive research is impossible" (p.23). Acknowledgement of this factor is addressed within the research by attention to dependability and confirmability.

Dependability and Confirmability

Stanley and Wise (1993) noted,

... it is inevitable that the researcher's own experiences and consciousness will be involved in the research process as much as they are in life.
... all research must be concerned with the experiences and consciousness of the researcher as an integral part of the research process (p. 58).

To enhance the dependability and confirmability of the study I implemented journaling with a reflexive component. The journal included questions and comments I had while conducting the study, questions and thought processes relating to the data analysis, and a record of feelings related to the conduct of the research.

Researchers must make available to other people the reasoning procedures which underlie the knowledge produced out of the research (Stanley & Wise, 1993). Conducting the research within a feminist framework required a particular set of values being overlaid on the study. Stanley and Wise (1993) stated, "... the researcher's self should be at the center of the research. It should be made a central part of the researchers's report not hidden and disguised through claims of objectivity and science" (p. 60). These values were recorded in the reflexive journal. I acknowledge that my own values and experiences cannot be separated from the research process and interpretation of data. A record of these was made both before and during the research process.
Research Methodology

The Research Participants

The participants in this study were six women, three African American and three European American, who worked a minimum of 30 hours per week outside the home and had at least one infant, toddler or preschool child. Five of the participants were located in a large city in the north-east and the sixth participant was from a large mid-western city.

Sampling and Gaining Access

Participants for the study were selected by purposeful sampling. The rationale for this method of sampling was to select individuals who could contribute a lot of information to fulfil the research objectives. Patton (1990) stated, "... information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research..." (p. 169). The purposeful sampling method used in this research was the snowball or chain sampling method. This method enabled me to identify cases that were information-rich by asking participants for names of other women in similar social circumstances (Patton, 1990).

To gain access to women who met these social criteria I contacted a friend who is a working mother
with a preschool child. She gave me names, addresses, and telephone numbers of friends and working colleagues who fitted these social categories. In turn I asked these women if they could give me names of other women whom they felt would make a significant contribution to the research. In order to gain "rich, thick data" the sample was small and purposive (Patton, 1990).

According to Stanley and Wise (1993), "... all research involves as its basis an interaction, a relationship between researcher and researched" (p. 161). Prior to making contact with prospective research participants I was aware of the importance of creating an atmosphere and a relationship in which the women participating in the research would feel comfortable in revealing aspects of their lives and personal experiences.

My initial contact with the participants was by telephone, using a pre-established script (Appendix A). The outcome of each call was recorded on a call record sheet (Appendix B). In view of the demanding lifestyle of working mothers, in all cases it was necessary to make several telephone calls to reach them. Upon making contact I introduced myself, explaining my background and the purpose of the call. At this point if they were interested in participating I asked them if I could explain the study in more detail at that
time or if it would be more convenient for us to set an alternative time for me to contact them. It was necessary to contact four of the participants at an alternative pre-arranged time. This time was when the children were in bed or engaged in an activity which did not require their mother's attention. One woman suggested it might be easier for me to contact her at work. With the remaining women I discussed the study in more detail during the initial telephone conversation.

Either during the initial call or in a scheduled follow-up call, I explained their contribution to the study in more detail. This conversation included the purpose and nature of the research, their contribution to it, and an acknowledgement of their right to withdraw at any time. I explained how the interview would be structured and the steps that would be taken to ensure that the study was representative of their experiences. At the conclusion I gave the women an opportunity to ask questions or seek clarification.

Data Collection

All the women contacted made a decision to participate in the study. We set a mutually convenient time for the interview. As a follow-up to the telephone conversation I sent a letter detailing the
important aspects of our conversation and confirming
the date, time and location of the interview (Appendix
C). I also included a consent form for their review
and signature (Appendix D). If they had further
questions or concerns regarding the research I
encouraged them to call me collect so that I could
address them prior to the interview. However, I did
not receive any calls. Approximately one week prior to
the scheduled interview date I contacted each
participant to confirm the date, time and location of
the interview. At that time I also gave them a
telephone number where I could be reached if it was
necessary to reschedule the appointment.

In order to maximize the convenience of the
interview location, the research participants chose the
site. Half of the interviews took place in the
participant's home and the other half took place at the
participant's place of employment. If, in negotiating
the time and location of the interview, the participant
expressed a concern regarding the care of her child or
children, I assured them that I would have someone with
me who would care for her child/children.

One interview took place in the Midwest in late
April, 1994. Since I had to travel to the east coast
for 5 of the interviews, these interviews took place
within a one week time frame between June 6 - June 13, 1994.

**Interviews**

To capture the multiple realities of the research participants and enable them to describe their unique experiences in their own words, the primary method of data collection was the face-to-face interview using a general interview guide (Patton, 1990).

This method enabled me to outline the topics to be explored in the interview. However, dependent upon the experiences and responses of the respondent, the exact wording and order of the questions was subject to change. The interview guide (Appendix E) was used as a basic checklist during the interview process, allowing the same issues and concerns to be addressed with each informant. This instrument allowed me to draw upon the experiences of the participants in order to address the foci of the study.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicated, "The instrument in naturalistic inquiry ... is a sensitive homing device that sorts out salient elements and targets in on them. The instrument becomes more refined and knowledgeable in that process" (p. 224).

The face-to-face interview enabled me to examine the participants' past experiences, those of the
present and, what their projections and expectations were for the future (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The general interview guide was developed from the literature review, the researcher's personal experiences, and contributions from a panel of experts made up of my dissertation committee.

Patton (1990), suggested six categories of questions to be included in an interview:

(1) Experience/Behavior Questions
These questions seek responses relating to what a person does or has done. They solicit descriptions of an individual's experiences and activities. e.g., what activities do you engage in that you would consider to be leisure.

(2) Opinions/Values Questions
These are questions which attempt to determine what someone thinks about a situation or an individual. e.g., what impact does your role as a mother/wife have on your leisure activities.

(3) Feeling Questions
The individuals thought and feelings are sought to be understood from responses to these questions. e.g., do you feel you deserve to have leisure. Why?
(4) Knowledge Questions
These questions elicit factual information
i.e., something that is already known. e.g.,
what contribution does your husband make to
the running of the household.

(5) Sensory Questions
Response to these questions allow the
individual to describe their sensory
experiences i.e., what is seen, heard,
tasted, touched, and smelled. This category
of questions did not seem appropriate for the
focus of the study.

(6) Background/Demographic Questions
These questions are to obtain identifying
characteristics of the interviewee e.g.,
marital status, age, level of education.
e.g., tell me about yourself and your family.

These categories were used as a guideline for the
development of the interview schedule. Consideration
was given to the ordering of the questions to maximize
the development of trust and rapport between myself and
the research participants.

The interview guide was developed to elicit data
which would address the objectives of the research.
The wording and emphasis of the questions changed
depending on the personal experiences and life circumstances of the individual participants.

Prior to implementing the interview schedule I field tested the instrument while conducting the first two interviews. These women were asked to comment on the clarity and wording of the questions and their relevance to their situation (Glesne & Peskin, 1992). There were limited comments relating to the wording of the questions and structure of the interview. However, at this time it was suggested that there should be consistency in the use of the terms recreation and leisure. The feedback was used as a basis for making changes to the interview schedule. The field tests also enabled me to practice interview techniques and examine the logistics of this method of data gathering.

With the consent of the research participants, our conversations were tape recorded. This method enabled me to have a full record of what was said during the interview process. This method was particularly important since it provided the data for the research. The interviews were between 1.25 and 2.25 hours in length.

Field Notes

Field notes were made during and after the interview. Field notes are described by Bogdan and
Biklen (1992) as "... the written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in a qualitative study" (p. 107). Since there is no claim of objectivity in this form of research it was also important to have a personal account of the research experience. This forms the reflexive component of the field notes, in which the subjective side of the research process and outcomes is noted. As stated by Bogdan and Biklen (1992), "The emphasis is on speculation, feelings, problems, ideas, hunches, impressions and, prejudices" (p. 121). In this form field notes contribute to the trustworthiness of the data. The field notes provided a forum for ideas and thoughts to be recorded. These records included notes relating to the wording of questions, the atmosphere in which the interview was conducted, and the response to the interview by the interviewee.

**Journals**

In addition to conducting a face-to-face interview, in order to triangulate the data, I provided the research participants with a journal. I requested that they write in the journal for a period of one week. Recognizing the external demands on working mothers, I did not want this task to become a burden to
them. The journal specifically addressed their leisure experiences during that time frame. They were encouraged to include personal feelings and emotions relating to their leisure experiences and the meaning they have in their life.

A prepaid self-addressed envelope was provided for the return of the journal. Three journals were returned and became part of the data for analysis.

Ethics

Approval for the research proposal was obtained from the Human Subjects Review Committee at The Ohio State University. Written consent forms were used to obtain informed consent from the research participants. This method informed participants that involvement in the study was voluntary and that they may withdraw at any time. In addition they were made aware that their confidences would be protected and their anonymity preserved (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

Prior to the start of the interview I secured the participant's permission to audio-tape our conversation. At this time they were also made aware that the tape recorder could be turned off anytime at their request.

At the conclusion of the interview the research participants were asked to select a pseudonym to be
used during the write up of the research. The purpose of this was twofold; to give the participants some power within the research process and to ensure the protection of their confidentiality and anonymity.

Establishing Trustworthiness

The rigor of positivist research is judged by internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1989). However, as noted by Sparkes (1992), "... it is inappropriate for positivistic criteria to be utilized when passing judgement on a piece of interpretive research or critical research. To do so doesn't make sense given the starting position ..." (p. 46).

Since the ontology and epistemology of post-positivist research differs from that of positivist work, the rigor of the work is examined in alternative ways. Post-positivist research requires the establishment of trustworthiness. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the basic issue related to trustworthiness is, "How can an inquirer persuade his/her audience (including self) that the findings of the inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?" (p.290).
Credibility

In post-positivist research credibility is equated with the positivist term internal validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility relates to the extent to which the realities constructed by the participants match those presented by the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1989; 1985).

The credibility of the study was addressed throughout the research process by attention to member checks, triangulation, and peer debriefing. These activities and their contribution to the credibility of the study are discussed below.

Member Checks

According to Lincoln and Guba (1989), member checking is "... the single most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 239). It is a method through which the participants in the study can confirm what was said and the accuracy of the researchers interpretation of it.

Member checks were conducted throughout the study. During the interviews I sought clarification on points of discussion. In addition, a verbatim transcript of the interview was sent to the research participant for review relating to the accuracy of the document. This process also gave them the opportunity to add any
information they felt was pertinent and which they omitted during the face-face interview. It also gave them the opportunity to withdraw information. A deadline was set for the return of the transcripts. A self-addressed envelope was provided for this purpose.

A total of four transcripts were returned. Of these transcripts, two had corrections relating to wording and grammar. A note of explanation accompanied the other two transcripts (See Chapter IV).

A letter of thanks was sent to those participants who returned their transcript (Appendix F). A follow up letter was sent to those participants who did not return them, encouraging them to do so (Appendix G). No additional transcripts were returned as a result of the letter.

**Triangulation**

It was previously thought that a single item of information should not be given credence unless that information could be triangulated with another source (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This notion carries a positivist implication since the assumption is that there is a truth to be had and if we use enough data gathering methods it will be found, enabling researchers to tell the "right" story (Denzin, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). If the social action of an
experience is unique to the individual then there is little likelihood of the same interpretation between different resources (Denzin, 1989).

It is now acknowledged that triangulation allows the exploration of different perceptions rather than attempting to determine the truth (Lincoln & Guba, 1989). Triangulation allows the researcher to obtain information from different sources and reveal different aspects of what is being studied (Patton, 1990). The purpose of triangulation is therefore the exploration of different aspects and perceptions of individual experience, rather than an attempt to determine the "truth".

In order to triangulate data from the research participants, they were interviewed and also asked to keep a journal for a period of one week.

**Peer Debriefing**

A professional peer, not involved in the study, was used by the researcher to "... shore up credibility, provide methodological guidance and serve as a cathartic outlet" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 283). This individual, in the capacity of peer debriefer, kept the researcher honest in her investigation, assisted in the exploration of the sequence of methodological steps and provided an outlet for
researcher catharsis. The interactions between the researcher and the peer debriefer served to curb the researcher's enthusiasm to create data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The peer debriefer was an African American graduate student in the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Although she had a personal and professional interest in qualitative research, she was not familiar with the literature on women's leisure.

As part of peer debriefing, regular meetings were scheduled between myself and the peer debriefer. During the meetings she served as a "devil's advocate", challenging ideas and asking questions to clarify my thinking.

**Prolonged Engagement**

People are more willing to talk about personal or sensitive issues once they feel they have developed some trust or rapport with the interviewer (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Lincoln and Guba (1985) quantify the development of trust with "daily engagement" of time (p. 303). The investment of prolonged periods of time at the site of the research was not possible in this research. This process would be intrusive and not suited to the research focus. However, the time devoted
to making contact with the research participants by letter and telephone prior to the interview helped in the effort to develop trust and rapport between myself and the research participants. In addition, I had contact with the participants during the interview and prepared the interview guide in such a way that questions relating to more personal or sensitive issues were towards the end of the interview, thus giving time for trust to develop.

As noted by Glesne and Peshkin (1992), trust and rapport are characteristics that once they have been established also have to be maintained. Contact with the informants continued throughout the study through member checking. In addition, at the conclusion of the study a letter of thanks was sent to each participant (Appendix H).

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis involves organizing what you have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what you have learned (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 127).

A verbatim transcription was made of the audio-tape from each interview. In addition, the research participant's journals became part of the data for analysis. My journal and field notes or memos were added to the data to be analyzed. To facilitate data
analysis all of the data sources were word processed into a similar format to the interview data. To assist in the process of analysis the transcripts were single spaced, with wide margins and line numbering. The transcripts were checked for accuracy by listening to the audiotapes and comparing them with the verbatim transcripts.

Lincoln and Guba (1986) described the inductive process as appropriate for a naturalistic study. This method allows for "multiple realities to be found within the data" and was "more likely to identify the mutually shaping influences" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 40). This process involved attempting to uncover embedded information and making it explicit.

The data were analyzed inductively both within and across cases. This process involved "identifying, coding and categorizing the primary patterns in the data" (Patton, 1990, p. 381).

To begin the analysis, each transcript was read twice. The first step in analyzing the data was coding. During this process the data were examined for patterns as well as for topics covered by the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Examples of patterns included socialization, ethic of care, and adaptations. A code book was developed, listing all the codes and sub-codes found in the data. Categories were initially derived
from key concepts, or important themes that emerged from reading the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

On a sentence-by-sentence basis, data statements, also known as meaning units, were highlighted. During this process the incidents or facts were marked and then rewritten as a concept. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) described coding as "... a progressive process of sorting and defining and defining and sorting those scraps of data ...that are applicable to the research process" (p. 133).

Once the codes were developed, the data were reviewed again and each unit (i.e. paragraph, sentence etc.) was marked with the appropriate coding category in the form of an abbreviation, e.g., E.O.C., Soc., leading to the development of themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

In order to facilitate the handling of the data, the transcripts were cut so that units of data could be placed in manilla folders, and labelled with one code. The units were labelled with the name of the participant and the page and line number of the transcript. This enabled me to easily refer back to the master copy of the transcript (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The codes were then collated and organized into more encompassing categories or themes.
Summary

An explanation of the research methodology was presented in this chapter. This chapter explained the philosophical assumptions related to the interpretive paradigm. Based on the philosophical assumptions, a discussion of the research design was presented. Methodological issues associated with the design including data collection, the establishment of trustworthiness and data analysis were addressed in this chapter. The following chapter is a presentation of the research data.
Chapter IV

DATA PRESENTATION

Introduction

This study focused on the meaning and experience of leisure in the lives of six working mothers with an infant, toddler, or preschool child. The interview transcripts were examined case by case as well as across case. The data in this chapter are presented in such a way that the voices of the participants are clearly evident. They describe, in their own words, their experience of leisure and their needs and desires in the context of their social and economic lives.

Through the use of member checks the women had the opportunity to check the accuracy of what was presented in the transcript. They were encouraged to add or delete any sections they felt necessary. Giving the women the opportunity to do this was an important aspect of the research process and it contributed to the trustworthiness of the data. The returned transcripts contained limited editing. Most women added to the statements made in the interview.
However, one transcript was returned with large sections of the transcript deleted. Part of the letter accompanying the returned transcript stated,

I read through the transcript and took out a lot of what I said rather than adding to it because I felt that much of what I said had no bearing on the question(s) you asked. In spots it seemed I was just rambling on.

Another participant had similar feelings. In her letter she wrote,

I hope you received some valuable information out of the interview, because much of what I read seems to ramble.

This participant, however, did not delete any of her transcript.

Biographies and Job Responsibilities of the Participants

Spencer

Spencer is a 29 year old white woman who lives in a northwest suburb of a large midwestern city. She has been married to her husband, an attorney, for six years and they have a two and a half year old son. The child attends daycare full-time. Based on her family income, lifestyle and education, she identifies as upper-middle class.

A nurse by profession, at the time of the interview, Spencer was also a full-time graduate student. In the past she has worked for the Health
Department as a Visiting Nurse. Presently she is working for a Home Health Care Agency doing visits and case management. Her average number of visits per week is 22, with 25 visits being considered full-time. However, on occasion she has been responsible for up to 35 visits in a week.

When asked to describe her job responsibilities and the demands of her work role outside the home, Spencer said,

I go to patients homes and I see them. I do mostly medicare which is skilled visits, which a lot of the time are very involved cases and a lot of times are indigent people and there's a lot of phone calls, calling doctors and we also have to supervise a case ... we have to supervise everyone else that is in the case. If there is physical therapy and occu ... with that comes personality conflicts with other people and you just have to kinda say you know ... this or that. As far as case management I do all the upkeep of the paper work that is required through HICPCA and the patient care conferences we have every other week. This is everyone who's on the case goes and we have to make sure that everything is going ok with everyone. So that's mainly it. I just go into homes and assess people there.

In discussing the demands of her job, Spencer spoke of some of the non-traditional work hours she is expected to maintain.

... I work every third weekend also. We're on call. And you're on call the entire 24 hours. If any calls come in you have to go out. Sometimes we have scheduled patients, sometimes we don't. Right now we do. We have an I.V. case on the weekend which is in the worst area of town that you could possibly imagine.
She also talked about the impact these demands have on her and her family.

It's a burden, it's a mental burden. I mean that even if ... its just the whole fact that for three days straight at any time of the night, anytime of the day, no matter what you do, where this is supposed to be your leisure time ... or like the time you are supposed to be relaxing its always in the back of your mind that you are going to get called ... it still weighs on your mind. You always have to carry ... make sure you have the pager with you, you have to make sure ... It's like (sigh). ... Yo just don't feel that you have a break from that week, because you need time when you're not dealing with it.

When asked if she considered her work to be stressful, she replied,

Yeah it is, because if someone ... like today I had ... before I even ... I was leaving the house and it was like they were paging me, paging me and I'm like ... and there's Mr. P. (patient) who wants to know when you are coming ... you really have to see this ... Mr. S (patient) wants .... Everyone wants me there and it's like I try not to make my patients real dependent on me but regardless they are going to and there's nothing that you can do about it. It's just like you are being pulled apart and everyone wants something and wants it now ... and its like aagh!

BJ

BJ is a 36 year old African American woman. She is married and has two children. Her oldest child, a daughter, is 10 years old and her second child, a son, is two and a half years old. Her daughter attends school and based on BJ's work schedule, her son is in daycare on a part-time basis. BJ and her family have lived in a suburban area of a large east coast city for
seven years. She identifies as "... working - working, middle class".

She works full-time as a computer operator. Her hours are from 8:00 p.m. - 8:30 a.m. on a three day on, four day off basis, for a total of 37.5 hours per week. Her husband is a computer programmer who works day time hours. In speaking of her role and responsibilities at work she stated,

Under the gun all the time. There's always changes .... Its a tough business. We have three platforms. For that we have to maintain IBM machines ... not just the machines. We run jobs like different payrolls, accounts payable, all different kinds ... manufacturing. We have ... run different jobs through the IBM system. We have a Hewlett Packard System and we have UNIYS System ...

BJ indicated that her work has deadlines associated with it. In addition, there are multiple and interconnected responsibilities associated with her position.

... when they blow up you have to call the person on call. We have to deal with people all the time but sometimes you call them and at awkward hours and you have to deal with ... not just the repercussions ... you have to deal with them saying they told you one thing and then they tell you another thing and they are waking up at three o'clock in the morning and can't even spell their own names right half the time ... then repeat what you said and then working up problem reports on them and after you .... Its very detailed because you have to ... if you have a problem ... a job go down on the IBM it may affect a job on another system. Another job on the HP may be waiting for ... on the Hewlett Packard ... maybe waiting for it and it will blow up because it will time out and you've got the problem over there and you've got to call Canada. In the mean time you have to
write all these things up in the data base, 
something else blow up .... Its really ... its 
like you're fighting fires a lot of times ... not 
all the time but the majority of the time. 
... So we're like a jack of all trades so to 
speak. And then you have a person who may be out 
sick, they have a person at lunch, they have a 
person at break ...its still got to be dealt with. 
We've got the phones ringing off the hook and 
something's wrong ... its hectic all the time. 

During her working career BJ experienced of 
working all three shifts. She explained the factors 
which affected her decision to work third shift and the 
ramifications this has for her family life. 

I'd always worked second shift. I switched first 
shift. First shift was too hectic 'cause getting 
the kids out in the morning. I tried working the 
first shift while I was going on the training 
phase. I was working on the first shift and the 
two and a half year old, he was two at the time 
... he was having a time adjusting and getting 
them out in the morning ... even getting the other 
one out in the mornings, but basically its him. 
He was potty trained and he started regressing, he 
started stuttering ... and he wouldn't talk to the 
sitter, not as much as he used to talk ... so it 
was an adjustment period for him. And then by the 
time I go to work and come home and cook, they 
eat, I fall asleep and won't eat that night ... so 
I neglect myself, find myself exhausted, more 
exhausted than I'd ever been in my life. ... I 
worked third shift since he's been born. 

BJ's work schedule also impacts on her experience 
of holidays. She explained the impact that her work 
schedule and shift rotation had on family holidays and 
events. 

If I rotate on ... my schedule is rotated to that 
shift at that particular time. Say I worked 
Thursday, Friday, Saturday for three months, 
Thanksgiving is on a Thursday , I have to work ...
I'm only there three days and they expect me to be there you know ... that's my regular scheduled shift ...

Kathleen

Kathleen, a 34 year old African American woman works in public relations for a very large data communications company located in an east coast state. She is a single parent with a three year old son. Her son is in daycare on a full-time basis. Kathleen lives in a suburban environment. She identifies as lower middle class.

Kathleen explained the responsibilities and demands of her job.

I have a demanding job. I work for a very large data communications company worldwide and I am the only person in public relations, therefore I support four or five major groups and I am responsible for all the public relations activity. I work in our corporate headquarters department. We support all of our subsidiaries worldwide, particularly focusing on four major countries. So I have a very stressful, demanding job ...

In explaining the length of her workday and the effect her responsibilities as a single parent have on it, she stated,

... it can involve anywhere between 40 and 60 hours a week but because I'm a single parent and I have responsibility for my son, unfortunately I don't have the flexibility to work the extra hours that I need to sometimes.
When asked about additional responsibilities associated with her position, Kathleen said that on occasion her job involves travelling.

I took four major trips in the last month so ... it does. Its sporadic, sometimes more planned some that makes it a little bit easier, but I do do some travelling.

It is evident that travelling on company business places specific demands on Kathleen.

Usually the travelling that I'm doing is around a specific tour, a press related tour or a training session. For instance the last session I went to in Chicago we met from seven in the morning 'til nine at night ... three days, long days. There is no free time. ... for your press tour you are travelling with senior executives, you're always on call. Even when you want to tear away and go back and just sleep in a room you feel obligated to be with your colleagues, have dinner with them or the press or something ... 

When asked if she felt that failing to socialize with her colleagues or clients would affect her career she stated,

... it would. Its just not the politically correct thing to do. I think when you travel for business, like I said you're on call, you're on business, you're on their time and your leisure time does not begin until ten at night.

Kathleen indicated that the demands of a business trip are more stressful than a regular day in the office.

... its above and beyond your regular job so your regular job doesn't go away. You've got to do a lot of work before you leave and you've got to finish work when you get back. While you're away you're checking your messages back and forth ...
Balancing her role as a single parent with the demands of her profession necessitated negotiations with her employers. She explained the tenuous balancing act she must negotiate between the two roles and the impact her responsibilities as a single parent have on her work role and career development.

It's tough. I have to really juggle that very sensitively because ... while at the same time they'll be sympathetic with the fact that I have to take care of that (her role as a mother), there will be certain things that'll be passed by me because I have a child and they know I have responsibilities. So I have to be very sensitive to that and it actually works the opposite where I'll probably take on things that I know that I really can't do but my boss will ask me just to let me know that there's nothing that he can't ask me to do .... It's a real tight balance and you have to do that because it's a very political game, particularly in my job and if I don't ... if I'm not there somebody else's going to be there.

Naomi

Naomi, an African American of West Indian descent was born and raised in a large east coast city. She is 35 years of age and has been married for seven years. She and her husband have two daughters, aged three and a half years and three months. Naomi works as a teacher in the public school system of a large east coast city. She currently teaches a learning disabled class. Her husband works nights. Naomi's older daughter is in daycare. At the time of the interview she was on maternity leave and able to take care of her infant daughter at home.
Naomi discussed her entry into her chosen profession.

I knew from high school that I either wanted to work with children or the elderly. I took a human growth and development course in high school and my love was more for children at that point. So I pursued that and found out which was the best school to go to for education. I applied and was accepted at Wheelock. Went to Wheelock and loved it. I've been in the (public school system) for the last 10.5 years.

The special demands of her profession were explained by Naomi. She also spoke of her colleagues reaction to the work that she does.

I have a lot of kids that have auditory processing problems, visual motor problems and a whole lot of things so I see it as being very hectic, very busy. Your adrenalin's going. I mean I love it but its ... it is, its very stressful. And yet I feel very that I'm very lucky because I have twelve kids. A lot of my colleagues who have quote, unquote regular ed. or special ed., but they have quote unquote special needs kids in with 25 kids. So they have all these other kids to deal with, 20 kids that they have to present the regular curriculum to and 5 kids that can't handle the regular curriculum so they have to have separate attention to them. So they say to me I don't know how you do it and I say to them I don't know how you do it during the course of the day.

Carol

Carol, a European American woman, is married with a two and a half year old daughter. She did not disclose her age. She has lived in a suburb of a large east coast city for seven years. An executive secretary by profession, Carol is employed at a data communications company. She identifies as middle class.
Carol described the major responsibility of her position as an executive secretary.

... I'm an executive secretary for one of the vice-presidents so it's more my job ... probably the major responsibility is just the dependability of being here. Having someone here as opposed to doing stuff with him.

She indicated that she works "at least 40 hours" in a week. Typically her work day is from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.. When asked if she worked weekends Carol answered, "very rarely ... very rarely ... occasionally if there is a big crunch I'll come in".

Elizabeth

Elizabeth, a European American, is married with a six year old daughter and a four year old son. They both attend daycare full-time and have done so since they were infants. Her husband is Greek who she identifies as an "... an entrepreneurial-type of sorts". She did not disclose her age.

For seven years she has worked as the Director of Work-Family Programs and Benefit Services at a large financial company, located in the downtown area of a large east coast city. Elizabeth lives in an environment which she described as "... not real suburban but it's not a city either". Based on how the government considers people and income she identifies as upper-middle class.
In talking with Elizabeth and discussing the responsibilities involved with her work, she indicated that she "had a very big interest in what you're (the researcher) are talking about". She explained the specifics of her position as follows:

I develop all of these programs which involve some of the things you see listed here (pointing to a brochure). But there are programs for working families. There are health and wellness programs. There are service recognition programs for long-term employees. There's special benefits that are executive-type related services. There's a lot of just general benefits communications. Like this thing sitting at my desk is a personalized statement about all benefits that we do for all employees. We just did that so there's a lot of the general benefits department communications. Or the Benefits Department logo which I designed which is the thing you see here in color. I have a lot of things that fall into my area, but most of it's pulling together the ... or try to pull together, in effect, the personal balance - the work balance in people's lives.

It was Elizabeth's perception that many co-workers were under great pressure because of the demands of their work. However, she did not feel that a similar kind of stress spilled over into her position. Her role within the company involves creating programs to assist employees in handling and minimizing the pressures on employees and their families. She stated, "We have a strong entrepreneurial culture which has a lot of pressure attached to it. As a result, it just puts us at the forefront and you have to keep driving. That pressure creates a lot of stress. Slowly but surely, working on ways in which we can help reduce that or - but it requires cultural change which is not something that's easy anyway. We aren't the only ones involved with it, but I can live it as well as ... I don't have the kind
of pressure that some people do in this company. Some people have extraordinary time pressure. A lot of late hours ... a lot of time on weekends ... a lot of emergency meetings at 5:30 and a lot of things that I don't have to worry about at the corporate level that would affect me as a family. There are a lot of people who couldn't make it here.

Unlike other employees within the company who have unpredictable demands on their time, Elizabeth indicated that her working hours were "... 8:30 - 5:30, regularly. But I do some things at home"

The Typical Workday

Having discussed the demands of their professions, we then talked about what demands they face when these are then combined with the demands of the family and the home. I asked the women to describe a typical day for them when they were required to be at work.

Through necessity the day begins early. This choice is made by Carol in order that she can get herself ready for work before her child begins to need her attention.

Generally I get up at 6 ... and I generally shower and get ready before I get my daughter up. Hopefully she'll sleep. This morning she was up at 5 so that kind of threw me out but generally I can get her to sleep, or at least lay on the couch and watch T.V. 'til I'm ready. Then I generally get her up very quickly and change her and take her to the daycare which is a few miles from my house.

Kathleen indicated that she also made a choice to get up earlier than her son in order to start to meet
the demands of the day, attend to needs that she was unable to meet the previous day or, do tasks that will ease some of the pressure later in the day or later in the week.

I'll set my alarm for an hour or two earlier and I'll take care of things I didn't get to the night before. It's work to get out in the mornings. It's like there's projects ... the project for me when I wake up is to get (her son) fed and dressed and myself fed and dressed.... I have to fix his lunch, I have to get his breakfast together, sometimes I cook dinner in the mornings so I don't have to ... 'cause when I get home from work I'm too tired, I don't have time to do ... plus I have to get dressed, I have to be professional. I have to ... to get my schedule together ...

The decision to extend the day by choosing to get up early was also made by Elizabeth. During the time between getting up and having to attend to the children's needs when they wake up, she takes time to work on projects related to her work outside the home. Once the children begin their day, Elizabeth's attention is focused on getting out of the house on time.

... maybe three out of five working days I get up at 5 and take my shower and go out and find the coffee pot and maybe pull out ... I get a lot of things to read here that I don't read at work, so I pull things out to read or I do a lot of my thinking time. I do a lot of things that I can write, or developmental things that I can do at home. So I'll try and pull an hour out maybe to do that. So from 5:30 'til 6:30 when ... the kids usually get up at 6:30 sometimes earlier. I don't know ... there's a magic ability, they seem to know when mom is up but I can't figure out how they do it! I sneak around so quietly. They get up. From 6:30 we get breakfast and from 7 we're getting dressed. At 7:30 we've got our teeth
brushed and our hair combed and we're out the door at either twenty of or quarter of 8.

In addition to the choices made by some of the participants to start their day before the rest of the family, Naomi and Elizabeth made specific choices related to their commute to work. These choices were made to ease some of the stress and enhance the quality of their day.

It takes about 45 minutes. It's about 45 minutes but I've found a nice route to work, a less stressful route than (route number). And I've found a wonderful classical music station on the radio that I just turn on and just listen to it. I can feel myself relaxing. ... I'm glad because a fellow colleague of mine showed me the route. I love to get in early at least by 30 minutes. (Naomi)

Elizabeth, who works in an office downtown, has also made decisions about her commute to work.

Right now my husband's been driving me to (the subway station) to drop me off. So I don't have to worry about the driving part. I think I'd be more of a boat load of nerves. The (subway) you have no control over, so you get nervous too. But you have no control - you have no control over it. I'd rather not have to sit in traffic. I don't miss driving a bit. Even though some parents who I know drive, in fact drive to our school to pick their kids up. They'd rather do that, but not me. It's worked out o.k.. I'm a devoted subway rider (laughter). ... It does give you a little bit of time to get the period you need between home and work and between work and home. That is so important. ... without having to worry about all those people. You can read.

After the early start to the day some women interviewed spoke of the hectic nature of their life at work which contributed to their day.
Well ... I wear my sneakers and bring my shoes. A typical day is that you don't get to change from your sneakers to your shoes because you don't stop running around. (Naomi)

I get in here at 8:30 pretty much, or 8:25. Then I listen to my phone mail message, look at my e-mail messages, come look at my mail and plan what ... much of the work her is developmental so I work collaboratively with a lot of human resource departments and a lot of other functions. So I spend my ... half my day in meetings with one group of people or another, or developing ... talking with ... for example (hospital) today. ... I usually don't go out for lunch. It's kinda rare that I even have the time to do it. there's just so much. (Elizabeth)

Although Elizabeth indicated that going out for lunch is a rare occurrence, a journal entry spoke of such an experience and the feelings she got from it.

I had some rare time around the lunch hour to get away from work. Usually the day is so caught up with so much work that I enter the building in the morning and, unless I have outside meetings, never emerge until 5:15 p.m. But today I took a leisurely walk around (a tourist site). Even more unusual for me I bought some easy-to-eat-while-you-walk-lunch. Very restful.

Between the demands of home and school Spencer has somewhat of an uncertain schedule. The way she spends a work day is dependent upon the time of her university classes and the patients she has to see during that day. Spencer found it a challenge to describe a "typical" workday.

There is never a day when I just only work. I always have class and work so it depends on when I have class. Like yesterday I had class at 9:00. I saw a patient then went to class, then I had a class at 10:30. I saw patients until 5:30, picked up my son and came home. That's the day ... how
the day pretty much goes. Like today I am seeing patients all day and I basically go in the home and I call in the office and there's always problems. I've talked to the office several, several times and there's just different stresses. Like this week there's a nurse that's gone so I'm seeing her patients, I don't know any of them. I don't know where any of them live so it takes a lot more time. Then I have class at 5:30 and I'll probably be home by 10:00. So I leave at 8:00 and get home at 10:00.

Working on a three day on, four day off shift system in addition to her third shift schedule means that BJ has different concerns in her "typical" work day. She described the feelings she associated with the days that she has to be at work and the preparations required of her.

A typical day for me when I have to be at work ... oh ... I don't get very much done. I'm all tensed up before I even get to work ... thinking about what I have to do before I get there, think about what I have to do before I go to work. Typical tense day ... pretty intense. Because I'm not as organized as I'd like to be and I'm rushing ... rushing, rush, rush, rush ... a tenseful, rushful day, you know ... I go to work at 7:20, 7:30 because its close by. But before I go dinner's got to be done, the kids gotta be fed, the clothes gotta be out for the next day, the lunches gotta be made ...

Interviewer: So you're constantly planning ahead?
Yeah ... if you don't plan ahead forget it ...
Interviewer: Running around in circles ...
... like a rat in a maze ...

Before the end of the work day many of the women interviewed were already thinking of what they had to do at the end of their scheduled work day. Their
concerns were related to collecting their child/children from the daycare before it closed, as well as those they associated with the care of the family and the running of the household.

... before the end of the day I'm also starting to think what I have to do for home projects ... whether it's laundry that has to be done, bills, food shopping, make supper and under constraints of a project at work is getting to the daycare to pick him (her son) up. (Kathleen)

It takes me about - if I leave here at 5:00, I'll get into the (subway station), which is about five minutes away from the school, by about twenty of six, or fifteen of six. I have to get them by six. There's no room for error on the subway. Usually there's not a problem. One of them is ... the YWCA has an after-school program which is widely used. She's going to go there. So pick (her daughter) up there and (her son) up somewhere else, at least for this year. But I did that when (her son) was born for the period that he was in the infant room because the infants had to leave earlier. It worked out fine. (Elizabeth)

Generally I'm running out of here somewhere between 5:00 and 5:30 to make the 6:00 close at the daycare center. So I'm generally doing that and I generally just make it ... and I generally pick her up and take her home. On occasion when I need to do overtime or the rare occasion when I have something to do with friends after work, my husband can pick her up. (Carol).

Based on BJ's work schedule the timing of her family responsibilities was different. However, the responsibilities were very similar. BJ indicated that after she came home after working overnight, she got the children ready to go to school. Only after these demands were met did she take the opportunity to get
some rest. However, the demands of the family soon returned to the forefront of her mind. She stated,

... and then I go to bed. You gotta unwind down ... you gotta wind down before you go to bed. Then by the time you go to bed it's time to bounce back up because you've gotta make sure that you're there to pick up the other one (her daughter) ... kids up from school. ... I wouldn't dare let her walk by herself ... the world has gone mad. So I'm tossing and turning ... oh I'm sure I gonna sleep too late ...

Most of the women interviewed indicated that their roles associated with and their responsibilities for their families continued into the evening.

Thursday nights is the only night that I don't have pretty much the whole night with him (her son). And I don't study at night either ... that's the one thing I just don't do. That's completely his time so regardless that's completely time blocked out unless I have class. (Spencer)

Most of the time my husband, occasionally he's just getting in or he may not be home yet. So generally I change and try to figure out what we're going to have for dinner 'cause I don't plan very well. I try to at least make sure my daughter gets something to eat. Then usually clean up from dinner then at that point generally if there's ... you need diapers at the store or the car needs gas ... those types of chores, or if there's laundry that needs to be thrown in then generally my husband and I ... one of us kind of tends to my daughter, plays with her, the other does the chores. Generally I don't get her down 'til 9:00. Last night it was 9:45. So by the time I get her asleep then my day ... usually by that time I'm lucky to be awake myself ...

(Carol)

Dad and the kids pick me up at (the subway station). Spend about ten minutes or fifteen minutes just sitting with them, getting down with the kids on the floor or whatever. Then getting the ... dinner and they'll (the children) get in the bath while I'm cooking. Then we eat. They go
to bed or take a bath at 9:30 or so and I'm ready to fall asleep. (Elizabeth)

Then for me after all that's done (picking her son up from daycare and getting supper) the next thing for me would be getting (her son) settled and in bed on time. (Kathleen)

Naomi tends to spend time with her children when she gets home from work. Since her husband works at night, he is usually home when she arrives home.

If I'm lucky my husband cooks which he does a lot. We sometimes warm up leftovers. But when we run out of leftovers, sometimes I have to cook, and then clean up. Then make sure I go through my daughter's backpack with her to make sure there's not any notices in there I need to see.... Getting her (older daughter) ready and trying to get her into bed by 8:00 so I know she gets enough sleep.

After long and hectic days some of the women indicated that they felt exhausted and ready to fall asleep.

You know I'm trying to keep my eyes open 'cause my husband is a night person and he gets up only fifteen minutes before we leave in the morning. So I've already got two hours on him. So I mean it's a long day. Usually I go to bed about 10:00. (Elizabeth)

I like to try to sit and read even for half an hour so I feel like I'm not just working and sleeping. Occasionally I watch T.V.. I'm not a big T.V. person but my husband generally watches it so I'm usually in the same room .... (Carol)

Being a single parent Kathleen has sole responsibility for her son after she collects him from daycare and they arrive home. She indicated that her day does not end once he is in bed.
It still continues. No it doesn't end because the next challenge is to see if I can get through the night without interruptions because he still wakes up at least one ... he has nightmares and dreams ...

Kathleen indicated that she often made the choice of either going to bed early, shortly after her son, or making use of the time that she had to herself for catching up with tasks related to either her work or the running of the home.

I make myself usually go to bed before 11:00, but if I can go to bed at 8:00 I will. If I can get (her son) to go to bed at 8:00. Since I'm usually more tired in the evening, I tend to go to bed right when I put him to bed and then I'll get up earlier since he'll sleep longer in the morning. ... If I have some energy I might actually do more work 'cause I can telecommunicate from home on my computer. Depending on what my workload is I might do some work at night or again I might do laundry but then I'm thinking about ... since I do a lot of travelling sometimes there's a lot of pre-planning that's involved ... packing and that kind of thing ... so it (the day) doesn't actually end.

A "typical" day during which the women interviewed were required to be at work involved multiple demands and tasks. The demands and tasks associated with taking care of both the home and the family, in addition to the requirements of the work place, resulted in a long and hectic day for them.

The Typical Non-Work Day

Having discussed and described a typical day when they were required to be at work, the women were then
asked to address their experiences on days when they did not have to work outside the home. There was a distinct contrast in their experiences during a typical non-work day which will be the focus of this section.

The general consensus was that the typical non-work days were more relaxing and somewhat less stressful. They were more family oriented, with the focus on taking time to spend with their child/children and their partner. However, tasks related to the care of the home and the family are not ignored. They are completed at a more relaxed pace.

Well a little more relaxing. More time in the morning. Generally we get up ... when my daughter wakes up we drag her into bed with us with the hopes we may get a few more minutes sleep. It generally doesn't work but we're always hopeful. Sometimes she'll stay with us for a little while. Then it's more relaxing. We usually eat breakfast at home then ... we make breakfast. She (her daughter) likes waffles and stuff like that. Then, depending on whether we're going out that day or someone has something to do depends on how fast we get up, get dressed and do that kind of stuff. If we don't have too much going on we tend to be a lot slower. I can still be in my pajamas at noon. You know ... usually during this time I'm throwing in laundry, trying to get her (her daughter) in the bath and trying to get her dressed and those type of things. ... lot slower pace. ... When the good weather's here we try to get out ... visit the zoo, go for a ride ...

(Carol)

Well I get up more like 6:30 instead of 5:00. So I get up later and take more time to do everything. Some Saturdays are spent doing some chores. Some Saturdays are spent procrastinating at chores! A lot ... I spend a lot of time playing with the kids, almost too much because they look for mom to play with them ... I just love doing things with them. Actually us getting
back to play again. Really, I mean, you haven't played for years and now when you have kids, all of a sudden you can play again. So I just enjoy that whereas actually my husband is not too good. He doesn't really like it. he's not very comfortable doing that. So I'm the one who fulfills the wrestling and the playing, and the playing ball, and taking them out to the pool, everything I tend to do. He does some things when he's with them now but I do most of it. So most of my time is devoted ... I don't get too much time around the house. (Elizabeth)

Spencer also spends her non-work days in a more relaxing way. She focused on family activities with her son and extended family. However, she acknowledges that some of the time is spent on "catch-up "things around the house.

On these days, basically Saturday and Sunday, I get up and usually (her son), he takes a shower in the morning and get him ready. A lot of times we'll meet his grandparents for breakfast and then just whatever during the day. If I don't have to study or whatever we usually go to the zoo, (the water park) ...

Interviewer: Do family kinds of things ...

Oh yea, definitely, all. And then usually Sunday night is when I clean the house. I usually clean from like nine 'til about one and then that's ... now laundry I do during the week. But that's pretty much how the weekend always goes.

Despite trying to organize her non-work days in such a way to create a less hectic atmosphere, Kathleen still felt that these days were still very demanding of her time. This time is taken up with activities for her son and with her extended family as well as catching up with household chores.

It's still very busy. I try very hard not to schedule anything for the weekends, but you get a
lot of calls to attend birthday parties from the kids at the daycare for (her son). I have a very big family so there's usually some kind of family function going on ... and because ... and because I don't get a lot of time with friends and family during the week I tend to get invited to a lot of things or I can spend the weekend ... I might do laundry or something that I've put off ...

The relaxing nature of a non-work day was also described by Naomi. However, she did not associate a non-work day with a weekend day.

Oh, the snow days. A surprise gift from heaven. Or my birthday. I always make sure I take my birthday off from work. Try to sleep later. Not a whole couple of hours, maybe an hour and a half. I can't sleep long anyway. I think it's just less stressful. ... You can get up and stay in your pajamas. You can eat a late breakfast. Whatever, it's nicer. Lots of time too ... during some part of the day I end up doing work for school anyways.

In the past BJ's work schedule dictated that she had to work weekends.

... before it was crazy that I didn't have the weekends off ... see we rotate every ... like every three months and those are the months I have to work weekends ... but then I have most of the weekend off ...

When BJ was asked whether she preferred the weekdays or the weekends off she replied,

The weekends ... I prefer the weekends off. because when I don't have the weekends off, I have to come home and sleep and the kids are up and they want to play and ... my husband, he spend time with them because when I don't have them he has them. That's the way it works ... you have to, you want to make a decent living right ... you have to. ... Sometimes when I'm working I don't want to be bothered, I wanna sleep. When I'm not working I'm fine, I wanna do everything ... I'm happy go lucky child ...
She went on to describe the feelings she had on a day when she was not required to be at work.

Well ... relaxing ... because you don't have to rush ... get things done when I get up in the morning and I have a relaxing day for the rest of the week until its time to go back and then I get tensed up.

Definitions of Work

Having examined their typical days during which they were either required or not required to be at work, I asked the women to consider their definition of work.

Spencer and Elizabeth both considered work to be their employment outside the home.

I term it as things that take me away from my son ... anything that does, that's not inside the home is just an additional stressor. But I would just say anything that can be ... I don't consider housework and all that as working ... a working situation because you don't have the stress of being responsible to somebody else. But basically anytime that you have a responsibility to someone else to fulfil something, then I think it's work. (Spencer)

Even for all the fact that a lot of childrearing is work, I don't consider that work. I just wouldn't use that word if I were to describe it ... because that is life if you ask me, as is my job here but my work is ... I consider work ... my job. ... You know there are a lot of duties ... around the home but the word work does not come into my mind ... (Elizabeth)

In contrast, BJ was clear that she considered both what she does outside the home, in the form of her
What do I consider work? What I consider work is my occupation, home, the cooking, the cleaning and domestic chores and being a banker (laughs) trying to balance the check books. uhm, cooking, cleaning, laundry ... being more like a drill sergeant, getting the kids up in the morning and getting my husband up. the first one up and the last one in bed ... that's work. I didn't realize it, I'm just realizing ... that its work....

Interviewer: So it's like having two jobs?
... absolutely, two jobs ...

Interviewer: ... two full-time jobs ...

Absolutely ... taxi driver, driving the kids here, there, and everywhere - to school, to swim lessons or this and that, so yea ... that's work.

BJ went on to speak of what she considers to be the work associated with shopping.
... grocery shopping is not leisure, not at all because you have to ... using coupons and shopping and trying to save ... save money

Interviewer: ... it's a job unto itself ...

Yes absolutely ... all the coupons, you have to make sure this one haven't expired and double coupon week or triple coupon week at some stores ... you have to cash in on those ... one store for particular items and to a different store to shop for other things because those types of things is you don't have anything to show for your food ...

In her previous description of a 'typical' day when she had to be at work, Kathleen clearly described tasks related to her occupation as well as those associated with the running of the home and the care of her son. Her definition of work incorporated the
things she has to accomplish both inside and outside the home. Naomi also identified work both inside and outside the home in her definition of work. However, she was less definite in her definition than BJ or Kathleen.

... How would I define work? I think work's important to me because it's the other side of who I am as a person. I find a great deal of satisfaction from work. It's very rewarding when you can work with a child.

Interviewer: ... you've got your work outside the home, is there anything at home that you would consider to be work. Or is that a totally different category?

uhm ... kind of different categories. It boils down to their both work but I think it's a little bit different. ... bottom line though, I see them as two different types of work.

Carol was in agreement. She defined work as,

Stressful ... I mean I enjoy it but I find it stressful doing both (working outside the home and being a mother). ... they are two different things but they're both ... there's a lot of work to be done in the home too.

Some of the women interviewed clearly defined work as their occupation in the work force. Others were very adamant that much of their everyday life, including their job outside the home and the tasks associated with homemaking, was work to them. Others, although recognizing that some of what they do in the home could be considered work, were less definite in their definition of the nature of work in their everyday life.
Partner's Contribution to the Family and Household
Demands

Although it appeared that the women had total responsibility for the running of the home and the care of the children, some participants indicated that their partner contributed to the running of the household.

I can't really complain ... although sometimes I do. He's generally very good. He knows how hard it is to work full-time and do what I do. So he appreciates the second income so he realizes to be able to do that he's gotta chip in. He really does, I can't say he doesn't, he really does. He does some of the housework. He'll do vacuuming and dusting and he'll clean up the kitchen at night and he'll clean the bathroom. Doesn't do laundry but that's o.k.. I don't think I want him touching mine anyways ... I do my own. So he generally will pitch in that way and he's very good about ... if I need to do something he'll take care of my daughter ... take care of our daughter, watch her or whatever. (Carol)

Monetary ... what else does he do ... sometimes cleans, not all the time ... sometimes cooks. I do most of the cooking, most of the cleaning. He picks up behind himself. He do the ironing ... he does the ironing. I hate ironing, he does the ironing and other things. (BJ)

He does all the grocery shopping which is wonderful. I go in for the odds and ends during the week, but he does the majority of the grocery shopping. ... He's very frugal and he knows how to shop. That wasn't always the way. It has changed in the marriage. When I first got married I'd do all the shopping. I'd come home crying because I'd spent all the money and I had three bags of groceries. Then I'd never liked coupons now he loves coupons. You'd think he invented coupons! (Naomi)

In the past months, while preparing to continue his education, Elizabeth's husband has remained at home
while she continued to work. She has noticed changes in the ways he contributes to the care of the family and the running of the household during this period.

He wouldn't have before and now when he's done this for ... it will be a year and a half by the time he goes back to school, he will never I don't think ever go back to not doing them at all. ... We're fairly traditional but I mean he's done virtually everything now so I don't think ... He used to if he was around the house not do it. He'd sit and pull out a paper in the morning ... and I'd say ... how can he read the paper when I'm doing these things. But I don't think he can go back to that anymore ...
Right now he does almost everything. He does the wash, the laundry, the cleaning. He doesn't do the cooking. That's the only thing he doesn't like, doesn't do. But that's almost the only thing now. ... He's painting the house right now. He's making appointments for the kids. He's taking them to the doctors. He's doing all of that. ... Otherwise he contributes by taking care of a lot of the financial stuff. Insurance, the cars, manly sort of traditional things which is fine. I don't really mind.

When asked who would be responsible for taking children for medical appointments when her husband returns to school and she is working, Elizabeth replied,

We'd probably split it if we could. When he ran the restaurant he couldn't do them, so I would do them. When he's going to be in school that will be interesting. I'll probably tend to do things more in the vacation. As we work in the school vacation time, I'll probably use more vacation time to make appointments and do things in a more regular pattern.

Spencer was asked what contribution her husband made to the running of the household. Her response was "... financially real good". However, other contributions were limited. He often actually created
more work by attempting to help. In addition, the help from her husband usually only came after he was prompted.

He always says well I do a lot and I'm like you know, little things ... like I asked him to change over the laundry. He'll change over the laundry, he'll turn it on for fifteen minutes. But then I'll have to think ...

Interviewer: ... has he turned it on enough ...

Well I know he hasn't ... I mean towels don't dry in fifteen minutes. ... its like he's a very intelligent person but how come he can't think of ... o.k. I have been telling him for six years when you put towels in you have to put them in for over an hour. Well how come he can't think of that. And, you know, why can't ... why does he have to open the refrigerator door with his hands all dirty. Why doesn't he just have the time to wash his hands ...

My thing is that if I feel like if he wasn't there, because he's really messy, I could take care of everything without having to clean up after his mess. He doesn't even do the bills, and I'm like ... this is just too much. There's just too much. there's too much for me to do.

BJ also perceives drawbacks to the help that she receives from her husband in the running of the home.

When he cleans, it's often difficult to get him to clean as often as I clean, but when he cleans he does a thorough job ... it may take him an hour, it would take me fifteen minutes ... it would take him a whole hour to do it. That's why I'd rather do it and just ... I mean he does a ... you can practically eat off anything he cleans but it takes him so long to do it. I shouldn't complain because he'd do it but I'm like ready to go and I want to get done ...

BJ indicated that she was happy with the help that she gets from her husband and there was nothing specific that she felt he could do that would be of
additional help. Naomi had similar thoughts since "... if I just ask he'll just do it".

However, both Carol and Spencer would like more "thoughtful" help and dealing with the details of everyday life, which would take some of the pressure and responsibility from them.

Maybe the worrying about ... the thing is and I don't know I think this tends to fall to women anyway. He never worries about it ... it's his mother's birthday, it's his father's birthday, its his great-aunt's birthday and if you don't get the gift the family won't talk to you for the next year. I feel like ... I feel like sometimes I'm the one always worrying ... oh its father's day, what are you going to get your father? I'm the one running around thinking about it and with all those types of things. I worry about we're going to the wedding, what are we going to get for the gift and I'm the one running around on my lunch hour and getting it. Those ... that would probably be something. (Carol)

It's like I have to think of fifteen things that day that have to be done but if he just ... if I didn't have to worry about ... like this morning I got up and I'm like is it Thursday ... I left the house. I'm like is it Thursday yet, we have to get the trash out. But if he just went ahead and did that, that would be one thing less that I felt completely responsible for. (Spencer)

Kathleen's situation as a single parent with a young son has meant that she has to be responsible for everything related to the running their home and the care of her child.

I believe more of the stress is the single parent ... I think that if I did have somebody else here ... it's a major pain in the butt.

Even the most simple of household tasks take on a new perspective when the responsibility for a young
child is the primary focus. However, taking care of the home necessitates the completion of chores. She described some of the challenges she faces related to the dual task of taking care of her child as well as doing the chores associated with taking care of their home.

Any time I have what I call free time I'm always doing something else so that I don't have to do it later. It's a chore for me to go to the dumpster to dump the trash out because, do I do it while (her son) is sleeping and have him in the house by himself? Do I bring him with me and make it a major event where he's ... I'm trying to follow him while carrying the trash out or do I ... Sometimes on my lunch hour I'll come home and empty my trash 'cause he's not there. Or if I have a free lunch I might do laundry or I might do food shopping so I don't have to deal with it with a child ... Simple chores are complicated by trying to watch a child who could run into the street, who you don't want to leave in a car by himself ... I have to wait 'til he's sleeping before I can even clean the bathroom or use detergents or things that I think he's going to get into.

Most of the participants felt that they did get some help from their partners. However, they did feel that other contributions could be made which would make things a little easier for them. The single parent was faced with special demands which she was forced to face and create strategies to overcome.
Leisure

What is Leisure?

The perception and meaning of leisure in a person's life is very individualized. When the women in the study were asked to discuss some of the words and/or phrases that they personally associated with leisure, their responses can be categorized into three groups; a sense of freedom, a feeling, or an activity. For some women the meaning they associated with leisure was a combination of any of the three categories.

Spencer's definition of leisure was associated with having freedom.

Carefree ... carefree time spent without mental stress is what I call leisure, where I'm not ... and it can range from anything but it is basically time spent where you are not worrying or doing something that's mental ... basically if I'm not doing something that I have to do; school, house, work ... there's always something that has to be done and any time that I can not worry about it and take my mind off of it I consider to be leisure time.

She went on to elaborate on the necessity for her to feel a sense of liberty, to enable her to experience leisure.

... there are times when I'm not doing anything but I'm constantly worrying that I need to do this or that, but its just time ... because sometimes I say that this is it I'm not going to feel guilty and I just take the time and that'll be that.

Leisure was also defined as a feeling.

When I think of leisure I think of free time, rest time, relaxation ... those are the main things I
think of when I think of leisure ... vacation
time, down time, quiet time ... (Kathleen)

I think leisure to me means a time to relax and do
something that relaxes you. (Carol)

Well, the first thing that comes to mind is
relaxation. That's a single word. Time to devote
to personal life ... yea ... I think so. It's a
development of personal interests and enhancement
of those personal parts of me that I don't get
time to develop an expression for. (Elizabeth)

Naomi defines leisure as both a feeling and a
sense of freedom. She speaks of both freedom and a
sense of enjoyment.

Just having the time to enjoy an activity or
something without knowing you have a limit to it
would be my definition of a leisurely time.

In contrast BJ associated leisure with particular
activities.

Sleep. Reading a juicy novel, and sleep. Now
that I'm speaking about it, aside the fact ... the
sleeping factor, leisure would be walking on the
beach, rolling up and down on the grass out back,
swimming ...

Carol and Naomi expanded their definitions of
leisure by linking activities with the feelings they
associated wit leisure.

Relaxing ... fun ... maybe sports, play ...
(Carol)

... stressless ... leisure ... friends, books. I
think of books when I think of leisure. I
subscribe to the town paper and they keep arriving
and I don't get a chance to read them. (Naomi)
Leisure Experiences and the People who Share Them

When the research participants were initially contacted, the subject of the study and nature of the study was discussed. Without exception the women indicated that they felt that they did not have any leisure. However, during the course of the interviews when they were asked about their leisure they talked about the experiences they considered to be leisure and the people with whom they shared them.

Spencer

Spencer spoke of the experiences she considered to be leisure. Almost all of the experiences were active in nature.

... outdoor things. We go to the park a lot, the zoo ... we are at the zoo at least once a week, (name of a water park) which is a water slide place. In the summer we are there about three or four times a week. Family, things with family. My brothers ... like I played football with them on Sunday and we played rollerblade hockey and stuff. I go out with my friends. We'll go out and have a drink and go dancing, things like that. ... I do some cultural things but its mostly like family getting together and ... like last night we went to the park and that was a big treat for me. We took my son to the park for three hours and waded in the creek and that was like leisure for me.

Spencer spoke of the active nature of her leisure experiences.

... I'm very active so I don't have a lot of time where ... Like the only time where I can say where I'm just sitting not doing anything is like if ... there is maybe two or three programs I like during
the week on T.V.. And those are like half hour shows.

Spencer's leisure experiences are spent either alone, with her extended family or with her child. She also indicated that on occasion she spends time with friends when they go out for the evening.

... alone, by myself, family are very ... I have five brothers and two sisters who I'm very close to ... I have a lot of friends to do things with.

With my son, that's probably about five times a week. There are days when either I'm too burned out or I have to study, or I have to do housework to where my husband has to take him by himself. And there are days when I just take him by myself.

When asked to explain why she chose the activities, Spencer said,

I'd say mood, availability of other people, what everyone else is doing, what my son's ... you know, a lot of my leisure time is spent around doing things to entertain him. So hence the zoo and ... the zoo and (museum). We have a (museum pass) we go there all the time, the parks we really utilize the parks a lot.

BJ

At the beginning of our discussion BJ's perception of leisure was associated with having a social life.

I don't have much of a social life. I don't have a day to day social life ... like you get up, you're on the phone all the time with your friends ... best friends you know ... you don't have that.

However, after some thought she began to recognize some of her other everyday experiences as leisure and those people who she shares them with. Her leisure is divided between spending time alone, with her children,
with her husband and her children, and also with
friends.

BJ spoke of the leisure activities she does alone.

I used to bowl but I don't do it anymore, that's a
different story. I don't because I can't, it's a
physical thing. I like nature. I like taking
nature walks ... walking in the rain, getting wet.

She also discussed the leisure experiences she
shared with her children.

I would say I spend more time with the kids
because of my working hours. I work the evening
shift so he's usually with me while she's (her
daughter) at school. I take him to the playroom
at the mall when the weather is bad and when the
weather's good I take him to the park and he feeds
the animals, play about, look around a bit ... or
he swim at the Y and I get in the water with him.
I used to swim quite often at the Y. but I don't
have time ... I try at least once a week now, I
haven't even had time to do it once a week.

In speaking of the leisure experiences she shared
with her family, BJ discussed a recent addition to her
leisure.

He's (her husband) a bowler so we travel with him
to different competitions. Just last weekend for
example we was in Upstate New York. Usually its
in this town or a couple of towns over, we don't
care to travel. ... He may bowl at 12:00, 2:00,
6:00, 8:00 or 10:00, it depends on the time of day
or night.

However, if her husband is bowling locally, BJ and
the children spend the time doing things together while
he plays in the competition.

If its at night the kids and I will take in a
movie or sometimes we go to the bowling alley. We
play the games. He's (her husband) a real avid
bowler so if they don't wanna play the games,
we'll watch a movie and then stay home and have popcorn ...

BJ also discussed how she created leisure for herself. This enabled her to spend time with her friends, away from the responsibilities of her family.

... we plan to do things, like the girls and I. We plan like every three months or so, so ... the ladies that I bowled with we go away ... we put the money aside. A couple of months ago we went to the Cape for the week and pampered ourselves. We had a masseuse and you know ... we enjoyed ourselves.

Interviewer: So those kind of things are something to look forward to ...

I guess a leisure ... for myself and we do that like every three months ... all of us are married and we all have kids ...

Interviewer: Who looks after the kids?

... our husbands ... they take care of the kids. We go for the whole weekend. Next time we're gonna go for a week (laughs). We wanna take a trip to either Atlantic City or some place ... A few weeks back we took ... we rented a limo and went to Newport ... had dinner and we came back.

Interviewer: That must be a real treat.

Yes, that's a treat.

Kathleen

The demands on Kathleen's time and energy were evident when she spoke of the ways she spends her leisure.

In the home ... sleep. No, sometimes I just come home and just sit, just sit and stare at the T.V.. I'm not really watching it, its just on. Just the T.V.'s on and I'm sitting and (her son) is running around crazy or he's trying to get me to do things
but its like my body is just rejuvenating or something its reenergizing ... its like a battery ... recharge it. But you know I don't do dishes, I don't do anything I just sit. Maybe I'll put a load of clothes in the washing machine ... but I just have to be still, be quiet, or I lay down. I don't read, I don't do anything. I can't use my mind, it has to be ... totally at peace. Like I said my job is a lot of reading, it's a lot of computer work, it's a lot of phone work, its public relations so I don't wanna be on the phone. A lot of my friends don't think I call them anymore ... my phone's there, I can't do anything.

Kathleen explained what she liked to do outside the home.

For me ... personally, if I can get out to a night club. That's the way I relax and unwind. I'm not necessarily out dancing ... actually I'm not. I'm just being out.

Interviewer: ... out of the home?

Right. Out of the home and out of work among people my age and just listening to music ... it's a fun time.

Her leisure was spent alone or with friends.

When asked with whom she spent most of her leisure, Kathleen replied,

Mostly myself, I guess. Unless I'm going to a club then it may be one or two girlfriends but I've even ... for the first time in my life gone to clubs by myself just to be out ...

In summarizing her leisure Kathleen stated,

... its usually out of the home and of work ... or sleeping.

Her reason for choosing sleep as a leisure experiences was,

... I don't feel like I ever get enough sleep. I'm tired ... its just the tiredness, the need for
rest. I'm physically and emotionally exhausted, so that's the major influence.

Naomi

Creating opportunities for quiet time alone was evident in Naomi's discussion of leisure. Speaking of work she stated,

I love to get in early. ... I love to get in early, at least 30 minutes, have my cup of coffee and my bagel or muffin or whatever and just listen ... 

Inside the home Naomi enjoyed spending time with her children. She said,

I read stories to my kids. That's leisure, because I enjoy reading and I enjoy seeing their reaction to the books, and I enjoy talking to them about the books.

Although she enjoys the time with her family, Naomi recognized the limitations responsibility for two children can have on her mobility and her experience of social occasions.

Where am I going to go with a three month old and a three and a half year old? I wouldn't have any fun. When we go to church, it's nice, but I have to leave out of the service to go feed or change (her daughter). ... What I look forward to at church is the coffee hour after church because I get to meet and talk with other couples ... and socialize. The church is really nice in that there's a lot of young kids. You have something in common to talk about.

Prior to having her second child, Naomi's husband took her daughter to relatives for the weekend. Naomi spoke of the experience of having a weekend to herself
without having responsibility for the care of her
daughter.

I had the weekend here to myself. At first I was
really disappointed that I couldn't go because it
was his (her child's godbrother) first birthday
... After they left, 'cause they left at the
crack of dawn - like quarter to five in the
morning - I went back to sleep. ... I rented some
movies. I got to read things. I got to move at
my own pace without stopping to give my little one
lunch or a bath or whatever I have to do.

Taking advantage of another opportunity that
presented itself, Naomi discussed an experience of
leisure which she considered pleasurable. She had
taken her older daughter to school and her younger
daughter was at home with her husband sleeping.

I went to the card store which is one of the
things I love to do. I love to buy cards for
people. I got coffee and a donut and sat down
right there in Dunkin Donuts and had the cards and
made them out. I have a car phone so I called him
(his husband) and said "is the baby up yet"? He
said no. I said "well I'll be home in another 20
or 30 minutes.

Knowing that the responsibility for the care of
her daughter was being taken by her husband, Naomi gave
the impression that she was able to indulge herself a
little, doing some of the things she enjoyed. This
impromptu experience had a significant, beneficial
impact on her sense of well-being and had a positive
effect on the remainder of her day.

That was great. My whole day was wonderful from
then on because I had that time to sit there and
relax and do something I wanted to do without
being interrupted.
Carol

Carol highlighted two activities which considered to be leisure, both of which she does alone.

Well I've always liked to read and reading has always been one of the things from when I was a child I enjoyed doing. It relaxed me. I like to exercise a lot. I always feel so good after it. But it's one of those things that you also have to push yourself to do it. So sometimes you think it's leisure and sometimes you think it's discipline ... I don't get to do it very often. ... I like aerobics or even just walking.

However, she indicated that she spent most of her leisure time with her husband and daughter, and extended family.

... leisure to me is spending time with my husband and my daughter on the weekends or whatever, at the park or just playing in the yard.

When the weather's good we try to get out ... visit zoos or just try to go for a ride or a lot of times at the weekend we visit family. Most of my family's on the North Shore, on the other side of (the city). So we go up and visit family and go out to dinner.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth spoke of a number of activities which she considered to be leisure. In speaking of what she considered to be her "own personal leisure", she stated,

My leisure is really around - my own personal leisure - is in the bath, in the shower. My five to six - when I can get mental leisure is cooking which I really enjoy. Then my time when I forget every other kind of thing that I have to do and just sit down and play with the children and do things with them.
She also spoke of activities associated with her own personal interests.

I'm very interested in written communications because it's what I do. I sit here and sometimes try to keep a diary of what the kids are doing or jot down thoughts of stories. I'd like to write some day. Decorating cakes for their birthday...

Elizabeth also made use of the time alone on her commute to work to do something enjoyable for herself by "reading on the subway on the way to work".

The opportunity for time alone does not always come at convenient times and the consequences of grasping the opportunity have to be weighed against the consequences.

We arrived at 9:40 with the kids fast asleep. Dad went to bed too and now I'm inclined to stay up all night just to enjoy the solitary peace. However, that's a dream because the kids will have me up, regardless, by 6:30 a.m. (Journal)

A more typical scenario was described by Elizabeth in a journal entry,

Today was pretty typical, my snatches of leisure being: reading the newspaper between time with the kids, laundry and breakfast preparation.

In discussing her leisure, Elizabeth also identified time she spent with her children and discussed both in the interview and her journal the pleasure she derived from activities associated with them.

My leisure is sitting down and relaxing and playing with the kids.

Somehow I managed to keep my eyes open after 9:30 tonight so I spent some time reading after the
kids went to sleep. Very rare and nice. The bonus - we also spent another 45 minutes at the pool before dinner. (Journal)

We climbed ice and snow mountains out in the parking lot. They were 8 to 10 foot high piles of snow so we had some unusual fun with those.

Pool again tonight. I'm having such fun. enjoying watching the kid's pleasure, not to mention playing in the water. (Journal)

Swimming lessons for (her son) this morning at the YWCA. Priceless joy in watching him learning and succeeding at something. (Journal)

Spending time with extended family and friends was also significant in Elizabeth's experience of leisure.

Visiting became a social occasion.

Even if we're going out visiting, we're going to relatives: brothers, sisters, cousins, mom and dad, grandmom.

When we're truly sitting down, relaxing, doing nothing, it's when we're visiting friends or family. I suppose that may be when we're getting really to leisure.

This afternoon and early evening spent down on Cape Cod in Falmouth. Friends are in from Ohio and we made our annual visit to see them. (Journal Entry)

Although Elizabeth indicated in her interview that "... my husband and I don't do a lot of things together" a journal entry stated,

Today is truly exceptional for us - dinner out alone for (her husband) and I. I can't remember when the last time was that we were out without the kids - together and alone!

Elizabeth not only enjoyed the time alone, doing things that interested her, but she also enjoyed time
with others, specifically her children, family and friends.

Facilitators

Season

The interviews were conducted during the summer, when the weather was warm and sunny. It was evident that the summer season facilitated certain activities, particularly those taking place outdoors. These activities were spoken about by all the women.

Elizabeth spoke of the effects the good weather had on enabling her to spend time with her children at the swimming pool.

The best thing about the summer is the extension of leisure time - specifically THE POOL! We have tried, more than any year yet, to get to the pool everyday. This year the kids are doing so much on their own with the swim rings and borrowing the life guard vests.

As I look back on this week I find there's plenty of room for leisure. In fact, the summer has generally been very good. Many factors contribute to this: the desire to enjoy the weather, our general practice of visiting people on weekends and, of course, as mentioned the presence of my husband at home. The pressure to complete all the undone chores and the daily housework doesn't exist. (Elizabeth - Journal).

In contrast the inclement winter weather limited activities. As Carol stated,

... the weather has a lot, especially this winter. There were times you just couldn't get out and there's only so much you can do in the home ... so that was tough. It was a long winter. (Carol)
However, despite some limitations, Elizabeth and her children enjoyed some of the winter conditions.

We got out to enjoy the snow a little bit. But it was never the right snow to get out and get the kids to build a snowman. It was just too much snow usually, and it just froze. So we didn't get a lot of time to go sledding and things like that. They are also not old enough to get into ice skating ... you can't do too much. (Elizabeth)

Location

Location can have an effect on the leisure opportunities and choices available to an individual. Both Carol and Elizabeth spoke of the effect living close to the ocean has for them.

When asked if it was beneficial to be near the ocean, Carol replied,

We like the water a lot even just to walk or ... yea, definitely. I definitely like the east coast for that. If I went to the west coast I'm sure I'd like it too! (Carol)

In contrast Elizabeth felt that the impact of living close to the water was minimal. It's effects were more aesthetic in nature.

Oh boy, it could be more. We don't actually visit the ocean that much. Part of it is probably because we have the pool. It's a real potential impact, we just don't exercise it. That's the only way I can answer that. Right now it doesn't necessarily matter. Except ... well, now that's not actually always true because we actually are on the water. It's not a wide open ocean, but it's an inlet or a bay. A certain amount of appreciation of life and what I consider part of leisure is an appreciation of that. What you see in terms of the view and the sunset and the sunrise. And a little bit of extra time out on the balcony. So that seeps in too.
Other People

The women spoke of how other people can facilitate their access to leisure. Elizabeth and BJ indicated that much of the motivation to create leisure comes from within.

Something that helps me get myself into leisure or ... it's solely up to me. I'm the only one that can create the situation. (Elizabeth)

uhm ... they have to be more of a ... something that you want to do ...

Interviewer: ... so its your own personal choice ...

BJ also explained how her children acted as catalysts for her.

Sometimes the kids ... sometimes when we don't feel like doing it the kids will say "let's go" ... the kids prompt you to do it ... they get you going. ... come on, come on ... You see something on T.V. that you like ... come on, come on let's go. The kids get you up and going when you don't feel up to it.

The husbands of both Naomi and Elizabeth were factors in assisting their wives in their leisure experiences.

I think my husband. I think he's pretty supportive. He knows I really want to do something, he'll be supportive. He'll be there. (Naomi)

The other might be my husband. We're pretty much a home crew. We don't really go out and do a lot of things. We've always been home bodies. (Elizabeth)
Naomi spoke with appreciation of the time when her friend was instrumental in facilitating an enjoyable day.

I have a very close friend who is my oldest daughter, one of her godmothers. She's very good. I remember when we (she and her younger daughter) came home she and her mom waited a month and then came and took me out to lunch. That was the most wonderful day. That will always stand out in my memory because they stayed a while here with me and they stayed with the baby. I went up and showered and changed and we went to lunch at a Chinese restaurant ... Then we stayed there just in time to pick (her older daughter) up from school shortly after. ... She's the one who is always encouraging me to get out and get some time to yourself, do something. Whenever she can she'll come down. Every time she visits me its a treat.

Extended family can also play a role in easing some of the pressure and facilitating leisure. Kathleen discussed the role her mother played in creating time and opportunity for her leisure.

I'm very fortunate that ... having my mother helping by babysitting gives me that freedom. The only freedom for me to be able to go to a nightclub is a babysitter and I can't always afford one so it's having either a friend or my mother ... What she'll do is she'll actually let my son spend the night, therefore I can either go to a club and I don't have to pick him up 'til the next day so that gives me two things, the club and I can come home and sleep, sleep in ...

Interviewer: ... a total break ...

Naomi also spoke of the potential impact her mother may have on her leisure.

... the rumor mill has it that my mother is retiring in October. If my mom does retire, then I will take the baby with me and drop her off
there. ... to help you in so many different ways. Not to create leisure time but as a support to.

Weather, location, and other people have been identified as facilitators of leisure and as factors which influence leisure choices. BJ identified other additional concepts as a facilitating factors in her leisure choices.

Because its relaxing ... its inexpensive, it's not ... there's no time restrictions. I can just like ... if I want to go on the beach for say ... if I want to lay out there all night and look at the stars I have that option ... I don't have to say o.k., its closing time now you know. It like you go to the roller skating rink, there's time restrictions there ...

Wishes

If they were given a day to spend doing anything they wished, without the constraints of their everyday lives, four of the women in the study would choose to either spend it alone or divide the day between time alone and time with friends.

BJ said,

If I had the chance to do what I wanted for the day ... I would sleep and read and watch maybe a talk show and then sleep  (laughs)

Interviewer: So you'd pretty much want to spend the day by yourself?

I would, if I had the time to do that.

Elizabeth stated,

... the first thing would definitely be ... I cherish and enjoy being alone. I don't mind, that maybe one reason why. In fact, I might spend a lot of the time around the house because of the
time I'm in the house alone is probably one day a
year or something. That might be for just a few
hours. I might really walk around the house and
listen for the quiet a bit. ... I'd spend half of
it just sitting around reading. The other half
I'd treat myself to a nice lunch. Stroll around
places and enjoy the city. I'd sit in the park.
Just kind of do those things that I don't have
much relaxed time to do which typically might be
looking at a furniture store. Places that I don't
pay attention to. I'd like to decorate my house
and dream about things. ... If I had two days I'd
call up some friends and say come over and sit and
just relax.

Carol would divide her time between doing things
alone and spending social time with friends. She
stated,

I think maybe I'd do a little shopping for myself.
I don't get to do that very often. Maybe meet
some friends I haven't seen for a while. Maybe
meet them for lunch and visit with them. Maybe an
aerobics class later in the evening or whatever.

Spencer had a list of things she would want to do.
Based on her personality she also divided her time
between friends and time alone.

I would do all kinds of things ... I'd lay out in
the sun, or go to a movie. I'd go shopping. I
would probably ... I'd love to go to the gym. I
haven't been to the gym for three weeks because
that feels really good ... to work out. (Spencer)
I'd want some of the time on my own because even
though I'm very sociable and I like people around,
I do like some time just on my own where I'm not
having to interact ... probably some of the time
like laying out in the sun reading a book by
myself. That would be great as long as I could
remember that I don't have studying to do and I
don't have tons of laundry to do. (Spencer)

Kathleen was indecisive in her choice of companion
on a day of when she could do anything she wished. Her
son or friends were equally likely to be chosen.
I mean it depends ... there are some days actually that I'm here that I'm glad. I'm relaxed but spending it with my son because I don't get to see him or spend time with him, but at the same time there's going to be other days when I want to spend it with someone my own age ... it's different levels and it's different types of leisure that kind of satisfy different needs. So I mean I've enjoyed some nice times just doing nothing with my son and we both were relaxed and its quality time but I would have just as much relaxation too, relaxing with a friend ... doing the same thing ...

In contrast Naomi described the day she would spend with her children. She discussed the importance of having the freedom to do things without the constraint of time and other demands.

I'd spend time with my kids. I think I'd go to the museum with them and treat them to lunch and buy anything in the museum gift shop, no matter what the price. I'd buy them each as many things as they wanted. Go shopping with them or something, just go driving around. There's a lot of things I'd love to do, that we do do, but there's like a time constraint. You have to come home to eat or you have to make supper or something like that. I do enjoy spending time with my family. I look forward to the weekends when we are all together. That's a big thing for me. I find myself on Tuesday nights saying "oh, there are three days to the week then there's the weekend". Things are a little bit less stressful for me on the weekend because my husband's around. To move at our own pace. He's busy around the yard and shopping, but it's different. (Naomi)

**The Ultimate Leisure Experience**

In considering the possibility of a leisure experience without constraints of time, money, or responsibilities prompted the majority of women to
describe a situation in which they would get away from it all.

Oooh ... I'd love to take a trip around the world. I'd love to first go see Africa. I'd love to take my time and just go to every country because that's where my roots are ultimately. Just see the world. Shop until I drop (laughter). Then I'd like to come back and volunteer at my school where I work now. Just have the luxury of going there and helping out and working with the kids. When I get tired of it or whatever, just leave and say I'll see you guys in two weeks, two months whatever, and not to have to get up and go!

Travel to ... some tropical country. Lie out on the beach ... wouldn't necessary to be in the sun all the day because I wouldn't want to cook up but ... just trying different culinary dishes of the country and stuff. Relaxing, taking a boat ride, fishing, look at some of the countryside, some of the sights, just ... no telephone. No work ... no work ... (BJ)

I would get a cabin up at about 10,000 feet in the Rocky Mountains, maybe 12 and maybe the Swiss Alps. Somewhere that's truly breathtaking. I would choose time in the mountains and enjoy the outdoors. The quiet, the peace. Nothing like the wind whistling through the pines. I grew up in Colorado. I'm kind of used to it. ... that's what I would do. (Elizabeth)

I like the ocean a lot so anywhere ... nice weather, on a beach somewhere ... just relaxing. (Carol)

Be on the beach. Really, I love the ocean and just being able to do exactly what I wanted to do without having to be ... not having to be some place at some time and that would be ... a vacation. What's a vacation?! (Spencer)

In contrast, quietness and time alone in her own home was the focus of Kathleen's ultimate leisure experience. She stated,

... just quietness ... I guess a week alone (laughter). It doesn't matter where, it could be
at home. It doesn't matter. Preferably, maybe away from home... but then again I think you just feel more comfortable at home. So maybe it's the need to be at home and having the down time that would be nice. No phone ringing, no T.V., no radio ... nothing. Just laying down relaxing, maybe listening to music ... (Kathleen)

Leisure Constraints

In discussing their perception of constraints to leisure, the women in the study identified constraints associated with the following: the care of others; lack of time; safety; and social expectations. The concept of a lack of time, or a restriction on time, was associated with their caring role as a wife and a mother, in addition to their work outside the home.

Caring Roles and Lack of Time for Leisure

As a mother you always put your child first and so your leisure gets really pushed back. The same thing maybe ... somewhat as a wife. Not as much but you're always trying to make sure everyone else is happy and things are going well. So I think you become the third person you worry about. (Carol)

Elizabeth expressed similar feelings.

Well as a wife and mother, there really isn't much leisure time that's mine. For sure that's pretty much gone. The time to do things for yourself personally aren't there. Of course I'm doing a lot for myself being at work. In terms of the real intellectual satisfiers. A lot too in terms of heart and soul. There's no time for leisure. It really is greatly reduced so that my only leisure time is ... real, true leisure is 5:00 - 6:30 in the morning.
When asked if she consciously created that time, Elizabeth replied,

I think so, over time. Some out of necessity. Fortunately I am a morning person and I like it. So it was easy. But I have definitely valued it more and more as time has gone on. The leisure time that I used to get when the kids were babies would be when I was nursing them. Even if it was at four in the morning or whatever. It was a tremendous opportunity. So I guess you take it as it develops over time. Right now, that's where its at. I didn't even used to have that. When (her husband) is working, then I used to cook at 5:00 to 6:00 in the morning or throw a chicken in or do something in. So that when I got the kids home and he was still gone, I wouldn't have to cook because he wasn't there to take care of them. In that case, then the kids and I could sit down together and relax over dinner together. I wouldn't have to mess with being in the kitchen and take care of them ... We've constantly adapted over, back and forth.

Spencer identified the demands on her time based on her role within the family as caretaker of her child and husband.

Well as a mother ... I guess as a wife, I mean I pretty much have responsibility for everything in the house and I have the ultimate responsibility for my son too. So even though he is great with him, sometimes I get real frustrated that, you know, he doesn't think to do things. I mean he's never bought him clothes, he doesn't notice, well maybe he's getting a temperature or ... you know. And then just, just everything. Everything is pretty much my responsibility. I'm used to it now, it was much worse before because I hadn't ... just this whole new human being to take care of was just really ... I felt overwhelmed but I still get upset that, you know, like everything ... my husband thinks I'm bossy and always telling him what to do. Which I am but someone has to do it and I have to give orders ...

Interviewer: ... delegate ...
Yea, delegate ... so that's really difficult. That's really hard because you just feel that even though I'm a nineties woman it's still my job to figure out what's for dinner, and it's my job to make sure that the laundry gets done. I mean even things like our front door's all scratched so I painted that this weekend. It's like he doesn't think of any of these things. I think of everything ... ... my son is very much more attached to me and just little things like, "No, I want mommy to change my diaper, daddy can't do it .... No mommy has to get me dressed, daddy can't do it". So there is that too pulling the guilt like ... you know I shouldn't be sending them off to the zoo today while I just you know ... I shouldn't be doing that because I feel that he thinks I'm like blowing him off or something, and I'm not.

Kathleen spoke of the conflicts she experienced in her role as a single parent and the choices she is forced to make because of the demands placed on her.

A lot because then too ... since you are working full-time you don't see your child. When you do have some free time you're thinking of things that would be exciting for them ... so you may want to take them to the zoo or to something that would be fun for them, maybe not too bad for you. You try to compliment that a little bit but you learn ... its just time management. You just realize that you can't do it all. You don't try to do it all in one day, so you try to balance it.

Interviewer: So if you don't to do it all, which parts do you X out?

I X out ... I remove things that would involve too much time or energy on my part. So even if my son wanted to go to the zoo, and he's been wanting to go for a month, I will not go if it's something I can't really physically or emotionally handle. because I'm the breadwinner and I need my health and my sanity I will X out something of his activities first ... throw a video in ...
Lack of Time

The women in the study also spoke specifically about the general lack of time in their everyday lives for leisure.

... time. There's not that extra hour to get to aerobics. Maybe if I didn't work I could bring my daughter to a health club and then you have babysitting rooms and I could do it in the morning or things like that. Or the other thing is a lot of times at night I hate to go out and leave her after leaving her for a ten hour day then to turn around and leave her to go out to a health club it kinda gets ... it tugs at your heart a lot. I think if I was at home with her all day I'd be really ready to get out to a health club. I think on that it would be more positive. (Carol)

Time ... that I have to work Thanksgiving and Christmas. I miss out on some of the family things. (BJ)

... the time constraints. You know you end up having to do a lot of time management. That's a major factor in working outside the home. That's a negative ... the time constraint because you have a time constraint with the daycare, you've got a time constraint with the job. The type of job I have is not a nine to five job, it's just not that easily split so that adds a lot of frustration and challenge so it's more a negative.

Flexibility, or lack of flexibility with the time. Also you feel the strain of being a mother and not being able to be with your child and see him growing up. You do miss that so you're torn a lot between that and trying to maintain a job, to maintain your finances and your career, as well. (Kathleen)

You can't do some of the things because of the time constraints. Like I know on Wednesday after class a lot of times ... there's the same ... there's a group of us ... there's fourteen of us gone through every course together. We're really close. Well a lot of times Wednesday after class they'll go to dinner or go have a few drinks or whatever. I usually have patients to see, I have to pick up my son or something. I mean my husband
will do it but I constantly feel guilty even though you know his daddy's there with him. I need to see him at least three hours a night which I used to like die without seeing him three hours. It was like if I was gone three hours I was so bad. I've improved but you know that work definitely makes an impact on how tired you are, what you have to do the next day, and then there's the mental stress. Probably my biggest constraint is school right now. The fact that I have to study and it changes me. When school is stressing me out or work is stressing me out I'm a completely different person ... completely. I just ... I don't enjoy things as much. Interacting with my son is not as good although I force myself to because he is a very ... he loves to snuggle and cuddle and all that. I'm usually o.k. after I relax a little but its really hard kinda tuning some of that stuff out. Stress is the biggest. If there's a problem at work or if there's something going on its just ... it takes over. (Spencer)

I would have the time to go workout and exercise like I might like to do and haven't done for twenty years. So it does reduce it for sure because you just have so much less time to play ... Time is the most critical factor to anybody. But as a parent, there's nothing that's more important than time. Especially with my husband's work at night. I used to fantasize about the ways I could make extra time. Squeeze it out here. How could I do that? I spent a lot of time thinking about this. Could I do this? What if I did this? I fantasized about different ways I could work with my job schedule. Ways that could have worked with the type of job I have. It consumed an awful lot of my time, but now its not present. For obvious reasons it's not an issue now. Because its just ever present in your mind. ... I do things very different from a mother that would be home all day. I would feed my kids earlier. Probably would have gotten into much more respectable bedtimes than they currently have (laughter). (Elizabeth)

The biggest constraint is one of those ... having enough time to do them. Because by the time you get down to pursuits of pure enjoyment, you've only got 10 or 15 minutes, or something like that. You've got so little time that there's not a lot of them. Having the time is the only constraint
again that I can really think of. The other part of it though is thinking about yourself. The constraint is that you're otherwise directed toward somebody else - kids or husband, the home or whatever ... (Elizabeth)

Time, family, work, ... that's it ... (BJ)

Kathleen specifically mentioned the experience of a lack of energy to do anything because of the demands on her both inside and outside the home as a constraining factor on her leisure choices.

Just being tired ... energy levels. I just don't have the energy. I had the opportunity to do two things on Sunday and I ... doing nothing, just doing nothing. I just did nothing. I stayed at home. By choice, easy choice.

Safety

Some of the women also mentioned concern for their own safety as a constraint to leisure. Although for the most part this did not totally prevent them from taking part in a chosen leisure activity, they did discuss particular precautions they would take to alleviate some of the fears.

Speaking from the perspective of a past experience, Naomi stated,

In my case at night, I tend not to go out at night as much because one time shortly before I got married, I was attacked and robbed at night. Since then even here, crime happens everywhere. Moving from the city to the suburbs, we have street lights, but they're not really street lights. Things are still very dark. I still feel fearful driving into my driveway. I turn the car on high beam and I'll check it out before I get out because that fear has never left me. The fear
of getting attacked in my car has just never left me. (Naomi)

BJ felt that a concern for her safety had a restrictive effect on her leisure choices.

Oh yes, most definitely. If I wanted to take a walk at dawn there's a safety ... and I wouldn't do it these days and times. Maybe thirty years ago, yes but not today. If I wanted to take a walk ... if I wanted to go to a highly populated area, just walk around town and ... I wouldn't because of the crime. There's crime everywhere, everywhere you look even out here. This is a nice sort of reserved type town but you know we have problems once in a while.

Concerns for the safety of both herself and her son played a role in Kathleen's leisure choices.

If I don't wanna go by myself to a club, it would be a safety issue ... yes ... it would be safety definitely ... To and from. In and out of the car at night. Safety driving myself or driving with (her son) to drop him off somewhere. So yes I ... I definitely think of that. So yes ... that is a very good factor. (Kathleen)

For Carol her recent responsibilities as a mother meant that she looked at the issues and concern for her own safety from a different perspective.

Probably more so now that I have a child than I did before. I think your own mortality ... you realize that you have the responsibility of someone because I think before I don't remember ever thinking ... especially when you're younger. I went anywhere by myself and I'd go all through (the city) without thinking about it. But I think now, probably more that ... I'm sure its always been there but I think you notice more the violence and the problems. So probably, yea, a little more so going out on my own somewhere I'm definitely more safety conscious ... I'd be more conscious. I don't know it may ... it depends. I may not want to meet someone in town by myself somewhere and have to walk at night ... have to meet someone and walk and walk somewhere. That
would probably stop me, something like that. I'd probably just arrange to meet them outside the city and drive in together or something like that.

Elizabeth brought a different perspective to the discussion when she spoke of her husband's concern for her safety when travelling.

I'm giving my husband the gift of going to Greece with his cousin this summer for ten days. I thought about going to visit my brother in Colorado. My husband's thought of it is I don't really like the thought of you travelling alone. I didn't really ask him to explain that. So he may have a real basic thought about it. He may be thinking of struggling with the kids alone is what he's really thinking. But there might be something else too. You being alone for four hours. What is it? I travel by myself. So I don't really know. I suppose that kind of thing is always there. That kind of thing about being safe.

Social Expectations

Personal standards and social expectations also contribute to some of the constraints experienced by women in their leisure choices. Naomi places certain limitations on her leisure activities because of her upbringing and moral standards.

Well, there's certain things I wouldn't do ... yeah, certain things. I wouldn't pass judgement on other people, but I wouldn't think it's appropriate for a woman to be seen doing or to do. Well, I don't go out to the bar and drink myself under the table. I'd go to a restaurant and have a drink, but I wouldn't hang out in a bar or I wouldn't go out partying with girlfriends because I had free time, my husband home watching the kids. I don't have the desire to do that. ... I wouldn't feel comfortable doing it.
In contrast some of the restrictions Spencer perceives as a woman are related to the way in which society expects a woman, and in this instance a married woman to behave.

Well I will say there's times when ... like since I go out with my girlfriends and things like that, my husband's friends will raise their eyebrows, like she's going out with the girls. I don't know if its because I never did that before. But then one of my girlfriends who I had, we were all the way through nursing school, met her husband and he ... There was a party at the hospital, he's a physician, and he's like ... we had met out at (a restaurant) to have a drink and he's like "I thought she was married" and she said "yea, she is, she's been married over six years". He's like "well what she doing out?" I just think that's really offensive because it's o.k. for my husband to go out. But that really offends me ... that does, plus the other ... everyone knows that I'm overly protective of my son. Don't mess with my kid, everyone knows that. But on the other hand its almost like you know I don't ... when I do anything I feel guilty and I don't apologize for it to anyone and I don't try to act like I'm, you know whatever, but I'm still aware of it. I'm aware that people ... you know may see that but there's not really things that I like to do that I can't do.

Well initially when I first started going out which was about a year ago with my girlfriends, I hadn't been ... gone out with my girlfriends at all, not even to a movie, since we'd been married. So he was happy about it at first because I was really just completely overwhelmed with everything and I was kinda burned out and he thought it was really good for me. As time went on, after a couple of months of me doing things it was kinda like ... he had made little comments and he would say things. But now we have an understanding that I spent several years at home waiting around for him and he knows that I'm a great mom and all that and he knows that I'm really overwhelmed and I need the time. So he dare not say anything ... is all I can say. But he has, but it's fine.
Benefits of Working Outside the Home

The demands associated with working outside the home and the responsibilities the women have within the home undoubtedly impact their leisure choices and experiences. However, the women in the study did see certain benefits to working outside the home. In some instances enabling them to have different leisure choices.

For some women the benefit was financial which allowed them to make different leisure choices.

... just in affordability and the networking, being able to afford a car. It gives you freedom. Working you do get the networking of colleagues and you find out about other programs or other types of vacations that you could maybe do that involve families. Working just gives me a lot of advantages as far as health care ... something you don't have to worry about and you feel a little bit easier ... and you get some vacation time. I definitely think that its been a positive thing. It enables me to do a lot of travelling and actually when I do travel I look for ways to include bringing my son. So that's a real positive thing for him because I've been able to do side trips and combine it with vacations and see the family that I wouldn't normally get to see or afford to see. So its actually broadened his awareness and his mind so that's a very positive thing although there's less time to get everything together. Kind of a negative out weighing a positive. (Kathleen)

I have more of a variety to choose from because I have the money to do different things. I would probably cut back on the trips and I would cut back on going out with the girls. Just do things that wouldn't require much money ... (BJ)

The other thing with leisure time and working I mean obviously its an added income so you have a little bit more cash flow to maybe do a few more things. Well I don't think I mean ... even going
a lot of these places. They're not cheap to get in anywhere anymore. I mean to ... we went to one of the zoos, it cost me over $20 to get in. certainly I don't think if I didn't have a second income I certainly wouldn't be doing those things. It would be more the public parks and maybe the beach type things. Also maybe vacation-wise. We're planning to take come vacation the end of the month and go to Storyland up in (vacation area). they have a big thing ... area for the children, that type of stuff. I think it would be different if we didn't have a second income we wouldn't ... I mean we're going to stay in a really nice place and stuff. We wouldn't be doing that, we'd probably be camping. (Carol)

The positive thing would be that you would have the money to do things. Like if we wanted to take a trip, which up until two summers ago we did. We like to go to Canada and we've visited different parts of Canada. Working helped in that we had money to take the family trip to do that. (Naomi)

For others it was the social contact and satisfaction that they got from working outside the home. This contact was a form of leisure for Elizabeth, serving to fulfill some of the need for social contact.

The best way to probably answer that is there's so much social satisfaction with work, I guess. So while I might not necessarily call it leisure, it certainly is an extraordinary part of my self satisfaction. While I may not be getting time to relax, I'm getting extraordinary amounts of self-confidence, very definite social contacts which I take a great deal of pleasure out of. This becomes my social life. In some cases more so than at home because we're more limited in our contacts, since we have children and not being able to get out. So it's extremely valuable to me in that regard. In a sense, maybe the enjoyment that I get out of those things that leisure might give, I'm actually getting out of my work. Similar sentiments were expressed by both Spencer and BJ.
Well, I enjoy working. I mean some of my patients I'm very, very close to that I've seen for over a year now ... I feel like family. I really know that I'm a good nurse and I know that when go in all my patients if they have problems, they are taken care of. So I know that I'm doing something good in that sense. And then mentally I'm very much a task oriented person and I feel like I'm accomplishing all the time. (Spencer)

... I'm away from home and I get a chance of having some type of adult communication, that's another thing ... (BJ)

Leisure and Lifestage

Pre-Marriage

The married women in the study spoke of their leisure experiences and the influences on them, prior to marriage. The increased sense of freedom from outside worries was addressed by Spencer,

It was fun (laughter). There was plenty of it. well I got married two weeks after I graduated so it's really hard to tell because I always had the stress of school and I worked full-time in school so that's real hard to tell. But the time that I had was time that was ... every time that ... it wasn't like I wasn't like I wasn't worried about all other things. It's like now there's so many other things to worry about. All I had to worry about was whether my laundry was done. So it's completely, completely different.

Naomi also spoke on the issue of freedom and its effect on her leisure choices.

Before I got married? Can I remember how life was before I got married? (laughter) I took trips somewhat. It was easier to plan to go away. Like I said, spur of the moment stuff I could do. I didn't worry about money that much. I tended to probably not spend as wisely as I do now. I think I was in closer contact with my friends. I think we did more as friends. (Naomi)
Freedom from obligations also impacted Carol's leisure choices and the manner in which she chose them.

Well, quite a bit different. At that point you don't have a home that you're worrying about. I lived at home 'til I got married so it was basically ... you worried about ... you're either in school or working and you did that. After that you had no obligations whatever. You came and went as you wanted. So I think ... at that time I went to the health club every night or every other night. I took off on the weekends without thinking about it and went out from work with everybody and did a lot of those types of things which you don't do now, especially on the spur of the moment.

BJ's leisure choices were also associated with a sense of freedom and lack of responsibility to or for anyone else.

Leisure before I was married ... drinking all the time. I was much younger then, partying all night long into the wee hours of the night. Drinking, partying, sleeping, drinking, partying, sleeping ... throwing my money away. It was a feisty stage. I just did that all the time. That's all I wanna do and that's pretty much the norm at the time and the group, the social group that I was involved with, that's all we do, all the time. Then as I got older my interests changed.

Elizabeth spent time with her husband-to-be.

We were going out. Much more kind of date things. Those things have long gone. When you're married that kind of stuff disappears (laughter) All that romance.

After Marriage but Before Children

Freedom was still evident in Carol's life after her marriage but before having a family. However, money and financial commitment began to be a factor in leisure choices. Carol also indicated that she
socialized more with friends prior to marriage, a choice she now makes less frequently.

Once you get married and leave ... we bought a house right away. A house takes a lot of commitment. Also money flow, you don't have the income to go away every weekend and that type of thing. But still there was a lot more time. I could go to the health club right from work. I didn't have to worry about going home and if I didn't want to worry about doing laundry it didn't quite matter. Now you better do laundry, or the kid's got nothing to wear. ... We ate out ... we used to eat dinner out probably at least once a week. On the weekends we always went somewhere. And more so ... I did probably a lot more things on my own at that point because ... maybe went out with my friends more than I do now. I'd take off or even during the week the friends from here (workplace), we'd go out for dinner or I'd meet people. Once you have the baby it's just kinda ... even though my husband would pick her up, when you get home you'd still have to think about is there stuff for the next day, are the lunches made. It gets to the point where it's gotta be really worth it to be, making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches at eleven o'clock at night.

For BJ and Spencer family circumstances relating to their husbands' education resulted in them spending extended periods of time in the home.

... before the kids came along my husband was in college and I was working and we just stayed at home. He stayed at home and studied and I stayed at home and relaxed, reading, watching T.V. and playing cards. that was basically it, playing backgammon ... (BJ)

... after we got married it was ... he started school right away so I had all this time on my own that I had nothing to do. But yet we had spent three years together, doing everything together. So, you know, I had to ... spend a lot of time just not doing anything, just bored. We spent all our time together. We never did anything apart. So I spent a lot of time with ... just doing nothing. (Spencer)
Spending time as a couple was the focus of the Elizabeth's leisure.

But even when we were married with no kids, we had a lot more contented times with each other.

Like Elizabeth, Naomi and her husband went out more as a couple. However with money becoming an increasing consideration. However, this is something they view as a temporary situation which will change in the future.

I think we went out more. We spent more money. We went to parties together. We could just go out and not worry about things like who's gonna take care of the kids and all that. We did a lot more of that. We did more things together, which, I think, is what I really miss. ... We are married now and we can put the money to something else. He says it is going to get better. It will. It will get better again. Right now we're sacrificing for a reason, so that later on we can relax and enjoy ourselves have the money to do the things we want to do. You have to sacrifice somehow.

Deserving of Leisure?

The experience of leisure has changed for many of the women interviewed as they have moved through various changes in their life. From before their marriage and since marriage and before the arrival of children, their lives and experiences were in a process of transition. Now, as indicated from what they have discussed, there are many restrictions and constraints on their leisure experiences. When asked if they felt
they deserved to have leisure, without exception they answered yes and went on to explain why.

Yes, of course I do ... that's healthy. I should, I deserve it. That's why I take off with the girls every three or four months and ... do good things with the kids. We go roller skating, to the movies, my husband, the kids and I. We don't do it every single week but you know, let's say maybe at least a couple of times a month we do either one thing or another, or we go to the bowling alley. (BJ)

Definitely. Every woman, every human being is deserving of leisure if they work, a job ... put hours into a job or invest in a job or do a good job. Everybody is deserving of leisure. I think, especially mothers (laughter) deserve leisure time. If there was a time when I just never got a chance to have free time that would be horrendous. (Naomi)

yea ... I mean I feel like I certainly feel I deserve it ... yea. I mean ... maybe not to lay on the beach for ... every weekend but I certainly think I deserve an hour every other day or whatever. (Carol)

Oh yea ... I'm not a guinea pig (laughter). I absolutely ... I look at it you know like when I first started going out with my friends and stuff and thought ... like I felt guilty, like gosh what am I doing in a bar or ... because I always thought that was so terrible. But then I thought if I'm not doing anything and I feel comfortable with it and whatever getting out of just being out or whatever, I think that's good for me. ... I'm active so I really do things. So I feel like I deserve to have that time. I have to or I'm not gonna function. Plus, you're only young once ... (Spencer).

Yep! ... Because I work very hard all the time. I work all the time and juggling this ... the child. So I feel like I deserve it maybe more than people realize. (Kathleen)
Although Naomi felt she deserved leisure she was accepting of situation based on her current family circumstances.

Even though I wish I had more leisure time to go out and do things on my own, it doesn't make me real depressed because I don't. It's something that I say "well I can't do that now, but there'll come a time when I can do all the things I want to do now. From being around my parents and other friends parents that I see, I know its a matter of course. This is what I've chosen to do. As you go into different commitments, like when you're just a husband and wife, there's different things that you stop doing. Like you certainly don't continue to date people, because you're a committed person. So, when you have children they have become your priority. You're there for them. You know that after they become a certain age or whatever and they're more independent, then you have your life back again. So, it's like I know it's a commitment thing I've invested in. A little bit sometimes I feel I like I had some free time to myself. (Naomi)

Leisure and Well-Being

Does leisure, or lack of it, have an impact on the women's sense of well-being? This question brought issues of stress level and its impact on the daily lives of the women in the study. Carol, Elizabeth, and Kathleen all spoke of the impact that increased levels of stress due to their responsibilities and lack of leisure opportunities have on their lives.

Well, I think the main thing is the stress level. I think that if I could really work out some type of ... timed myself on a daily or every other daily basis, whether it was just to relax or whether it was go for a walk, or go to an aerobic class I think my stress level would be a lot better. I find myself sometimes really on the edge and I think its because it just builds up
and I don't get to release a lot of tension that I should be doing. (Carol)

Well, I go back to last year when it was such a busy year for our family. My husband, when he was working, you're uptight too much. If you really are at wits end, which I was then, is that you're much more ... you're under stress, so you tend to lose your temper more. You're much closer to being impatient. Instead of being relaxed and understanding, your response - you find yourself having an impatient response. usually to your family which is wrong thing. You don't even know where it's coming from. It comes out even before you ... That's the biggest price working women pay. You are tired when you get home. You've had a long day. So you don't have time to relax and it's very likely that the children or your husband or somebody else would get the brunt of it sometimes which is entirely wrong. You need to just learn how to avoid it. But the question was how I did it. So if I have leisure experiences, then they restore to me a sense of control which is what you tend to lose when you have none (leisure). You have no time to do the work around the house. Everything starts getting overwhelming. All of a sudden it takes you three days to get the laundry from the laundry basket back into the drawers. Because it stays for a day in the dryer and another day on the table. All you have time to do is cook dinner and wash clothes and that's it. So that you have this overwhelming sense that you can't do really anything. I'm getting overwhelmed and I don't have any control. That begins to affect your self-esteem. It also affects ... but I don't know if that actually was felt. So if that has happened, maybe I don't know. It creates stress and stress does affect, for sure, my image and my ability to work and be creative and relax. Because you need to be relaxed and in control to be a most effective person, whatever it is you're doing. Leisure time, very definitely, positively affects that. It gives you a better outlook on life. It allows you to be more appreciative or relaxed with children. It does everything positive. It has an incredibly positive effect. There's no doubt about it. I wish it was quantifiable. (Elizabeth)

I have to have it in order to function, because of the stress of my job and the responsibilities I
have at home. If I don't find some time or make myself rest, I would be a more panicked person. ... It is a major health issue for me, physical and emotional. So I have to recognize that and build in some things that I've never really built in before to allow myself to have some level of relaxation or else I would be sick ... (Kathleen)

BJ spoke of the effect her lack of opportunity for leisure during the winter months had on her sense of well being.

I'm always tired, the worst than at any other time because there's not a whole lot to do. We have the Y. for the indoor pool, we can do that whenever we can get out ... if we can get out, if it's not too icy out, if the snow isn't too high. Less active, definitely, in the winter. You become a house potato. You don't have much energy. You feel more lethargic at that time of the year. I do because I'm not getting out in the fresh air. Sometimes I'll open the windows and everybody's freezing just to get some air ... just to get air, because when you're in here, closed in, it's not good.

Speaking of her time spent on Cape Cod with friends:

I felt rejuvenated ... really loved it. It was healthy.

Speaking of the everyday experiences of leisure:

... that's relaxing, swimming with the kids, bike riding ... it's relaxing. It's good exercise because I'm concerned about our weight. We have health issues in our family and I'm careful about what I cook, and different foods I prepare and how I prepare them. We have to get our exercise. I hated winter because I wasn't able to do much ... you go out for a little while, build a snowman. Whoopee, we're only out for a little while because it's so cold ...
Partner's Leisure

The women spoke of the way in which their husbands contributed to the running of the household and, in some instances the way in which they facilitated their wife's leisure experiences. They also noted that their leisure experiences differed from those of their husbands.

... watching basketball, football, sports ...

... less 'cause he can watch T.V., perfectly simple. He can watch football, basketball, whatever ... the kids take off. If I wanna watch a show the kids are huddled onto me, they zoom like bald eagles, hanging all over me. They don't wanna do that with him and I ask why. "I don't wanna watch basketball, I don't wanna watch ..." and he's sitting there smiling like ... I'll watch something they don't like. But if he was watching something they would zoom in ... He watches golf ... everything ... golfing, fishing, basketball, football, bowling, they're not interested in any of it. (BJ)

I would say that he ... he's probably a lot like me in that respect that he worries about getting home so that we can get things done or whatever. But its easier ... I mean he just came off a four day fishing trip which was ... it wasn't ... it was a blink of an eye for him to plan to go. Now if I planned to go away for four days it would have been major chaos ... what's gonna happen ... plan. Whereas I mean he didn't ... it was just like yea. It wasn't even planned so he kinda just up and went. So I think in that respect they're different. Mine I would have definitely have had to had a lot more planning and a lot of work to get that ... I think its a lot easier for him to go and do something. He doesn't worry about all the variables I would worry about ... the house, the child, that kind of thing. (Carol)

Completely ... we have completely different things. Like I like to go out and dance. He likes to watch ... he watches every sport that's on T.V. and I hate it on. It makes me like
scared. I used to be able to sit down and watch a good football game. Well now I'm at the point where I can't even bear to watch that. I get upset. Like I'll come home and it'll be on and I'll be like, huh! You know I'll be thinking that he's been ignoring (her son) or that he could have been doing this because he'll stand right in front of the T.V and just be zoned ... It's not three months a year, it's twelve months a year and it's not one night a week, its seven nights a week ... It's very frustrating. He likes to drink a lot more than I do. I like going out, and I mean I'll drink a beer, but he'll get to the point where he drinks too much, so that makes me mad.

We have no interests together. ... I mean I have lots of friends who ... their husbands watch sports and they hate it but they have things that they do together. (Spencer)

I think the only thing is that I get jealousies that he can just go out and have his time and I'm here at home. It's not a resentment, it's kind of an envious thing.

Interviewer: Do you think he gets more leisure that you do?

That's hard to say because it boils down to no I don't think he does. It just seems that way. It's different.

Interviewer: Is it easier for him to take time to do something that he wants to do? Is that the difference?

I think so because I think that it's a role that only I can fill so I have to be there for them (the children). Lots of times he'll ask my older daughter does she want to go with him. She'll say no, I want to stay with mommy. Given who I am and the role I'm playing, that's what I have to do. I have to be here. If I want to go somewhere, I can pack them up and take them with me. I think that the little thing in me knows he can just get in that car and take off. He's by himself and can go off and do whatever he wants to do. (Naomi)
Suggestions for Employers

The women interviewed in the study had a number of suggestions directed towards employers to create increased flexibility in their role as a working mother. This flexibility in turn may increase the amount of time they have for leisure in their lives. Suggestions made by the women included: daycare provision and assistance; flexible schedules; the sensitivity of employers; and the provision of opportunity for on-site and off-site leisure.

Daycare

The women in the study indicated that they were ultimately responsible for their child or children. They were responsible for taking the child to daycare and collecting them from daycare. The additional time it took to drop the child off in the morning and the pressure at the end of the work day to pick up the child before the facility closed, were concerns addressed throughout the interviews. The predominant suggestion for the ways in which employers could facilitate leisure for working mothers, was the provision of on-site daycare. They also discussed associated concerns relating to the care of their children which could be addressed by on-site daycare provision.
Naomi advocated on-site, employer provided daycare facilities. She said,

I think on site daycares are a fantastic thing they've started trying to do in recent years. I think that takes a lot of pressure off moms. Because you get a call at work, your child is sick. My daughter would be in (city) and I would be in (city). Or if she is in school in (city), I'd have to leave work and come get her. That's stressful because they tend not to go and tell you how sick. They might say she's been throwing up all afternoon. It's like, oh my God, I have to get her. I think on site is fantastic. ... Even now my husband drops (her daughter) off at school because I have to be in, well 9:05, but he knows I like to be in early. So he will take her to school which is a sacrifice for him when he works late. It's very hard to get up and get a kid ready. Now we're both hoping that my school will turn back to an early school so that we can both take care of (her younger daughter). I don't know what's going to happen. The rumor mill has it that my mother's retiring in October. If my mom does retire I will take the baby with me in the morning and drop her off there.

This concern was supported by Kathleen who stated,

They could work more with daycare ... on the daycare service and build some flexibility in there for hours.

Speaking of the benefits of on-site daycare provision BJ said,

Yea ... because expenses today are too much, some of them are, uh ... you won't have people calling in sick as often, They could ensure that everyone has an hour lunch so you could spend time with your kid if you have daycare right at the facility. It splits up the day for the kids and knowing that their parents are close if something happened they are right there. You've got to go to work everyday. The kid's going to be there everyday so you know ... it would actually be beneficial to the employers. I think it would be good ... Apart from the daycare ... I mentioned subsidizing it right ... make sure there's an extended lunch ... make sure there is an hour
lunch to have lunch with the kids if you want ...
(BJ)

Since she currently has a good daycare for her child, Carol was unsure in her feelings about employer provision of on-site daycare.

Well I don't know. It's hard to say. It may or may not. I have always had her pretty close and I've always worked it into ...I've just moved her. She was in a home when I was working down in (city) but it was only a mile or two. So it maybe only added ten minutes on each end of the day. Now its the same thing here and its really right on my way home. I'd have to drive past it so its not that ... If I couldn't find suitable daycare close, yes definitely. If I had to drive a half hour, that's one of the reasons I moved her because I'd have to drive half an hour and drop her off and the half hour to get here and the same thing at the end of the day.

In contrast Elizabeth was not in favor of on-site daycare because of the specific location of her office. From a professional viewpoint she had concerns about the practical and economic viability of such a provision.

I would not like to have to commuted in on a daily basis with my kids and my baby bag and my bag. So the only way I would have benefitted would have been the 5:00 rush home to meet the 6:00 deadline. That very definitely would have been a benefit. Certainly, if I could see my kids. I believe that there are certain times, that's not even good for them. Because unless its worked into their schedule, a toddler will want to go with you when you come to visit them. Maybe if its a part of their schedule and you do it every day. But I tend to wonder if that's such an ideal like so many parents say. Maybe it works. I guess it does because of some centers. It must have worked somewhere. We have a lot of struggle. A lot of parents that say, "Why not here?" In the (city) metropolitan area, that's a very tricky question because not only is there not space to do it in
the downtown area, but 4,000 out of the 6,000 employees take the train or the (subway) in. At night its like (E. makes a gesture to simulate crowded trains). People can do it but it's not real conducive to making it easy for you.

Interviewer: If the corporate offices were somewhere other than downtown?

... much more possible because the you could drive and then you could drive and then, yes it would be possible ... and the only reason is that it would give you the opportunity to cut that additional drop off pressure out of your life which is a lot of pressure.

Concerns relating to the cost of childcare were also addressed by the women in the study. The mothers identified provisions made by their employers and also made suggestions for the improvement of financial contributions. Carol had concerns relating to the financial aspects of daycare and the ways in which employers can make contributions. She said,

They do have something here called ... its dependent care where they'll let you put pre-tax dollars into an account, whether it's for childcare or elder care. You kind of put this money into an account and then almost ... its almost then like you've submitted an expense report every week. So that is something nice. I haven't utilized it. I'm really thinking of looking into it. In the past my daycare was under the table so it was ... I couldn't use it. But now I'm using a center so ... Anything they can do helps ....

Speaking of the financial provisions made by her company for childcare while travelling, Kathleen noted,

... offering reimbursement for other types of childcare expenses. My company does this, I don't know if all companies do this but that enabled me to do some of these side trip travelling. If you have to leave your child at home or if you have to
take them they'll reimburse you expenses for childcare so that helped me out. Some of those things exist but it's just you have to fight through a maze to get to it and there's no guidelines outlined ... 'cause I had found that the expenses were reimbursable but I didn't know how much ... how much to pay a typical nanny and guessing if that was a good price and what's the level you can do that with.

The contributions some employers make towards daycare is the provision of a referral service to assist in locating effective daycare provision. Spencer recognized that it was not possible for some employers to provide on-site care. She said,

Yea ... and it's not like well, o.k. ... we can't provide a big daycare system for anyone but we do have these referral sources. Just something to make the person ... make them understanding and not make women feel. I know like at (former place of work) even women feel ... this was like nurses and supposedly caring public health professionals, and it was like people were so insensitive.

Kathleen also noted the benefit of an employer referral service for daycare.

Some companies have referral services for daycare. Like mine does, but going the extra step ... that's a benefit.

**Employer Sensitivity**

Employer sensitivity to the everyday demands of working mothers was addressed by Naomi. She said,

... They should try to be more sensitive. I was very fortunate, have been very fortunate, in that with my principals, they've been very sensitive to me and very supportive. Even in this particular site where I'm working now, it seems that the principal - there were five of us this year that were pregnant - she almost had a mental breakdown because of that. She was very supportive. Trust
them (the employees) enough to know that if they come into their job, they're gonna do a good job. If they have to take time off from work, then they are gonna come back and give you 150 percent ...

Flexible Schedules

From a professional standpoint Elizabeth noted the potential benefits of flexible schedules and the ways they could help working mothers.

We've done a couple of work/family responsibility surveys within the corporation. I did one last year. Knowing that ... I mean you don't even have to be a working person, never mind a working mother or father very long to know how valuable time is. The survey definitely validated ... if we tried to get a level of concern that parents have within the work/family responsibilities, childcare, school age, elder care kinds of things. There was a constant serious or significant impact. A lot of the people that answered the survey did not have kids. Thirty to sometimes 40 percent, depending on if they looked at a particular line of work, of people said they had serious to frequent with significant concern on these issues as they relate to work. If you said that you had constant or frequent concern for these issues, would a change in work schedule help? Forty seven percent flexibility. Flexibility is way up above part-time, job share, any of them. Because people want or need to work full-time ... But flex-time and more, usually twice as much more, was start earlier in the morning. At least a recognition of the fact that you're in here already early. Instead of the space time at night that's so culturally acceptable, like people who are going to stay here until 7:00. These parents, so many of them feel guilty leaving here at 6:30. It's ridiculous ...

Interviewer: Some parents say, well I can't justify staying late at work because I've already been away from my child for x amount of hours already ...

... right and that's the way they should feel. That should come first. Absolute priority if you have them. There are such pressures between work
and family life for some people. Fortunately I'm able to balance it pretty well. There's nothing that could come in the way of that. If the job did, I'd find another one.

Having a flexible schedules was also addressed by Kathleen, Spencer, and Carol.

Having the flexibility and allowing a lot more of those things makes it a lot easier. (Kathleen)

I would have flexible work schedules. That would probably be the number one thing. Whatever it means I think you probably retain employees more if you say ... instead of saying you have to be here from eight to five, say o.k. you can come in at 7:30, o.k. take a half hour lunch instead of an hour lunch ... flexible schedules so that ... because there's so much guilt and there are so many stressors involved that people say that well if I let you off work at three then what are you going to do in that time ... it doesn't matter. So I think flexible work schedules. The other thing is for maternity leaves. I think that should be flexible with work guarantees (Spencer)

Like flex-time, maybe doing some work at home. It all depends a lot on what your position is. Some people have more access to that kind of thing than others. If they maybe allow flex-time so maybe if you came in a little earlier you could leave at 4:30 to make that quick aerobics class before you had to go home. You had an extra hour to do some of the things you needed to do. (Carol)

Activities

The provision of activities for employees during breaks in the work day or at weekends. Spencer had some suggestions for employer provided "perks".

... I would also say ... they are silly things but ... like memberships to gyms and things like that ... on site daycare. That would really have impacted my life. It really, really would have 'cause I went through so much trauma with deciding where to put my son in a daycare. Just things like that. You know, just little perks that make
people feel they are being treated well. So if you feel like, somebody's giving maybe a free zoo pass if you have kids under the age of ten ...

Carol and Kathleen spoke of the provision made by their employers. They also discussed some of the drawbacks they encountered in attempting to take advantage of the activities.

Sometimes ... I know they've done some things here (work place) which are good. They've done aerobic classes at lunch and stuff like that but ... I find that more stressful. Trying to rush to get to it, rush to change to get back to work especially in the position I have because it's the phones and the coverage. So I find that the stresses of trying to get to there isn't worth it. But some people here do it and really enjoy it and it works out well. But I mean those are the types of things that are good. If they are on-site things. (Carol)

On the other hand they do have some activities that they do for families on the weekends but I haven't been able to attend any of those things. It's just too much, although I'd like to go sometime. They do family fun days, family breakfasts, you bring your kids to craft fairs, that kind of stuff but its just ... for me personally I just can't do it ... (Kathleen)

Elizabeth had some suggestions for working mothers. She said,

I've done this a few times in talking with people that are new at it. Drop the self-imposed pressures that women place on themselves, either by saying I've got to be out there working or I'm no good, 'cause I'm no good if I'm home as a working mother. But if you've got to work, forget about having that three ... that well balanced meal. Yes it should be balanced, but there are other ways to do it. So release the pressure on yourselves to have kids that have got to be in bed 'cause its 7:30 'cause that's the way it should be, 'cause that's the way its always been done. That's what my mother did and that's what some other people tell me is right. Don't worry about
that. Do ... I would say ... I would instruct them to spend the least amount of time possible getting dinner ready and having ... So that the most amount of time can be spent with the children and the family. Because in that way they get their ... they reduce the stress on themselves and they'll have a higher level of satisfactory time. That would be my best advice.

Suggestions for Commercial Providers of Leisure

The women in the study also offered suggestions for the ways in which commercial leisure providers could cater more to the needs of working mothers. The primary concern was the provision of childcare. They also mentioned making things more attractive to family involvement.

Childcare

Childcare was a primary concern for the women in the study and an issue which they felt warranted attention by commercial leisure providers.

I think in a situation like that, about the only thing I could possibly think of is childcare, which some do - baby sitting is available. I think that's the only thing. When I was bowling they provided a baby sitting service for the kids. He (her son) went all the time when he was like a year and a half. Other places could do that if ... have a play room for the kids, that's what they have. They have a playpen. Like when I was bowling they had a playpen when he was an infant and they brought the playpen out. Right there where I was bowling ... right behind the chairs so you can see the kid. If other places provided that it would make it so much easier for women to get involved in different things. If they provided a playroom for all different age kids, from infants on up ... (BJ)
... daycare facilities, like at the gym ... 'cause there's so many obstacles just to getting to the gym or getting to whatever you're doing. ... I know so many people "oh I really love to workout but I don't have a babysitter or whatever". But if they had an area, even like a little mini-gym for the kids that they're playing. I mean 'cause first of all you have the guilt but if there's something fun for the kid to do then and they're looking forward to it, I would assume that memberships would boost by oodles. Like the Gymboree classes I always took my son to. That was really nice and fun for him to play on. They could do that. I mean if they hired one person, six or seven dollars an hour, to be in this room ... it doesn't have to be anything real big, but yea definitely, I think that's huge. I remember when I was stuck at home. It was kinda how I felt stuck at home and my husband didn't get home until ten 'o clock at night, four nights a week. I mean there was no way I could ask someone to watch him to go and workout but I was grossly overweight. I gained 80 pounds with him (her son) and that was a constant worry. I finally bought a treadmill and got on that. That's boring. It would've been nice to get out and ... I could have afforded it too. It would have been nice to be able to go and he'd have something to do while I was there, and I wouldn't feel guilty. That's huge ...

Interviewer: It also ties into the social aspect, meeting people and ...

Oh yea, definitely ... because if you are going there every Tuesday and Thursday night you see the same person possibly and ... because I've done that. One of my best friends I met her at the gym ... (Spencer)

Oh gosh ... it was so difficult for me to find a health club that had babysitting. That is the main thing and if they had babysitting during the day ...

Interviewer: Right, so they don't take into account the working mothers.

... working mothers. So there's very few that have that. The ones that have it just thrive for them and its very good and they're reasonable, about two dollars an hour or something very
reasonable. That's the big thing, the babysitting. (Kathleen)

I think a lot of places are becoming more aware now that they would have more participation by women in certain meetings and so forth if they could find childcare. ... That's tough at night here after I've worked all day and have total responsibility for them at night, that's very hard. So, I think if they continue to be sensitive and provide ways that will take stress off mothers, like providing childcare. Where you don't have to worry about where your kid is ... that's important. (Naomi)

Interviewer: Do they have a childcare facility at the health club you go to?

They don't have it at night. They only have it during the day so it doesn't really work well for ... they don't really have anything in the evening. They have it usually in the mornings during the week and I don't even think they have it on the weekends. ... I think they assume at night that if you're going to come, one of the parents would be home. I assume that's what they must think.

... I don't even belong any more. What I've been doing ... I don't get there very often. Before I had the baby I belonged and you paid a monthly fee and then what happened was I stopped it right when I was mid-pregnancy. I froze the membership for a while 'cause I was too big to do anything. I should have gone but ... and then I went back when I was still on maternity leave. I was only out nine weeks. The last few weeks they allow you to do stuff. And then once I started back to full-time work with a young infant there was just no time and I was just ... at that point I just couldn't leave her after working all day when they're so young I just couldn't bring myself to do it. So at that point I cancelled the membership. Now what they'll allow you to do is you can go in and just pay for a class. It's like 5 dollars a class. Right now I can't make a full-time commitment. It makes good financial sense for that ... This place is pretty decent. Its not far from home. (Carol)
Family Involvement in Activities

The women in the study indicate that the provision of activities in which the whole family could be involved in should be a consideration for leisure providers. Associated with this need was the cost of involving all the family.

Maybe being open different hours. Some of the places being open in the evening in the good weather, things like that. And then also maybe financial things for children. Some of these places, they charge outrageous amounts for a two year old. I mean twelve dollars is really crazy. I feel bad because people who have a lot of children, there's no way you could afford to do things like that. And maybe having more things that you could bring children to. There's a lot of things that you really frown if you bring kids to or whatever. Even health club type things. Maybe have more involvement that you could bring your kids and have them involved in something while you were doing something else, which would be good for both of you.

When you mention movie theaters, I can't think of anything except reducing their rates. They're too expensive. ... There's a lot of Chuck E. Cheese's and Bonkers, and Discovery Zone ... I think they are directed at the working parent. I think they are directed at the busy person. They give you a family place to go, but they are, I think, they exploit the excitability of the kids to an extraordinary degree. They shoot up on the level of excitability. I don't know if that bothers the kids or not. But I don't go to those places. (Elizabeth)

Plus I think things like the zoo or places like that ... they foster mothers who are away from their children and have that ... those kind of things foster bonding or whatever you want to call it. So I think daycare, potentially discounts or some kind of cooperation with companies as far as ... we'll do this and you'll do this for us. Possibly the time that the zoo closes ... it closes at 5:00. It'll be later in the summer but
now is the time when everyone is kinda cabin-fever and its like by 5:00 I still can have a couple of hours to take him (her son) to the zoo or something ... (Spencer)

I was at the hairdresser when I found out that there's a cruise line now that has vacations for families where they take your kids and they put them in groups by ages and they just ... its like their vacation and you go on a cruise and you can sleep, do anything you want ... The kids are taken by counsellors and they're gone so those types ... commercially more kinds of things. I know that its slowly sprouting up in some way. (Kathleen)

I think hotels are doing that too with family packages. They're making it more attractive for an entire family. (Naomi)

Summary

The experiences of the women in this study, told in their own words and presented in narrative form, formed the basis for this chapter. The data addressed issues relating to the meaning and experience of leisure within the social context of the lives of the women in this study. Constraints to their leisure experiences factors within their everyday lives which influence their experience of it were also addressed. The data also spoke of the ways in which employers and leisure providers can facilitate leisure experiences and by alleviating some of the obstacles encountered by working women with young children.

The following chapter will summarize in greater detail the findings of the study. In addition, observations and recommendations will be made based on
the findings of the study. Finally, suggestions will be made for future research.
Chapter V

SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

The final chapter is divided into four sections: (a) summary of the research process; (b) summary of the findings; (c) observations and recommendations; and (d) suggestions for future research.

Summary of the Research Process

The examination of the meaning and experience of leisure for working women with an infant, toddler, or preschool child resulted from my professional interest in the provision of leisure experience and opportunities for women. My professional involvement included the marketing and provision of recreational opportunities for women as part of programming responsibilities at a suburban recreation center in England. Comments and feedback relating to their experience of leisure from the women at this facility were the catalysts for my interest in this topic.

In an effort to gain an understanding of leisure in the lives of working women with children under the
age of six, case studies within the interpretive paradigm were selected as the research design. The following objectives guided the study:

1. To explore and describe the meaning of leisure and the role it plays in the context of the lives of the working mothers who participated in this study.
2. To identify and examine the constraints on leisure experienced by working women with an infant, toddler, or preschool child.
3. To examine the impact of women's work, both inside and outside the home, on their experience of leisure.
4. To examine the contributions employers and leisure providers can make to facilitate the leisure experiences of working mothers with an infant, toddler, or preschool child.

This naturalistic study, within the interpretive paradigm, stressed the understanding of the ways in which individuals experience their social world. This design allowed for leisure to be considered within the context of their lives as a whole. In addition, in order to place the women's experiences at the forefront of the study, it was conducted within a feminist framework.
Since the research was exploratory in nature, a multiple case study approach was selected. These case studies involved six women, three African American and three European American, selected through purposeful sampling.

To enable the women to describe their experiences of leisure in their own words I interviewed them using the general interview guide method. The interview guide, developed from the literature review and my professional experiences, provided consistency in the topics addressed in the interviews with each participant. To ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data, with permission of the participants the interviews were tape recorded. In addition, the participants were also asked to keep a journal pertaining to their leisure experiences and the feelings associated with them for a period of one week.

A verbatim transcript of the data, the participants' journals and the researcher's field notes and journal became part of the data for analysis. The data were analyzed both within and across cases.

I read each transcript several times and then they were coded. These codes were then examined for the development of themes. The findings of the study were displayed in narrative form, using the words of the
research participants to demonstrate and explain the findings.

The rigor of the research was enhanced by member checking, the reflexive component of the researcher's journal and peer debriefing.

Summary of the Findings

The data were analyzed both within and across cases. The findings of the study relate specifically to the six women participants. It was not my intent, nor was it possible, to generalize the findings to all women. It was recognized that the study and the findings from it were affected by the particular experiences of the participants and the time and location of the interviews.

The data will be summarized in relation to the research objectives and the findings of previous research.

The Meaning and Experience of Leisure

The meaning of leisure is very individualized. There are multiple perspectives relating to individual definitions of leisure. The women in the study described what leisure meant to them in association with their everyday lives. In summarizing the meaning of leisure four patterns of response emerged: (a)
leisure as freedom; (b) leisure as feeling; (c) leisure as a feeling in association with a sense of freedom; and (d) leisure as an activity.

Leisure as Freedom

Spencer, one of the participants, described leisure as having a sense of freedom. This feeling was associated with time when she did not have to worry about anything else that had to be done or demanded her attention. She also identified leisure as a sense of freedom when she was not involved in something that demanded the exertion of mental energy. The guilt associated with the feeling that there are other things that need to be done, impacted negatively on this sense of freedom. For her the feeling of freedom was therefore necessary to enable a rewarding leisure experience to take place.

Leisure as a Feeling/Experience

For Kathleen, Carol, and Elizabeth leisure was described as a feeling or experience. Relaxation and quiet were essential elements of their leisure experience. It was described as a feeling in the sense that the leisure experience was viewed as a means of relaxing or, in contrast, it was something that relaxed the individual.
Beyond a sense of relaxation, Elizabeth also described leisure as a way in which she experienced self development. She felt that leisure gave her the opportunity to develop personal interests. Therefore, the focus of her definition of leisure was experiences that enabled her to focus on herself rather than others.

Leisure as Freedom in Association with an Experience

The feeling of enjoyment and gaining pleasure from an activity was the focus of Naomi's definition of leisure. However, she also indicated that in order to enjoy her leisure she had to be free from the constraints of other commitments.

Leisure as an Activity

BJ described leisure in terms of activities. Her definition focused on the activities she would choose to do and those she considered to be leisure.

The results of this research shows similarities with the findings of previous studies dealing with the ways in which women define leisure. The work of Bialeschki and Michener (1994), Green, Hebron and Woodward (1987b), Hunter and Whitson (1991) and Shaw
(1988) described how women in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada defined leisure in their lives. Their findings demonstrated that the elements of leisure defined by women included a sense of enjoyment and pleasure; feelings of relaxation; a sense of freedom; and the opportunity to please oneself. The work of Henderson and Bialeschki (1987) further supports the results of these studies. Women in their study described the elements of leisure as a sense of enjoyment, the inclusion of intrinsic rewards and a freedom of choice.

In this study the definition and description of leisure as a sense of freedom, a feeling/experience, a combination of a sense of freedom and an experience or an activity supports the finding of past research associated with the ways in which women define leisure.

Leisure Experience(s)

When asked about their leisure experiences, the women in this study initially indicated that they did not have any time for leisure. Their typical response was "What leisure?". However, as the interviews progressed they did begin to talk about what they did for leisure and the ways in which these experiences were affected by other aspects of their lives.
The experience of leisure for the women in the study was interconnected with both their home and professional life. Both aspects of their lives had a significant impact on their experience of leisure. They recognized that their own leisure was interrupted by the demands and the needs of the family and work outside the home. However, they indicated that they gained pleasure from spending time with family. They considered this interaction to be an important aspect of their leisure experiences. The experiences described by the women in the study indicated that their leisure experiences occurred while attending to something or someone else. In support of the findings of Bialeschki and Michener (1994), some of the women in this study acknowledged an inevitable lack of personal leisure until the children were older and more independent.

Active leisure was predominantly associated with their children. The activities ranged from visiting the zoo to reading and playing with their children. When identifying what they considered to be leisure, taking the children to places which they would find fun and enjoyable was a prominent consideration for the women in the study. The swimming pool, the beach, the park, or the bowling alley were frequent locations for
leisure. The children enjoyed the experiences and therefore it was also enjoyable for their mothers.

Since the women spent the day away from their children spending leisure time with their children provided enjoyment and pleasure. Spencer, Elizabeth, and Naomi all described the enjoyment and pleasure they got from spending their leisure time with their children. In fact, their children were the focus of their leisure experiences. The children are young and inevitably in need of the attention of their mothers.

Some of the women participated in active leisure as part of their leisure experiences without their child or children. Activities chosen for active leisure included swimming, rollerblading, touch football, walking and aerobics. Passive activities such as reading and sleeping were considered to be important by all the women. Moreover, the need for quiet time, rest, or time to sit and just do nothing was evident and consciously striven for by most of the women in the study.

Visiting relatives and friends was also part of the leisure experiences of the women in the study. The need for socializing and being with others was a dominant theme. However, whether this was by choice or out of the expectations of family members and friends is unclear. Spending time with their partner, however,
was not a frequent occurrence for the women. Anytime spent with their partner were family oriented, and the children became the focal point of that experience.

Since the children of the women in this study were so young and dependent, it was more difficult for the women to experience leisure without them. In most cases this was not a choice they were actively seeking. However, when asked what they would do if they had a day to do whatever they chose, without any restrictions, all of the women, except Naomi, chose to spend at least part of the day alone, the focus being on relaxation. The rest of the day would be spent with others, predominantly friends who they rarely had the opportunity to see, doing things they infrequently had the opportunity to do - things for themselves. In contrast Naomi would choose to spend the day with her children, gaining pleasure from sharing experiences with them and giving them things they would like.

The theme of relaxation was also evident in the women's ultimate leisure experiences. Travel to the ocean or the mountains where the goal was peace and relaxation was highlighted by all the women.

The high level of stress and physical and emotional exhaustion were addressed by many women in association with the expectations and responsibilities of home and work. In order to effectively handle the
stress associated with their multiple roles, the women in this study recognized the need to take time for themselves. These mothers recognized the need for leisure in order to have a better outlook on life and an appreciation of a relaxed atmosphere with their family. The findings of this study support the work of Bialeschki and Michener (1994) and Shank (1983) in which leisure was identified as a way for women to maintain a sense of self and balance within their lives.

The women indicated that other people could facilitate their leisure experiences. Family members, friends and partners played an important role in this capacity.

When the women in this study compared their leisure to that of their partners, they indicated that they felt that their partner had more freedom in their choices and decisions regarding their leisure experiences. From the women's perspective their partners had greater freedom and are not restricted by the roles that they have to fulfill within the family situation. If the men chose to do something they could do it without extensive forward planning and preparation to ensure that the family would be taken care of while they were gone. Their partners did not feel that they had to include the child/children in
their leisure. Leisure was something they did for themselves. Consequently, the men did not have to worry about the variables which concerned women in their leisure decisions. Moreover, they did not have to worry about the practicalities related to the management of the household. These observations support the findings and observations of Bella (1988), Hunter and Whitson (1991), and Lenskyj (1988).

Constraints

Time as a Constraint to Leisure

Many constraints related to the leisure experienced and discussed by the women in the study were related to their social role and societal expectations of women. As working mothers there was always someone or something demanding their time and attention, either in the work place or at home.

The women in this study had professional jobs which were demanding and stressful. They spoke at length about their responsibilities both inside and outside the home. Spencer and Elizabeth, however, only considered work to be their paid work outside the home. Anything they did relating to the running of the household or childcare was not part of their definition of work. In contrast Kathleen and BJ were adamant in their definition of work as encompassing
responsibilities both inside and outside the home. Carol and Naomi were somewhere between these two points of view. They acknowledged that responsibilities for child and home care were work, but they were less adamant in their view when compared with Kathleen and BJ.

While not polarizing work and leisure, these viewpoints locate the role of leisure in the context of their total life experience. They do have a dual role even though the role in the home was not considered to be work by some of the women. Perhaps this is linked to an expectation society has for them and the role they take upon themselves to take care of the home and family.

The demands of work and home responsibilities, and the associated lack of time appeared to be a problem when considering their leisure. This was very evident when they compared their daily routine between days off and days at work. During work days they were very rushed. They were constantly going from one task to the next in an attempt to ensure efficient transitions through the day. Kathleen spoke of her experiences in terms of "projects". During workdays there was limited time for leisure. The leisure that did occur took place on the commute to and from work, at work in the form of socialization, or time spent with children at
the end of the work day. Young children are very demanding and needy of time and attention, adding to the demands on time and energy experienced by the working women within the study.

The lack of time identified as a concern by these women supports the observations of Hargreaves (1989) and Shaw (1994). Hargreaves (1989) stated "Women with young children who also go out to work are in the worst position. Leisure is fitted in between essential childcare, cooking, shopping etc. There is no notification of time off so the distinction between work and leisure is blurred" (p.136). Shaw (1994) noted, "... women are disadvantaged with regard to time for leisure due to household obligations and family commitments" (p. 10).

Many women received help from their partners with regard to the running of the household. However, this help was not related to the organizational help. They helped with practical tasks around the home and some childcare. Every women in this study was responsible for the overall welfare of the children. This is part of gender role socialization for both males and females. It was interesting to note that Spencer described more work being created by her partner than help contributed by him.
The dual role of women in society resulted in great demands on time and energy for the working mothers in this study. The time that they do have is fragmented and unpredictable, therefore negating many leisure time activities.

Socialization and the Ethic of Care

The concept of the ethic of care as described by Gilligan (1982) and applied to women's experience of leisure by Henderson and Allen (1991) and Henderson and Bialeschki (1991), permeates the discussion of the experiences of the women in the study.

Taking care of others, in this case their children and partner, was a responsibility of all the women in the study. Getting the child up and dressed, getting them to daycare and collecting them at the end of the workday were responsibilities taken on by all the women. Although there was help available from the partner for those women who were married, the ultimate responsibility for the child or children was taken by the mother. In many instances the children chose to be with their mother even when their father was prepared and willing to take responsibility for their care. Their mother fulfilled the caring role. They willingly fulfilled that role and gained enjoyment from doing so.
For some women in this study the partner also became part of the people to be cared for. Cooking, cleaning, and managing the household were responsibilities taken on by the women of the house.

The research of Bialeschki and Michener (1994) found that leisure comes second to family and work responsibilities when children are dependent. This research supports the findings of Henderson and Bialeschki (1991) and Henderson and Allen (1991) who found that women subordinated their own leisure and deferred their own needs to those of family members, under the guise of the ethic of care.

According to Gilligan (1982) and Henderson and Allen (1991) the ethic of care is also extended to the women themselves. However, women are not as good at doing this because it necessitates taking the care and attention away from others. When asked if they deserved leisure the women in this study unanimously and adamantly indicated that they did. This notion of a sense of entitlement to leisure supports the work of Henderson and Bialeschki (1991). Kathleen spoke of the need to take care of herself because she is a single parent and the personal recognition of the impact of stress on her physical health.

This study supports the findings of Allison and Duncan (1987) and Shank (1986) who found that women
felt guilty about taking time for leisure and themselves when there were so many other obligations demanding their time and attention. Feelings of guilt permeated their choice of leisure activities. If their choice of activity took them away from their children, they were less likely to follow through with their leisure choice. The guilt was associated with working all day away from their children. They did not feel that they could leave or not see their children at night. Ultimately the guilt was associated with taking time for themselves.

The feelings of guilt associated with taking time for themselves and being away from their children forced them to make adaptations in their lives to create or facilitate leisure or time for themselves. Examples of adaptations they made in their lives in order to experience time for themselves included getting up before the children and creating a window of time for themselves and planning time away with friends which may be a few hours or as long as a weekend. It was a time when responsibility for the family is taken by someone else.

Choices about how to commute to work were also ways the women in the study created time for themselves. Leaving for work early or travelling by train rather than car were choices made by Naomi and
Elizabeth. They considered it time they could have for themselves and resulted from conscious decisions on their part.

Safety

Safety and fear of violence were concerns for all women in this study. This supports the work of Green, Hebron and Woodward (1987a). Their concerns were precipitated by past experiences and the recognition of the state of society today and the dangers of going out or being out late at night. Some of the women expressed that their concerns had increased since they became mothers. They spoke of the precautions they take and the decisions they made regarding their leisure choices which were affected by these problems. Green et al., (1987) suggested that fear of violence and the concern for safety was mediated by male control of the public world.

Suggestions for Employers

In discussing the suggestions made by the women in the study relating to the ways in which employers can contribute to their involvement in leisure four patterns of response emerged: (a) childcare; (b) flexible scheduling; (c) employer sensitivity; and (d) provision of activities.
With regard to childcare, suggestions included the provision of on-site daycare facilities, referral services, and assisting with the financing of childcare.

Flexible scheduling would enable the women to take time for herself prior to having to take responsibility for their children either at the beginning or the end of the workday, to make the transition from home to work or visa versa.

The support and sensitivity of the employers to the demands and expectations on working mothers was suggested as a means of helping women employees.

Finally the provision of activities for women at work, possibly at lunch break was suggested

Suggestions for Leisure Providers

The concerns identified by the women in the study were all related to their role as mothers and the ways in which leisure providers could make it easier for them to take advantage of available leisure activities and programs.

As with the suggestions made to employers, the greatest concern for the women in the study was the need for childcare. They suggested that there was a need for childcare provision to be made at night and the weekend for working women. This was a particular
suggestion for health clubs. It was also suggested that activities for children could be provided at the same time as those for women. All the women indicated that they would be willing to pay for childcare since it would enable them to do activities they wanted without feeling that they have to leave their child to do so.

The payment for leisure activities was also an issue addressed by the participants. The unpredictability of access to time sometimes held women back from joining a facility such as a health club, particularly when the membership was expected to be paid in full.

Hours of operation should take into account the time availability of working mothers. This concern related to places where the mothers could share time with their children. Associated with this was the expense associated with sharing time with their children at commercial leisure facilities. They encouraged providers to consider discounts for young children.

Observations and Recommendations

Based upon the methods and findings of this study I have several observations and recommendations. The research placed the women's experiences at the center
of the research and in the context of their lives. The interest was in the women as individuals and how their experience of leisure was impacted by the social context of their lives. The necessity of this approach to research is summarized by Bialeschki and Michener (1994). They stated,

There is a need to approach leisure as if it were a woven tapestry. Contexts such as gender, family and lifespan/course considerations can be likened to different colored threads that, when woven together, produce a tapestry of patterns unique to the weaver. However, if the threads are examined separately, and not in relation to the tapestry, the perceptions of the observers/researchers may not be truly reflective of the weaver's intent (Bialeschki and Michener, 1994, p. 69).

When I initially approached the prospective research participants, their response was very enlightening. They were extremely interested in participating in the research and were genuinely appreciative that someone was interested in their experiences. No one had asked them about their perceptions of leisure experiences and how they played out in relation to the rest of their life. The time is right for women to be asked about how they experience life. Although their experiences were unique to their own social situation, there are also commonalities between their experiences. Participation in such a study allayed some of their concerns about their own experiences as a working mother with a young child. There are other people experiencing similar things.
Their feelings and frustrations were validated by those of others. It gave the women the opportunity to think about their own circumstances and "I hadn't thought of it before, but ..." was a common response.

Although all the participants were committed to their involvement in the study, I had to recognize the multiple demands on their time. Making initial contact took several attempts and despite reminders I did not get response to the member checks from all the women. The journal task was an additional demand on their time and was not completed by all the women in the study. Researchers interested in working with women in research projects must be prepared to make concessions and adaptations to facilitate their involvement.

The rigor of the research was in part addressed by member checks. This method was an important aspect of giving the women an opportunity to ensure accuracy of their interview. A transcript was returned to me with large sections excluded, based on the feeling that what she had said was rambling and unimportant. This upset me as a person and a researcher with an interest in the issues and experiences of women. My perception was that the women felt that what they had said was not of value, a situation which reinforces the need to recognize that women's voices need to be heard.
Researchers can work with women to provide a forum in which this can occur.

My initial decision to include cases representing different racial groups was precipitated by the possibility of identifying similarities and differences based on race. The six women participants were evenly divided racially between African American and European American. However, the analysis of the data did not indicate any differences based on race. In considering the responses, it was possible that the social position of the women, and their involvement in professional occupations out weighed the issues of race. In addition, Kathleen, a single parent had other issues and concerns based on her social position relating to her leisure. The experiences of women who are single parents and in professional occupations warrants further investigation.

Social expectations of women in the role of care giver to the family had significant influence on their experience of leisure. The ethic of care permeated their everyday existence. The home and family were the first priority in their lives. Everyone demanded a part of them. Their time, energy and attention was divided in many different directions. Although their partners helped, their help did not appear to be in the most beneficial directions to alleviate some of the stress
in the women's lives. It appears that more assistance with the running of the household is necessary relating to decision making, planning and managing the details of everyday life. Since more mothers are working outside the home, there is a potential need for a change in gender roles.

The leisure experiences of the women in the study were focused around the children. The women indicated that they enjoyed these experiences and accepted that it would be that way until the children were older and less dependent. However, it was evident that they felt that they deserved leisure. There was a recognition that they needed to have the time for themselves in order to facilitate a positive sense of physical and emotional well-being. This time was created by conscious adaptations in their lives. However, the importance of others in the facilitation of this time was also important. Their partner, other family members and friends played an important role in enabling working mothers to have time for themselves. This time could facilitate the reduction of stress and anxiety in their lives associated with fulfilling their dual work role. Perhaps the development of groups among women for social, emotional and practical support may be a source of encouragement for women. The women
can help each other and facilitate each others leisure experiences, either individually or as a group.

The women in this study did not have blocks of time for leisure nor was it predictable. Their leisure was intermingled with other tasks. The only time they got for themselves was when they created it.

As noted by Henderson (1994a), for research to have consequence it should be translated into practice and used to improve the quality of life for disenfranchised groups. The women themselves should benefit from the knowledge gathered by research. This knowledge can contribute to making leisure better for women. Both employers and leisure providers can facilitate changes that could affect women's leisure experiences.

The increasing numbers of mothers in the workforce should be recognized and acted upon by employers. They can make contributions to ease the pressures on working mothers and assist in the creation of time which women can use for themselves. This help can come in the form of practical help such as daycare for children or financial help in securing good daycare for their employees children. This may free up both time and money to enable women to do more of the things they would do if they had these resources available. Activities at lunch time may enable women to feel that
they do have time for themselves to do things they want to do. This may be physical recreation e.g., walking programs or aerobics, both of which require limited investment of time and money, financial commitment to on-site health club facilities or financial contributions to health club memberships.

The lack of flexibility in scheduling adds to the pressure on working mothers. The stress associated with a schedule planned down to the last second must take its toll on the emotional and physical health of the women. Flexible schedules would allow working mothers to have some autonomy in their day. They would still give their employers a full day of work but within a time frame which fits their family schedule. Employers and the policies they make can make a significant difference for working mothers.

Leisure providers need to be aware of the constraints, restrictions and personal experiences associated with being a working mother with an infant, toddler or preschool child. In order to cater to this target group it is imperative that leisure facilities and programs such as health and fitness clubs and community recreation programs provide childcare both in the evening and at weekends. The guilt experienced by working mothers in leaving their child to do something for themselves could be alleviated if they could take
their child with them and know that they would be well cared for. This provision would facilitate women's involvement in commercial leisure. In addition, activities for children scheduled at the same time as those for women could facilitate women's involvement in leisure.

There is also a need for sensitivity in the programming of leisure activities. Programmers should be aware of the restrictions on time for working mothers. The involvement in leisure programs should not be negated by the timing of the activity.

Suggestions for Future Research

Many aspects of women's leisure still need to be explored in order to develop greater understanding of leisure within specific social contexts. The following are suggestions for such research:

1. The development of grounded theory by extensive interviews with larger numbers of women.

2. The development of a grounded survey based on interviews with women in order to conduct research with a random sample of women to facilitate generalizations.

3. The participants in this study were located in a metropolitan area. Future research
could consider the leisure experiences of women in suburban or rural environments. Consideration could also be given to the experiences of women outside the east coast and midwest areas of the United States.

4. Research studies with a more cultural perspective to investigate the impact of class and race on women's leisure experiences.

5. A longitudinal study to examine the impact of lifestage on the leisure experiences of women.

6. In the present study all the women were employed full-time. Future research could examine the effect of other working status on leisure experiences, for example: part-time work, non-traditional working hours, unemployment.

7. A research study to examine the leisure experiences of full-time homemakers.

8. Research study relating to the ways in which women create their own leisure experiences.

9. A study to examine leisure in the context of the lives of single mothers.
10. A study of the ways in which leisure experiences impact women's self-esteem and health.

11. Praxis oriented research focusing on the ways in which leisure providers and employers can facilitate women's leisure experiences.
APPENDIX A

TELEPHONE SCRIPT
Hello: May I speak with First Name and Last Name?

(IF RESPONDENT IS NOT AVAILABLE AT THE TIME: Determine if an alternative time would be possible or when the respondent might be available. Thank the individual and terminate. (RECORD INFORMATION ON THE CALL RECORD SHEET).

(IF RESPONDENT IS AVAILABLE, FOLLOW SCRIPT)

My name is Linda Tremble. I am a Doctoral candidate in the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation at The Ohio State University. I am currently undertaking research for my dissertation on Leisure in the Lives of Working Women with Pre-School Children.

MEE suggested that I call you since she felt you may be interested in taking part in my research project. Let me tell you a little bit about the project. I am going to be interviewing working mothers to find out about their experience of leisure and the meaning it has in their life. I am interested in your experiences of leisure and recreation as they related to your everyday life as a working mother with a pre-school child, and would like to explore them as part of my research.

I appreciate that your time is precious so I do not want to take up too much of your time for the project. If you are interested in becoming involved in the study it will involve an interview lasting approximately one and one half hours at a location convenient for you. With your permission this interview will be tape recorded. You would also be asked to keep a journal for a period of one week. Once I have transcribed the interview I will send you a copy in order that you can check it to ensure that it is accurate. At this time you will also have the opportunity to add anything you feel necessary.

Are you interested in being involved in the study?

If NO, then thank them for taking the time to listen.

If YES, I will be in Boston between June 7 - June 15. Please arrange

DATE____________________
TIME____________________
I will send written information to you regarding the purpose and nature of the study and your involvement in it. I will also enclose a consent form for you review and signature which I will collect from you when we meet. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me collect at my home number, (614) 784-0921.

Thank you for your time and I will look forward to meeting you on at __________________, on __________________ at ______am/pm.
APPENDIX B

CALL RECORD SHEET
NAME: ___________________ PHONE #: ___________________

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RESULT ABBREVIATIONS:

NA = No answer
NH = Not home
WR = Will return (when)?
WN = Wrong number
DC = Disconnected
REF = Refused
APPT = Appointment set up for interview

CODE FOR RECALLS:

A = Did not talk to
B = Talked to

DATE CONFIRMATION LETTER SENT
APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP LETTER
Dear < >

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me and for your interest in my research project. As indicated in our telephone conversation, I am a Doctoral candidate in the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at The Ohio State University. I am working on my dissertation for the completion of my Ph.D.. Prior to I was a faculty member at a Community College in England where I was involved with the preparation of students to work in leisure and recreation facilities.

The purpose of the research project is to explore the leisure experiences of working women with pre-school children. This will enable women, like yourself, to give voice to their experiences of work and family life and their impact on leisure. This, in turn, will provide information to employers and leisure providers as to the leisure needs of working women, and the contribution they could make to improving the quality of women's experiences. Working women with pre-school children, who work a minimum of thirty hours per week outside the home will be the major contributors to this study.

Here are some important points you should be aware of prior to the beginning of the study:

- the interview will last for approximately one and one half hours
- the interview will take place at a location convenient to you
- the interview will be tape recorded to enable me to have a clear record of the information you give me. The experiences you share are very important to me and I do not want to lose any of this valuable information. However, at any time you may request that the tape recorder be turned off.
- participation is totally voluntary and you can choose to withdraw from the study at any stage
- the interview is totally confidential. No one, except me, will have access to the information you reveal in the
interview or journal

- the final report will contain quotes from the interview and/or journal. However, the information will be revealed in such a way that it will not be possible to associate you with the experience.

- you will have an opportunity to review the transcript of the interview and correct any inaccuracies or contribute more information about your experiences.

I would appreciate it if you would read the enclosed consent form. By signing it we are both agreeing to follow the guidelines I have outlined in this letter and in our telephone conversation on (date). I will collect and sign this form when we meet for the interview.

Thank you for your interest in the project and your agreement to participate. I am looking forward to meeting you at _______________ on _______________ at __________am/pm.

Sincerely,

Linda Tremble, B.Ed (Hons.), M.S.
I consent to participating in research, the purpose of which is to examine the meaning and experiences of leisure for working women with pre-school children. The Principal Investigator or her authorized representative has explained the procedures to be followed and the expected duration of my participation.

I understand that the interview will be taped and last approximately one and one half hours. In addition I will keep a journal for a period of one week. The transcripts of the interviews will be sent to me for my review and feedback.

The information I reveal in the interviews will remain confidential and my name will not be revealed in the final report. In addition, I am free not to answer any questions I may be asked.

I have been fully informed of the procedures described above and agree to be an informant in the study. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

I, ____________________________, hereby grant you permission to publish any material obtained in this study, provided my name is not used and efforts are made to insure my anonymity.

(signed) Participant (Date)

I have fully explained to ____________________________ the nature and purpose of the procedures described above. I have asked if any questions have arisen and have answered to the best of my ability.

(signed) Interviewer (Date)
APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE
Thank you for making time in your schedule for this interview. As I mentioned in our telephone conversation this is a study of the meaning and experience of leisure for working women with pre-school children.

The transcript of this interview will be coded to provide confidentiality. Your identity will be protected and is unnecessary for the purpose of this study.

We have discussed recording this in our phone conversation, but I would like to ask for your permission to tape record our conversation. (Turn on recorder). May I tape record our conversation? Thank you. May we begin?

1. It is my intention to look at you leisure experiences as part of your life as a whole.

Can you tell me a little bit about your family - children, marital status.
Tell me about your job - where, how many hours, the type of work.

What kind environment do you live in (rural, suburban, urban ...).

If you were asked to place yourself into a social class group, what would it be.

2. Can you give me some words or phrases you associate with the word leisure. What images does the word leisure conjure up in your mind.

Can you describe for me what for you makes leisure. (What do you consider to be the essential elements of leisure in your own life).

3. How would you describe or define leisure in your own life.

4. What activities do you engage in that you would consider to be leisure. What factors have influenced your choice of activities. Where do you spend most of your leisure time

5. With whom do you spent your leisure time.

6. When you consider your life as a working mother, how would you define work (What are the components of work in your everyday life).

7. Describe a typical work day.
(Hours, position, demands)

8. Describe a typical day for you when you are not required to be at work.

9. What effect does working outside the home have on your life? (In a positive/negative way).

10. Do you feel you have different leisure choices because of your involvement in paid work? Does you work outside the home have an effect on how you spend your leisure - in what ways.

Time - Money - friends - leisure in the workplace

11. What impact does your role as a wife and mother have on your leisure activities.
12. Does your partner contribute to the running of the household. In what ways. If the answer is no, what would you like him to do and how would this affect you and your experiences.

13. Tell me about your leisure time and activities before you got married. (activities, time, who with)

Tell me about your leisure time and activities since marriage but before having a child.

14. What would be your ultimate leisure experience (no barriers of time, money, other obligations).

Under your current family and work circumstances if you were given time to do anything you wanted for the day what would you do and who would you choose to spend your time with.

By looking at the previous questions what do you feel are the constraints you currently experience in your choice of leisure activities.

time, money, transport, socialization, sense of entitlement, ethic of care, safety

As a woman in today's society do you feel restricted in your leisure choices - in what ways safety, social control

15. How do you feel your leisure experience differ from those of your partner - partners work, time schedule.

16. What contribution do your leisure experiences, or lack of them have on your sense of well-being.

17. Do you feel that you are deserving of leisure. Why

18. What suggestions could you make to employers of women with pre-school children that would facilitate their potential for the experience and enjoyment of leisure

19. What suggestions would you make to leisure providers to enhance the opportunities for women's access to leisure experiences outside the home.
20. Is there anything further you would like to add that you feel is important to your experience of leisure that we have not addressed.

Do you know of anyone other working mothers who may be interested in getting involved in this study. I will give you some of my cards so that if you talk with anyone you can ask them to call me if they are interested.

Thank you for the time you took today to talk with me. In order to keep this interview confidential and the write up anonymous, I would like you to select a pseudonym that I can use in the research. May I call you if I have any questions.

TURN OFF TAPE RECORDER

Comments regarding the format of the interview and the questions within it. Any suggestions for anything else that you feel should be included.
APPENDIX F

THANK YOU LETTER
Dear < >

Just a quick note to thank you for returning both the transcript and the journal. I realize that time is at a premium so I appreciate the time you took to complete this aspect of the research. Your prompt return of these materials has made a significant contribution to the research process.

Our interview provided me with some very interesting research data. It is time for your experiences as a working mother to be heard by those people who have the potential to make a difference. Recognition for the wonderful work you do both in and out of the home is long overdue. Thank you again for the time you have given to this research. I look forward to talking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Linda Tremble, B. Ed. (Hons.), M.S.
APPENDIX G

FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR MEMBER CHECK
Dear < >

I just wanted to touch base with you regarding the interview transcript I forwarded to you last month. Once again I recognize the limitations placed on you by time, and the commitments and obligations of family and work. Time is at a premium, but hopefully you have had a chance to look through it to check for any errors or ambiguities. This is a very important aspect of the research process since it enables me to ensure that I am representing your experiences accurately. Even if there are no amendments you feel should be made to the transcript, it will make a significant contribution to the research process if you return it to me in the envelope provided. I would also appreciate it if you could also forward the journal to me at your earliest convenience, regardless of whether or not you have had an opportunity to make any entries. If you would like to have the journal mailed back to you so that you can continue with the process that you started, feel free to let me know.

Your interview provided me with some very interesting research data. It is time for your experiences as a working mother to be heard by those people who have the potential to make a difference. Recognition for the wonderful work you do both inside and outside the home is long overdue. Thank you again for the time you have given to this research. I look forward to receiving your materials and talking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Linda Tremble, B. Ed (Hons.), M.S.
APPENDIX H

THANK YOU LETTER
Dear < >

Thank you for taking the time from your very busy schedule to participate in my study. I very much appreciate you sharing your daily experiences with me. Without your valuable contributions the study would not have been possible.

For your information I have enclosed a summary of the research findings. If you have any questions or comments feel free to contact me.

Again, thanks again for your valuable contributions!

Sincerely,

Linda Tremble, B.Ed (Hons), M.S.
APPENDIX I

PARTICIPANT PROFILES
SPENCER: Nurse and Graduate Student
        Married with a 2-1/2 year old son
        European American

BJ:     Computer Operator
        Married with a 10 year old daughter
        and a 2-1/2 year old son
        African American

KATHLEEN: Public Relations Account Executive
        Single with a 3 year old son
        African American

NAOMI:  Public School Teacher
        Married with two daughters ages 3-
        1/2 years and 3 months
        African American of West Indian
descent

CAROL:  Executive Secretary
        Married with a 2-1/2 year old
        daughter
        European American

ELIZABETH: Director of Work-Family Programs
            and Benefit Services
            Married with a 6 year old daughter
            and a 4 year old son
            European American
BIBLIOGRAPHY


