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The Process of Career Decision-Making in Women: The Decision to Obtain a Nontraditional Occupation

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THE PROCESS OF CAREER DECISION-MAKING IN WOMEN: THE DECISION TO OBTAIN A NONTRADITIONAL OCCUPATION

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Sociology

Western Kentucky University

Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Paula Von Houston

May 1998
THE PROCESS OF WOMEN'S CAREER DECISION-MAKING: GENDER SOCIALIZATION AND THE CHOICE TO ENTER A NON-TRADITIONAL OCCUPATION

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One of the attractions of sociological research, for me, is that the questions which set the research process into motion are often born in the recesses of the researcher's personal life. The contents of this thesis reflect the perplexing and sometimes painful process that I, like so many other women, endured in deciding what career was best for my life. As a young girl, the image of a single woman, in her thirties, pursuing a master's degree with sights set on a Ph.D. would have brought forth connotations of pity. My future, as seen through the limited scope of my imagination, at that time, could have been fulfilling only in the context of marriage and family, and perhaps a job that worked around the former two priorities. However, by following the path towards information and knowledge which I found liberating, the scope through which I saw the world began to open up. It was only through the awareness of a multitude of alternatives for my life that I could recognize the limitations which had once bound my imagination.

This process did not happen in isolation. Over the course of my life I have been blessed by the love and support of my family regardless of the extent that my ideas and opinions veered from theirs. I have been blessed by a heritage of independent and courageous women who, at times, followed their hearts despite fear of violating cultural
norms. Their examples provided inspiration to me throughout the writing of this thesis. When, at times, it appeared that there was no end in sight, I could think of many more "practical" things that I could, and probably should, be doing with my time. However, none of those things would have fulfilled my desire to bring together the voices of women as they expressed the struggles and triumphs in their pursuit of a fulfilling career.

The people whom I owe the deepest gratitude in relation to the completion of this thesis, however, are my thesis committee members, Dr. Joan Krenzin, Dr. Steve Groce, and Dr. Judith Hoover. Their countless suggestions and corrections, efforts to coordinate schedules in order to meet with me, telephone conversations, memos, letters, e-mails, faxes, etceteras provided the structural foundation for this project.

Dr. Hoover graciously accepted the invitation to be a member of my committee at an extremely critical time--the summer before I began my doctoral work. There was considerable progress made over that summer, thanks to her, which enabled me to complete it before progressing too far into the doctoral program. For that, as well as for her insight and cooperation, I will be eternally grateful.

As a student of Dr. Groce I learned to appreciate and be excited by the depth and importance of sociological theories as they are applied in any research endeavor. He introduced me to the work of Pierre Bourdieu whose concepts "habitus and field" I utilized to understand and explain how women make career decisions. In addition, Dr. Groce's genuine attitude of support of women created a nurturing academic environment for this thesis to evolve in.

Last but not least, Dr. Krenzin was the person who believed in my ability to
succeed when I had serious doubts myself. Without wavering from her firm expectations she guided my thoughts and bolstered my confidence gently towards the completion of this thesis. Her advise was never more than a telephone call away. From the first semester of the master's program, when the roots of this thesis were planted, until now, two quarters into a doctorate, she has been with me all the way. There was never a revision that I felt she had not analyzed with a fine-toothed comb for errors in grammar or logic, requiring a great deal of time and devotion. In addition, she managed to communicate in-depth insight and positive reinforcement above all else. Regardless of the unceasing attention to detail, the underlying support and desire for me to succeed was always evident. The hours that she devoted to this project, and every other thesis committee on which she serves, is testimony of her devotion to students and the educational institution itself. The impact that she has made on many students' lives (including my own) will be felt for many years to come. Thank you Dr. Krenzin.
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This thesis examines the differences of experiences in working-class and middle-class women's lives due to childhood gender-role socialization and current situations in their lives. The purpose of the study is to examine how past and present experiences influenced four groups of women in making career decisions: 1) owners of nontraditional (male-type) businesses, 2) owners of traditional (female-type) businesses, 3) non-owners of nontraditional (male-type) businesses, and 4) non-owners of traditional (female-type) businesses. Both social and cognitive processes were examined for clues.

In-depth interviews were conducted with a total of twenty women to examine their childhood and current experiences of gender socialization. The women were chosen on the basis of their current occupation. Questions were designed to elicit descriptions of respondents' experiences regarding: 1) common interactions with siblings, friends, parents, and teachers (significant others); 2) messages about careers and educational options from significant others; 3) messages about motherhood from
significant others; 4) gender stereotyped actions from significant others; 5) role models; 6) parental education and occupational training; 7) current social networks; 8) how the respondent became interested in her career; 9) respondents' work experiences and educational levels; and 10) major influences on respondents' occupational choices.

The socialization approach was used to analyze and explain how these women's experiences affected their career choices. In addition symbolic interactionism and a middle-range theory called habitus and field by Pierre Bourdieu were used. It was found that women who are from the working class experience a cumulative disadvantage due to an internalized scheme through which their values are filtered. In addition, the opportunity structure is not as developed for working-class women as it is for women who are considered middle class (based on their occupation).

Business owners were found to have many shared experiences which were not common to the other category of women. The first is that most business owners turned out to have been raised by parents with liberal gender-role attitudes. As a result, most reported that motherhood was not an assumed fact for their lives. When motherhood is not assumed, girls feel less pressure to prioritize marriage and family above a career. In addition, eight out of ten business owners had parents who actively encouraged achievement values. All ten business owners learned to set long-term goals as children, and most had nontraditional hobbies. Nine out of ten business owners, as opposed to four out of ten non-business owners, had parents who actively supported their hobbies. Also, the majority of business owners, as children, had known and admired at least one
person who had an interesting career.

The non-business owners and the women who are in traditional occupations are cumulatively disadvantaged as regards their ability to make a completely free choice regarding a career. During childhood they received more messages that might have led them to assume that motherhood must take priority over career plans; they experienced fewer nontraditional hobbies and less parental support regarding long-term goals; they had less exposure to women in nontraditional careers or to women who were business owners; they had less assistance planning a career; and their parents provided fewer achievement-oriented activities and were less likely to interact with them on a regular basis. Thus far during adulthood they have experienced less support for their career goals; they experience less autonomy, flexibility, and creativity on the job, and they are likely to feel less confident about financial planning and their own leadership ability: Over all, they have lower self-confidence than business owners and women in nontraditional careers.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

"She took big risks, reaped big rewards" (Haukebo 1997, p. E-1). The preceding quote, referring to a female entrepreneur, illustrates a paradox of the current social conditions under which women make occupational decisions. Taking risks and reaping big rewards fly in the face of much of what society dictates in regard to how women should behave and what they should achieve. These same actions, however, are the fundamental necessities for success in entrepreneurship and male-type occupations in general. Any school-age child can quickly respond to a question regarding what types of activities are appropriate for women as opposed to men. Activities involving risk taking would no doubt fall into the masculine category. The process that communicates these messages to children has been a subject of interest to researchers for several decades (Lott 1981). Research on how this process, which also focuses on adulthood and how gender socialization contributes to occupational segregation, however, is much less common. This research will contribute to the body of knowledge on gender segregation and, in specific, the process by which some women avoid it by attaining nontraditional careers, including self-employment.

The process by which jobs become more appropriate for one sex than another is called occupational sex-typing (Oppenheimer 1970). The segregation of men and women
into separate jobs and the result of this process have been extraordinarily constant over the last 50 years (Reskin and Roos 1990). Almost 50 percent of all employed women work in jobs that employ mostly women, such as clerical work (Dunn 1996). Abrahamson and Sigelman (1987) found that in order for women and men to be equally represented in all occupations in metropolitan areas, 51.3 percent of women would have to change job categories. Occupational segregation is detrimental for women in terms of the pay, occupational stability, and occupational mobility associated with traditional female-specific jobs (Reskin and Hartmann 1986). In addition, the overrepresentation of women in relatively few occupational categories stems from the fact that many women's talents go under-utilized (Reskin and Hartmann 1986). Structural factors which influence the types of jobs that women choose include sexism, agism, and racism (Abrahamson and Sigelman 1987).

Gender socialization is a broad process that has been used to explain the how and why by which men and women learn to accept and value their respective roles in society (Bott 1971). Through this process women get a sense of what roles and occupations are more "appropriate" for them. However, gender socialization cannot fully explain adult behavior (Gerson 1985).

The differences in childhood socialization experiences of women may vary a great deal in regard to a number of factors including social class (Riessman 1959) and parental attitudes (Baker and Entwisle 1987; Barak, Feldman, and Noy 1991). These varied socialization experiences lead women to adopt a variety of early expectations in regard to choices that are possible for their lives.
While I believe that objective processes such as socialization, sexism, discrimination, and material constraints affect women in real ways, I see women as more active than passive as regards the career-related decisions that they make throughout their lives. One can not assume that all women would seek high-paying, high-profile occupations even if all structural constraints were removed. For example, women report higher levels of satisfaction with their jobs than do men (Hodson 1989). Given the lower status and rewards associated with most female-typed jobs, the fact that most women report satisfaction seems paradoxical. There are varied explanations for this phenomenon. If job segregation were somehow imposed on women, one would expect them to report dissatisfaction with their jobs. If one believes that women are inherently rational and are no less motivated than men to attain self-fulfillment, one might conclude that most women operate from a different set of values as regards work and family than most men (Hakim 1991). Jobs which are highly rewarding are usually highly demanding. Due to diverse priorities, especially as regards family, not all women prefer jobs that require a huge personal investment and that lack flexiblity. I also argue that women also have less exposure to highly rewarding jobs and therefore have less expectation than men of attaining one.

I wish to avoid the assumption that occupational success for women equates with a nontraditional occupation or self-employment. These two situations do, however, offer insight into why some women choose these alternatives in light of the social pressure to take traditional career paths that usually involve less autonomy. These situations also shed light on class-related phenomenon which influence women's career decisions. Women
whose family of origin was middle class or who currently identify with the middle class may have certain advantages over women whose family of origin is working class and/or who currently identify with the working class. Women who prefer and also attain demanding, autonomous jobs are in economically strategic positions that most women never experience. For this reason they may prove to be windows through which one can examine how women internally and externally avoid barriers to nontraditional careers for women.

Walker (1990) found that work is an effective way for women of all social classes to gain respect and feel included in wider society. Work allows women to feel good about themselves outside of the context of family. Also, working-class women who perceive opportunities for advancement where they are employed acknowledge the desire to move up the career ladder. Most do not, however, due to the fact that many female-specific jobs (like clerical work) have relatively limited opportunities for vertical mobility. Even if one does advance, it is not clear to others that advancement has occurred. Therefore, desires for advancement are alternatively expressed in terms of hopes for a new job.

Professional women, on the other hand, are able to attain social status that contributes to their personal identities through their jobs. Their work provides an avenue for self-expression and an opportunity for growth. (Walker 1990).

Early life choices that women make regarding education, marriage, and motherhood obviously play a key role in the career they will eventually attain (Gerson 1985). The primary emphasis of this paper will be on the events that influence women to pursue nontraditional jobs. In specific, what interactions occurred (or didn't occur)
in both childhood and adulthood that internally and externally influence women's career choices. Similar patterns of interactions may be shared by women whose families of origin were of the same social class or who currently identify with the same social class. In addition, similar patterns of interactions may be shared as a result of the social networks that women have experienced. While both membership in a social class and membership in a variety of social networks may be the result of marriage and family attachments, how do the resulting interactions affect women's career decisions once they are in these life stages?

In this study 20 working-class and middle-class women who currently work in traditional and nontraditional occupations were interviewed. Ten of the respondents (the women considered middle class) are women who currently own businesses. Women business-owners, five in female-typed occupations and five in male-typed occupations were included in this half of the sample. The other ten respondents were women in working-class occupations that do not require a bachelor's degree. Five women in female-typed occupations (such as secretary) and five women in male-typed occupations (such as construction foreman) were included in this half of the sample. Several theories are used to understand and explain the social processes that are revealed in this study. I found no single theory that could be used to predict and explain both the subjective and objective social processes that influence women's career decisions. The socialization perspective, symbolic interaction, and Bourdieu's (1973) theories of habitus and field each provide vital pieces to this puzzle.
CHAPTER II

THEORY

In order to understand the systematic yet personal process by which the majority of women end up in female-typical occupations with low occupational mobility one must take into consideration both subjective and objective social processes. The socialization perspective, along with symbolic interaction and Bourdieu's (1973) theory of habitus and field allow us to envision the reflexive, dynamic, and comprehensive process by which women make career decisions.

We cannot examine the subjective social processes which effect women's career decisions without also examining the objective social processes which effect them and still manage to gain an accurate picture of this process. An objective approach would stress the ways in which situations beyond women's control affect women's options and behavior. Examples would be factors such as being born into the working-class and, therefore, experiencing the typical material and educational conditions of that class; the parental attitudes and behaviors that a girl is exposed to; the size of her family of origin; and the type of people whom she encounters while growing up. While it is not safe to generalize too broadly as regards the attitudes and behaviors of people in the various classes, many class-related patterns have been documented in the literature (e.g. Bott

However, structural influences alone do not explain why and how some women and not others are motivated to pursue nontraditional careers. The socialization approach helps to provide one missing piece to this puzzle. Socialization theories point out the processes that create personalities of men and women "as children internalize the capacities, values, and motivations appropriate to their gender role" (Gerson 1985, p.30). "Socialization" can be considered a general category that includes both psychoanalytical and role learning models. The role-learning model will be used for this thesis. This model stresses the process whereby children assimilate ideas and values from their social environment (Gerson 1985, p. 30).

The Socialization Approach

Socialization theories, also, use an objective approach to examine how boys and girls develop masculine and feminine personalities (Gerson 1985, p. 30). Parsons and Bales (1955) explain that this process brings these results by first integrating values and desires appropriate for children's genders. This process leads to the development of skills necessary for adult roles and careers (p. 16). For example, masculine roles such as athlete and insurance salesman are acceptable to boys due to the internalized values that boys develop through the process of socialization. Because these roles are acceptable to them, they willingly develop the necessary skills to achieve them. In a similar way, feminine roles such as housewife and mother are acceptable to girls due to internalized values that
skills quite naturally due to internalized values and motivations.

A recent article by Eccles (1994) proves that this process is still alive today.

Eccles found that gender socialization affects early educational and occupational choices by influencing girls and boys to have basic differences in what she terms "core personal values" (p. 586). For example, girls report being more willing than boys to sacrifice career goals for a family. In addition, girls express more of a desire to help others. Boys express more desire to "become famous" or "make a lot of money."

Gerson (1985) points out that socialization is inadequate for explaining adult behavior, however, for a number of different reasons. Two of the most important reasons are that socialization does not take into account the fact that people's values and motivations inevitably change over time and that desires and sources of motivation vary broadly among women. Moreover, socialization does not explain how two women raised in similar environments may develop extremely different aspirations as regards careers. Nor does it explain how or why women who had similar early aspirations might select totally different careers in their adult lives.

Symbolic Interaction Theory

In 1922 Cooley developed the "looking glass self" concept to explain how all people look to others to see how their actions are being interpreted and received (Cooley [1922] 1964). They, in turn, adjust their reaction to receive what they hope will
be a more favorable reaction from others. This concept has many implications for girls and women as they develop career plans throughout their lives. When girls perceive negative judgments from parents, teachers, counselors, peers, or other significant people in their lives as regards sex-atypical interests, they may monitor their behavior and desires and orient themselves toward a more traditional role.

Mead (1934) developed one of the core concepts of symbolic interactionism—all human beings have a "self"--which means that a person can reflect upon and react to his or her own thoughts and actions (p. 79). The significance of the self, according to Mead, is that humans have the ability to set themselves and any other "objects" apart from their environment by attaching meaning to them. According to symbolic interactionism objects do not exist prior to the time a person assigns them meaning. As applied to this thesis women in similar environments may define and interpret the objects or experiences that they encounter in different fashions. Furthermore, even in the situation in which two women assign the same meaning to a word or interaction, they may each react differently. Thus, symbolic interactionism can explain the process whereby women with similar socialization experiences may make a variety of different choices as regards careers.

Mead (1934) used the term self-indication to name the process of assigning meaning to an object and then deciding how to act (p. 80). He acknowledged that the process of self-indication always occurs in a social context. That is, every person's definition of an object reflects the social environment into which he or she is born. The term "object" can refer to people, words, interactions, emotions, or literally anything that can be assigned meaning.
The term "symbolic interaction" refers to the subjective processes by which human beings define the meanings of one another's actions and consequently react according to those meanings (Blumer 1969). It is based on three fundamental premises. The first is that human beings assign meanings to things and act accordingly (Blumer 1969, p.2). This process is mediated by social positions, norms and values, group affiliation, social pressures and status demands that may influence the meaning a person assigns to objects (Blumer 1969, p.3). Childhood socialization theories do not take into account this first fundamental reality to explain behavior. If one interprets women's career decisions solely on the basis of childhood socialization, one would not account for the unique and individual process of assigning meaning to every interaction.

The second premise is that these meanings arise out of a social context (Blumer 1969, p. 2). Through the process of social interaction people negotiate meaning. Women do not live in a social void where objects (such as occupations) are free of meaning assigned by others. There are many people who give women direct and indirect feedback early in life as regards what careers are appropriate and attainable for them. Women use this information in constructing their own meanings.

The third premise is that all meanings are interpreted and modified by the individual who encounters them (Blumer 1969, p. 2). Two steps are involved in this process of interpretation. First, the individual decides the objects in her world to which she chooses to assign meaning. This process is much like communication with oneself as opposed to a psychological interplay of feelings, sensations, and ideas (p.4). Second, by virtue of communication with oneself the individual manipulates the meaning
of the object according to the particular situation she is in (p. 5). Thus, a woman who is a single, working-class mother of three may have very gender-role ideas that are very different from those of a married, middle-class mother of two.

Habitus and Field

My starting assumption is that class and gender represent two systems of stratification, both of which need to be included in explaining occupational choices of women. While Bourdieu does not specifically address the issue of gender stratification in any of his writings, his theory lends itself well to it. Bourdieu has relentlessly addressed class stratification issues, however. In specific, he has written a lot about how the educational system contributes to maintaining cultural and social hierarchies (Bourdieu 1973; Bourdieu 1990; Bourdieu and de Saint-Martin 1974).

A brief explanation of the process of "social reproduction" in the school is in order because of its parallel with what women experience in the occupational and educational arena. Bourdieu (1973) notes that it is assumed that schools and families of all social backgrounds work together to promote knowledge of the cultural heritage (p. 73). An example of one such cultural heritage, "The American Dream," is supposed available in equal proportion for all who are willing to work hard to achieve it. However, according to Bourdieu (1973) not all people are provided with the first half of the "code" that is used to decipher societal information about how to achieve such dreams (p. 73). Those who inherit the code culturally through social class are able to
grasp information and ideas presented in the educational system that those never exposed to the code can not decipher. In addition, those who possess cultural capital recognize it in others and promote "their own kind." This phenomenon is only one example of how large social structures can unite with subjective experiences to hold some people "in their place." This code is called "cultural capital" (p. 73).

Bourdieu developed a theory that synthesizes both micro and macro processes in describing the processes that keep people tied to a great extent to their social position at birth. The mental structures through which people deal with the social world are termed habitus (Bourdieu 1973). Habitus is an internalized scheme that people inherit through their culture and social class that allows them to interpret the world in certain limited ways. Thus, habitus creates deep-rooted likes and dislikes or "tastes" that distinguish an individual as a member of a certain social class. For example, Cohen and Hodges (1963) noted that working-class roles at work are limited in comparison to middle-class roles. Working-class people experience a narrower range of perspectives and expectations on the job. The working-class person, during the course of his or her work day, must learn to respond to less complex and varied work responsibilities. Limited experiences and roles may lead to less confidence in one's own ability to use good judgment, especially as regards impersonal, specialized roles that are not in some way associated with ascribed status. These attitudes and feelings are then transmitted to children through socialization. I am especially interested in learning the specific ways that girls overcome handicaps that affect career decisions and that are acquired through gender socialization.

The concept of "field" is a relational concept rather than structural. It refers to
the network of actor-actor relations as well as actor-institution relations comprising a
person's environment. Tastes for things ranging from sports to occupations are associated
with a certain social class. When people pursue their tastes, individuals from similar class
backgrounds gain proximity to one another. These contacts may provide more or less
bargaining power in society. An example of a relation of contacts that men traditionally
experience in the Southern United States might be called the "good-ol'-boys" network.
Men have traditionally been instrumental in helping other men, perceived to be similar to
themselves, climb the career ladder. Few similar networks exist for women and other
minorities because of the traditional lack of "career heritage" and lack of accumulated
cultural capital. Perhaps as more women and minorities achieve higher occupational
positions, some of these trends will begin to change. Without such support systems,
however, some women and minorities still manage to climb the career ladder. The
childhood socialization experiences and subjective-interactions that influenced their career
decisions are, therefore, of particular interest.

The fact that life situations vary for people depending upon their social class is no
secret (Bott 1971). Life situations provide people with cultural-capital--social networks,
likes and dislikes, and personal experiences--which, in turn, gives access to lesser or
greater opportunities. Thus, working-class women and middle-class women
will associate with different groups of people. For example, working-class women are
more likely than middle-class women to maintain close ties with family and childhood
friends throughout adulthood (Cohen and Hodges 1963). These ties serve as reciprocal
support systems in times of need without regard to achievements or merit. Support is
never measured in terms of money or services but rather by one's willingness to help the other to whatever degree possible. Within this world working-class people maintain security and confidence. Outside of this network a sense of one's worth is diminished. All of these factors negatively influence a working-class person's chances of occupational mobility. For middle-class people, willingness to encounter and overcome unfamiliar circumstances is a skill that is actively instilled in children with the knowledge that these skills contribute to occupational mobility (Cohen and Hodges 1963).

Moore (1990) found that women's social networks, as compared to men's, are composed of greater numbers of kin. Earlier studies have shown that non-relative social networks can prove very beneficial for obtaining career connections (Granovetter 1974). This phenomenon illustrates yet another way that women are disadvantaged because of gender-role orientations. In addition, Liao and Cai (1995) found that the traditionality of each woman's attitudes and behaviors may change according to the type of intimate relationship within her social network (e.g., supportive of versus opposed to non-traditional gender roles). For example, the working-class tendency to have more close connections with relatives correlates with a greater prevalence of traditional gender role attitudes and traditional divisions of labor. Thus, working-class women may be at a cumulative disadvantage as regards odds for obtaining a nontraditional career. While a cumulative disadvantage is expected, the following review of the literature will uncover both support and contrasting evidence regarding this prediction. Contrasting evidence often reveals alternative explanations for the social processes that occur in women's lives.
Class Identification in Women

Women's class identification process can not be predicted by the same factors as men's. Two approaches of class identification in women focus on married women. One explanation, asserts that wives' class identification is based on their husbands' status (Jackman and Jackman 1983). This model, however, fails to take into account work experiences that bear on wives' class identification (Simpson 1988). The other argues that wives' own autonomous socioeconomic statuses also affect their class identification (Simpson, Harper, Jackson, and Stark 1988).

Employed wives differ from unemployed wives in their class identification because they have autonomous roles that affect their class identification (Simpson et al. 1988). The old familial explanation does not apply to working wives today because of women's increasing labor force participation (Hartman 1987). In addition, the roles women play in society are increasingly independent of their husbands' socioeconomic statuses (Simpson et al. 1988). This fact too affects class identification. Although their husbands' statuses may affect their class identification, wives' autonomous work roles and experiences must not be ignored (1988). This model predicts class identification from two distinctive variables--traditional female type and self-employment. Work in a female-typed occupation and sale of one's labor (as opposed to self-employment) indicate working-class identification.

Class identification expresses in a symbolic way people's experiences with power and privilege (Lockwood 1966). Undoubtedly some of the most deeply felt experiences
with power and privilege take place at work, and these experiences are closely linked to
gender.

In this thesis, I use a model based on the one proposed by Simpson et al. (1988). Class identification for women is predicted from sex segregation, self-employment and union membership in Simpson's model. Non-business ownership, work in a female-typed occupation, and union membership promote women's identification with the working class (Simpson et al. 1988). In this thesis, however, union membership will not be considered because unions are not found to be significantly influential in the area of this study.
Do women actually determine their own careers, and then choose a husband who is supportive of that career, or are their lives formed by the structural constraints that entangle them? The early career plans of women tell us a lot about the unique career path that each woman constructs, and her current reality reveals to what extent those plans came to pass. Women's early career plans vary a great deal (Gerson 1985). Some women actively leave career plans open in order to plan around the uncertainty of marriage and family life. Others, apprehensive about mixing family and career, design career plans with the intention of obtaining a career before marriage. These early aspirations form the baseline for career decisions later in life.

Gersons (1985) examined in great detail the process of how women choose between work and family commitments. She found that women's work aspirations interact with their desire to have a family. While taking the effects of family commitments into consideration, this research examines other factors in addition to family commitments that influence the process of career decision-making in women.
Childhood Socialization

It seems that almost all societies have seized on the anatomical differences between men and women to assign gender roles—sets of cultural expectations that define the ways in which the members of each sex should behave. Gender socialization is a broad field of study that has been used to explain the process by which men and women learn to accept and value their prospective roles in society (Lott 1981, p.6). Gender role socialization begins at birth and continues throughout life. Girls are socialized to pursue passive and expressive activities including those focused on physical appearance and artistic activities (Mischel 1970). Boys are socialized to pursue activities involving competition and risk-taking.

Parental Influence

Stereotypes are beliefs that are commonly held about a distinct category of people. Stereotypes held by parents as regards "natural abilities" of one sex or the other have been shown to cause differential treatment of boys and girls that result in "self-fulfilling prophesies" (Eccles, Jacobs, and Harold 1990). For example, a common stereotype assigned to girls is that they are less capable in mathematics than are boys, and only girls who put forth an extraordinary amount of effort achieve as much as some boys do quite naturally. When parents believe these stereotypes, they interact with sons and daughters differently as regards math activities and discussions. Girls may develop less confidence in their abilities in math as a result of differential treatment. This process, in turn, fulfills the
Parents' influence on their children's gender-role stereotyping and consequent gender-typed interests and vocational choice has been of interest to researchers for a long time. Same-sex parent influence on the young is important because modeling the behavior of the same-sex parent in childhood helps give the young overall orientations and world outlooks similar to those of their parents. Because women who work tend to have more liberal attitudes about gender-roles (Thornton and Freedman 1979), one would expect their children to be influenced by the attitudes as well (Kiecolt and Acock 1988). Research shows that daughters whose mothers work outside the home are more likely than daughters whose mothers stay at home to plan on having a job when they grow up and to be independent and assertive (Hoffman 1977). In addition, Kiecolt and Acock (1988) found that mothers who worked have less traditional gender role attitudes.

Palmer and Cochran (1988) found parental involvement to be important in career development of children and adolescents. Mother's education has a big impact on daughter's education (Liao and Cai 1995). In addition, Kiekolt and Acock (1988) found that adult daughters of mothers who worked have less traditional gender-role attitudes.

Previous research has found that education tends to produce open-mindedness about nontraditional gender roles in daughters (Kiecolt and Acock 1988). In addition, it has been found that daughters whose mothers had few gender-stereotyped attitudes show more internal locus of control than daughters whose mothers had many gender-stereotyped attitudes (Hoffman and Kloska 1995). Internal locus of control refers to confidence in the fact that one is in control of one's life as opposed to being at the mercy
of luck or other people.

More highly educated women are likely to have daughters with higher educational attainment. Obviously, mothers with more education are more likely to provide support financially. In addition, a study by Glass, Bengtson, and Dunham (1986) found that although a mother's function as an economic provider is important, her attitudes will likely influence her children's attitudes into adulthood regardless of the financial support she provides. It seems that social class, which is correlated with educational level, influences attitudes through the socialization processes (Liao and Cia 1990).

Mothers screen their children's abilities according to gender-stereotypes (Jacobs and Eccles 1992). Mothers are known to imply that daughters are not as skilled in math although research evidence does not support this assumption. Thus, gender stereotypes affect mothers' perceptions of their children's abilities. These perceptions, in turn, can affect children's confidence in their abilities as well as their choices of activities in which to participate.

Cognitive Processes

Three studies (Bem 1985, Eccles 1994; Neimeyer, Metzler, & Bowman, 1988) have provided evidence for the effects of gender role socialization on cognitive style and related vocational structures and career decision-making. Bem (1985) defined a gender schema as a predisposition to process information based on a network of mental associations that girls and boys develop. These predispositions, in turn, affect their perception of reality (p.355). Thus, sex-linked cognitive processors potentially influence
career choices on a mental level long before career planning is even under way. Self-concept is based on specific personality traits that children accept as appropriate for their gender. Thus, the measuring stick for self-esteem is based on gender. This measuring stick, in turn, becomes an independent mechanism for perceiving and categorizing information that children and adults encounter.

Eccles (1994) developed a model that links educational and occupational choices to the individual's expectation for success and the value the individual attaches to the various options perceived as available. Gender roles define what are appropriate activities for a person as well as what constitutes successful performance of those activities (Eccles 1994). Individuals selecting educational and occupational activities do not consciously consider all options. As they mature, girls and boys are exposed to different opportunities that tend to channel them in certain directions. This channeling limits their exposure to "gender inappropriate" activities. Options classified as appropriate for the other gender may not even be considered for fear of negative consequences or because accurate information about the option has not been communicated. If a woman identifies totally with the gender-role schema as defined by the culture, she may actively reject activities or career options that the culture does not designate as "appropriate" because she perceives the probability of success to be low (Eccles 1994). Thus, gender roles influence educational and occupational choices by reducing available options in a person's mind, as well as reducing expectations of achieving certain options, or causing one to reject certain options.

Neimeyer et. al. (1988) pointed out, first, that men have a larger number of career
constructs that they perceive as being appropriate and available to them. This fact may be explained by differing values, instilled through socialization, regarding occupations. Not only are the values different for men and women, but also men consider a greater number of possible careers for their lives. Thus, a larger number of careers have personal meaning to men. Second, inherent in gender socialization for men is the value of independence. Integration is pushed more for girls. These basic values may influence career decisions as well.

Socialization at School

Gender roles could influence a person's educational and occupational opportunities indirectly through the attitudes and interactions of people individuals are in contact with as they mature.

Parents, teachers, and school counselors can also influence individuals' perceptions of their field of options through the information and experiences they provide. Parents can directly affect both the options actually available to their children (e.g., by providing or withholding funds for a college education), and the options seriously considered (e.g., by mandating, encouraging, ignoring, and discouraging various options). Finally, peers can affect the options seriously considered by either providing or withholding support for various alternatives. These peer effects can be both quite direct (e.g., laughing at a girls when she says she is considering becoming a nuclear physicist), and very indirect (e.g., anticipation of one's future spouse's support for one's occupational commitments). (Eccles 1994, p. 590)

In addition, feedback given to girls may vary depending upon the social class that they occupy. All people recognize power distinctions in various arenas of their lives such as at school, at home, and in their neighborhoods (Bott 1954). Lockwood (1966) found that people possess different social consciousnesses as a result of membership in different social classes. The feedback given to girls may be a reflection of the amount of power and
prestige that girls are typically expected to attain in life (Eccles 1994).

Social Class

Weber ([1946] 1973), in "Class, Status, and Party," distinguished between class and status. He said that class referred to an individual's economic situation and status referred to the lifestyle--shared with others--based on family background, place of residence, social activities, and consumption patterns. Thus, lifestyles vary according to one's position in the status hierarchy.

Bott (1954) described how social class is a subjective experience in that individuals develop a perception of their social position based on their unique experiences with power and prestige. No one has full knowledge of other people's experiences, and so each individual does his or her best at guessing what characteristics constitute specific social classes. By making such an assumption one can then estimate his or her place in society as compared to what he/she assumes others' places to be. Moreover, people imagine the norms and values of their own as well as other social classes in order to adjust their activities in accordance with the norms and values of their perceived class and to identify individuals of other classes as separate from themselves. This model of class structure allows people to make sense out of the objective social structures with which he or she has little knowledge and limited direct experience (Bott, p. 165).

The term "class identification" refers to the process by which people associate psychologically with a social class. Women's class identification process can not be
predicted by the same factors as men's. Two approaches to class identification in women focus on married women. One explanation asserts that wives' class identification is based on husband's status (Jackman and Jackman 1983). This model, however, fails to take into account work experience that bears on wives' class identification (Simpson 1988). The other argues that wives' own autonomous socioeconomic statuses also affect class identification (Simpson et al. 1988).

Employed wives differ from non-working wives in their class identification because they have autonomous roles that affect their class identification (Simpson et al. 1988). The old familial explanation does not apply to working wives today because of women's increasing labor force participation (Hartman 1987). In addition, the roles women play in society are increasingly independent of their husbands' socioeconomic statuses (Simpson et al. 1988). This reality, too, affects class identification. Although their husbands' statuses may affect their class identification, wives' autonomous work roles and experiences must not be ignored (1988). This model predicts class identification from two distinctive variables—traditional female type and self-employment. Work in a female-typed occupation and sale of one's labor (as opposed to self-employment) indicates working-class identification.

Class identification is a symbolic way in which people experience power and privilege (Lockwood 1966). Without a doubt some of the most deeply felt experiences with power and privilege take place at work, and these experiences are closely linked to gender.
Values

One must be careful not to assume that women are dissatisfied because they experience more occupational disadvantages than men do. In fact, many studies indicate that most women report high levels of occupational satisfaction (e.g., Hakim 1991; Hodson 1989). If job segregation were somehow imposed on women, one would expect women to report dissatisfaction with their jobs. Some researchers have explained this phenomenon by suggesting that women may simply learn to accept situations into which they are forced (Hakim 1991, p. 184-86). Another explanation is that women's reference groups are limited to female jobs, which constrain the options that women perceive they have (Hakim 1991, p. 51). These explanations do not sufficiently explain why occupational segregation persists despite the fact that women and men currently attain comparable educational levels and qualifications (Hakim 1991).

Hakim proposed that many women's priorities are different from men's and that paid work is less important to women. If one believes that women are being rational when they report satisfaction with their jobs and that they are no less motivated than men, one must conclude that women operate from a different set of values. These values are reflected in studies on work commitment in the section that follows.

Parsons and Bales (1955) noted that values contain imperatives to actions due to contingencies of everyday life. It follows that values associated with membership in a given social class would be reflected in attitudes and choices regarding careers. Walker (1990), however, found that women in the working class have similar values to women in
the middle class as regards work and family. Walker (1990, p. 299) argued that women's values are similar across classes, but working-class jobs provide varying opportunities for establishing identities which coincide with those shared values. Women's values with respect to work and family are based on broader cultural values that may be a higher priority than class values. They are transmitted culturally through personal interactions, public institutions, and the media. However, differences in women's economic resources influence the likelihood that those values become expressed in women's lives. Most working-class jobs are devoid of opportunities for personal growth due to strict supervision, few rewards for achievement, and lack of occupational mobility. On the other hand, middle-class occupations tend to provide more opportunities for autonomy, rewards, and mobility (Walker 1990).

Both middle-class and working-class women work for a variety of reasons, with financial reasons being common to both classes of women. However, Walker found that working-class and middle-class families would suffer different consequences if the wives were not working. While working-class women reported that they could not pay for basic necessities, professional women conveyed that they would have to give up "fringe benefits" such as major house renovations.

Working class women are more "locked in" to gender specific roles due to the fact that the working class is more stratified. If freedom from gender roles equates with liberation, working-class women do not know liberation (McKenney 1977). Working class women have been working for several decades, but their jobs are not what one would consider rewarding. Economic oppression causes working class gender roles to be
distinct in the working class (McKenney 1977).

Early Decisions

Gender role attitudes are not sufficient to explain adult behavior for women Liao and Cai (1995). Childhood socialization appears to influence gender-role attitudes indirectly through a woman's current life situations. For example, a woman who is divorced and employed would probably have different gender-role attitudes and behavior than if that same woman were a housewife and mother of three. Life situations such as marriage, parenthood, or divorce significantly influence attitudes and behaviors.

Parental models and messages do not necessarily predict girls' later life choices (Gerson 1985). A variety of role models and significant people in girls' lives offer sometimes contradictory messages to women as children and adolescents. Nevertheless, children filter these messages selectively, perceiving and responding to them on their own terms. Over time, if events and circumstances promoted or allow it, some women "distance" themselves from their childhood, psychologically and socially, but sometimes temporally. Also, as women mature, they deal with the mixed messages of childhood in a variety of ways. Ambivalence, confusion, and the postponement of final decisions are among the more common responses.

Integrating Education and Work

Walker (1990) found that there are many commonalities in life experiences of working-class women. The working-class women choose to work full time upon
graduating from high school. Many live at home with their parents for three or four years. Until parenthood they continue to work, possibly changing jobs several times. Their jobs typically offer little challenge, little pay, and few opportunities. Dissatisfaction with jobs is the main reason given for quitting several different jobs. The experiences of working-class women differ greatly from the common experiences of professional women (Walker 1990). Professional women's path toward adulthood began with college instead of full-time work. After graduating from college they began working long hours in entry-level positions in their chosen fields. Most professional women held their first jobs an extended period of time. Postponement of marriage allowed them to graduate from college and establish a career before motherhood.

**Integrating Family and Work**

Liao and Cia (1995) found that progression through life stages such as marriage and parenthood leads to more traditional gender-role attitudes. On the other hand, adults who choose less traditional paths, such as single-parenthood, are less likely to have traditional attitudes (Kiecolt and Ackock 1988). Variations such as age, rural residence, and religious affiliation also influence women's life situations and gender-role attitudes and behavior (Liao and Cai 1995). Age correlates with traditional, gender-role attitudes toward the family. Also, women residing in rural areas are more traditional in their gender-role attitudes toward the family (Liao & Cai 1995).
Sproat, Churchill, and Sheets 1985 reported that only 60 percent of women say that they are committed to continue working if there is no financial necessity to do so. For women who place a higher value on family roles than work roles, jobs which are less demanding would be not only satisfactory but preferable. The discrepancy between levels of job satisfaction and work commitment between men and women, however, disappears in higher-level jobs. This occurrence points to the possibility that when men and women have similar values regarding work, they have similar levels of satisfaction. However, when women are the secondary bread winners in their families, convenience and job enjoyment are more important priorities than other benefits that jobs might have to offer.

According to one study women's lower level of work commitment is due to their own traditional sex-role attitudes and the desire to be the primary caretakers of children (Hakim 1991). Women with traditional values predictably have husbands with similar views. The significance of husbands' traditional views is that studies show that husbands generally have more influence in relationships in which wives do not contribute substantial amounts of income to the family (Mirowsky 1985). Thus, traditional-minded husbands likely exert a negative influence on the level of work-commitment of their wives. Even when husbands verbalize approval of their wife's independence regarding work, by withholding help around the house or by withholding emotional support they may indirectly apply sanctions at the same time.
Women's social networks, which are often composed of more family members than men's (Fischer 1982), may at times be constraining (Liao and Cai 1995). Bott (1971) showed that marriage partners tend to have more segregated roles when both are members of close-knit social networks. Close-knit social networks are more common in the working-class as are social networks composed primarily of family members. Thus, a structural factor, such as social class, affects the number of kin in one's social network, which in turn affects gender-role attitudes.

Women's social networks as compared to men's are composed of greater numbers of kin (Moore 1990). This reality implies that women are more likely to focus on relationships with relatives than with non-relatives. Earlier studies have shown that non-relative social networks can prove very beneficial for obtaining career connections (Granovetter 1974). Thus, women are at a disadvantage because of gender-role orientations. Full-time employment, on the other hand, has the effect of reducing the number of relatives in women's social networks but not in men's. The implications of full-time employment for women are that women then have greater contact with non-kin networks that could introduce them to new opportunities and knowledge about non-traditional careers.

A qualitative method of research was used to obtain data on how all the previously mentioned research related to the women in this sample. Following is a detailed explanation of the research methods.
CHAPTER IV

METHODS

The purpose of this study is to understand the commonalties and differences in childhood socialization and adulthood micro-events that occur in the lives of women. By choosing a sample of women based on specific sets of career outcomes, I sought to draw out information from women's past and current experiences that gave insight into how these phenomena affected their career choices. Of special interest is the class background of the respondents and how class origin influenced this process. Instead of attempting to put forth a hypothesis that might bias evidence in a certain direction, I chose to leave all possibilities of influence open.

The two main phenomena that this investigator examines—childhood socialization and adult experiences--can only be considered in the specific context within which they occurred. Qualitative research is the only effective way of generating data while fully grasping the social context in which the data are produced (Mason 1996, p.4). Quantitative methods of research do not suffice when one seeks to obtain data that are rich and contextual in nature. While a quantitative method of research such as questionnaire might touch on some aspects of the experiences of women, it would not enable a researcher to understand how a human context gives rise to experiences. Questionnaires about occupational choice would tend to overlook specific interactions and
experiences that influenced women throughout the course of their lives. Coded answers on a questionnaire cannot grasp the essence of a relationship, including the emotions and insight shared between two or more people. Nor can it grasp the desires, goals, and plans of women. A woman's behavior may at times be contrary to her ideology as regards women's roles (Hakim 1991). Thus, tracking a woman's behavior independent of the unique thoughts and attitudes that coincide with it, as well as the circumstances surrounding it, may provide an incomplete or even an erroneous picture.

The fact that socialization varies by social class is amply supported by the literature (Kohn 1959). Walker (1990) described the commonalities of working-class women's and professional women's life histories. She noted that women of similar class backgrounds make predictable life choices as regards marriage and family. Familial and educational choices, in turn, affect career outcomes. Gerson (1985) noted that gender socialization theories are limited in explaining adult behavior for several reasons; however, a study by Liao and Cai (1990) found that socialization acts indirectly through life situations to affect adult behavior. By comparing and contrasting experiences and attitudes of women I gained a better understanding of why some women choose nontraditional careers over traditional ones and/or business ownership over non-business ownership.

In this thesis, I used a female model of class identification similar to the one proposed by Simpson et al. (1988). Simpson's model predicts class identification for women from one distinctive variable--sex segregation--and from self-employment and union membership, which are also in the male model. Work in a female-typed occupation, sale of one's labor (as opposed to self-employment), and union membership
promote women's identification with the working class (Simpson et al. 1988). In this thesis, however, union membership will not be a predictive variable because unions are not thought to be significantly influential in the area of this study.

One method of qualitative research that can be used to investigate and understand socialization experiences is in-depth interviewing. Researchers using in-depth interviews must "simultaneously orchestrate the intellectual and social dynamics of the situation" (Mason, p.43). "Intellectual dynamics" refers to keeping the interview on the subject of the research question. "Social dynamics of the situation" refers to the fact that one must ask questions in a warm manner that is likely to help the respondent feel comfortable while constantly being aware of the appropriate sequence of questions as well as the scope and breadth of the responses that you wish to receive. All of these dynamics must take place while being sensitive to the interviewee's needs and rights.

Sample and Data Collection

Self-employment provides autonomy and property rights to one's labor (Robinson and Kelly 1979), qualities that are identified with the middle class. Women's self-employment is typically in female-typed occupations, where it serves as an escape from the blocked mobility characteristics for those occupations. Self-employed women, therefore, are a window into the process of freedom from limited income and glass-ceiling effects. Women who are business owners of nontraditional businesses offer additional insight into the process of overcoming barriers—those that block or discourage women from pursuing
occupations traditionally performed by men.

In this study, twenty women who currently occupy traditional and nontraditional occupations were interviewed. Ten of the respondents were women who currently own businesses. Women business-owners in both female-typed occupations and male-typed occupations were included in this half of the sample. The other ten respondents were women in working-class occupations. Women in both female-typed occupations (such as secretary) and male-typed (such as construction foeman) working-class occupations were included in this half of the sample. All of the interviews were conducted in a mid-size city located in the southcentral region of the United States. A similar study conducted in a large urban area elsewhere in the United States may yield different findings.

Self-employed women were contacted through the National Organization for Women Business Owners. Interviewees were first contacted by mail by the organization's president who requested their participation. The letters were followed up by a phone call to set up the specific date and time for the interviews. Interviews were conducted in my office or in some other neutral location safe from interruptions. Women who work as paid laborers were contacted through the use of snowball sampling. Special care was taken to contact women from a diverse group of working-class occupations. These women were also contacted first by letter and second by a phone call.

Instead of attempting to draw causal conclusions that connect women's experiences with certain careers, I identified patterns of experiences, attitudes, and circumstances that helped explain why and how some women can achieve nontraditional occupations and/or business ownership. Rather than attempting to generalize about a
population of women, I sought to understand, in depth, the patterns of experiences of the twenty women in my sample. For these purposes, I felt that a sample size of twenty, ten business owners and ten non-business owners was sufficient.

The interview schedule consisted of questions designed to answer three main research questions; 1) How do differing childhood, gender-socialization experiences affect career choices? 2) How do differing events in adulthood affect career choices? and 3) How do transitional events that occur between childhood and adulthood affect career choices? Interview questions designed to elicit clues to the first question included those regarding the social class of respondents' families of origin and their current family (1-2, 51-54); childhood gender socialization at home (3-9, 12-24), in schools, involving peers (28-29), and siblings (30-32); gender socialization reflected in childhood hobbies and through childhood occupational stereotypes (45-50). Interview questions designed to elicit clues to the second question included those regarding experiences with supervision on the job (70-73), freedom to be creative on the job (74-75), confidence with financial planning and money (76-78); experiences involving personal or vicarious autonomy (79-80), exposure to occupational information and networks (81-91); and emotional, financial, and occupational support systems (92-101). And interview questions designed to elicit clues to the third question include those regarding how the respondents got started in their business or profession (55,61,62); and when they began seeing themselves as leaders (67). (See Appendix A for a complete listing of questions.)
Limits of the Study

This study was designed to be exploratory and descriptive in nature, focusing on a small number of respondents in order to devote greater attention to detail; therefore, it is unreasonable to assume that these respondents are representative of all business-owner and non-business owner women. Instead, this study provides groundwork for future investigation.

I was unable to track the social class effects from childhood on for each of the respondents individually. In order to do that the study would have had to have been designed more as a case study. Perhaps a combination of in-depth interviews and case studies would have provided the best possible approach.

One of the traditional-non-business-owner (TNB) respondents was not in a career that she planned to settle in for life. She was a waitress at the time of the interview but planned to go back to college and become a writer. Because she was not settled into a career of her choice, this could possibly have slanted the results slightly. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that any of the other women will continue indefinitely in her present career.

Because the scope of this thesis was so broad, it was difficult to address all the literature that could have been addressed on the subject. One could never cover all of the literature that is available on gender socialization and social class as it relates to careers for women throughout their lives. Perhaps an in-depth focus on any one of the three time spans that I chose to cover—childhood, transitions, and current life situations—would have
proven to be more practical and attainable.
CHAPTER V
FINDINGS RELATED TO CHILDHOOD

At least thirty percent of the interview schedule was designed to build a picture of interaction patterns of respondents, as they were growing up, and their parents. These pictures are not static but rather dynamic and reflexive. They help us understand how and why these interactions had any effect on their career choices and if so, the nature of the effect.

The categories of respondents that will be compared and contrasted throughout the findings chapters are owners of nontraditional (male-type) businesses (NTB), owners of traditional (female-type) businesses (TB), non-owners of businesses that are in non-traditional (male-type) occupations for women (NTNB), and nonowners of businesses that are in traditional (female-type) occupations for women (TNB).

Gender Roles

Crouter, Manke, and McHale (1995) found that parents who have traditional gender roles around the home tend to have traditional gender role expectations of their children. This process of gender-role socialization increases as children near adolescence.
In addition, the incidence of same-sex, parent-child, shared activities increases as opposite-sex children are born. The relevance of the gender-intensification process to this study is that the general attitude fostered in boys is the need to be independent and the general attitude fostered in girls is compliance. A process such as this could have the effect of influencing girls to consider occupations which involve little to no autonomy.

In fact, 8 out of 10 business owners had parents who adopted liberal gender roles around the home:

That is kind of a tough one. My dad always woke us up for school, and he cooked breakfast every morning. And, the reason he did that was because my mom worked. He cooked her breakfast before she went to the telephone place. She was an operator. So it just stuck. Daddy always cooked our breakfast and got us up every morning. Mom would be up...that's nontraditional too.

(Joan, NTB)

My parents were funeral directors. And, it is interesting...my father is dead now but my mother is still living and very much still active. She was one of the first females in the state of Kentucky to be licensed as a funeral director. So, I often laugh and say that she was liberated before it was cool to be liberated.

(Betty, TB)

Probably 50-50 of the household stuff was traditional. But if you turn the coin, dad might of done 50 percent of the cooking because it was squirrels or fried fish or something on the grill, and mom would be out doing the yard work. It was, there was nothing designed specifically for each other. Very very flexible. Dad might come in and decide that mom was out there working on the yard and she'd been out there all day so he would vacuum. That was nothing unusual. If she was playing with me, he'd do the laundry. If he was playing with me, she might go out and trim the hedges and wash the cars.

(Sue, NTB)

My mother had, I know she had at least two years of college. She did not have her degree but she was director of the welfare department for about 30 years.

P: So she did work when you were growing up?

Oh, yes. Even before then. (Rhonda, TNB)

Liberal gender-role attitudes were not the norm for most of the non-business owners. Eighty percent of the parents of non-business owners could be described as...
having traditional gender roles.

My mother has never worked outside of the home. (Marcia, TNB)

My mom was a single parent who raised four kids by herself and she also worked in a sewing factory. (Martha, NTNB)

Not when I was growing up. She was up until my older sister was born. And she still worked a couple of jobs; but after my dad got his degree, she was like a homemaker. And she volunteers quite a bit for work. (Lisa, TNB)

A study by Kiecolt and Acock (1988) found that women who grew up with mothers who worked in certain types of occupations tend to have more liberal gender role attitudes. To be more specific, mothers who had more prestige or authority in their occupations tended to promote liberal gender-role attitudes in their daughters. In addition, daughters whose mothers work outside the home are more likely than daughters whose mothers stay at home to plan on having a job when they grow up and to be independent and assertive (Hoffman 1977). In this study, most of the mothers of business owners tended to have more prestigious occupations, most of which require a higher education. The occupational breakdowns of mothers of business owners are as follows: sex therapist, two business owners, a funeral director, a director of a family resource center, bookkeeper, maid, and three homemakers. The mothers of non-business owners had a greater concentration of occupations which would be considered traditional for women. Their occupational breakdown is as follows: medical technologist, two nurses, a director of a welfare department, a Junior Food Store manager, a waitress, two factory workers, and two homemakers (see Appendix A for a more specific breakdown).
Previous research has found that education tends to produce open-mindedness about nontraditional gender roles in daughters (Kiecolt and Acock 1988). In addition, it has been found that daughters whose mothers had few gender-stereotyped attitudes show more internal locus of control than daughters whose mothers had many gender-stereotyped attitudes (Hoffman and Kloska 1995). Internal locus of control refers to confidence in the fact that one is in control of one's life as opposed to being at the mercy of luck or other people.

More highly educated women are likely to have daughters with higher educational attainment. Mothers with more education are more likely to provide support financially. In addition, a study by Glass, Bengtson, and Dunham (1986) found that although a mother's function as an economic provider is important, her attitudes will likely influence her children's attitudes into adulthood regardless of the financial support she provides.

The mothers of the respondents reflected a variety of different educational levels. In order to compare and contrast educational level among groups, educational levels were combined and averaged. NTB mothers averaged a bachelor's level of education, TB mothers averaged two years of college education, NTNB and TNB mothers averaged a high school level of education.

The degree to which respondents' parents valued and pushed for their daughters to obtain an education also varied a great deal. Several respondents reported that obtaining an education was something they had always known they would do.
There were kids that weren't expected to go to school for whatever the reason, whether it be financial or their parents were not educated or they worked for somebody else...factory work or whatever that they didn't see the importance of it. But everybody that I ran around with they saw the importance of it. That was just sort of where we were guided toward. I never really actually remember setting down and talking to anybody about..."I don't think I want to go to school now. I think I'll wait a year." That just wasn't...you graduated from high school, and two months later you were in college. Sort of a scary thought, especially since I was only 17 when I graduated from high school. It was pretty scary. (Sue, NTB)

I knew I was going to go to college. I've been saving money. I'm like a saver, and like my brothers used to borrow money from me because I always had money. (Amy, NTB)

Just by their expectations, by the opportunities they provided me, there was no question that I didn't go to college. I think the fact that I went to Vanderbilt opened a lot of doors for me. I really value that. And the fact that my mother, when my future husband asked my parents I guess for permission to get married, my mother got right up in his face and said, "The only thing I'm asking is that she finish her college education." So that was her number one priority with me and my future. (Betty, TB)

Other respondents said that education was either not a priority to their parents or was left up to them to think about.

Yes, in a way I do because with my children, they didn't have a choice whether they went to college for four years or not—it was an assumed fact. I think had I been pushed more or after my father died for my mother to go on and say, "Go to college, and you can be a doctor or a lawyer or all these things," I wonder what I could have become. That's one regret as far as family. I wonder what I could have become. (Joanne, TB)

No, every time I mentioned something about college or a profession my dad would say, "You're not going anywhere. I'm not giving you a dime." And he never has. (Katie, NTNB)

No. I can't say that my mom ever did [encourage her career development] because she always worked in a sewing factory. She always had to make a living, and that was the best that she could do. She made good money though. She always, she wanted me to go to school. She only said it in certain ways like, "You need to if that's what you want to do." She didn't push it. (Martha, NTNB)
No. I can't say that my mom ever did [encourage her career development] because she always worked in a sewing factory. She always had to make a living, and that was the best that she could do. She made good money though. She always, she wanted me to go to school. She only said it in certain ways like, "You need to if that's what you want to do." She didn't push it. (Martha, NTNB)

Ambition

McClelland (1990) found that of all young people who begin their educational or career track with high ambitions, it is mainly those from disadvantaged homes who fail to achieve those ambitions. McClelland also found that marriage is a detriment for most women as regards career achievements. It is important to look at parental attitudes regarding marriage and family in order to understand the early priorities of the respondents. In a traditional sense, most girls have been aware early in life that marriage and family must be incorporated into their career plans (Corder and Stephan 1984). The awareness of the likelihood of early marriage may influence some girls not to make serious plans regarding education or careers that might disrupt their plans for marriage and family. The respondents were asked whether or not their eventual motherhood was assumed, during childhood, by their parents. Some respondents recalled such comments as, "When you become a mother...," or :

My mother said, "Have a baby when you're young." Because, she didn't get married until she was 31, and she had three kids, and the last one was when she was 38. And, back then Grandma said I am never going to have another grandkid. So, I always heard, "You need to have them when you're young. Don't wait 'til you're older. You need to have them when you're young." My dad never said anything. He never said a lot. I got a lot from Mom. Daddy would tell Mom, and Mom would tell us. (Joan, NTNB)
About my eventual motherhood? Oh, she used to say, "Just wait 'til you have your own kids you'll know how it is." She said that kind of thing a lot. (Thelma, NTB)

It was always assumed I'd be a mother. That's the way I felt, that one day I would be. Basically, my parents were married, before my mother died, for 55 years, and we had our ups and downs like every family that's got seven people in it. But all of my brothers have been married for at least 17 years, and my sister's on her tenth year. It's just one of those things you do. You know some people's families stick together, and others don't. And ours just did. (Madison, TB)

Some respondents were well aware that motherhood was assumed even though they couldn't recall any specific comments:

Oh, gosh. That is a tough one. I don't know how to answer that.

I: Do you think, did they not even address the issue, or was it assumed that you would have children eventually?

Yeah, it was just assumed [that I would have children]. But I don't really remember; nothing stands out. (Rhonda, TNB)

That you are supposed to get married and have babies? It was just assumed at that time. I always had the vision of an Ozzie-and-Harriet type household, you know. You get up and have my little starched apron on in the morning and have breakfast on the table and get my kids off to school. Oh yeah! [I had conflicting emotions about working] Even to this day. Definitely. I needed the money. You know that it's either work and have a certain standard of living that you maintain, or you don't work and you don't have that standard of living, and I chose to work. (Joanne, TB)

Possibly an even stronger indication of assumed motherhood was the absence of any discussion about careers.

Mom said it was important to have an education.....like before I got married. That is something to fall back on....that you have that. It's like, you get married, I guess you have your kids, you live with your husband and let him provide for you, but you have that education to fall back on if you need it [emphasis mine]. And see, I quit school to get married.

I: How did you react to that?

Oh, I was in love. Forget about mom. I'm going to move away. I am in love. But I did look about going to school while I was in New Jersey. I had called a couple places. But, Rutgers University was way out of my price range. And, the others were too. So I ended up working for his parents' company for awhile until
I got my sanity and left there and started working at a bank. (Joan, NTB)

Other respondents were responsible for nurturing and cleaning up after their younger brothers and sisters. When this role is combined with no mention of careers or motherhood, a logical conclusion is that the respondent's eventual motherhood, if not assumed, was strongly implied:

No, not really. My sister and I each had duties, and our duties was the four younger ones. And, since I was a daddy's girl and my sister was a few years older than me, she was more at the dating age than I was. So after school she would run off in the car with her friends, and I'd go home. And if something wasn't done, dad would whoop me for it and not her. If all the dishes in the sink weren't washed like they were supposed to have been...with six kids--and the maid was there. She done like the evening meal and some of the washing and stuff, but it was our jobs to make our beds up and do some household things. I got stuck with a lot when my sister started having fun. (Lauren, NTNB)

Six out of ten business owners recalled motherhood had not been assumed or encouraged.

One of four who did recall discussions of their eventual motherhood recalled advise that she should wait to have children until after she had obtained an education.

I don't know that they ever thought I would be one. Not until I was in my mid-20s and remarried did it ever occur to them that I might want a child...and I do have one now who is three. I don't think anybody ever gave it much thought. I'm probably atypical in that I don't think people just assumed that I would. (Rose, NTB)

I don't know that motherhood was ever an issue. Being an individual was an issue with everybody. Being able to acquire and finish the education no matter what field you were in...was an issue. And, going to any extreme to get that education...it was just a given. You graduate from high school, and then you go to college. I don't care what you major in, you just go do it. And then you're a strong enough individual to make your own decisions and get out in the world. And, don't be afraid to do anything. (Sue, NTB)

My grandparents have always told me, "We don't want you to have children for a long time." And my mother tells me the same thing. My mother had me when she was very young. She was 19, and she ended up giving me to my grandparents. And, all that I have always heard was, "Don't make the same mistake I made. When you
have children, make sure you are ready to have children." (Emily, TB)

Interactions with Parents

A study by Ihinger-Tallman (1982) assessed the benefit of parental interactions with their children in helping children develop attainment goals. Values directed at achievement are called attainment values. Parental encouragement and awareness of career opportunities were shown to be significant variables affecting attainment values. It was also found that a positive emotional climate was necessary for parents to pass on attainment values to children. However, parent-son interactions have been shown to predict attainment values in boys more readily than parent-daughter interactions do for girls. It seems the socialization of attainment values is more complex for girls than for boys. Ihinger-Tallmar suggested that the parent-daughter interactions that de-emphasize marriage and children for girls may be more effective than direct encouragement of career or educational goals.

When asked about messages they received as children regarding husbands and marriage, respondents again reported a variety of different messages. No clear patterns emerged.

Well, a brain for starters. Education, social prominence. Because we are real functioning, issue-oriented family, we just were doers. ...I remember when I was dating in high school, I was madly in love with the football captain/basketball captain. He was athlete of the century. But he came from the wrong side of the tracks so that wasn't even an option to be discussed. They expected me to excel and carry on the family tradition, which I did. (Betty, TB)
They just wanted me to marry somebody with money. So I married a school teacher. Hey, at least it's steady work. (Joyce, NTNB)

Direct advice about careers and occupations was curiously vague for most of the respondents. While several respondents reported that obtaining an education was emphasized, very few were given any specific advice about where to go from there. Out of the five NTBs one was encouraged to be an attorney, another was told she could "be anything you want to be," and another was encouraged to be "self-sufficient." Two were given no advice at all; Of the TBOs three were encouraged to get a college degree, one was encouraged to "be able to take care of yourself," and the fifth was encouraged to "find something you like because you'll be doing it for a long time." Three of the NTNBs were given no advice at all, one was encouraged to go to school "if that's what you want to do," and the last respondent was advised to do something that she liked. Two of the TNBs were given no specific advice. One was encouraged to "get an education," and one was encouraged to "do what you want to do and make the best of it." The final respondent was encouraged to be a teacher or a court reporter--advice which she took, for she became a court reporter.

Even though most of the career advice was vague, it was obvious that some parents took a much more active role in socializing achievement values in their daughters than others did. One way that parents did this was by involving their daughters in their own achievement-related activities.

Yes. We did anything together. Showing cattle, I worked for my dad. I clerked cattle auctions from the time I was 12 or 13. That [clerking] is when you're responsible for collecting all the money, and all the paperwork-- $100,000 in a day was nothing. I think I did it because I knew that he thought I could. Yeah, but he
always thought I could do it. He just assumed that I could do it. If any human had ever done it, then I could do it too. My dad and I spent quite a bit of time together. And, we played golf. And, my brother and I spent a lot of time with him just hanging out. (Rose, NTNB)

Dad owned [name of company] here in [name of city]. So, he got off. He was very flexible too. He closed at 4:30, but if he wanted to leave and go play golf at 3:00, he was out the door. We played a lot of golf together late in the afternoons. We went on fishing trips together. We went on little over-nighters together. We just drove around and looked at new subdivisions which were being built since that's what he did. He put the heating and air conditioning in them. I'd jump in the car and go with him. On Saturdays if he had to go out and try to fix an air conditioning or heater and couldn't get under the house through the crawl space, he would take me, and by walkie talkie he'd tell me what to do. I went hunting with him. I had a good relationship with all my grandparents. One set lived down the street and one lived with us. Aunt and uncle lived next door. So, I was constantly doing something with the adults. And being daddy's little girl...not much passed I didn't get involved with. (Sue, NTB)

We would set out in the field and watch for people fishing. He checked people's fishing license. I only could go with him on days that he knew would be safe. Like when he was doing his routine check fishing license or routine check deer hunting license or go to the game farm at [name of college] and take some animals that had been found. (Emily, TB)

Participation in Parent's Business

Some respondents actually participated in running family-owned businesses as they were growing up.

[In reference to the amount of responsibility she was given]...Being small you just have to do the grunt work, as well...no she gave us a lot of responsibility. As much as we would take. (Rachel, TB)

I think they just gave me my independence. They gave me a blueprint to follow by their example. And I was given the responsibility early in life to achieve, and I think that is still with me to today. (Betty, TB)

One respondent recalled her mother sharing career-related information at the dinner table:

Sometimes she'd talk about her patients without naming any names. She'd talk about
them sometimes at the dinner table. You know she was a sex therapist and that made for some pretty good entertainment. She talked about that and some of the challenges of dealing with kids--some who were sexually active early. (Emily, TB)

Many simply recall participating in conversations with their parents as equals, being taken seriously as individuals.

Oh, yeah. Of course, me being the only child, I was very much involved in the decision-making process. Most of the time it was just, "Where do you want to go this year?" So, I got to make the decision. Other times with other family friends where they had two and three kids... it was just they were all involved. I would say it pretty much rotated out of that. If there is any such thing as a vacation anymore. And now with my friends... I'm seeing more of them involving the kids back in too. Of course most of the parents that I'm around are my age... that went through the same thing as I went through with making those decisions, and now they're allowing their children to help out. (Sue, NTNB)

If he had a big decision to make--I remember when I was in high school--if he was trying to decide whether he was trying to sell a farm or keep a farm, he would talk to me about it. And then, we obviously talked about the real estate and auction business because I worked in it. (Rose, NTNB)

I never had a curfew. And, I was always really responsible, and I think that was because he let me. I couldn't stay out all hours of the night, but he would let me say, "Okay, this is what I'm doing tonight." We would go over what was going on, and I would be able to say, "Well I should do it this way." (Amy, NTB)

Eight out of ten business owners had parents who actively participated in passing on attainment values in one way or another. Six out of 10 non-business owners also had parents who attempted to socialize achievement values in them. The more specific breakdown is as follows: 4NTBs, 4TBs, 4NTNBs, and 2TNBs. Two respondents learned basic responsibilities that could not really be considered attainment values, out of necessity.

I matured quick because my mom, she was on her own and she didn't make us, but we just had to. Like when I was in the fifth grade and my mom had her night job, we'd
clean the house and cook our own supper. We done all that. We had to learn because she had to work. She couldn't take off work, and so we depended on each other. I've got two older sisters and a brother, and one of my older sisters went into the air force when I was probably six. Me and my other sister, who is four years older than me, are the closest because we grew up together. It was just me and her and my mom for a while. (Martha, NTNB)

No, cause she was at work. I would have to do the housework. I was 14 and having to clean up after my two older brothers. Clean and cook. So she wasn't there; I was. I had to do all of that. I don't ever remember us being in the kitchen baking something. Now, my grandmother, yeah. My dad's mom. I would help her cook and bake things and clean up. Just stuff that I felt like I should be doing with my mother. (Dora, TNB)

Role Models

Role models can be very influential in triggering career interests in girls (Archer 1985). Role models include people that a child has contact with as well as those the child may admire with whom he or she has no direct contact, such as persons in the media. However, role models that have the strongest impact on children are those whom they know personally and with whom they can interact regularly. At least one study showed that the individuals are more likely to choose a nontraditional career when same-sex models are present in that occupation (Betz and Fitzgerald 1987). Most research, however, tends to place little importance on the sex of the role model. What matters most is the relationship of the novice with that person (Betz and O'Connell 1992).

Three specific types of role models were of particular interest in this study:
1) men and women whom the respondents admired (for any reason), 2) women whom the
respondents perceived as having high-paying jobs, and 3) women who did jobs that were usually done by men.

Nine out of ten business owners could name someone whose career they really admired as they were growing up. The last business owner could not recall admiring any person with whom she had direct contact, but she could recall actresses whom she admired. Five out of ten non-business owners could name someone whom they really admired as they were growing up. As the literature predicted, the sex of the influencer was not as important as the respondent's relationship with that person.

I'd say Daddy probably. Even though I heard most of the stuff from Momma. It was probably Daddy telling Momma because she didn't know how to relate to it. I would have to say my daddy. (Joan, NTB)

Well I admired my mom. I thought her job was kind of neat and my uncle who is a cardiologist and my aunt who is a social worker. I talked to all of them at various times. (Amy, NTB)

They had such strong work ethics, both of my parents. And so much of what Mother did was fun. It was fun...It still is. We have a great time. Yes, we work hard. But she did always made it look fun. It never looked like work. And doing it together was always fun. And wherever I have worked, I have always had fun, otherwise I didn't work there. That was just something she always told us all, "You have to work you better make it work." That's really what we've always done. (Rachel, TB)

We just are all--it is unusual for anybody in my family to not produce--so I guess I never thought of it. I just thought every family was like that. (Betty, TB)

My uncle, I have a favorite uncle. He was in the military and he's probably one of the people that I admire. He was in the Vietnam War. He did a 20-year career in the Marine Corps, which is something to be valued. He saw a lot of things. He never would talk too much to anybody about it, except to me. He showed me pictures from other cities that he never showed his kids. To me that was a big thing. (Joyce, TB)

I had a home ec. teacher that I really admired. She was single, and for her to be single and ...I really admired her. (Marcia, TNB)
I really admired my dad and his career. It just blew my mind how much he works and how they struggle to get everything. I admire my mom too, but she doesn't have a job except just raising us. (Lisa, TNB)

Seven business owners and four non-business owners could recall knowing a woman who held a job that they perceived to be high-paying. Only two of the eleven women who reportedly held high-paying jobs were something other than teachers or nurses.

Yes, relative to that area. Well, where I grew up, teaching was a high paying job and nurses and that was it. Now my grandmother was self employed and made more. (Rose, NTB)

No. One cousin, I take that back, was a nurse anesthetist. And she raked in the dough. But other than that, I can't think of anybody. No big doctor or anything like that. (Joan, NTB)

There wasn't a whole lot of them except for those builders. There were a few female doctors but not many. I thought it was pretty neat. I just didn't know how they got to where they got and I never at that point. Now I know. They either got there by way of their husband or their fathers. (Sue, NTB)

Well I knew a couple of dentists. (Amy, NTB)

I thought they did. Growing up. One of my best friends' moms was an RN. I always remember thinking, "Wow, she must make a lot of money." (Emily, TB)

I knew teachers. I knew nurses. There just weren't that many professional women in the world then. (Betty, TB)

I always thought my mom made good money...I still didn't want to be a nurse, but I admired her for what she done. (Lauren, TTNB)

Probably one. I probably knew a couple, but [a high school teacher]...I think she had a high-paying job. I thought the world of her. (Jane, TNB)

Not really. Most of them were not very high paying at all, or they didn't work. They were either teachers, hair dressers, worked in a store, or stayed home. (Lisa, TNB)
I don't remember any jobs like that. (Rhonda, NTNB)

The only woman that I know that does something like that is my cousin now. She's an electrician. And that surprised me. She went to school, and she makes good money doing it. But if that's what they want to do, let them go ahead and do it. I can't see myself doing construction work...no...but an electrician maybe. You never know. It just depends on what type person you are and what you like to do as far as that. When I was little, though, I didn't know anybody that did things like that. (Dora, NTNB)

Five of the business owners and three non-business owners either knew of or were aware of women who did jobs that were usually done by men. All, except one respondent, who were aware of someone fitting that description recalled having positive feelings about that person or those people.

Cool. Yeah, because I admired them. Because they were more.....and I wouldn't have used that word at the time...I was have just said cool. But probably because I knew somewhere that they were probably pioneers and trailblazers. (Rose, NTB)

I thought they were wonderful. I just thought it was great. And for my father to be able to contract jobs with women, knowing they were some of the best.... I knew they had to be pretty good. (Sue, NTB)

Pretty ambitious. (Rachel, TB)

I thought that was cool. (Betty, TB)

Didn't bother me. (Madison, TB)

I can remember my parents, my dad used to say stuff about females working at the gas station...or construction work. To me it really didn't make an impression on me one way or the other. I just thought it was something different. But they made money just like everybody else. (Joyce, NTNB)

I said, "Go girl." (Jane, TNB)

One of my aunts got a job at the paper mill that I worked at. And it was mostly just men and she was working on the docks, and they were like, "She can't do that." And she is tiny but she is so strong. She got up there and does it just easy as could be. I
just thought that was great. (Lisa, TNB)

Only one respondent, Katie, recalled being uncomfortable when she thought about a woman doing a "man's" job. At the time of the interview Katie held a nontraditional job herself--she was a cable line installer.

It made me feel uncomfortable. It was just so out of the ordinary. (Katie, NTNB)

Five of the business owners and one of the non-business owners recall having all three types of role models as they were growing up. Three of those respondents are non-traditional business owners today.

Longest-term Childhood Goals

Childhood goals reveal the extent that a child is able to plan and look ahead to the future. Goals can tell us a lot about a child's confidence in her own ability to have an effect on the world by accomplishing something. In addition, by setting and accomplishing goals, both children and adults prove to themselves that they have the ability to succeed in accomplishing tasks they wish to accomplish. Failing to set or achieve goals can have the opposite affect.

I don't know, as kids you get out there and think you're going to do so much and change the world, until you get out in the real world and find out that it's not going to work like you want it to work. I don't know what my long-term goal was. (Lauren, NTNB)

By examining the differences in the complexity of goals and the amount of time needed to accomplish them, we can better understand the inner worlds of the respondents when they
were children. Does a person who learned how to set and achieve goals at an early age have a greater propensity towards being a business owner? According to these data, it does.

When long term childhood goals of the respondents were examined, non-business owners recalled having less complex and shorter-term goals than did business owners. Six out of ten non-business owners could not recall having any long-term goals as children. Two non-business owners recalled a desire to achieve in sports but no specific goals relating to that desire.

I don't set goals for myself. I never have. I just take it a day at a time. Cause I am always scared that it is not going to come. I am scared that if I set a goal and I don't reach it, then I will be disappointed or someone else will be disappointed in me. So I don't set goals. (Dora, TNB)

Gosh I don't even know. Playing softball—that was it. I didn't really have any goals. My friends got me interested in playing softball. I played all through my grade school years. I liked having all of my mom's attention, but that wasn't the main reason. I like any kind of sports. For the first five or six years I pitched. Then I went to second. Then I played outfield. In my high school years I played catcher. I've just been all over the field. It doesn't matter where I played, I still liked it. My little boy played t-ball this year, and I really enjoyed getting back into it. (Martha, NTNB)

Well, let me think. Can we come back to this? (Jane, TNB)

I was like every other person who grew up in the sixties. I wanted to be married. I wanted to be Susie homemaker with the little house with the picket fence and the antiques, you know. I didn't care anything about goals. (Marcia, TNB)

The most specific long-term goal recalled by a non-business owner was to save up for a skate-board.

When I was about eight, I saved up for a skateboard all summer long. It took me the whole summer to save up like 25 bucks to get this skateboard. I bought it, and my parents ordered it for me. It took about twelve weeks. (Joyce, NTNB)
Business owners reported having a multitude of long-term goals as children. All ten could recall at least one long-term goal, four could recall having more than one. Rose recalled planning to win the showmanship award for cattle at the state fair and to win the regional tournament in golf (both of which she went on to achieve).

I guess if I think about it, my biggest goal during high school was winning the showmanship award at the state fair showing cattle. I always wanted to do real well in golf--well I guess winning the region in golf was my goal. But I never really set a goal to win the state. (Rose, NTNB)

Sue, an NTB, recalls wanting to be a full-time golf professional which she later achieved. Amy, also an NTB, began saving money at an early age to go to college. She had many other goals relating to sports and piano as well.

I knew I was going to go to college. I've been saving money. I'm like a saver and like my brothers used to borrow money from me because I always had money. I had a lot of sports goals. I played the piano and had goals in that, baseball and had goals in that. I had a goal to play tennis in college. I had a lot of goals. (Amy, NTB)

Madison, a TB, recalled working after school in order to save money to buy a car. It is interesting to note that she didn't consider saving to buy a car a long-term goal. A long-term goal to her was to graduate from college, which she also did.

Childhood Hobbies

Childhood hobbies not only reveal what the respondents were interested in as children but they also tell us something about their social status and the skills that they
acquired growing up. Traditional hobbies for girls (depending upon the age level) include playing with dolls, sewing, playing an instrument, cooking, or more active hobbies that do not require teamwork (such as roller skating or riding a bicycle). Nontraditional hobbies for girls include team sports or activities requiring strategic thinking such as rugby or raising and showing cattle. Traditional hobbies for girls tend to promote passivity, creativity, and nurturing skills. Nontraditional hobbies for girls have the potential for developing skills such as critical thinking skills, teamwork, and how to feel comfortable with, if not enjoy, healthy competition. The nontraditional business owners expressed having more nontraditional hobbies as children than any other category of respondents. Four out of five NTBs had nontraditional hobbies as children as opposed to one out of five TBs, two out of five NTNBs, and two out of five TNBs.

Things like swimming--I swam competitively up until I was 18. As far as hobbies, I've had so many hobbies it's unreal. Cycling, international softball, not really building things but being able to construct things, like messing with a car, change the tires, fan belts... Any of that stuff was sort of a hobby. Collected picket knives to koala bear to golf memorabilia--anything with heritage--I am a Civil War buff; a lot of different things that are still hobbies, but I just don't have time to do it. My uncle bought me my first softball glove. The kids in the neighborhood all played softball. It didn't matter if you were a girl or a boy. (Sue, NTB)

Girl Scouts they [her parents] really liked. Uh, I was in ballet for awhile. Actually ballet helped with swimming, believe it or not, but I decided that ballet is for sissies. Uh, I played baseball, I played little league baseball with the boys. My mother was dead set against that. She said, "I can't stand sitting in the bleachers listening to parents bad talking at the girl that's better than their son."
(Joyce, NTNB)

I was very much a tomboy. I had a horse, and I rode a lot, and I played baseball. Mother didn't like that. Girls are not supposed to do that. You know in the sixties you were not supposed--girls, ladies did not get angry, and if you showed your anger, then you were not a lady. I was very much a tomboy, and Mom didn't like that. I
played with three brothers. They had the car, and they got to drive the tractor. (Marcia, NTNB)

While most of the respondents reported having some kind of hobby, one traditional non-business owner could not remember having any hobbies as a child.

I didn't really have any hobbies growing up, other than just loving to play, I didn't do anything. Watch TV, and that was it—play outside. I didn't have any hobbies. (Dora, TNB)

Parental Support

Parental support for childhood hobbies can be an indicator of how involved the respondents' parents were in their lives. Parental support is defined in this study as attendance at games/activities, encouragement, or financial support. Nine of the business owners, as opposed to four of the non-business owners, commented that their parents were supportive of their hobbies.

When asked whether or not they believe their hobbies had any effect on their careers, three business owners and one non-business owner said that they had in one way or another.

Probably a heck of a lot more than I'd first think because I probably never would have gotten my first job within a real estate appraisal company if I didn't play golf. Only because the man that eventually became my boss and my partner invited me to play in a golf tournament before he hired me. So yeah, I guess. (Rose, NTB)

Probably, especially the golf, which was sort of a whim. And that was a career choice. Even in college, before girls' basketball was the thing because there wasn't such a thing when I was in college. I coached girls basketball when I first started teaching. I was the first woman to be hired as a head coach that was a female. Those type things, but there wasn't anything to be discouraged in. I was caught in an in-between group but was on the beginning of a lot of other groups like the coaches, and then I coached
various things. (Sue, NTB)

Yeah, I would think so, especially being so involved in sports. Being active I just knew I could not have a job where I would have to sit still all the time, or do something in a closed environment. Then there is team work you learn in sports. I used that a lot in the police force. (Joyce, NTNB)

Eight out of ten business owners could recall specific situations in which they received career-related emotional or financial support from their parents as opposed to two out of ten non-business owners. Those who recalled receiving some kind of support from their parents included 4NTBs, 4TBs, 1NTNB, and 1TB.

Childhood Friends

Friends share opinions, ideas, and activities with one another. Studies show that around the time of adolescence, friends can be more influential than adults in shaping children’s views and opinions. Can friends also be influential in shaping career goals? Respondents were asked about the educational level and occupation that three of their closest childhood friends went on to achieve. Four out of five respondents from each category report that some or most of their friends went to college. Eventual careers that their friends obtained varied a great deal. No patterns emerged from the data.
CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS RELATING TO TRANSITIONAL EVENTS

Three categories of questions that were included in the interview schedule could not be classified as being related to childhood or current situations in the respondents' lives. They were somewhere in between. The three sections below are important enough to consider, however, in understanding how critical turning points in women's lives can affect career decisions.

Social Class and Choice of Career

In this study the respondents' families of origin were classified as either working class or middle class based on the examination of several different variables: 1) educational level of respondents' parents, 2) occupations of the respondents' parents, 3) respondents' hobbies as children (rugby or sewing), 4) respondents' hangouts (country club or girl's club), and 5) family vacations (no vacations or frequent vacations). For example, Rose's father was a college graduate who worked as a real estate broker, a farmer, a developer and a county judge executive. Her mother held two master's degrees and had worked as a teacher, a social worker, and a family resource center director.
Rose's hobbies as a child included golf and showing cattle. She was a member of 4-H, and she and her family took vacations to Disney World in Florida. Because of her parents' advanced educational levels, the autonomy and authority that her parents achieved in their occupations, and the degree of financial security they possessed as reflected in the luxury of vacations to Disney World and other places, her family of origin is considered middle-class. The breakdown of class of family of origin is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Choices of Career by Social Class of Family of Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Choice</th>
<th>working class</th>
<th>middle class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nontraditional business</td>
<td>2  9%</td>
<td>3  33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional business</td>
<td>2  9%</td>
<td>3  33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nontraditional non-business</td>
<td>4  36%</td>
<td>1  11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional non-business</td>
<td>3  27%</td>
<td>2  22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moving Away from Hometown

In this study six of the middle-class families were supportive of their decisions to move away from their home towns as opposed to two of the working-class families. In other words, 67 percent of the middle-class families versus 22 percent of the working-
class families were in support of their daughters' decisions to move. Although the reasons for the moves were not documented, these results would seem to indicate that the middle-class families in this study were more supportive of their daughters moving if that is what it took to get ahead in life.

Development of Leadership Skills

Leading is defined by Webster's Dictionary, fourth edition, (1989) as follows, "to guide the activities, operation and performance of" (p. 419). Leadership is a necessary skill for business ownership in terms of managing employees, educating potential clients about products and services, and being able to make decisions. When respondents were asked if they considered themselves leaders, five NTBs, four TBs, three NTNBs, and three TBs said "yes."

Overall, yes...Probably because I like seeing things get done. I don't like seeing things in limbo. Don't mind chaos...but I like every now and then for the bag to be tied on chaos and something actually be done. So, yeah, I'm a leader. I like kids that I have worked with through teaching to think I am a leader because if they would only stop and listen to some of the things that I am trying to tell them, that my teachers told me, it would make it so much easier on them. And that is just an educational type leader. I guess everyone involved in education see theirselves as a leader or they wouldn't be there. (Sue, NTB)

Yes. I guess because I've done a lot of things. I've blazed a lot of trails, like I was the first female on the high school tennis team; I was the first female in Kentucky and the only female now, oral surgeon; I organized a lot of different organizations here, as far as my running and know a lot of people that, you know, help me do this, help me do that, kind of thing. (Amy, NTB)

I think I'm a leader because I like to take charge of the situation. A lot of people that I have hung around with or been in groups with have the attitude of not caring--they
don't ever want to make a decision. I was the one that made the decision. I can't stand that. I would have to stand up and say, "This is the way it's going to be." And people just gradually, if I made the decision, I took over. Nobody gave it to me...I just took command. (Emily, TB)

[I am] Strong, physically and mentally. I don't know. I just felt like this is what I'm meant for. (Katie, NTNB)

When asked about the age in which they began seeing themselves as leaders, responses varied. Three NTBs, one TB, one NTNB and one TNB reported thinking of themselves as leaders since childhood.

[I began seeing myself as a leader at...]Oh, two or three years old maybe. (laugh). I figured out early on how you get people to do things. And maybe that's manipulation... (Rose, NTB)

I began seeing myself as a leader when I was young. I always wanted to be the center of attention. I can't ever think of a time that I haven't been bossy. (Martha, NTNB)

I've always been bossy, since I was little. I usually have to get things going...[for example] I started the Women's Rugby Club here and am president of it. (Lisa, TNB)

Two NTBs, two TBs, 2NTNBs and 2TNBs said that it wasn't until later in life, college and beyond, that they started seeing themselves as leaders. Three respondents commented that accomplishments at work helped them begin seeing themselves as leaders:

Well, I really never did. I got the business--and had confidence. And then I'm on this committee at church now. I really don't know if I kind of want to be in on that. I am in this woman's group, and I wasn't sure if I wanted to do one of those things. But it was like, "I can do it. I think I can do it" And it was like, "These women are just like me. What's to be afraid of? If they can do it, I can do it." It never used to be that way. You stay in the background and you watch. Not anymore. You just get right up there. (Joan, NTB)

I guess when I started laying all my specialty skills on the table, like my computer skills--you get to know so many people across the state after you network. You know, I have already networked by doing certain types of training in this department...even
after all the training I went through and field training officer program where you ride with a different officer at a time and then you go through an evaluation program. I didn't think I was going to make it. I just really got tired of being scrutinized for having a string on my button--just little things that were finally starting to wear on me. I think the first time I was able to make an arrest and handled myself on my own--once I go out, go to my car, get in my car and go out by myself, and handle calls by myself, that's when I got used to it.

(Joyce, NTNB)

I was more of a follower back then, I was real quiet and shy. I would sit back and see what was going on. It's just kind of like work. When I first started painting I would sit back and say, "Well, can I actually do that?" I think about things before I do it. I'm not really a jump in and do it person. Now I will get to be daring and jump in and do something that I know I can do... [now] I know that when I am out there, I can do it just as well as the guys out there can do it. It's taken a lot of years, but yes, I have [proven myself]. Like with their union, you take a performance test there and the business agents would tell you, "Come in the third Sunday of the month and be sworn in." With me after going through all that, they still watched me for three months before they told me that. Where all the other guys were in right then and there. (Lauren, NTNB)

It is also interesting to note Joan's comment on how it helped her to see other women achieve. In addition it seems that role models are important in adulthood as well as childhood. Another respondent commented that she didn't consider business ownership before because no one had ever talked to her about it. She also previously reported that her only role models as she was growing up were actresses.

I don't know. I really don't, because I hadn't had anybody talking to me about, you know, "Well why don't you start your own business?" kind of thing. And when he [her husband with whom she went into business] had tried having his own company several years ago, it never crossed my mind that that's something I wanted to do, I mean, I was teaching school and I was happy. You know, never even thought about it until, I don't know, until I didn't have a job and was trying to decide what direction I wanted to take. You know, just exploring my options. I mean, that's just something I thought, "Wow, I wonder if I could do that?" (Thelma, NTB)

Rachel verbalized the essence of this situation when she said:

I didn't feel that [I had leadership skills] until I definitely got out in the work force and
had been there a good while and really learned more of the business aspect. I think a lot of it has to do with role models. A lot of women don't have the mentors or the role models that it takes to build that confidence. (Rachel, TB)

Two respondents commented that overcoming difficulties helped them see themselves as leaders.

I think so. Yes I was at a state-wide training for senior-citizen centers and we filled out a form-- we did not know what this form was, and I was one of those that showed that I had a high score showing that I was a leader. I took the test, and we had no idea what it was. I began seeing myself as a leader after the divorce because I was not going to let that divorce (pause) I came from a very bad marriage and I was not going to let that hold me back. (Marcia, TNB)

I think the family I grew up in, [helped me become a leader] because of death, which is about as devastating as you can get. Which, if you didn't balance that with some humor, you'd go nuts. I mean, everybody that came in my house was probably crying--there had been an accident or somebody was dead. And then I was married to a physician for all those years. You just have to compartmentalize, and that doesn't mean that I don't think about a client when I get up in the morning. But I do have the ability to shut it off when the client leaves and to keep some balance in my life. (Betty, TB)

Initiating Events

Most respondents referred to an opportunity of some kind that lead to their current career. Opportunities, however, are not sufficient in themselves for explaining why a woman pursues and obtains any given career. Nontraditional occupations for women are, obviously, primarily pursued and obtained by men. What other circumstances in combination with opportunity lead to either business ownership or a nontraditional career? Three categories of circumstances or "initiating events" seem to come out of the data: 1)
a life-changing event, 2) exposure to occupational information, and 3) exposure to
occupational contacts. Any one or more of these, in combination with an opportunity,
helped women in this study overcome disadvantages that they faced as women in the
workforce.

A Life-Changing Event

A life-changing event can be triggered by anything that has a strong emotional,
physical, financial, or psychological impact on a person. Examples mentioned in this study
include marriage, divorce, birth of a child, death of a spouse or loved one, or loss of a job.
Life transitions usually function to push someone into action out of necessity when they
otherwise would not have pursued the same course of action.

I am divorced. When I moved up to [name of state] I worked for my husband's
father's business, which was a ceramics business. And then we moved back down
here and started our own business, and when we divorced I bought him out. So, that
is how I got into all of this. But I had no idea, you know. When I got married I
thought, "I'll work for awhile, and then I'll have my babies." But things didn't work
out that way. (Joan, NTB)

I was married for 25 years to a very prominent physician. We had two children so I
did the "mommy track," the wife track, the community-leader track. I did all of that.
And if I could replay it, I wouldn't change a thing because that was a very important
piece of who I am today. After 25 years a divorce did occur. That is when I really
started focusing on what direction the rest of my life would take. And I went back
and furthered my education, and that is really how I got to where I am today. Four
years after my divorce I remarried, which was a whole other direction, and after three
years of marriage my husband died so, again, that put me in another transition period.
(Betty, TB)

Money. Before I married [name of husband] I was divorced in [name of state] with
two small children and I worked two full time jobs for a solid year after I was
divorced because I really didn't know that much about welfare and food stamps, and I
thought there has got to be a better way. I started dating this union painter and was
real fascinated with the amount of money he made. But at that time, unions had a age
limit on their apprentice program, and I was considered too old at the age of 23 to
enter the apprenticeship program so I had to get on the job training somewhere and then come in and take a test. So I worked five years non-union, which the pay was okay, but nothing like union pay. (Lauren, NTNB)

Up until ten years ago I was a full-time mom and full-time farm-wife. Susie Homemaker. About ten years ago my sister and another gal and I started a business because we wanted pocket money—that's all we wanted. We started a catering business; and we were thinking if we just worked each of us a couple of days a week, we would be fine. Well, one thing led to another. Apparently we were good at it, and we were so busy that it got to be really hard work, and we didn't want to work really that hard. During that time I divorced, and so I needed to work somewhere where there was insurance and benefits and that type of thing, and so we sold the business, and I went to work for a Board of Education as a teacher's assistant. I worked with special ed. students, middle-school-age children, and that's when I went back to school. I do not have my bachelor's degree, but I am a few hours short of my bachelor's. (Marcia, NTNB)

**Exposure to Occupational Information**

Many of the respondents became aware of occupational information that helped them decide to pursue the particular occupation that they currently have. Examples of being exposed to occupational information include learning that a certain occupation pays well, discovering reasons why a certain occupation would not be satisfying, learning of a shortage of employees in a certain field, or learning that one is actually qualified for a certain position.

Well I went to dental school initially and realized that I didn't want to be a general practitioner. I like the surgery aspect of it. Our patients are usually the sicker patients, and so you have to deal with more than just the mouth. You deal with the whole person, and that's fascinating to me. Surgery is actually fascinating to me. I like oral surgery versus other types of surgery in that oral surgery is usually shorter; it's usually twenty, twenty-five minutes long. We do our own anesthesia--most of it is office versus hospital cases, and I like that particular part of it; and also in oral surgery, you are your own boss. I knew I needed to do that. (Amy, NTB)

It was just by accident that I fell into this because I was a legal secretary, and when I got out of college, well, I went to the business university and there was a shortage of
reporters, and attorneys would have to take depositions. And so some of the attorneys said, "Well can't you take this divorce deposition or can't you take this...and I just kind of fell into it, and so I quit working full-time to work part-time taking depositions, and I've been working triple-time ever since. (Joanne, TB)

The place that I worked at—I enjoyed it. I had always said I would probably never do this because it's so iffy. People told me all along that there were opportunities to be self-employed. The lady that owns this business told me that she had some spaces open, but something happened where I worked, and the atmosphere became so depressing it was—I hated going to work. I hated going to work. It just felt negative and everything. I knew there had to be something better, and somebody had mentioned to me something about this opportunity here. And only within a matter of a few days I had started to move. (Emily, TB)

Well, as far as when I moved back here, one of the jobs that was open was a police officer. You know, I didn't think, even with a bachelors degree in law enforcement and a good background in English—that was my double major—and all the military background, I guess I just didn't think I'd be qualified to be a police officer. But, once they got my application, they said that this is exactly what we are looking for. (Joyce, NTNB)

Exposure to Occupational Contacts

Many respondents commented that knowing the right person helped them land a job or buy a business that they might not otherwise have gotten. These situations include when one person puts a "good word" in for another or when having contact with certain people allows one to be "in on" opportunities that other people may not have knowledge about.

A couple of people that knew us both told him, "She's the one you need to hire." Two people that I had worked--not directly with, but indirectly--encouraged him to hire me. (Rose, NTB)

I'm not real sure that I decided. It was a business opportunity that my accountant brought to my attention. I was playing [golf] full time and did not have a golf job at all. My accountant knew of this business for sale and said I needed to do something worthwhile and invest my money in a business that was doing okay—but knew that it could do a lot better with me at the helm. So I did a lot of studying real quick and
learned what I was supposed to do, and it's still a learning process. And, of course, cigars are on the boom so it even makes my business right now a little more lucrative. (Sue, NTB)

I've worked in department stores, restaurants, I worked in a warehouse for two years, and I worked loading trucks (checking stuff to go) out and I was black [dirty] when I left there. I liked it. It didn't bother me a bit. There was other women that done that job, [I was] just the only woman on that shift. In our slow time of the year I worked in the office, and then I didn't go back to the warehouse, and then I moved to a different warehouse where I also done office work. Then I started over here across the street. I had a good friend who referred me for a temporary job, and there I worked in the office where I learned a lot of stuff about cable just because I had to check production. I had to go to the maps on the wall, and I had to read the maps, and I had to learn what specific codes meant on that and the cable lines on the map. Certain codes meant it was a certain kind of cable. (Martha, NTNB)

I was a telephone operator before and I've been construction the rest of the time. I had already worked outside for two years, and I loved it, and being cooped up inside didn't set with me too well. How did I get here? My husband wanted to get me on because he thought I would be working with him, but it didn't work out that way. (Karen, NTNB)

Well, I have a friend [name] who is another roommate of mine. She works in the office as customer service supervisor. She got me hired on at [name of business]. I had been waiting tables and doing the restaurant thing--and I had also done a little bit of college--and I just wanted to do something different. I love mechanics and stuff. I was always such a tomboy when I was little. I used to do everything with my dad. I wanted to be just like him, but when I hit puberty I realized I was a girl. So it was great. (Katie, NTNB)

Still other respondents had multiple initiating events due to the fact that they walked into an already established or semi-established business or went into business with a partner who had related experience in that field.

Yea. And I, so I ask him [her husband], "Would you consider working for me and uh if all you have to do is do your thing and let me run the business?"...He's a surveyor. He's registered in five states and, uh, is now working toward his engineering degree--I mean he has a civil engineering degree--but he wants to get his P.E. And uh, so he's gonna take the first part of that test this fall, but anyway, uh he said, "Well sure...as long as I don't have to do, you know, anything except do my land surveying, that's fine. I don't care who I work for." (Thelma, NTB)
No, not really, not until I really got into my major in college. I lived at home and it was not until I got involved in my major at home, or in school really, were there any kind of major decisions. And then once I graduated from college, that's when I talked [her mother] into moving the business out of the house and into a retail establishment. (Rachel, TB)

When I came home from [name of city] I didn't know what I wanted to do, I was only like twenty-five when I graduated from college. And so I took real estate courses and sold that for awhile. I was also a legal secretary for awhile, while I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do, and that's when she was opening her shop. I was selling real estate at the time, and she would call and say, "I need some deliveries made," and so I'd go make deliveries. And I didn't really like real estate back then because it was really cut-throat and I'm not that kind of a person. I'm more or less, I believe that everybody's got something to give and that you can work together. Basically, you don't need to cut each other up in order to get something done. And in real estate, that's all they ever did, go behind each other's backs and stuff. And then I got pregnant, anyway, and so basically I just went in full-time in the shop with her. She was growing so fast that she had to hire somebody anyway, and I guess I'm a family person anyway, close to Mom; and that's why I did it. (Madison, TB)
CHAPTER VII

FINDINGS RELATING TO CURRENT LIFE SITUATION

So far childhood and transitional experiences have been discussed for possible affects that they may have had on career decisions of the respondents. Respondents were also asked questions about their current life. Questions referring to respondents' current career-related values, systems of support, regrets, and self-esteem were analyzed, compared, and contrasted. The following represents a summary of those findings.

Career-Related Values

Values are the road maps by which people direct their own goals and behaviors. For example, if an individual really values money, then that value can be considered as a factor in that person's pursuit of a lucrative occupation (or some other source of money such as a rich husband). Likewise it could be argued that if an individual values autonomy, regardless of his or her occupation, then that person would be more likely to pursue business ownership.

Respondents in this study were asked questions regarding the degree that they desired to be self-employed, value money, the ability to be creative on the job, and a flexible schedule. The following is an analysis of their responses regarding these work-
related values. In addition, expressed regrets were analyzed to reveal values respondents have (or had at one time) that for one reason or another were not acted upon.

**Desire To Be Self-employed**

Perhaps the most important factor to consider in this entire analysis is whether or not the women in this study have the desire to be self-employed. This desire or "value" could be a simple explanation for why at least some women do not pursue business ownership. As one would expect, each of the business owners expressed a preference for owning her own business over being in a paid position. Two NTNB and three TNB also reported a preference for business ownership. The business owners expressed many benefits of business ownership, which could be categorized into three main reasons:

1) desire to be autonomous—to have control over how goals are accomplished without having to follow someone else's leadership, 2) desire for greater income potential, and 3) desire to be more available to family. Comments reflecting the first reason include:

> Because if you're paid, somebody else tells you what you do. And I don't take direction very well. And I think it would be really hard. Before I started, before I decided definitely to start my own company, I was offered a job, probably making more money than I will for a couple more years. But I didn't want it. (Rose, NTB)

> Definitely [I prefer to be] self-employed, except for the stresses that the government puts on you. It is extremely, extremely hard to be self-employed. You never survive because of all the taxes you pay. Taxes eat up a small business. But I do not want to work for anybody else. I don't want somebody else telling me how to live my life, and how to do my job. And the only way you can keep from having that is to be your own boss. So, I couldn't go back working for somebody else, I don't think. (Thelma, NTB)

> I have worked for other people and it's okay, but for the most part I'd rather do my own thing. (Sue, NTB)
Being your own boss you can kind of determine how you want to run your own business, what kind of treatment you want to give your patients, what type of people you want to hire. To me it's the image of my company. That's important to me because the way we treat people here, we treat them like gold, and that's the image we give. It's not just a business per se. People who come in here know that we truly want to help them, and that's the way I want it to stay. That's the one nice thing. The other nice thing is that you can train and teach people. I teach my employees very much. I think education is very important. I give them very much responsibility in this office, and so that's important. Other people who are oral surgeons, who happen to be males, their assistants don't get those responsibilities. I can see that they respect what I do. I mean I'm the only female in [name of state] or [name of state], and they realize that everything that we do is going to be put under a microscope, and they understand that they need to be very professional. (Amy, NTB)

I feel like I have more control over my life—and over my decisions—whether they be good or bad. I think it probably more of a control issue. I have direction, rather than someone else directing me. I have direction. (Rachel, TB)

Comments reflecting the desire for greater income potential include:

I like material things. I have two children, and they are both college educated, and it takes money to raise a family. And I like pretty things. (Joanne, TB)

I love being self-employed. I will never go back to a paying job. The opportunity to have money is there. You can't blame anything that goes wrong on anybody else. You are responsible,...so if you don't make something happen, it's you, it's not somebody else. And I think you have more respect for what you do. I understand so much more what bosses have always told me. I can see where for people the quality of things change, you know, like I can see why people want to cut corners. But I don't think I have the choice to do that. When I work for somebody I had to do what they told me to do. I had to do whatever. And if I don't like what somebody tells me now, I don't have to do it.

Comments reflecting the desire to be more available for spending time with family include: I am my own boss. If I don't want to come in that morning, I can stay home. If my child is sick and I need to take her to the doctor, there is no one telling me, "Well, you only have this much sick time and you can't leave...and this and that." And I like that. I like what it affords you to do. (Rose, NTB)

I think flexibility is very important. I have to take my daughter to gymnastics at 4:30; then I will leave. But then sometimes I will come in on a Saturday. I kind of make up for it, or I'll stay there for lunch. It all evens out in the end.
(Joan, NTB)

[I prefer being] self-employed. I've had the better of both worlds with this as far as I'm concerned. I've been able to be my own boss. This has worked out well when the children were growing up. I didn't work as much then as I do now, but you could control your life more or less. (Joanne, TB)

In addition, at least three business owners also commented how much they enjoyed their customers:

Right now, money is not an object. Maybe flexibility and a little bit of freedom would be my number one priority. I do like being around people. I am a people person...I get all sorts of people [as customers]. It's just sort of a meeting place for people on their breaks or whatever. It is just a fun place to be. (Sue, NTB)

The patients and surgery. I love to do oral surgery—the technical part, but I also love the patients. I don't like to do the business aspect. I like to do the clinical aspect. (Amy, NTB)

[I love] to see an individual come in here, and their life is spinning out of control, and to see them grasp, internalize, and get their life back on track to do the work they need to do. And I am sort of their guide to do it. To see a marriage put back together. However, sometimes they don't need to be put back together. So, just to see an individual take charge of their life. (Betty, TB)

The fact that all the business owners would not have it any other way is not to say that there are not difficulties involved with business ownership. Comments below reflect the things that respondents dislike about business ownership:

The fact that you can get pretty isolated sometimes if you're working on a loan, a more complex property, or a loan assignment, and you don't see a lot of people some days, other days you do. But you can get pretty isolated. (Rose, NTB)

I like being self-employed. But sometimes it's like I wish I could just come and do my job and leave because there are so many pressures. But I like it. Once in a while if there is a little ruckus between employees and you got to calm people down and get them focused back on what they are there for. Or you've got to fire an employee. That is not one of my favorite things to do. And collections--I also do them once in a while. And now that I've done it for so many years, I know what to do. But you still get the person, "Well, the check is in the mail!" You get all kinds of things. But that
is not my favorite thing. And I don't really like to fire people either, but I have done 
that. And that's not too bad. (Joan, NTB)

Good. What I hate about it, is worrying about if I'm gonna have money to make 
payroll every Friday and if I'm gonna have the money to pay the taxes because that's a 
constant struggle. It is a constant struggle. People expect you to pay your bills, but 
they don't expect to pay you. People, it's so hard to collect what people owe you. 
And that's one of the most difficult parts of my job because I hate to have to ask 
somebody, even though it's what they owe me. 
(Thelma, NTB)

Working on Saturdays. I didn't used to work on Saturdays, but now I do most of the 
time. Probably the stress of making sure that numbers are up and sales are up and 
marketing...trying to come up with new marketing ideas. (Rachel, TB)

The time. Trying to be a court reporter is like trying to be a little bit pregnant. It's 
either all or nothing if you open yourself up to be a full-fledged court reporter. I'd say 
that is the hardest thing. (Joanne, TB)

The thing I like least about the job...is having to tell people how much it cost. That's 
because--and I've always been that way--I hate it because I enjoy what I do so much. 
If I had it my way I'd do it for free. (Emily, TB)

One reason that non-business owners gave for not wanting to be self-employed was liking 
the structure of a paid position. A second stated that "Flexibility isn't all that important 
right now." Another respondent commented that she didn't feel it would work out in a 
unionized profession such as hers (industrial painting). Others seemed to have adapted 
well to the situations that they were in. For example, one NTNB said that she did not 
want to be a business owner because of her need to accommodate a baby-sitter. One non-
business owner had attempted self-employment before and commented that she felt the 
rewards of self-employment do not equal the rewards of paid employment:

I think for the benefits that we receive I think that its better for me personally to be 
employed. 
I: Would you not have the same kind of benefits if you were self-employed? 
There's so much that I can get like from this agency that I was going to have to pay
for if I was self-employed, and your business has to be so large, your income, in order to get the same benefits from this agency, and so personally, I would rather be employed. (Marcia, TNB)

Financial Rewards

Overall, business owners seemed to place more value on money than non-business owners. Seven business owners and two non-business owners emphasized the importance of "making a lot of money" even though some noted that they felt other things were more important. At least two respondents also noted that it is less important to them now, than it had been in the past. More specifically, five NTBs, two TBs, zero NTNBs, and two TNBs expressed the feeling that money was important to some extent.

[Money is]Very important 'cause I've never not had it. I think that probably has a lot to do with it. I was spoiled material-wise growing up. (Rose, NTB)

Only initially it was. Because when you're going through school, you have so many loans and debts. But it's funny because now that I'm making it, it's really not as important. It's really funny how your views change. 'Cause my husband and I have worked so hard for five-and-a-half years, and we want to retire early, and our goal is to get that retirement nest egg. But then we sometimes think, "Is making that money and working and working so hard the most important, or is having some of that free time more important?" We are starting to realize that having some of that free time is just as important. I think as a female you realize that you have to work that much harder, and so you push yourself that much harder. (Amy, NTB)

I have to admit that's important. (Rhonda, TNB)

Flexible Work Schedule

A flexible work schedule seemed to be the most important priority of all for most of the respondents in this study. Eighteen out of twenty respondents noted that flexibility was important. Most of them expressed desires to be available for their family and children as often as possible.
I think [flexibility] is very important. I have to take my daughter to gymnastics at 4:30. Then I will leave. But then sometimes I will come in on a Saturday. I kind of make up for it, or I'll stay there for lunch. It all evens out in the end. (Joan, NTB)

Very. Because I have to take my son to school and pick him up, and I like going to see him do sports at school and that kind of stuff, and I like to be there when he needs me, and so it's really important. (Madison, TB)

It's very important at this time because my son is just starting school. He's starting activities—both my sons. One of them lives with his dad, but, you know, I try to make it to his activities, but it is hard because he lives in [name of state], and it's just hard for me sometimes to get over there to him because he lives so far away, and I have to try to get off from work and be there at a certain time. (Martha, NTNB)

It was interesting to note that even the respondents who worked a set schedule managed to describe at least some part of their job as being flexible. A waitress named Lisa, for example, defined "flexible" as not having the same schedule all the time. No matter how most respondents defined it, the illustrations given by most business owners of a "flexible" schedule clearly demonstrated that they have more control over how they spend their time on any given day than do the non-business owners.

[Flexibility is] very [important] because that's just the way I am. I don't start at 8:00, and I don't stop at 5:00. I may stay home and play with my son, take him to daycare at 9:00; and then I work through lunch, work all afternoon, pick my son up, my husband up, we have dinner, I do my household stuff. And a lot of times I go back in there at 9:00 or 9:30 at night, and get much more done than I did during the day. (Rose, NTB)

Yeah, it's very important to me. If I wake up and it's not a good day, I'm not feeling good, I may not come in until 9:00 or whatever, you know, because whatever I have to do most of the time, unless I have an appointment scheduled, then I can rearrange my schedule for the other things. (Thelma, NTB)

It's very important. I knew when I went into this that by being my own boss if I wanted to take a vacation or take Friday off or Monday off, I could do it. If I have a meeting, I can take that off and not have to feel bad. I run, I am a very avid runner so
Creativity on the Job

Eighteen out of twenty respondents commented that they enjoyed being creative at work. All totaled, 4 NTB, 4 TB, 3 NTNB, and 2 TNB said that they enjoyed being creative on the job. Ways in which individuals expressed their creativity at work varied. Clearly, however, business owners have a lot of freedom to be creative to a great degree at work:

Well, most people wouldn't see it as being creative because you're dealing with numbers and stuff, but a lot of property, the way you kind of have to formulate your own approach. (Rose, NTB)

Oh, yes, we all are [creative at work]. If there is a problem in our filing system, and somebody will come up with a better way, we will try it. Back in shipping, I wear many hats there. "Where's this tape? Well wouldn't it be better if we stuck it over here? Okay. Let's do that." We all get along pretty good so we can do that and try something different. We're fortunate because we are a small company, and we can do whatever. We wear whatever. It's a very relaxed atmosphere. (Joan, NTB)

Yes. I like doing the creative window displays and piddling around and moving the cabinets around. Doing different promotions. (Sue, NTB)

I can pretty much do what I want to do. Treatment, I can treat them how I want to treat them. As far as displaying the office, I can do that how I want to do it. As you can see, our colors are different than most other offices. That's just my preference. (Amy, NTB)

Yeah, I think that is a lot [of creativity] to my business. I love it. I wouldn't be a hairdresser if I couldn't. (Emily, TB)

In fact, I create a lot of my handouts. I create a lot. (Betty, TB)

I like working with the flowers. Actually, I like dealing with most of the customers, too, but I can get creative with flowers and that's the part I like the most. (Madison, TB)
Non-business owners describe being able to be creative in a multitude of ways as well. However, overall, most of the opportunities for creativity that they described were restricted to a greater extent than were those of the business owners.

Yes [I can be creative at work]. If I see that something needs to be changed, if I find a better way to do it, then I can tell my supervisor that we need to change it to that better way then it's changed. (Martha, NTNB)

It's got to be done a certain way, but you can go about it in a different way. So if I want something done a different way, then I can guide it that way. (Karen, NTNB)

Yes. I can give ideas and stuff. Like today with out converter boxes, I demonstrated some more efficient way of taking and handling them and stuff like that. Just stuff I've been exposed to. It's just an open environment. (Katie, NTNB)

I can set here with these seniors, and we can not do anything but play cards and pool all day, or I can plan activities, and I can do things that are fun for them— things that they haven't done in a long time. (Marcia, TNB)

Yeah, [I can be creative at work] as long as it fits into your unit you're doing, you can do anything you want. Like if we're doing animals, you can do zoo animals, forest animals, any kind of animals. As long as it fits into the unit we have to do at the time, you can be creative as you want. (Dora, TNB)

Current Support Systems

In terms of emotional or moral support that the respondents receive regarding their careers, only one respondent reported that her primary source of support was herself. All the business owners versus only four of the non-business owners, reported that their greatest source of support was a family member(s). The smallest amount of familial support was reported by nontraditional non-business owners with only one respondent
commenting that her husband is her greatest source of support regarding her career.

Comments about familial support include the following:

My mom and dad were always there and asking how the business was doing and then my dad passed away. And then my mom, "Well how ya'll doing?" And then my uncle, my dad's brother, would stop out once in awhile and ask how we were doing. And then the other brother, "Daddy wanted me to make sure ya'll are doing okay. Got any problems?" And I fill in my mom, "Mom we got this so many thousand dollar job," just so she can hear we're doing good, and that kind of thing. My dad was our biggest supporter. And of course Mom, she doesn't ask a lot of questions. I'd say the family, my mother. (Joan, NTB)

[My biggest supporter] is probably still my mother, whether or not she still now knows physically and mentally what I'm doing or not--up until a year and a half or two years ago she did; [other supporters are] my accountant who talked me into it [buying the business]; another friend who I play golf with; country club friends. They may be in totally a different business, but they're totally supportive of me. And if I needed anything, I could go to the country club and get anything done I needed done. So I've got a number of "number one supporters." (Sue, NTB)

My husband is [my biggest source of support]. He does part-time work here in the practice. He knows, it's really funny, all our roles in this relationship are basically reversed; he's the female, and I'm the male, and that's OK with him. He does all the money part of it. But even at home, he does most of the cooking. He does most of the cleaning. I'm always out having to do medical staff meetings and things like that. I don't get home until 8:00, and he's already got dinner made. It's just a whole different world, and he knows that. We've been talking about having kids, and he's gonna have to take most of the responsibility. He knows that I can't. That in itself is support because a lot of males are not like that; and if he were not like that, it would be very tough. (Amy, NTB)

Probably my son and daughter [are my biggest supporters]. Anything that I do. Now that my husband is retired, he is very helpful, but not until he retired or a few years before he retired. He thought I set here and propped my feet up and watched soap operas. I will have to add that I was blessed to have a husband--when you think about a woman running around all over the state of Kentucky with men, everywhere--you get in a car and you drive two or three hours to get somewhere. But I've been blessed with a husband who didn't demand that you've got to be home at a certain hour and you've got to have a meal on the table and you've got to do this. He has been supportive. My whole family has been supportive. A different temperament and it could not be done because there are a lot of people who demand that their wives have got to be home at a certain time, and my life is like a gypsy. You don't have any
set hours. (Joanne, TB)

My grandfather [is my biggest supporter]. He put up all the money for me to do this. He calls and encourages me. I can be at work and he will call and say, "I hope you're having a good day." (Emily, TB)

One person? My youngest daughter is extremely important. She is a psychology major. And she really supports what I do and is interested. My colleagues, too. I get lots of feedback from clients. My mother still doesn't understand what I do. Just a lot of people that are close to me. (Betty, TB)

My mother was. She supported me by being there when I needed her and by giving me good advice most of the time. I guess my father has kind of taken her place to a degree, but I don't call it support. I don't really think there is a biggest supporter. My husband supports me, but he doesn't come into the business and do that kind of stuff, you know. It's my decision. He's there, and if he disagrees with me, he tells me, but we don't fight about it. (Madison, TB)

There was one person who talked about non-familial support:

I have a really good friend who is also in law enforcement, and he's got more similar background. He treats me like I'm a sister. He watches over me. He tells me what he thinks of a situation if I'm not doing right, what I should be doing—-or what he thinks I should be doing, career things. What kind of education I need to further my career, whether it be a detective, or a street sergeant, and let's develop you this way. Kind of a mentor. (Joyce, TB)

The following comments reflect lack of support. After being asked, "Who is your greatest supporter career-wise?" these respondents commented:

"Probably myself. I want to go back to school really bad, and I've been trying to go back for about two years. It's just that I couldn't make ends meet in the dislocated worker program, and so I had to go back to work. I just can't stop working and go back to school unless I've got some income coming from somewhere else. I would have to be my biggest supporter. I don't want to be stuck with this job when I'm forty years old. I don't want my kids to think it's OK not to go to college. It may be OK for them at that particular time but you've got to have a career. You can't be stuck in a dead-end job or you'll never get anywhere. My mom says if that's what you want to do, do it. But you've got to be able to do it before you can do it. It's just not possible right now. I'm not married right now, but me and my boyfriend bought a house together. He doesn't support me like he should because that just means I'd be without a job and he'd be stuck with all the financial burden. (Martha, NTNB)
No one that close.

I: Your biggest supporter out of anybody then?

My roommates.

I: How do they support you?

[Name of friend], being a teacher herself, she helps me a lot. I can go to her and ask her little math problems that I know I had in seventh grade but I couldn't remember. I had to take a test before I got on the [name of cable company], and that just helped refresh my memory. And I talk about going back to college and stuff, and she really supports that. (Katie, NTNB)

Some comments did not reflect a great deal of support:

[Name of husband] [is my biggest supporter]. He pushes me off the bed and says, "Hey, it's time for you to go to work."

I: How else does he support you?

Well, when I come home and I'm mad about something, he will just set still and let me unload on him. (Lauren, NTNB)

My husband [is my biggest supporter]. He comes in and says, "If you want to do something, go for it. If you don't like it, then do something else." (Jane, TNB)

Each of the respondents, excluding three non-business owners could recall a person who had the greatest influence on her career. Four respondents reported that the most influential persons had been their fathers, six respondents commented that the most influential persons on their career were their husbands. Three respondents commented that the most influential persons on their careers were their mothers, two said their female friends, and the rest reported a variety of other types of relationships.

Seven respondents could even recall a specific conversation that had influenced a career decision:

I guess probably just going through my divorce, and my dad would tell me to buy him [her husband] out. I would tell him I didn't know if I could do it and he would say, "Yes you can." [If I hadn't had his support] I would have been bought out for little or nothing. I would have been taken advantage of. But I had one of the best lawyers in town, who got me everything I wanted. I even got sole custody of my child. And my
dad was right there. (Joan, NTB)

After I became a hairdresser, the lady that I worked for--it was a partnership--a man and a woman, the woman told me that I will never have respect for this business until you're on your own, and she encouraged me in that where I was a stepping stone. That I would progress. I did progress. That is what she expected. The man was different. He thought I should be loyal and stay there forever. (Emily, TB)

The thing that got me started was in the aisle at Kroger. It was weird. It was following my divorce, and I still had both girls still in high school. I just knew. I have never been one to set around and gossip. I did play tennis a lot, and I thought, "I can't spend the rest of my life playing tennis. What do I do now?" I ran into a friend in the aisle at Kroger and asked her what she was doing these days, and she had started doing some work in reality therapy. And I told her to tell me about it, and she said it was something that I might like to do. And it was literally as simple as that. And from that day forward I started, and I never stopped. But that day in Kroger made a difference. (Betty, TB)

Yeah [I recall a specific conversation]. When my dad was, had just gotten home on one Christmas, I noticed he wasn't feeling well, and he wouldn't tell me everything that was going on. And two months later I had to take an emergency leave because he was real sick, and he had a heart attack. And while he was in the hospital, the night before he had a really bad heart attack, he said, "You need to finish your college and take care of your mother, 'cause I may not be here." I guess that was kind of a promise to my father. (Joyce, NTNB)

Probably so. It wasn't casual conversation. This woman that was in this foster home that I was in, a little Spanish lady, she just put me in my place one day. She told me if I didn't change my attitude, and she called me a smartass one day. She crushed my ego so badly that she really really caused me to change. She told me that I was completely self centered and selfish. And I was. She really made a difference. (Katie, NTNB)

But I have a friend whose probably my best friend and once she told me that, "You know you can't live on that farm forever, and you are going to have to choose something some sort of broad field to get into or you are going to end up in a factory." There's nothing wrong with a factory, but I didn't want to end up in a factory. (Marcia, TBNB)

Contact with Other Business Owners or Individuals in Same Career

All ten business owners report knowing at least one other business owner
personally. In addition, seven non-business owners report knowing at least one other person in the same occupation as theirs. No data were collected on the quality of these contacts, however.

Five NTBs, four TBs, two NTNBs, and one TNBs report belonging to occupation-related clubs or organizations. Counting all the organizations that were mentioned, business owners were members of 29 while non-business owners were members of a total of five. In addition, eight business owners and one non-business owner reported reading career-related literature on a regular basis.

Regrets

Regrets can be a good way of accessing something people value that perhaps did not become actualized in their lives for some reason. By examining the respondents' regrets we begin to see some of the roadblocks that came their way. The regrets are grouped in relation to education, marriage, and age at which they had their first child and regrets regarding hobbies that they either failed to pursue or continue to pursue.

Education

All but two respondents shared one or more regrets that they had regarding education. They ranged from regrets over not finishing high school or not pursuing a particular field of study to not getting a doctorate. One person regretted not doing better in high school, and another wished she would have challenged herself more with more advanced courses in high school. Several regretted not going straight from high school to
college. One respondent regretted not going to law school; another regretted not becoming a veterinarian. No clear patterns emerged.

**Marriage**

Nontraditional business owners had the fewest regrets about marriage compared to the other categories of respondents. Joan, an NTB, commented that she wished she had been older when she got married the first time.

Of course I would. I'd be older. But then I think if I did go back in time and change things, would I ever have my child, that I have now? That's the only thing. If I had no children, I would go back in time and change things. But since I have a child, would that change? Now that I have her, I wouldn't want to give her up. So evidently that was my pattern, the way I did things so I could have my child. That's just the way things worked out; that's the way God led me. (Joan, NTB)

Three TBs, four NTNBs, and three TNBs also had regrets about marriage. Eight respondents commented that they would have waited until later to marry. Two respondents commented that they would not have married at all.

I would probably wait until later on. I just think that you could have a chance to go to school. I guess I see now through my daughter, who waited until she was 27 before she married, and she got to--oh I wouldn't take a thing for my children--but you got to understand that at that time, you didn't wait unit late in life to get married. Because I think I could get more education and perhaps have gone into another profession--I might have stayed in this same profession--I don't know. (Joan, NTB)

Then that was the norm. Then I wouldn't have changed it. Knowing what I know now, I wouldn't have married so soon. But yet that marriage was a very important piece in who I am today, in terms of community and name recognition. So, I probably wouldn't. (Betty, TB)

Yes, I would have not of gotten married at that age--and I had thought about it-- but I wanted out of the house and be able to stay out. My parents didn't want me to move back in after I got out of the military or got out to go to college. Chris and I lived together for a short while, and I had, I just didn't listen to that little inner voice that said, "This isn't the right time to do this," and ended up with a lot more
responsible

responsibilities than I was ready for. (Joyce, NTNB)

[I] definitely [have regrets]. I was 15 at the time. I would definitely change that and make it 24 or something like that. (Karen, NTNB)

Yes, I would have waited 'til I was a little older and had a better thinking head on my shoulders. It seems like the older you get, the better you think. I see a lot of me in my mom and dad and through my kids. Like the old saying, "I sound just like my mom." I see that in raising my kids. I think we've got great kids. In fact, my son is a painter. The guys at work kid me because my son is following in mama's footsteps. (Lauren, NTNB)

Oh yes, [I have regrets]. I would have went to school. I would have taken the more advanced classes, everything that was offered at the high school, and I would have continued school, and I would not have gotten married. (Marcia, TNB)

Age at Birth of First Child

Traditional business owners had fewer regrets about the age at which they had their first child. Only one TB as opposed to three NTBs, three NTNBs, and three TNBs expressed regrets regarding this subject. Five respondents commented that they wished they had had their children earlier in life than they did.

No, [I don't have any regrets] I had her when I was 27. And maybe I would of had her a little younger, I don't know. We were six years into the marriage before we had her. And I had always heard, "Have your children when you are young. Be married for a couple of years, and then start your kids." But that didn't happen for us. So, I don't know. She is going to be eight, so it's okay. Everything seems to have worked out okay. (Joan, NTB)

Well, like I told you earlier, we waited seven years. Probably yes [I do have regrets]. Uh, I think because I was 29 when I had my first one, I was a little old. Although I don't think you should start your family when you first get married. Excuse me. 'Cause it's such an adjustment, just living with your husband. I, I wish, I guess, that we had only waited four or five years. But I still think that's a good, you know, time. (Thelma, NTB)

I wish I could have had kids earlier. I'm 38, and now the pressure is kind of on. But in this business, you need about five years to get established. It's now that fifth year,
and so now I'm getting to that point. (Amy, NTB)

No [I don't have regrets] because he is perfect. We were married ten years before we had Jason, and so I guess really we should have had him sooner when we were younger so that we would be younger as he is doing things like going to college and that kind of stuff. I would also be younger when he has kids. (Madison, TB)

I would have had them at an earlier age. I was 28. (Jane, TNB)

Five respondents wished that they had had their children later in life. Three respondents with these kinds of regrets were NTNBs and two were TNBs.

[Name of daughter] was born when I was 25, but I still think I was not quite emotionally ready for it. The first leave I received was just six weeks. I had an infant. I still needed to finish a year of college. I had his daughter living with us, and she had emotional problems. I just, I don't think I was quite an adult yet upstairs. Of course, that made me grow up fast. I was a good mom. I still am. I didn't ever put my child at risk for anything. I always had good caretakers. I stayed with them when they were ill and took them to class when I needed to. If I had to, I would take them to class. Even if I had to sit out in the hall and be counted present and run a tape player and record the whole class, I did it. (Joyce, NTNB)

Yes. Well I was young; and when I had my first child, I wasn't married. I was 20. I definitely would [have waited]. Even after I had him I was still wanting to do stuff that I couldn't do. (Martha, NTNB)

[I] Definitely [have regrets]. I was 15 at the time. I would definitely change that and make it 24 or something like that. (Karen, NTNB)

Same answer. I wasn't mature enough at the time. (Rhonda, TNB)

Yeah [I have regrets], I would have waited. 'Cause I was 18, and I didn't have a place to live. I was living with a friend and her parents. And then I moved in with my mother, and that didn't work out because of her husband. But I would have waited. That was then. Now everything worked out fine. I don't have a problem with anything now. I am very independent now. (Dora, TNB)

**Hobbies or Interests**

Nontraditional business owners had the fewest regrets regarding hobbies or
interests that they wish they had either pursued or continue to have pursued.

Three respondents in each of the remaining three categories expressed regrets regarding this subject. Two respondents voiced desires to play musical instruments, two respondents had regrets relating to sports, and two had more general regrets regarding simply not being more active in different groups in high school and not being more creative and ambitious.

Current Self-perception

It is important to examine the respondents' perceptions of how capable they are regarding several characteristics that are either necessary for business owners to have or important for healthy self-esteem in general. The first characteristic of interest was financial planning. The others include: 1) ambition, 2) leadership, 3) organization, 4) emotionality, 5) confidence, 6) intelligence, 7) attractiveness, and 8) competitiveness.

Financial Planning

Respondents were classified as perceiving themselves as being either good at financial planning or not good at financial planning. Of all the respondents only five considered themselves unequivocally good at financial planning. Of the NTBs two considered themselves good, with no help from experts, and three considered themselves not good but working on it. Of the TBs one considered herself good (without help), and four considered themselves not-good. All NTNBs said that they were not good. Two TNBs thought they were good on their own, and one said that she is getting better with
the help of a financial planner. Three other respondents of various categories reported
that they, too, seek advise in reference to financial planning.

Each respondent rated herself on a scale from one to ten, with one being the
lowest and ten being the highest on several characteristics (listed above). The five scores
in each career choice category were averaged.

Ambition

Average self-ratings declined going from one group to the next beginning with
NTBs and proceeding to TNBs. The actual self-ratings are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Average Self-ratings on Ambition by Career Choice

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Key: NTB=owners of nontraditional businesses; TB=owners of traditional businesses; NTNB=non-business owners who are in nontraditional occupations; TNB=non-business owners who are in traditional occupations

Oh I would I would rate that up there a nine or a ten. Yeah, because I've never been satisfied staying at home because I did try that when the kids were little. And I told you I was a perfectionist. I would get up, have the house clean, the laundry done. By 10:00 I was sitting there thinking, "Now what do I do for the rest of the day?" You know, that was just not me. I have to be out doing and seeing what, you know, [I] can get into. Not trouble, I don't do that. But I just always want to see what else I can do. I'm not sure how to say it; I just could never stay home. I've never been satisfied. I guess I've never been satisfied with anything I've done because I want to see what else I can do, you know. (Thelma, NTB)

Ambition now or for what I would have had? As ambition I would be a ten. As for having to settle, ambitionwise, I'd say maybe a six.
I: So it was the circumstances that held you back?
And my husband. Like I said I wanted to go out on my own and set up an office and have people work for me and get bigger and bigger and bigger, and it was just, "No, no, no." Everything I've wanted to do, it was just, "No, no, no."
(Joanne, TB)

It used to be a ten, but now it's down to about a four. Well, I'm older now. When I was younger I had the determination that I was going to hang in there and do it. And now that I've hung in there and done it, I'm just hanging in there now for retirement.
(Lauren, NTNB)

Probably a five. I'm not really ambitious. (Jane, TNB)

Leadership

No clear pattern emerged regarding self-rated leadership ability. The self-ratings are listed in Table 3:

Table 3. Average Self-ratings on Leadership by Career Choice

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Key: NTB=owners of nontraditional businesses; TB=owners of traditional businesses; NTNB=non-business owners who are in nontraditional occupations; TNB=non-business owners who are in traditional occupations

If it was something I was interested in, probably close to a ten. If I was doing something that I was put in charge of that I didn't know a lot about or wasn't interested, probably up to about a seven, and I could designate others under me to do it who do know. That's part of being a leader, though, being able to designate others. I can do that and make myself look pretty good, but turn around and giving them the credit for it, too. (Sue, NTB)
If I have to [be a leader], I'd say an eight. Because I know how things are supposed to be done. I can get them done. I just don't like to be the leader. I've got a good eye for what needs to be done, how it needs to be done, and how to accomplish the overall end aspect of it. (Joanne, TB)

I would say about an eight. I've got a lot to learn still, but I think I'm a lot farther ahead than my peers. I have continued my military career. I am still in the national guard. I've been through several different types of leadership training and it helps quite a bit here, but they don't have that leadership training here, so I sort of teach some of the things that I know here. But I still have a lot to learn. I think it is something that comes over time, with experience. The old saying that you're not born a leader but you have to teach one. (Joyce, NTNB)

[I would rate myself an] eight. I think I am good at getting things across to people. Not so much as talking but more like examples. But I wouldn't say I am any higher than that because I have a hard time when I do get vocal. I think I have a hard time getting people to listen to me because they think I'm being bossy or they think I'm trying to rule them, which I'm really just trying to get them to see things my way for a little bit. (Lisa, TNB)

**Organization**

NTBs rated themselves lowest on organization compared to the other categories of respondents. In addition, they rated themselves lower on organization than on any other characteristic. The average self-ratings are listed in Table 4.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NTB</th>
<th>TB</th>
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<th>TNB</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>average rating</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: NTB=owners of nontraditional businesses; TB=owners of traditional businesses; NTNB=non-business owners who are in nontraditional occupations; TNB=non-business owners who are in traditional occupations.
Oh, I am bad at that. Well I am bad and good. I'd say about a four. But my desk is unorganized, but I know where everything is. That is kind of an organization, I guess. I can find things. (Joan, NTB)

I have been told that I can organize a tornado, so I guess I say a ten. However, I have found that I am more interested in the concept, in developing and creating; and then the small fine tuning, I don't like that. I like creating and the big picture. (Betty, TB)

Probably a six. And I certainly think right now in my life I am not as organized as I should be. I need a computer. (Joyce, NTNB)

About an eight. I am very organized when it comes to things because if you're more organized, you save time doing things. Like in the mornings, the night before we lay the clothes out for school the next day. Get them up. They get in their clothes. I have a time that I have to be there and out of the house and at work. So organization is it. I clean the house at night when the kids go to sleep so I don't have to worry about it the next day--the more time you end up having, if you're organized. (Dora, TNB)

Emotionality

Business owners rated themselves higher in emotionality than the other respondents, with an average score of nine. The averages self-ratings are listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Average Self-Ratings on Emotionality by Career Choice

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<th>NTB</th>
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<td>rating</td>
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Key: NTB=owners of nontraditional businesses; TB=owners of traditional businesses; NTNB=non-business owners who are in nontraditional occupations; TNB=non-business owners who are in traditional occupations
[I'd rate myself] probably an eight or a nine because there is no in-between for me. I mean, there is; but if I'm happy, you know it; and if I'm not, you know it. (Rose, NTB)

I am very...I have a soft heart, I let things get to me. If somebody else is hurting, I feel it. My clients tell me their problems, and I know their hurting, and it makes me hurt. If somebody cries, I cry. Whether it is good or bad. I can go to a wedding and don't even know who they are and cry. These emotions of love. And I can watch the evening news and get angry because people—the violence in the world. Either way you go, either good or bad. (Emily, TB)

[I would rate myself] probably about a seven, and that's changed since I was younger. I was a real hothead. But I've learned to accept things a little more. I don't feel like it's embarrassing to cry in front of your team. Around here it's a no-no. It's just a shocking thing. But there are times when I really just have to excuse myself, shed a few tears, and go back to what I'm doing. (Joyce, NTNB)

Probably a nine. I am very emotional. The least little thing, just like something will tick me off, I would probably just cry. (Jane, TNB)

Confidence

Overall, NTBs rated themselves higher than the other categories regarding confidence. TBs rated themselves the lowest on confidence with an average score of six. The average self-ratings are listed in Table 6.

Table 6. Average Self-rating on Confidence by Career Choice

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<th>NTB</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>average rating</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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</table>

Key: NTB=owners of nontraditional businesses; TB=owners of traditional businesses; NTNB=non-business owners who are in nontraditional occupations; TNB=non-business owners who are in traditional occupations
[I would rate myself an] eight or nine. I guess because I know that if I really want to do it, I can do it. (Amy, NTB)

I'd say a five. I exude confidence, I intimidate people, but personally inside I'm not a very confident person as regards things outside of work. (Joanne, TB)

[I would rate myself] probably a seven. Looking back on how I used to be, I had no confidence or anything. And I just realized that I am way out there now. (Karen, NTNB)

[I would rate myself] probably a seven or an eight because it goes back to the divorce. He couldn't have taken my confidence had I not been willing to give it up. But he took it, and it goes back to that. My stomach may be in knots but you'll never know it. (Marcia, TNB)

**Intelligence**

TBs rated themselves the highest on intelligence with an average score of nine.

NTBs rated themselves second highest with an average rating of 7.5. All of the self-ratings are listed in Table 7.

Table 7. Average Self-ratings on Intelligence by Career Choice

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<th>NTB</th>
<th>TB</th>
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<th>TNB</th>
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<td>9.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: NTB=owners of nontraditional businesses; TB=owners of traditional businesses; NTNB=non-business owners who are in nontraditional occupations; TNB=non-business owners who are in traditional occupations

[I rate myself a] nine. I figure I couldn't get were I'm at without some intelligence. (Amy, NTB)
Maybe a seven. I've got a lot of what you call street smarts. Outside of education I'd give myself a ten. I think I'm so perceptive of so many things. Probably because I've been working since I was twelve or thirteen years old. I started teaching buton in high school, making my way to make money and to have something. (Joanne, TB)

Well, I don't know, I just, I don't think I'm just like super intelligent. I probably have a pretty high IQ, but I'm not so smart that I can't use my common sense. I mean, to me, the things that I do are more common-sense oriented and not intelligence-oriented. And I'm not stupid by any means. Uh, I just feel like I try very hard to push myself in the intelligence category. (Joyce, NTNB)

Probably a six. I'm not really intelligent, but I'm not dumb either. (Jane, TNB)

Attractiveness

NTBs rated themselves the highest on attractiveness with an average score of seven. The average ratings for all the categories are listed in Table 8.

Table 8. Average Self-ratings on Attractiveness by Career Choice

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<th>NTB</th>
<th>TB</th>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Key: NTB=owners of nontraditional businesses; TB=owners of traditional businesses; NTNB=non-business owners who are in nontraditional occupations; TNB=non-business owners who are in traditional occupations

[I rate myself an] eight. I hear it all the time—not, "Oh you're so pretty,"-- but physically I know that I'm in shape. I work at it and so I won it. (Amy, NTB)

I'd say a ten. I'd like to knock about 20 pounds off, but apart from that I would say a ten. (Betty, TB)

A three on looks and a ten on personality. I don't know. [Husband's name] when he
first met me, I was arguing with this other painter who had come on the job and tried to take my job over, and [name of husband] seen me, just the back of me, and [name of husband] said something like, "I hope that's a female painter because she's sure got a nice looking butt." (Lauren, NTNB)

[I would] probably [rate myself] a four. Maybe I don't feel attractive. Is that all right? (Jane, TNB)

**Competitiveness**

Nontraditional business owners rated themselves highest on competitiveness with an average score of 9.5. Traditional business owners rated themselves second highest with an average score of eight. The average self-ratings of all of the groups are listed in Table 9.

**Table 9. Average Self-ratings on Competitiveness by Career Choice.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NTB</th>
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<th>NTNB</th>
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<tr>
<td>average rating</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: NTB=owners of nontraditional businesses; TB=owners of traditional businesses; NTNB=non-business owners who are in nontraditional occupations; TNB=non-business owners who are in traditional occupations

[I would rate myself a] nine, ten (laugh)...Uh, well you know I guess it would depend on what particular arena you're talking about, as far as my competitiveness, because I don't ever see another woman as competition. But as far as me building this company, I'm determined it's going to be the best engineering and land surveying company in [name of city] or in [region of state]. (Thelma, NTB)

[I would rate myself] ten plus. I've just got to be perfectly the best. (Joanne, TB)

I would say a ten. I think growing up with my siblings I competed a lot more for
parents attention, or just attention in general a lot of times. And no matter how I had to get it, I had to fight for it, even if that meant bad behavior. So, I did growing up. But I hate to lose; I'm a bad loser. I like to make it worth my time if I'm going to play. At work I try to assess myself against my peers, "What's this person doing that I need to be doing to get that next promotion or where do I stand with my peers?" (Joyce, NTNB)

Oh, I want to win, yes ma'am, a ten because I want to be up there. It goes back to the divorce. I'm going to be the best center manager that [boss's name] has got because she hired me to do this job. (Marcia, TNB)

Table 10. Summary of Self-Ratings: Average Rating on Personal Characteristics by Occupational Choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Categories</th>
<th>NTB</th>
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<th>TNB</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
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<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotionality</td>
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<td>9.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitiveness</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: NTB=owners of nontraditional businesses; TB=owners of traditional businesses; NTNB=non-business owners who are in nontraditional occupations; TNB=non-business owners who are in traditional occupations

Summary of Findings Related to Self-Ratings

Nontraditional business owners rated themselves 1.5 to 2.5 points higher on
ambition (8.5) than did women in the other categories of occupations. These scores contrast with the lower scores in the other categories, especially those of traditional non-business owners (6.0). These findings indicate that NTNBs perceive themselves as highly ambitious. It is not clear whether they perceive themselves as ambitious prior to nontraditional business ownership or whether they began seeing themselves as ambitious after they arrived at that status. Therefore, we do not know whether ambition alone pushed them to achieve non-traditional business ownership or whether the fact that they attained a nontraditional business provided them with "proof" of their own ambition.

Another explanation of these findings could be that women gauge their perceptions of their own ambition according to how accomplished they feel they actually are. A third explanation could be that awareness of the topic of this study could have influenced some respondents to compare themselves to other categories of respondents. Business owners, comparing themselves to non-business owners, would perceive themselves as more ambitious.

Traditional business owners rated themselves 1.0-1.5 points higher on leadership than did women in the other categories of occupations. One could postulate that owners of traditional businesses (such as hair dresser or counselor) work in more isolated settings in which their role is the primary or only leadership position. Owners of nontraditional businesses (such as the owner of a machine ceramic parts company or an oral surgeon) are more likely to work as part of a team. When one considers the less authoritative style of leadership that women tend to adopt, it stands to reason that women who work in a team environment would give themselves fewer points on leadership. Leadership and authority
tend to be shared more in female-headed businesses than in male-headed businesses.

Organization was the only characteristic for which owners of nontraditional businesses rated themselves lowest (5.5). One explanation for this finding could be that they perceive nontraditional businesses as not requiring a great deal of organization in order to be successful. A factor to take into consideration is the persons to whom the respondents may be comparing themselves. Even though these ratings are not based on a comparison but rather a scale from one to ten, it is likely that the respondents "frame" the scale based on people whom they know. They may know people whom they perceive to rate a one and people whom they perceive to rate a ten on "organization," or they may be comparing themselves to a male role model. Another explanation may be that non-traditional business owners have been exposed to more highly organized people than have the other categories of respondents. This association could also influence them to rate themselves lower.

Owners of both traditional and nontraditional businesses rated themselves 1.0 to 2.0 points higher on emotionality (9.0) than did the other categories of respondents. It is interesting to note that nontraditional non-business owners rated themselves the lowest on emotionality (7.0). One explanation for these results could be that working-class women (especially those in a nontraditional career) may be more likely to relate to a male model of professionalism, which defines the expression of emotion as "bad." It seems that business owners have managed to accept the emotional components of their personalities as a neutral, if not a positive, part of what makes them who they are.

Non-traditional business owners rated themselves 1.5 to 2.5 points higher on
confidence (8.5) than did the other categories of respondents. Owners of traditional businesses rated themselves lowest on confidence (6.0). Both categories of working-class women rated themselves 7.0 on average. Working-class occupations tend to have more of a social component than does traditional business ownership. This component could help explain the non-business owners' self-ratings on this characteristic. Motivated people tend to see and verify their accomplishments. Owners of traditional businesses do not translate their social successes into confidence. This behavior represents the rationale of symbolic interactionism and Cooley's ([1922] 1964) looking-glass self.

Traditional business owners rated themselves 1.5 to 2.0 points higher on intelligence (9.0) than did the other categories of respondents. Nontraditional business owners rated themselves second-highest with an average rating of 7.5. These scores could reflect respondents' experience with authority, autonomy and the subsequent ability to feel free to "try out" their own intelligence. In addition, if one rarely has the opportunity to make decisions and attempt to succeed at a creative endeavor, one will never know whether or not those endeavors would have succeeded. Business owners are likely to have more opportunity at making and succeeding at creative endeavors and are, therefore, more likely to rate themselves higher on "intelligence."

Nontraditional business owners rated themselves 1.0 to 2.0 points higher on attractiveness than did the other categories of respondents. Both categories of non-business owners gave themselves average ratings of 5.0. Although the cultural ideal for beauty is prevalent throughout all strata of society, it seems that working-class women compare themselves more rigidly to these unrealistic standards, thereby giving themselves
lower ratings on beauty. Business owners seem to either compare themselves less to societal standards of beauty or create their own standard of beauty for which to compare themselves. In addition, one would expect a link between self-ratings on confidence and beauty considering the strong emphasis on beauty for women in American society.

However, non-business owners, as compared to business owners, rated themselves higher on confidence whereas the reverse was true with ratings on attractiveness. These results indicate that self-perceived attractiveness is not directly dependent on confidence but rather on how rigidly one compares oneself to sometimes unattainable standards of beauty. It is interesting to note, however, that the pattern of self-ratings on "attractiveness" does compare to the pattern of self-ratings on "competitiveness."

Nontraditional business owners rated themselves 2.5 to 3.5 points higher on competitiveness than did women in the other categories. The variance on this characteristic is greater than on any other characteristic. It is clear that a competitive nature is an important component of a nontraditional business. As was the case with "ambition," it is not clear whether a competitive nature is a cause of, or an effect of, ownership of a non-traditional business. Owners of traditional businesses had the second highest score on competitiveness (9.5).
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

As stated in the theory chapter, it was predicted that class and gender represent two systems of stratification both of which need to be addressed in order to understand how career decisions are formulated throughout women's lives. Social class at birth is not a predictor of whether or not women become business owners. However, an analysis of the social class of the respondents' families of origin does add insight into the internalized scheme that women inherit and which allows them to interpret the world in certain ways. The fact that most business owners were from middle-class backgrounds and that most non-business owners were from working-class backgrounds is indicative of the fact that the internalized scheme resulting from class does have some effect on the decision to become or not to become a business owner. One possibility, which was predicted, was that one's class background brings one into proximity with people of similar class backgrounds, enabling middle-class respondents to be in contact with business owners and related information more often than working-class respondents are. Another possibility is that the decision is partially based on perception of the likelihood of success as a business owner. Working-class women would have less exposure to successful business owners and, therefore, less confidence in the likelihood of succeeding themselves.
Another factor related to social class and which must be taken into consideration is the class with which women identify. Information included in the literature review explained one theory of class identification in women in which business ownership itself and/or working in a nontraditional career for women was thought to be related to identification with the middle class (Simpson et al. 1988). On the other hand, women who are paid laborers or who work in traditional occupations are thought to identify more with the working-class. Regardless of the causal order, it seems that membership in or identification with the middle class had an effect on whether or not women eventually became business owners.

Pierre Bourdieu said this internalized scheme is influenced by social class "habitus" (1973). Habitus creates deep-rooted likes and dislikes that distinguish an individual as a member of a certain social class. These similar likes and dislikes bring people of like classes together through the activities and interests that they pursue. "Field" refers to the network of actor-actor relations and actor-institution relations that are formed in this process.

Before habitus and field is used to explain the results of this study, it is first necessary to discuss the hypothesis that the gender socialization process is yet another way that habitus is influenced in girls. Theory suggests that socialization results in a double disadvantage for working-class women by promoting an "internalized scheme," which is limited by both gender and class bias, through which career decisions are filtered. Through gender socialization girls learn to be feminine and are continually relegated to feminine roles. When I considered common experiences of all the respondents, regardless
of their social class, several potentially limiting experiences and/or internalized ideas became apparent. For example, most respondents did not begin seeing themselves as leaders until adulthood. Only five respondents could recall seeing themselves as leaders at an early age. Three respondents commented that it was through experiences at work that they began seeing themselves as leaders. Because all individuals, both male and female, begin at an early age to formulate ideas about what they will do in life, the fact that leadership is not compatible with most girls' gender schema is clearly a factor in why most girls limit themselves to occupations requiring few leadership skills. This filtering process helps explain why none of the respondents had early plans to become business owners. For most, intervening circumstances of one kind or another influenced that decision.

One such intervening circumstance was exposure to critical occupational information. Many women became business owners and/or pursued their careers as a direct result of 1) discovering that an occupation/business ownership pays well, 2) discovering why certain traditional occupations/non-business ownership are not satisfying, 3) learning of a shortage of individuals in a certain field/business, or 4) learning that they were qualified for a certain position/ownership position. The fact that exposure to occupational information had such obvious effects on women's career decisions uncovers an important point—the information was either not available to them prior to the insight or they had systematically ignored it due to their internalized ideas about what are "appropriate" roles for women.

Perhaps this idea about appropriateness resulted from the types of female occupations which they were exposed to when they were growing up. Only a few
respondents recalled knowing of any women who were anything other than varieties of teachers or nurses. Still fewer knew women who did jobs that were usually done by men.

Another commonality of both business owners and non-business owners alike is the fact that they all express desires for flexibility in their schedules, in most cases to be able to attend to their families' needs. This reality also reveals interesting insight into women's career decisions; most decisions are made with their families in mind.

These patterns of experiences were the most common and most pervasive ones that were revealed in this study. When I explored socialization a little further, I found differences in experiences that may be linked to different career outcomes.

Socialization

Business owners were found to have many shared experiences that were not common to most other women. The first is that most business owners had been raised by parents with liberal gender-role attitudes. As a result, most reported that motherhood was not an assumed fact for their lives. When motherhood is not assumed girls feel less pressure to prioritize marriage and family above a career. In addition, eight out of ten business owners had parents who actively encouraged achievement values. All ten business owners learned to set long-term goals as children, and most had non-traditional hobbies. Nine out of ten business owners had parents who actively supported their hobbies as opposed to four out of ten non-business owners. Last, but not least, nine business owners, as children, had known and admired at least one person who had an
interesting career.

Habitus

Perhaps the best insight into the habitus of the respondents is their values. Values reveal likes and dislikes that are screened by the habitus. As predicted, all business owners placed a high value on business ownership. Common sense would tell us that; however, when one examines this fact in light of the concept of "habitus" a logical question which comes to mind is "Why did some women manage to retain or develop such a desire while others did not, considering what we know about the socialization process?" The common experiences that were detailed above provide the best explanation. Other values that business owners share allow us to piece together a vivid picture of their habitus.

We have already discussed the desire for flexible work schedule and how women's career plans are closely tied to their families. Business ownership provides for many women the optimum opportunity to obtain such a schedule. In addition, seven out of ten business owners report a desire for financial rewards, and more business owners than non-business owners report that the creativity and autonomy were strong motivators for them.

Habitus was also revealed in the form of regrets. Nontraditional business owners reported having the fewest regrets over marriage, which points to the fact that "cultural capital" was available to them regarding the type of person to marry and the best time to marry. Cultural capital can be described as one-half of a "code" through which cultural information is read. The other half of the code is provided by culture. Bourdieu (1973)
used cultural capital to explain how some people are less equipped to succeed in the educational system. Cultural capital as applied to this thesis affects women in many different aspects of their lives, which in turn affects their careers. It is well known that working-class women tend to marry sooner and bear children at an earlier age than middle class women. These two factors alone have adverse effects on women's careers (Gerson, 1985). Those without the half of the code are less equipped to make informed decisions about such critical crossroads in life. As it turned out, traditional business owners had the fewest regrets about the age at which they had their first child, and nontraditional business owners had the fewest regrets about the hobbies that they pursued or continued to pursue in life.

Habitus is also revealed in current self-perceptions of respondents. Nontraditional business owners rated themselves highest on ambition (8.5), confidence (8.5), attractiveness (7.0), and competitiveness (9.5). They tied with traditional business owners on emotionality (9.0). The fact that they rated themselves highest on these characteristics is indicative that they have higher self-confidence, overall, than do the other categories of respondents.

Traditional business owners (TBs) rated themselves highest on the last three characteristics: leadership (8.0), organization (7.4), and intelligence (9.0). It seems that traditional business owners recognized their competency but they did not seem to have the same level of self-confidence as did the nontraditional business owners (NTBs).

Non-business owners rated themselves lower on every single characteristic as compared to business owners. This fact indicates that they have lower self-confidence,
Hodges (1963) noted that working-class roles at work are limited in comparison to middle-class roles. In this study, the working-class respondents had indeed experienced fewer opportunities regarding autonomy and creativity on the job. This limited experience is reflected in how they rated themselves on confidence (7.0 versus 8.5 for nontraditional business owners) and the ability to be creative and autonomous at work (fewer working-class respondents expressed the ability or strong desires to be creative and autonomous on the job). Tastes for everything ranging from sports to occupations are associated with social class. Not only are working class women in this study at a disadvantage because of the fact that they lack confidence and value the aforementioned characteristics less but also, as a result of these facts, they have less occupational contacts. More business owners than non-business owners reported that occupational contacts helped them get started in their businesses/occupations. At least three business owners also had semi-established businesses with a relative or went into business with someone who had experience in that area. They had more contacts with other business owners than did non-business owners, and they reported receiving more emotional support from family members and other sources than did non-business owners.
A woman's decision to become a business owner or to obtain a nontraditional career can not be predicted with certainty by any theory. Not all behavior can be explained in terms of socialization or habitus and field. Individuals are always going to interpret their situations in unique ways as a function of their personalities and the circumstances which they are in. If one interprets women's career decisions solely on the basis of childhood socialization, one would not account for the unique and individual process of assigning meaning to every interaction. For example, some business owners reported that their ambition to achieve was derived from their desire to "rise above" the poverty and limitations of their childhood experiences. Other respondents who experienced childhood in poverty found themselves in similar positions in adulthood.

However, it appears that women who identify with the working class as reflected by non-business ownership and women who are in traditional occupations are cumulatively disadvantaged as regards their ability to make a completely free choice regarding a career. During childhood they are likely to experience more messages that cause them to assume that motherhood must take priority over career plans; they are less likely to experience nontraditional hobbies or parental support regarding long-term goals; during childhood, they have less exposure to women in nontraditional careers or who are business owners; during childhood they have less assistance planning a career and are likely to have less support of career goals in adulthood; during childhood, their parents provide fewer achievement-oriented activities and are less likely to interact with them on a
regular basis; in adulthood they are likely to experience less autonomy, flexibility, and creativity on the job; they are likely to feel less confident about financial planning and their own leadership ability; and they are likely to have lower self-confidence over all.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should focus more narrowly on experiences of women who choose a nontraditional career and nontraditional business ownership. Women who choose non-traditional careers could be compared to nontraditional business owners in terms of their experiences in both childhood and adulthood. With a more intensive study one could expose more detailed information about how such women manage to break through sex segregation barriers and the glass ceiling.

An additional suggestion for future research could be a comparison study of men in traditional working class professions and male business owners. Experiences in childhood and adulthood could be examined for possible influences on their career. Social class of their families of origin as well as the social class with which they primarily identify could be analyzed for possible influences on their career decisions. Male gender socialization and exposure to male career networks could be researched for possible clues as to how men arrive at traditional jobs for men.
APPENDIX A

BUSINESS OWNERS--NONTRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

Rose

Rose is the owner of a commercial real estate appraisal business. She is white, in her early thirties, and married (second marriage) to a business development director. She also has a three year old daughter. She has had seven years of college but no degree. She was raised in an upper-middle class family with other female, business owners in the family. Her mother has two master's degrees and had two undergraduate degrees in math and science. Her father was a college graduate with a degree in agri-business. Her father was a real-estate broker, farmer, developer, and county judge executive. Her childhood hobbies were golf, showing cattle, and playing football with her brother and his friends. Her parents were very interactive and shared a lot of information with her about their jobs and possible careers for her.

Joan

Joan is the owner of a ceramic machine-parts company. She is white, in her mid thirties, and divorced and has a seven-year-old daughter. She was the oldest of three children and has a younger brother and a younger sister. She began college but dropped out to get married. Both of her parents had two-year degrees. Joan's family of origin was working class. Her father built houses, sold cars, and rented apartments for a living. Her mother helped her father by cleaning apartments and doing the books. Her childhood hobby was softball.

Thelma

Thelma is the owner of a land-survey business. She is white, in her mid forties, married, and the mother of a twenty-year-old son and a seventeen-year-old daughter. Her husband is employed by her as a land surveyor. She has a master's degree in education. She was raised in a low-income, working-class family. Both of Thelma's parents had a high school education or less. Her father was a career army person who died when she was eight years old. Her mother baby-sat to sustain the family. Thelma had one older sister. Her hobby as a child was reading. Thelma met her husband while she was in college, and he has been very supportive of her throughout her life.

Sue

Sue is the owner of a tobacco specialty shop. She is in white, in her mid forties, and single and has no children. She has two master's degrees, one in education and one in...
gerontology. Her mother was a graduate of high school and her father was a college
graduate with a degree in engineering. Sue was raised in an upper-middle-class family.
Her mother owned a nursery school for a short time but was primarily a housewife. Her
father was a lighting engineer and business owner. Her hobbies as a child included golf,
competitive international softball, mechanics, and collecting knives, koala bears, and golf
memorabilia.

Amy
Amy is the owner of an oral surgery clinic. She is white, in her late thirties, and
married with no children. Her husband is the business manager for her clinic. She was
raised in a middle-class family. Her mother obtained a master's degree and a doctorate in
nursing and then a master's degree in psychology. Her mother works as a sex therapist.
Her father has a bachelor's degree and worked as a pharmaceutical sales representative.
Her childhood hobbies included sports and piano.

BUSINESS OWNERS--TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

Rachel
Rachel is the owner of an interior decorating business. She is married
(second marriage) to a man who is employed by the Department of Education for the
state. She is white, has two children (eight and ten), and has a degree in interior
decorating. Rachel was raised in a middle-class family; both parents were college
educated. Her father managed a small rural electric company; her mother operated an
interior decorating business out of the home. Rachel was the youngest of three children
and has one brother and one sister. Her interests as a child were sewing, water sports, and
helping her mom with the business.

Joanne
Joanne is the owner of a free-lance, court-reporting business. She is married
(second marriage) to a retired pharmacist. She is white and has two grown children, a son
and a daughter. Joanne has a nine-month business degree. She was born second to the
youngest in a family of six children. Joanne grew up in a working-class family; her mother
was a housewife. Her main hobby as a child was sewing.

Emily
Emily is a self-employed hair dresser. She is white, in her late twenties, and
married with no children. She was the only child in a working-class family. She was
raised by her grandparents. Her grandfather was a game warden with a high school
degree. Her grandmother was a waitress from time to time and had less than a high school
diploma. Emily's hobbies as a child were watching sports on TV and playing the piano.

Betty
Betty is a self-employed marriage and family counselor. She is white, in her late
forties, and widowed and has two grown daughters. Betty grew up as a single child in an upper-middle-class family. Her parents were both high school graduates, active in the community, and owners of a funeral home. Betty's interests as a child were music and tennis.

Madison

Madison is an owner of a floral shop. She is white, in her mid-forties, and married to a school teacher. She was the second oldest of five children from a middle-class family. She has a bachelor's degree in art and worked for a short while in real-estate before going into business with her mother. Her father was a salesman for a printing company. She is the mother of one seventeen-year-old son. Her hobbies as a child included sports, camping, piano, and art.

NON-BUSINESS OWNERS--Nontraditional OCCUPATIONS

Joyce

Joyce is a police officer and a member of the national guard. She is white, in her early thirties, divorced, and the mother of two children. She was raised in a middle-class home with three older brothers. Her mother has a bachelor's degree and is certified as a medical technologist. Her father has a bachelor's degree and a juris doctorate. Before his recent death he was employed as a labor arbitrations lawyer. Joyce's hobbies as a child included swimming, softball, sledding, soccer, track, and reading.

Martha

Martha is a cable dispatcher. She is in her early thirties and divorced and is currently living with her boyfriend. She is the mother of two children. Her family of origin was working class, and she was the youngest of four children. Her mother had less than a high school education and worked in a sewing factory. Her stepfather was a truck driver. Her hobby as a child was softball.

Karen

Karen is a heavy equipment operator. She is white, in her mid-thirties, divorced, and the mother of one twenty-year-old son. She was raised in a working-class family and was the middle child of five. Her mom had a tenth-grade education and was employed in a sewing factory. Her father had a sixth-grade education and was employed in civil service. She was married at 15 and doesn't recall having any hobbies as a child.

Lauren

Lauren is an industrial painter who is in her mid-forties. She is white, married to a folk-artist (second marriage), and has two grown children from a previous marriage. Her mother is a nurse, her father was a city employee, and both were college educated. Lauren was the second-oldest child of six. Her hobbies as a child were roller skating and bicycling.
Katie

Katie is a cable T.V. installer. She is in her late 20s, white, and single. She was the adopted daughter of a working-class couple. She has one adopted sister. Her parents had high-school educations. Her mother was a housewife; her father was an iron worker before he became disabled.

NON-BUSINESS OWNERS-TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

Jane

Jane is a child-care assistant. She is African American, in her early forties and separated from her husband, and she has two sons, seven and eleven. Her husband is a mortician. She was raised in a working-class home. Her mother obtained a degree in nursing; and she doesn't know any information about her father, who passed away when she was ten. She was the fourth child of ten. Her hobbies as a child included cooking, sewing, bowling, softball, and concerts.

Marcia

Marcia is a senior-center director. She is white, and in her mid-forties, she has two grown children, a son and a daughter. She has three years of college credits but no degree. She is married (second marriage) to a wholesale hardware salesman. She was raised in a working-class family of five; she was born second to the youngest. Her mother was a housewife and a high school graduate; her father was a coal miner with less than a grade school education. She rode horses as a child and played softball.

Lisa

Lisa is a nineteen year old waitress. She is white and single, and she had no children. She was born into a middle-class family, the youngest of three girls. Her mother has a high school diploma; her father has a law degree. Her mother worked mainly as a housewife. Her father was a lawyer. Her hobbies growing up were reading and playing rugby.

Rhonda

Rhonda is a court reporter. She is white, divorced, and the mother of one grown son. She studied two years beyond high school to become a certified court reporter. She grew up the only child of a middle-class family. Her mother had two years of college, her father a master's degree. Her mother was the director of the welfare department; her father was the superintendent of schools. Her hobby as a child was piano.

Dora

Dora is a teacher's assistant for a preschool program. She is white, and single,
and she has three sons (ages nine, seven, and five). She obtained a GED. She was raised in a working-class home, the youngest of three, with two older brothers. Her mother has a tenth-grade education; her father was a high-school graduate. Her mother managed a Jr. Food Store; her father was a police officer. Her hobbies as a child were cooking, writing, and working in the garden.
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Questions marked with (f) are taken from:


I. How do differences in gender-socialization experiences affect career choices?

Social Class of Parents
1. How much education did your parents have?
2. What are/were your parents' occupations?

Other
3. Was your mother employed outside the home when you were growing up?
4. How did you feel about her working? Why?
5. How did your father feel about her working? Why?
6. Have you ever wanted to move out of town for any reason? What were your significant others' reactions?
7. When you were growing up, what impressions did you detect from your parents or significant others as regards their feelings about your eventual motherhood?
8. What did your parents or significant others indicate are good traits that an ideal husband should have?
9. What advise did your parents or significant others give you about careers/occupations? How did you react to it?
10. Were you a Girl Scout, a 4-H member, or a Girls' Club member? Why?
11. Did this group ever deal with career choices?
12. Did you interact much with your mother? What kinds of things did you do together?
13. Did you interact very much with your father? What kinds of things did you do together?
14. What kinds of important things did your mother/father do that helped you mature?
15. Did your father ever talk about his job? What kinds of things did he say?
16. Did your mother ever talk about her job? What kinds of things did she say?
17. Did your father ever talk about his boss? What kinds of things did he say?
18. Did your mother ever talk about her boss? What kinds of things did she say?
19. Did your parents ever talk about job problems? What kinds of things did they say?
20. Did your parents ever talk about job rewards? What kinds of things did they say?
21. Did your parents ever talk about job challenges? What kinds of things did they say?

22. When you were growing up, did the children in your family participate in big family decisions such as large purchases or vacations plans?
23. Can you see how your family background might have impaired your career development? In what ways?
24. Can you see how your family background may have advanced your career development? In what ways?

*Gender Socialization—Schools*
25. Did any teachers in elementary or secondary school talk about jobs or careers to you? If yes, what did they tell you? How did you react?
26. In high school did you take home economics, typing, advanced math, or college preparatory classes?
27. When you were a child, did you prefer to be a leader/officer or a follower in a group?

*Gender Socialization—Peers*
28. Did any of your close friends from high school go on to college?
29. What are the current occupations of your three closest friends?

*Gender Socialization—Siblings*
30. What are the current occupations of your siblings?
31. Did you have any older siblings? Did you interact much with them? What kinds of things did you do with them?
32. Do you ever remember them scolding you for anything? What?

*a. What are the differences in childhood goals?*
33. As a youngster, what was the longest term goal that you set for yourself? Did your parents or significant others (close relatives or best friends) support you in setting and obtaining this goal?

*b. What are the differences in childhood hobbies?*
34. Did you ever have any hobbies that your parents or significant others encouraged you to maintain?
35. Did you ever have any hobbies that your parents or significant others discouraged you from maintaining? Why?
36. Do you think your hobbies as a child had any effect on your career choice?

*c. What are the differences in current self-perception?*
37. On a scale from one to ten how would you rate yourself as regards
attractiveness?
38. On a scale from one to ten how would you rate yourself as regards intelligence?
39. On a scale from one to ten how would you rate yourself as regards confidence?
40. On a scale from one to ten how would you rate yourself as regards ambition?
41. How emotional are you on a scale from 1 to 10?
42. On a scale from one to ten how would you rate yourself as regards competitiveness?
43. On a scale from one to ten how would you rate yourself as regards organization?
44. On a scale from one to ten how would you rate yourself as regards leadership ability?

d. What are the differences in beliefs/messages about occupational stereotypes?
45. While you were growing up, did you know any women who had high-paying jobs? How did you feel about them?
46. When you were a child, what did you think of women who did jobs that were usually done by men?
47. If you could go back in time, would you do anything differently as regards your education? Why?
48. If you could go back in time, would you do anything differently as regards the age at which you were married? Why?
49. If you could go back in time, would you do anything differently as regards the age at which you had your first child? Why?
50. If you could go back in time, would you do anything differently as regards hobbies/interests that you would pursue or continue to pursue? Why?

II. How do different experiences in adulthood affect career choices in working-class and middle-class women?

Current Social Class of Respondents
51. What is your current occupation?
52. What is your husband's or significant other's current occupation?
53. What occupations have you worked in over the last ten years? How did you feel about them? Why?
54. What occupations did your husband work in over the last ten years? How did he feel about them? Why?

Other
55. How did you decide to ________________?
56. If you could have it either way, would you wish to have some kind of paying job or to be self-employed? Why?
57. What do you like best about your job? Why?
58. What do you like least about your job? Why?
59. How important is flexibility in a work schedule for you? Why?
60. How important is making a lot of money to you?
61. How did you get started in this business/occupation?
62. When did you first think, I want to be a ________?
63. What gave you the idea?
64. Do you know any other people who own businesses? Do you have very many friends in this occupation?
65. Who is your biggest supporter (career-wise)?
66. How does he/she support you?
67. Do you consider yourself a leader? Why? When did you begin seeing yourself as a leader?
68. What made you feel capable of doing this?
69. Why do you think more women aren't doing this?

a. What are the differences in experiences with supervisors/ supervision?
70. How often do you feel that your work puts too many demands on you? Why?
71. Before you owned your own business, did you like your most recent supervisor? Why?
72. How important to you is being your own boss? Why?
73. Do you like your current boss? Why or why not?

b. What are the differences regarding freedom to be creative on the job?
74. Do you have the freedom to be creative at work? How?
75. Do you enjoy being creative at work?

c. What are the differences in experience with financial planning and making money?
76. How well do you expect your business to do? Why?
77. How far do you expect to advance in this occupation? Why?
78. Do you feel that you are good at investing money and financial planning?

d. What are the differences in experiences involving personal or vicarious autonomy?
79. Do you know very many women who own their own business? Do you know very many other women in this occupation? How do you feel about them? Are they good at what they do?
80. What percentage of on-the-job decisions are you free to make alone?

e. What are the differences in exposure to occupational information and networks?
81. What newspapers or magazines or books, if any, do you read regularly?
82. Are you associated with any business, civic, or social, or church organizations? How? Do you see any of the people associated with these organizations on a regular basis? Do you ever talk about anything work related? (f)
83. Did you ever have networking opportunities (interviews, invitations to luncheons, invitations to community meetings) that you passed up? Why?
84. Was there anyone outside of your family whose career you really admired? Did you ever
talk to that person about how they got their job? (f)

88. Are there any other relatives, co-workers, neighbors, members of some organization, friends, acquaintances, or other people whom you see or talk to on a regular basis?

89. Do you ever talk with them about your business/occupation? (f)

90. Was there any conversation that you remember having in adulthood that really influenced a career decision? (f)

91. Has there ever been anyone in your life who really inspired you to try what you do for a living? Why did they inspire you? How did they inspire you? (f)

f. What are the differences in terms of support systems (emotional, financial, occupational resources)?

92. If you needed to get a large sum of money together, what would you do—would you ask someone to lend it to you; go to the bank, savings and loan, or credit union, or do something else? (f)

93. Was there anyone who really supported you in doing what you do? (f)

94. When you are concerned about an occupational matter, how often do you turn to somebody? (f)

95. When you are concerned about an emotional matter, how often do you turn to somebody? (f)

96. Often people rely on the judgment of someone they know in making important decisions about their lives—for example, decisions about their family or their work. Is there anyone whose opinion you consider seriously in making important decisions? (f)

97. Is there anyone whom you would feel comfortable borrowing money from? (f)

98. Do you ever socialize with people whom have occupations similar as yours? (f)

99. Do you ever socialize with people whom have occupations different from yours?

100. Thinking about people whom you know, do you sometimes wish that you knew more people whom you could socialize with? (f)

101. Thinking about people whom you know, do you sometimes wish that you knew more people whom you could turn to for advise? (f)
APPENDIX C

RESPONDENT CONSENT FORM

The study for which you have agreed to participate examines the differences which occurred in childhood socialization that affect the kind of occupation or profession a woman selects as an adult. Gender-role socialization through family, friends, and school will be examined. Please read and sign the consent form below if you wish for the information that you share(d) to be used in the study.

I understand the purpose of this research is to contribute to the body of knowledge about gender-role socialization and its effect on career decisions of working women. I also understand that the research procedures involve interviews of one of two hours.

There are no potential risks to the participants of this study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that all information is confidential, and my identity (or the identity of anyone that I discuss) will remain confidential. I am free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation at any time. Any questions that I may have about the project will be answered by the researcher named below.

Western Kentucky University and the investigators named below have responsibility for ensuring that participants in research projects conducted under institutional auspices are safeguarded from injury or harm resulting from such participation. If appropriate, the person named below may be contacted for remedy or assistance for any possible consequences from such activities.

On the basis of the above statements, I agree to participate in this project.

Participant's Signature ________________________________ Researcher's Signature ________________________________
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