

MARRIED WOMEN STUDENTS AT
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ABSTRACT

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By

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Although some progress has been made toward equalizing educational opportunities for men and women, it is quite clear that women at this point in time receive fewer of the standard rewards of academia than do men. Married women appear to be even less likely than women in general to be getting the university education they want, need and/or are capable of. The purpose of this study was to examine the educational achievements and aspirations of married women at MSU.

One hundred and fifty women were interviewed during Spring quarter of 1970: 1/3 were currently students but their husbands were not, 1/3 were currently students and their husbands were also, and 1/3 were not currently students but their husbands were. Data was collected from each woman on herself and her husband.

Differences were found both between and within the three groups with respect to the following variables: age, number and ages of children, employment, income, parents' education, husbands' reactions to wife's attending school, and opinions on the worth of scholarships. On a number of other variables the differences tended consistently in the direction of women receiving fewer of the standard rewards of

of academia--using the following variables as indicators of those rewards: degree attainment, amount of certainty regarding future degree plans, number and duration of educational interruptions, GPA, credit load, major field, full or part time status, and type of job held while spouse and/or self is in school. Of some note is the finding that male students whose wives are also students obtain much fewer of the standard rewards than do male students whose wives are not in school, and, on some dimensions, even fewer than the female students in the sample.

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By

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INTRODUCTION

The fifties and sixties have seen an increasing emphasis on equal rights for minorities, with educational equality receiving much of the attention. Early efforts at defining and solving the inequality were focused on blacks and the poor, and, more recently, on Chicanos. Lagging far behind was any concerted effort to provide equal opportunity for another minority groups: women. The reasons for this are many and varied--not the least of which is the extreme difficulty of pinpointing and "proving" discrimination against women in education. Although the volume of protest and study has recently increased, the response of educational institutions has been less than adequate.

For various reasons women, even in 1969, get far less university education than do men. One reason why it is difficult to pinpoint discrimination against women in academia, is the circularity of the problem. For example, can graduate schools be blamed for admitting fewer women than men if (1) fewer women than men apply (i.e. the women self-select themselves out), and (2) the schools have reason to believe that women are less likely than men to "use" their education? Or, on the other hand, can women be blamed for low aspirations (i.e. for self-selecting themselves out) if they know that fewer members of their own sex get into graduate school and that job opportunities in academia are much better for men than for women?

The assignment of responsibility for the differential educational attainments of the sexes is further complicated by the fact that women

(as opposed to members of other minority groups) must live in close day-to-day contact with the majority group: i.e. women are married to men. This contributes to the widespread feeling that each woman's education (or, more correctly, her lack of it) is her own personal trouble rather than a collectively experienced structural problem.

The present study is an attempt to specify at least some of the dimensions of this problem, using married women students in the university as a special case of the larger issue. It is an attempt to document some of the factors, both objective and subjective, which are correlated with university attendance among married women. Underlying this study is the assumption that they are (as a group) getting fewer of the more highly valued rewards of the prevailing value system in a culture which puts strong emphasis on education. The intent of this study is not to define any causality but to describe a population and suggest some relationships which obtain at this point in time. The context in which this is presented is that women are a minority group, they occupy marginal status in this society, that the assumption of equal ability can be taken as given and need no longer be proven, and that the life chances of each individual woman are not her personal troubles but rather "public issues of social structure." (Mills, 1967:8)

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The range of literature relevant to this study is broad; encompassing general treatises on the status of women, to examinations of the place of women in academia, to more specific studies concerning married women students. All deal with the same general issues of cultural expectations and institutionalized barriers which limit the life-chances of women. If one thing stands out in an evaluation of the literature on women it is the overemphasis placed on studying characteristics of women and the dearth of studies examining the ability and/or willingness of the system to respond. Even the present study unfortunately tends in the former direction.

The following review will be divided into three categories: (A) general writings on women, (B) examinations of the place of women in the academic community, and, (C) more specific studies on the education of married women.

Part A

There is a wealth of literature from Mary Molstencraft (1967) to Shulamith Firestone (1971), suggesting that the fact of being born female results in getting fewer of this culture's more highly valued rewards. Since much of this literature has recently gained wide circulation, there is no need to review it extensively here. However, the

work of Bird (1969), Dixon, (n.d.) Firastone (1971), Hacker (1951), Hughes (1949), and Myrdal (1944) warrants brief mention.

These works include (1) those concerned with denying the biological inferiority of women, and, (2) the more theoretical works on women as a minority group. The former involves "a denial of biological inferiority, indeed of biological determination of social behavior in women." (Dixon, no date:1). This parallels a similar body of literature concerning blacks. It attacks assumptions of inferior intellectual ability as well as assumptions of "the proper place" of women--as for instance the assumption that women are persons to whom a certain amount of drudgery is biologically appropriate. Writings in this category also seek to expose some of the cultural expectations based on the foregoing assumptions which act as self-fulfilling prophecies "proving" their truth.

But, as Carol Andreas points out:

The New Feminism takes the equality of the sexes for granted and concentrates on uncovering and publicizing the systematic ways in which the society prevents women from realizing their full potential . . . The New Feminist does not see it as her task to prove that her educational endowments are not inferior to those of men. (Andreas, 1968:8)

Much of the literature in this second category involves "more theoretical treatments of women as somehow occupying marginal status, representing a minority group, or showing strong parallels to the position of blacks in the United States." (Dixon, no date:1). It accounts for the observed differences between the sexes in terms of socialization in a context of differential cultural expectations and institutional barriers.

Most notable among the early works is Helen Hacker's article, "Women as a Minority Group" (1951), which draws on Gunnar Myrdal's parallel between women and blacks (Myrdal, 1944) and the marginality literature (c.f. Hughes, 1949). On the basis of her definition, she asserts that women are a minority group:

A minority group is any group of people who because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. (Hacker, 1951:60).

However, although women clearly meet the first criterion, it may be claimed that they do not meet the second. For example it may be claimed that women do not view themselves as objects of collective discrimination or, if they do, that they feel such discrimination is justified. Since "they feel no minority group consciousness. . ." (Hacker, 1951:61), they cannot properly be said to belong in a minority group. However, ". . . the term 'minority group status' may be substituted. This term is used

¹"It seems to me no accident that sociology did develop an underground concerning the status of women, even while dominated by such patent celebration of the 'status quo as natural law' as we find in Parson's. The reason is not necessarily traced to the presence of women, but rather upon the nature of psychological assumptions in sociology--originally these assumptions were subsumed under the axiomatic statement of people as 'Blank tablets' who were then shaped and formed by culture and society into fully socialized adults. While this early assumption has been modified, sociology nonetheless emphasized (largely from George Mead) the processes of socialization, the development of a social self through role-taking, in which social behavior, and indeed identity, springs from interaction and from learning from significant others one's appropriate roles in life. Once the biological determination of feminine behavior is rejected, there exists a theoretical tradition most compatible with the notion of equality between the sexes, since it would explain inequality between the sexes as a result of social learning, and not of immutable biological differences. The tradition is also radical, because it explains by the mechanism of social learning--the problem does not lie with women, but with the social order that condemns women to an inferior status. It is the social order, not women, which must be changed." (Dixon, n.d.:2) (On this last point, I disagree with Dixon. While it is true that changes must be made in the social order it is also true that changes must be made in people's heads--men's as well as women's.)

to categorize persons who are denied rights to which they are entitled according to the value system of the observer." (Hacker, 1951: 61). Here she points out that blacks for many years by and large accepted the doctrine of their own inferiority and lived within the system. "An observer who is a firm adherent of democratic ideology, will often consider persons to occupy a minority group status who are well accommodated to their subordinate roles." (Hacker, 1951:61). Her paper:

is exploratory in suggesting the enhanced possibilities of fruitful analysis, if women are included in the minority group corpus, particularly with reference to such concepts and techniques as group belongingness, socialization of the minority group child, cultural differences, social distance tests,² conflict between class and cast status, race relations and marginality. (Hacker, 1951:69)

The minority group status of women established, other [such as Caroline Bird (1969) and Marlene Dixon (n.d.)] have attempted to expose some of the systematic ways in which women are kept down. In general, both the tactics and the effects are similar to those used for many years to keep blacks in their place. In addition, "women are disqualified from many top jobs because they don't have wives." (Bird, 1969:59). Marlene Dixon points out that "the hypocritical insistence that things are really equal is the cruelest form of discrimination, for it leads the individual to blame himself or herself for personal failure when in fact the cards are stacked against them." (Dixon, n.d.:10).

²She also points to an interesting difference between women and other minorities: "Since inequalities of status are preserved in marriage, a dominant group member may be willing to marry a member of a group which, in general, he would not wish admitted to his club." (Hacker, 1951:64).

Finally many writers make suggestions for the future, but warn that change is not easy:

Vanguard couples have taken turns working and going to school, but all pioneering requires thought and planning which tradition and habit settle with less effort. (Bird, 1969:197)

Even seemingly successful adaptations are not without pain for those involved, for it is those minority group members ". . . whose values and behavior most approximate those of the dominant majority who experience the most severe personal crisis." (Hacker, 1951:68)

Part B

In addition to the general treatises on women, there have appeared more recently a number of books and articles dealing specifically with discrimination against women in academia. Most deal with the mechanisms and implications of institutionalized barriers and personal discrimination. They differ, however, in two ways: (1) in which areas of concern they treat, and, (2) in their varying degrees of radicalism--some being frankly adjustive, others calling for more radical change.

The former category, those works suggesting ways for women to adjust to "their" problem, I will not review here. However, the work of Eli Ginzberg deserves some mention. Basically he views the issue of women's education as one of increasingly broader options for women--broader than before, and broader than those open to men:

Beyond their problems, or, as some writers put it, their conflicts, these women face an even larger number of significant options. Ginzberg, 1966:5)

. . . this is an exploratory study aimed at 'uncovering' the process of decision making followed by a group of educated women who confronted a wide range of opportunities and some constraints. (Ginzberg, 1966:16)[underlining mine.] Society does not care so much whether he marries--although most men do--but it expects him

to hold down a job. . . . On the other hand women are free of this requirement. Their options are much broader. There is considerably more tolerance in our society for women who remain single than for men who remain idle. (Ginzberg, 1966:16)

While he may be correct that women can more easily choose not to work than can men, his line of reasoning ignores several things. First it ignores the taken-for-granted subtle and not so subtle institutionalized barriers and effects of socialization that make it difficult for women to take advantage of the "much broader" options which he outlines. In fact an "option" is not even an option if a person cannot take advantage of it. Secondly, he seems to fall into the fallacy of suggesting that since some women have made it others can easily make it too. Granted, his books did lay some of the ground work for studying educational chances of women and many of his points are well taken, but he leaves fundamentally unexamined some of the systematic ways women are denied equal access to education.

The second category of studies attack the problem from many different angles, but all point to the same conclusion: it is no accident that women get fewer of the standard rewards of the educational system. A general view of the problem is presented by Elizabeth Cless:

Higher education in the U.S. was designed exclusively for the white, upper-or-middle-class male. Its procedures, its rigid uninterrupted timetable, and its cost all but prohibit its use by women despite well-meaning. . . 20th century attempts. (Cless, 1971:310)

This viewpoint is shared by Bettina Huber, who extends it to women's chances as faculty members:

Rather, it seems that there are a number of aspects of the academic experience which stack the deck against women in the promotions game. The structure of academia has been designed through time to routinely accomodate the work needs of the male professional. (Huber and Patterson, 1970:3). [Furthermore]. . . in conjunction with university demands (which favor men not women) women are also burdened with greater responsibility by the larger society--especially if they are married. (Huber and Patterson, 1970: 37)

Anne Davis points out that "married career women have a whole set of disadvantages for which the university makes no provision." (Davis, 1969: 96) (Such as childbearing & rearing, responsibility for housework, the expectation that she will help her husband with his work, etc.). In addition to the objective disadvantages, women have been socialized to feel they must not inconvenience anyone else in the process of getting a degree or a job. Some suggest that:

It is wrong to deny individuals born female the right to inconvenience their families to pursue art, science, power, money, or even self-expression, in the way that men in the pursuit of these goals inconvenience their families as a matter of course. (Bird, 1969:199)

Lack of career performance or high educational attainment on the part of women is often cited as a reason for not hiring women or for not admitting them to degree programs, which in turn is a reason why women don't perform or attain. Jesse Bernard cites this circular causal pattern as contributing to the difficulty in pinpointing discrimination: "in view of these facts, often given as reasons for differential treatment of women, it is difficult to discern real areas of prejudice." (Davis, 1969:97)

Others have documented specific and more subtle ways that academia systematically disadvantages women. According to Reisman, women "remain outside the informal communications systems that is deemed such an essential in getting important job positions." (Davis, 1969:96). Women are also systematically excluded from the protégé system, as Martha White has outlined (1970:413-416). She suggests three main reasons for this. First, since women are not expected to make much of themselves intellectually, and since a scholars prestige is in some measure gauged by the

quality of his graduate students (protégés), then having a woman can be risky for a professor since there may be no pay off. Secondly, sexual entanglements (real or fantasied) can complicate and/or end the relationship between a professor and his protégé. Thirdly, even assuming that the second eventuality does not come about, the professor's wife or the protege's husband may think it has or will and may exert pressure to end the relationship. In summary, she suggests that:"

commitment and creativity in science are not merely a function of an individual's competence or excellence, but are a product of the social environment as well. Acceptance and recognition from significant other people (one's peers and other professionals), and opportunities for stimulating and challenging interaction are essential for developing a strong occupational or professional identity, and for creating the inner sense of role competence which can lead to greater commitment and productivity in professional work. Unfortunately women, especially those who have experienced interrupted or discontinuous careers, find such opportunities and acceptance difficult to obtain. (White, 1970:416).

Referring to future employment opportunities,³ Huber documents her charge of "systematic, albeit subtle, discrimination" facing women in academia with the following observations. First, there is a "systematic pattern of excluding women from tenure" (Huber, 1970:35). Married women get tenure much later than unmarried women, who in turn get it later than men. (Huber, 1970:25). Secondly, this results at least in part from the following: (a) women are less likely than men to have closely related primary and secondary specialities; (b) women are much less likely than men to teach a course related to their speciality [this type of teaching experience would make it harder for the female academic to establish herself as an authority in a specific field" (Huber, 1970:31)]; and (c) women are less likely than men to be teaching graduate students.

³The discussion of future employment opportunities is included here since the issue of women's education is inextricable from it.

For male sociologists, then, teaching experience and speciality area interact in a positive way, thereby enhancing the chances of academic success. For women, in contrast, this salutary relationship does not exist. In fact. . . a number of aspects. . . create obstacles to her success (Huber, 1970: 34-5).

Again, citing some broader evidence of sex bias in higher education, Elizabeth Cless points out that:

today more than 75% (some estimates are as high as 95%) of the intellectually gifted youngsters who do not enter college are girls. Approximately 50% of all women who enter college drop out before receiving their first degrees. All the sources recently examined by Jencks and Riesman for THE ACADEMIC REVOLUTION suggest that women with BA;s are less than half as likely as men to earn a graduate degree, despite the fact that, on the average, they have better undergraduate records than men. (Cless, 1971: 312)

In an extreme case cited by WEAL (n.d.), "21,000 women were turned down for college entrance in the state of Virginia; during the same period of time NOT ONE application of a male student was rejected." At the graduate level the same pattern exists:

According to a 1968 SPECIAL REPORT ON WOMEN AND GRADUATE STUDY, 72% of all women receiving the bachelors degree in 1961 planned to attend graduate school and 76% of them had high academic records. By 1964, 42% had enrolled for graduate study but only 2/5 of those were full-time students. (Cless, 1971:312)

On another level is the issue of what Universities have done to correct sex biases. Daniel Zwerdling in The New Republic (1971: 11-13) reported that the threat of blocked funds was necessary to force the University of Michigan to institute reform to correct sex bias. The same article also pointed to ways that universities can hide meaningful statistics.

In summary, these works have pointed to the fallacy of viewing the inferior educational attainment as a problem of individual women--a line of reasoning that "has looked for inner traits when it should have been looking at social context. (Weisstein, 1968:2).

. . . if rats run mazes better because experimenters are told they are bright then it is obvious that the study of human behavior requires, first and foremost, a study of the social contexts within which people move, the expectations as to how they will behave, and the authority which tells them who they are and what they are supposed to do. (Weisstein, 1968:6)

All these works question "the assumption that people move in a context-free ether, with only their innate dispositions and their individual traits determining what they will do. . . ." (Weisstein, 1968:7)

Part C

A major portion of the studies on students who are married assume and find that it is the husband only who is the student. These studies [dealing with S.E.S., GPA's, marital adjustment, happiness, personality needs, etc. (Christopherson, et. al, 1960; Aller, 1962; Falk, 1964; Chilman and Meyer, 1966; Fshleman and Hunt, 1967; Hurley and Palonen, 1967)], are of limited value due to 1) lack of theoretical formulations, 2) weaknesses in basic design, and 3) incomparability of data because of sampling problems⁴ (Marshall and King, 1966:350-9). Many show an insensitivity both to the problems faced by married women who want an education and, more basically, to the legitimacy of their even wanting an education.

⁴For example, one study reports that "only 1% of the men and 4% of the women had dropped out of college at any time because of marriage." (Chilman and Meyer, 1966:69). Generalizing to the entire population of married students is invalid because the sample doesn't even include all those people who dropped out but did not return to be part of a sample. Other studies were more aware of the possible circumstantial bias of the student sample" (Christopherson, et. al., 1960:128). Those married students with the most problems have most likely dropped out of school and are no longer around to be interviewed.

Of some interest are the studies of the S.E.S. of married students which suggest that "apparently married male students are more apt to come from families of lower S.E.S. than unmarried males." (Marshall, 1966:352), Eshleman and Hunt (1967:487) go farther to say that "the bulk of married students come from a lower class background." If this is true, it may partially explain why so few of the wives are in school: Both the husbands and the wives probably subscribe to more traditionally defined sex-roles, meaning that both are less likely than their single contemporaries to see education as a reasonable expectation for the wife.

Marshall (1966) found that student couples with children enjoy less satisfactory marital adjustment; married students participate less in college activities and finally that married males aspire to higher future goals than single males. He goes on to say that ". . . the differential aspiration of the females was not generally as marked as the males and was somewhat complicated by the fact that many of the women were fulltime housewives." (Marshall, 1966:357). While he suggests that "it would appear that the process of marriage is largely responsible for the higher educational aspirations of the married respondents" (Marshall, 1966:357), he seems to ignore or take for granted the effects of marriage on women. Other writers as well show this insensitivity to the conditions which stack the deck against women.

In contrast to Marshall's acceptance of the status quo as natural law are writings which suggest some of the implications of the present pattern of husbands obtaining more education than their wives:

But, by and large, couples are not equally educated. The accepted pattern is for husbands to have more schooling, wives to have less; and as the years of togetherness accumulate, the differential

widens. . . . He winds up with a Ph.D. she with a "Ph.T., the consulatory degree for "putting hubby through". An election has been made that the husband's career has priority No doubt the young woman's sacrifice was appreciated but the division of labor begins to divide interests too. Routine work keeps her in a narrow channel, while he goes on to increasingly more complex levels of thought. In most cases her career is eclipsed. The wife who puts her husband through, winds up through. (Reeves, 1971:33-4)

Several studies have been done concerning married students at MSU and Lansing Community College (Ross, 1963, 1965; Erickson, 1966; Hunt, 1966; Thomas, 1965; Lantz, 1969). Dorothy Ross points to the greater difficulty women face getting the education they are intellectually capable of:

Sanford has stated 'one of the greatest dangers at the period of late adolescence is that the young person will commit himself prematurely to a social role that helps define him as all right in the eyes of the world but which is not in keeping with his needs and talents. The marriages these young women made were not inappropriate in the eyes of the world. . . . But they found themselves in situations which restricted their freedom to grow and develop as autonomous individuals. (Ross, 1963:75)

The three "lacks", lack of time for home and family, lack of time for study, and lack of finances, contributed to the suppression of goals that could have been appropriate for the intellectual potential of the woman. (Ross, 1965:8-9), these studies illustrate the impact of the cultural attitude toward marriage and family on the goals and concerns of the beginning single freshman and her married undergraduate sister. From my vantage point as a counselor of both men and women students, it seems to me that the counselling of women in higher education is a more complex process than counseling of men. To the consideration of such factors as motivation, academic aptitude, special skills, and interests which are applicable to helping a man make an appropriate choice to which he can then proceed with single purpose, we have to add for women the resolution of the conflicts presented in these factors:

1. The present attitude of the American society which places almost any kind of a marriage for a woman above a career or intellectual attainment. . . .
2. The limitation imposed by the "perceived" attitude of the significant male--boyfriend, husband, father, professor, or others.

3. The selection of a program which will lead to a goal which will be possible to combine with the responsibilities of marriage and family.
4. The selection of a goal which permits interruption for child-bearing and rearing.
5. The physical and psychological stamina necessary to combine roles successfully.
6. The availability of educational or vocational opportunity with husband's mobility.
7. The frustration inherent in suppression or downgrading of goals as a result of marriage. (Ross, 1965:9-10)

The findings of a study by Lantz (1969) suggest that those women who are in school have more clearly defined goals and more feminine oriented occupational plans than those not in school. This suggests that school is easier and seen as more reasonable for those women who accept cultural attitudes and who choose a feminine career---in other words, women who stay in their place.

A third study concerning adult students found that: Women were older; both the men and the women tended to come from non-college parental backgrounds; spouses tended to have some college education (but more of the husbands had done graduate work); the men were aiming for higher degrees than the women; more women than men were in education; and, while the men held a variety of jobs, the women were concentrated in office, sales, teaching and nursing. (Erickson, 1966).

The Faculty-Student Committee in their Proposal For a Married Student Service Center (1971) concluded that the student wife:

is a prisoner to her apartment; she cannot share with her husband in his intellectual development. Hence the situation arises in which the husband grows intellectually while the wife remains stagnant, becoming an increasingly less stimulating partner to her husband. Such conflict in the wife naturally produces strains in

the marital relationship which often cannot be reduced unless concrete changes in the environment are made. (Faculty-Student Committee, 1971:6)

Even this seemingly understanding study fails to get at basic underlying assumptions concerning the rights of women.

Margaret Mead has suggested that women's lack of education is not only for the individual woman's developing autonomy, but also for the marriage relationship and, by extension, for society in general. Some universities have instituted programs aimed at correcting this imbalance by encouraging (with scholarships) the wives of male students to continue their own schooling at the same time as their husbands. (cf. (Schleman, 1969a, 1969b)).

The remainder of the articles deal with two issues. First are the /socialization variables which prevent married women from seeing education as a reasonable expectation for themselves. Whitehurst (n.d.) has suggested one mechanism by which women keep themselves out of school:

It is probable that American mothers find it overwhelmingly unacceptable to see in themselves a very important level of self-seeking behavior. . . . self-seeking appears in this sample to be covered by rationalizations of doing something for the children, family benefit, or society. (Whitehurst, n.d.;8)

Second, are the more tangible difficulties of being a married woman student. These include duties which customarily fall on the wife: care of children and responsibility for housework, helping the husband with his work, and the need to earn money to pay for the husband's education. All of these are a combination of cultural expectations and objective conditions. Of the difficulty in breaking out of old patterns, Cynthia Epstein writes:

Today women who choose both marriage and a career face a nearly normless situation. . . . The ability to deal with complex roles. . .

is still largely a matter of individual adaptation and compromise. (Epstein, 1969:20)

A final observation on the writings in this category: some of the reported "facts," while doubtless true, can be and are used in a way that keeps women "in their place." For instance, many studies (c.f. Fagerburg, 1967) report that interrupted students are better students. This can and does provide a rationale for saying that the present status quo (women getting their education after their kids grow up) should be preserved. Consider, on the other hand, how outraged we would be by anyone's suggesting that since older blacks are better students than younger blacks, universities should not worry about making it possible for more young blacks to attend college. The same holds if we substitute men for women in the analogy. Here I am not denying that older students may very well be better students, only that the evidence seems to be used selectively as a rationale for preserving the status quo. However, even if people are better students (usually operationally defined as getting better grades) it is still true that a late vs. an early education does restrict one's life chances.

At the time the data was collected for the present study, most studies of married women students were based on the assumption that less education for women was 'natural', and furthermore great strides had been made in improving educational opportunities for women. The present study began with the assumption that women receive less education than men for two reasons (neither of which is the result of some inherent part of female nature): (1) they are taught, early and late, to expect less, and (2) the objective conditions under which they, as

compared to men, must get an education severely limit the likelihood of their getting as much as their intellectual capabilities would indicate.

Looked at in another way, the present study suggests that in order to get the standard rewards of the educational system one must play by the rules. The rules, as far as education is concerned, are that men will get the amount of education they want, need, and are capable of either before marriage, or after marriage with the financial and moral support of the wife. The man will get an education and a good job (which is what men are expected to want) and the woman will get the security and status of her husband's achievements (which is what she is expected to want).

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

The data used for this study were collected from two sources: statistics from the Office of the Registrar at MSU, and 150 telephone interviews. The latter were done by the author at the end of Spring quarter 1970.

From the Fall 1969 MSU Student Directory, a stratified random sample (including both graduate and undergraduate students) was selected consisting of one hundred and fifty women in each of three categories:¹

1. Fifty women who were currently students but whose husbands were not.
2. Fifty women who were currently students whose husbands were also.
3. Fifty women who were not currently students but whose husbands were.²

Ninety-eight per cent of the women contacted agreed to cooperate with the study. Data concerning both spouses was obtained from each woman.

¹In all, the original sample included 188. Twenty-four persons could not be contacted for the following reasons: moved, unlisted phone, or disconnected phone. An additional nine numbers resulted in no answer over a two week period, and the university refused to give the addresses or numbers of two people. Finally of the 153 women contacted only three refused to complete the interview schedule: one could not speak English, one was reluctant to give the information over the phone, and the third did not want any part of the interview.

²A person was counted as a student if he or she was a student during any one of the three quarters from Fall 1969 to Spring 1970.

Telephone interviewing compared to regular interviewing is fast and efficient--all interviews were completed between May 20 and June 6; no travel time or expenditure was necessary; people seldom home were easily reached, and out of town respondents could be included despite the distance. All these factors made it possible for all interviews to be done by one person and to be completed at essentially the same time (end of Spring quarter)--increasing the comparability of the data. The advantages over mailed questionnaires are many. First the very high response rate of the present study is never equalled by mailed questionnaires. Only three out of 153 did not complete the interview. Secondly, complicated directions would have been necessary on a questionnaire making questionnaire completion difficult for many respondents. Finally, the open-ended questions were no doubt answered in more depth.

One disadvantage of telephone interviewing is that many people are suspicious of telephone calls from strangers. Although I was extremely successful at gaining their cooperation, I have some ethical reservations about that very success. Increasingly large portions of people's private lives are becoming material for data banks. Even the possibility that such data could be used to control people against their will makes me uncomfortable about my potential contribution to this trend. More innocuously, but still potentially harmful, the fact that respondents came to trust me on the phone may have made them more open and vulnerable to the myriad telephone solicitations that occur daily.

The interview itself took from 10-15 minutes, but many lasted longer. At the end of the interview I usually asked the respondent if she had questions to ask me or any comments to make. Although these conversations

(which lasted from two to forty-five minutes) were of little use to me in the actual study--they were extremely valuable in another sense. Data collection is usually a one way street--the interviewer asks questions and the respondent answers. Through these informal (and in many cases warm and intensely personal) conversations a new model was possible. Some respondents had opinions on the worth and conduct of the study which they wanted me to know about. Some were negative about the study, while others felt the focus of the study was vitally important. Others gave me a lot of encouragement to continue with the study after the thesis was done. Some respondents were intellectually or emotionally affected by the interview. For example, for some women it was their only chance to talk with another adult during the day. For others, it was a chance to compare problems and accomplishments with another person who was trying to combine family responsibilities with getting an education. Some were threatened by various issues brought out in the interview and needed reassurance that they personally were alright. Others had personal problems and appreciated the chance to talk through those problems with a sympathetic stranger.

Thus, to some extent, many respondents got more from the interview than simply a chance to give someone data for a thesis. I think an interviewer has an ethical responsibility to respondents--to recognize and take account of the complexity and autonomy of each individual (something a questionnaire or an interview generally does not do); and to take some responsibility for the fact that the interview may bring out feelings in the respondent that may need to be dealt with right away. I have chosen not to use the information shared in these informal conversations since I feel it would be a violation of trust and intimacy.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Although it is often contended that women now have equal access to education, the results of this study are consistent with an opposite contention. First, the results show significant differences between men and women in the direction of the men obtaining more of the standard rewards of academia.³ Furthermore, there are significant differences between the three groups of subjects (each containing both men and women)--the most startling of these being that male students whose wives are also in school are less likely than other men, and even less likely than the women in two of the other categories, to get the standard rewards of the system. Some of the differences which were documented by the study are presented below. The more generally descriptive results are outlined first, followed by those results that best illustrate the differential attainment of the standard rewards of academia. Some of the qualitative responses to question number thirty-two are included in Part II, allowing more insight into the values, hopes and fears of the respondents.

³More degrees, uninterrupted education, etc.

Part I

The three groups⁴ interviewed for this study differed from each other in significant ways along the following dimensions; age, numbers and ages of children, employment, income, friends, parents' education, husband's reaction to wife's education, and impressions regarding the effect of scholarships.

The age differences between the three groups were considerable and in the hypothesized direction, with Group II being the youngest and Group I the oldest.

TABLE 1
AGE BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
25 or under	11	9	36	29	18	11
over 25	39	41	14	21	32	39
Mean age	35 <u>±</u> 10	38 <u>±</u> 11	24 <u>±</u> 4	26 <u>±</u> 5	28 <u>±</u> 6	29 <u>±</u> 6

Although by definition all the women in the sample were married, 10 per cent (5) of the women in Group I were separated at the time of the interview.

⁴For the remainder of this thesis the three groups will be referred to as follows:

Group I: Wife a student, husband not.

Group II: Both husband and wife students.

Group III: Husband a student, wife not.

The differences in the mean age at marriage between the three groups were small although twice as many of the women in Groups I and II were married before age 20 as compared to the women in Group III.

TABLE 2
AGE AT MARRIAGE BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
under 20	10	1	11	4	5	5
20-24	28	26	39	46	39	31
25 and over	10	4	0	0	0	0
Mean age	22.06	24.68	20.58	22.3	21.8	23.0
s.d.	3.4	4.4	1.7	2.3	2.4	3.6
N=	50	50	50	50	50	50

Women with children, especially preschool children, are less likely to be going to school. Women in Group III (who are at home) are twice as likely to have children as are the women in Group II (who are students). Women in Group I (who are also students) are even more likely to have children but theirs are less likely to be of preschool age.

TABLE 3
NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY BY GROUP

	Group I	Group II	Group III
no children	9	32	16
1-2 children	18	14	30
3-4 children	22	2	3
5-6 children	2	2	1

A high percentage of married students in all three groups are employed. Although having to work is often cited as a reason for not going to school it seems clear from Table 4 that many people are able to work full time as well as attend school.

TABLE 4
EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
not employed	18	1	16	12	22	14
Part time	7	0	16	16	6	15
full time	25	47	18	22	22	21
N=	50	50	50	50	50	50

One of the most frequently mentioned reasons for not being in school is lack of finances. Yet it is the group with the lowest income that finds it possible for both the husband and wife to go to school. Almost all of the women in Group I have very high family incomes.

There were only three respondents in Group I with incomes of less than \$5,000/year--all three were recently separated from their husbands.

TABLE 5
ANNUAL INCOME BY GROUP

	Group I	Group II	Group III
Under \$5,000	3	15	8
over \$15,000	26	4	7
N=	50	50	50
Mean	\$12,500	\$6,500	\$8,500

There is a very high correlation between attending school and having close friends who attend school. However, it cannot be inferred from the present data whether having close friends in school is a cause or an effect of the woman herself being in school.

TABLE 6
NUMBER OF CLOSE FEMALE FRIENDS NOW IN SCHOOL BY GROUP

	Group I	Group II	Group III
None	16	15	29
1 or more	34	34	20
has no close friends	0	1	1
N=	50	50	50

An interesting and unexpected finding concerns the educational level of the respondents' parents. The data in general do support the hypothesis that married students have less educated parents than the student body in general. However there are interesting differences in the data from Group I. The fathers of women in Group I are ten times as likely as the fathers of the women's husbands to have one or more college degrees. Almost $\frac{1}{2}$ of the women's fathers have college degrees, while only 2 of the 50 fathers of their husbands have degrees. This same relationship holds for women in Group II but the difference is much less striking (15 of the wives' fathers and 12 of the husbands' fathers have degree. In Group III the opposite holds--the husbands' fathers are more educated than the wives'. In all three groups the mothers of both the men and the women have roughly the same number of college degrees (in each group between 11-13 of the mothers have one or more college degrees). The anomalous situation of the wife's father having more education than the husband's father still obtains in Group I even when age is held constant⁵--suggesting that the difference cannot be attributed to the relatively large number of older women in Group I. Looking at each individual couple from Group I, one finds that the same pattern holds: in 31 out of 50 cases the wife's father has more education than the husband's father, in 8 cases the education of both spouses; fathers if roughly equal, and in 6 cases the husband's father has more education. One possible hypothesis is that only women who feel

⁵Considering all education, not just college degrees.

very much entitled to an education (i.e. women who came from more highly educated families themselves) can justify their going to school after marriage and children. This, combined with the fact that their family income is very high, may explain why it seems more reasonable to them (than to women in general) to get an education.

TABLE 7
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF PARENTS BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I				Group II				Group III			
	Women		Men		Women		Men		Women		Men	
	Fa.	Mo.	Fa.	Mo.	Fa.	Mo.	Fa.	Mo.	Fa.	Mo.	Fa.	Mo.
BA	10	9	1	11	9	7	7	7	9	6	10	11
MA	4	4	0	1	1	4	1	4	2	2	3	1
PhD, MD, etc.	7	0	1	0	5	0	4	0	3	0	3	0
Totals	21	13	2	12	15	11	12	11	14	8	16	12
N =	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50

The data from one question, "How does (or would) your husband feel about your going to school?" do not seem very valid or reliable. It probably does not reflect the complexity of feelings inherent in the situation. However, two things may be mentioned. First, considering only gross differences, it appears that fewer of the husbands in Group III than in either of the other two groups are in favor of their wives going to school. Some of the "no answer" responses may reflect a negative attitude on the part of the husband (the response in many cases was "Oh, I wouldn't go anyway so his opinion wouldn't matter"). Finally it is interesting (though perhaps unwarranted) to speculate

why so many of the husbands in Group do encourage their wives to go to school---perhaps it is easy to be encouraging if they know that their wives really wouldn't go anyway.

TABLE 8
HUSBANDS' OPINIONS ON WIFE GOING TO SCHOOL, BY GROUP

	Group I	Group II	Group III
no answer	0	0	10
encouraging	45	47	34
indifferent	1	3	1
negative or OK with conditions	4	0	5
N=	50	50	50

Since money is often cited as a reason why married women don't go to school, I asked the following question: "If special scholarships were provided for married women, do you think more of them would go to school?" Though some of the people answered the question in terms of themselves, most answered in terms of others or of women in general. Some answered for both themselves and others--thus the column totals may be more than 50. In general, the women in Group III were the least likely to see scholarships as an incentive for most women. Not even 1/3 said "yes", as compared to 2/3 of Group II and over 1/2 of Group I. They were almost three times as likely as women in either Group I or II to say "no" (with respect to both themselves and others). However, with respect to themselves, they were slightly more likely than either

I or II to say "Yes, a scholarship would help me"--12 as compared to 7 and 9 respectively. Interpretation of these results is very tentative. Perhaps the women in Group III are aware that there are many reasons more important than money why women don't go to school. Women in Group II see the most value in scholarships, perhaps because of their very high interest in school and their very limited family incomes.

TABLE 9
PERCEIVED VALUE OF SCHOLARSHIPS SPECIFICALLY
FOR MARRIED WOMEN, BY GROUP

	Group I	Group II	Group III
For Self:	3	5	17
No	3	5	17
Yes	9	7	12
No answer	33	38	17
Wouldn't go anyway	0	0	3
For Others:			
No	9	5	13
Yes	28	34	18
No answer	11	7	20
Don't know	2	4	2
N=	50	50	50

Summary of Part I

The results thus far indicate that women in Group I are considerably older than other students; that women with preschool children are less likely to be students; that the amount of income necessary for the wife to go to school is very relative; that a large proportion of married students are employed; that women in Group I have more highly educated fathers than do their husbands; that husbands' feelings about their

wives' education vary between the groups; and that women have mixed feelings about the value of scholarships for married women.

Part II

While the preceding results do point to some differences along sex lines between the six subgroups, the following items provide the clearest delineation for the differential distribution of the standard rewards of academia. For the purposes of this study degree attainment, amount of certainty about future degree plans, number and duration of interruptions in education, GPA, credit load, major field, full-or part-time status, and type of job held while self or spouse is going to school were used as indicators of the standard rewards of academia. Briefly summarized, the differences between the groups tend in the following directions:

- Men whose wives don't go to school (Group III) have both the highest expectations and highest achievements related to education.
- Women who go to school later in life (Group I) are next in line on most dimensions except in total number expecting to get a PhD.
- Men and women who both go to school (Group II) face more difficulties and have lower expectations than either of the above.
- Women whose husbands are in school but who are not in school themselves expect and get the least in terms of degrees, etc.

Assuming a random distribution of abilities and an open system (i.e. no systematic discrimination) one would expect roughly equal numbers of men and women to be obtaining BA's, MA's and PhD's. This was clearly not the case for the 150 couples interviewed at MSU in 1970.

First, there are large differences among the four groups of students in terms of what degree they are presently working on. Males whose wives are not students are almost twice as likely as the next higher

group (women in Group I) to be enrolled in a PhD. program. Men whose wives are in school however, show a pattern more similar to the women in the sample--they are less likely than even the women in Group I to be in a PhD. program.

TABLE 10
NUMBER NOW IN PHD PROGRAM, BY SEX AND GROUP

	<u>Group I</u>		<u>Group II</u>		<u>Group III</u>	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
In PhD. program	8	--	1	6	--	15
Other	42	--	49	44	--	35
N=	50	--	50	50	--	50

The same general pattern holds (with some leveling) in comparisons of the numbers of students in each group enrolled in graduate programs--including MA and PhD.

TABLE 11
NUMBER ENROLLED IN GRADUATE PROGRAMS, BY GROUP AND SEX

	<u>Group I</u>		<u>Group II</u>		<u>Group III</u>	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
No. in Grad. Prog.	25	--	21	24	--	34
N=	50	--	50	50	--	50

The following table which combines the number of persons with a PhD. already, or who are now in a PhD program makes comparison with the non-student spouses possible.

TABLE 12
NUMBER WITH PHD OR IN PHD PROGRAM, BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
No. with PhD or in PhD program	8	15	1	6	0	15
N=	50	50	50	50	50	50

The differences between and within the three groups are striking, with men consistently obtaining more PhD's than their wives. Also, this comparison shows a very marked difference between men in Group II compared with men in the other two groups--a difference which still obtains when age is held constant.

Future degree plans of the subjects also follow the same pattern. Of the men in Group III, 21 expect to have a PhD by the time they are through going to school. Among their wives on the other hand, only 4 ever expect to obtain a PhD. There is sharp distinction between men and women along this dimension. Even the women in Group I, who on many dimensions fare better than the men in Group II, expect to get fewer PhD's than any of the three groups of men. Furthermore, the equality which seemed apparent in the educational careers of Group II couples disappears, with nearly four times as many of the men expecting to get a PhD.

TABLE 13

TOTAL NUMBER EXPECTING TO HAVE PhD SOMETIME OR
WHO HAVE IT ALREADY, BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
No. having or expecting PhD	12	18	5	18	4	21
N=	50	50	50	50	50	50

The responses to the open-ended questions provide dimension of analysis on the subject of degree attainment. Most of the responses show the degree to which women accept standard sex-role definitions--many see their lack of education as their own personal problem; feel that women should be able to "keep up" without going to college; feel that men need more education than women; and feel that it is more okay for a woman than for a man to feel inferior.

Most outstanding is the degree to which the responses suggest that women see their lack of schooling and the resultant difficulties as their own personal problem or as "the way things should be". The following quotes are in response to the question "many husbands get more education than their wives. Do you see this as a problem?"

Many women said that not only was this no problem, but in fact husbands should have more education than their wives. They stressed the "logic" of this plan and the importance of the wife's accepting her inferior position:

--I don't think it's a problem as long as they recognize that they are not necessarily intellectual equals.

--Heavens no, he should have more.

--No this is probably good for the entire family--i.e. good for his ego.

--His will hopefully surpass mine. If you have to put all your eggs in one basket, they should go in the husband's. I won't be working for the rest of my life.

--. . .Like if both want to go to shcool, but they can only afford one or the other, it would logically be the husband, because he has to be the breadwinner.

Another large group pointed out that it would be much worse if it were the wife who had more education. Women can accept feeling inferior, but men can't. Also some saw the strains put on a family by an educated woman as illegitimate:

--Doesn't matter except if wife has more than husband. In our society it doesn't matter if the wife feels a little inferior.

--In general I think the husband would have more, wife shouldn't feel superior educationally.

--More problem if the wife has more

--Yes, but it's still better than the wife having more education than her husband. . . . The more education the wife has then maybe she'll start to get career oriented and put some strains on the family.

--The big problem is that women get too much education. It's eventually going to break down the family system. . . .

A number of women said that while this could be a problem, the burden is on the wife to find some way to "keep up."

--It is the wife's responsibility to keep up

--No, no problem. I kind of keep up with him (reading, talking with people.

--No, most of my friends read a lot and belong to League of Women Voters, and Sierra Club so they keep up just fine with their husbands.

Others said that the husband having more education was not a problem generally but then went on to say that it had been a problem for them personally. The tone was generally self-reproaching or at least very particularized--its just our particular relationship, or my particular husband--with little recognition of the problems inherent in the structure of the situation:

--No. The only problem is my case (her husband has a law degree and they are now separated, leaving her to support the kids as best she can).

--The big problem is that women get too much education. It's eventually going to break down the family system. You get pulled in all sorts of directions. But, then again, there are a lot of husbands that get their PhD and then leave their wives (like mine did). . . but it's not the University's problem--each person should find their own solutions.

On the other hand, many also pointed to the effects they had noticed resulting from the husband having more education than the wife; divorce, separation, feelings of inferiority and being left out:

--Yes, definitely. They've left their wives behind. I've seen this in my friends.

--Yes, the husband tends to look down on his wife as less intelligent

--There is a higher incidence of marital deterioration when the husband is in graduate school. There were five divorces in my husband's department in two years (she herself is separated).

--Yes! Well there is a lack of communication. Some places I've felt I didn't fit. You sometimes feel a little insecure.

--Yes! Wives don't fit in husband's social or academic groups.

--Yes, especially when you get married young and the wife puts the husband through law school. When finished she doesn't have anything.

--But then again there are a lot of husbands that get there PhD's and then leave their wives (like mine).

--I know quite a few MD's whose wives put them through college--after 15-20 years there is no rapport between them.

Number of degrees (possessed or projected) is not the only indicator of differential distribution of the customary rewards of the system. There is also a wide variation (by sex and group) in terms of the certainty of future degree plans. Those who are in the customary career line (male oriented) are the most sure of when they will get their degrees. Women in all three groups and men in Group II experience the highest degree of uncertainty regarding future degree plans. The following table represents the number of persons who responded "Don't know" or "Far in the distance" to the question of "When do you expect to get your final degree?"

TABLE 14
DEGREE OF CERTAINTY REGARDING FUTURE DEGREE PLANS BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
No. who are uncertain	14	5	11	13	17	8
N=	50	50	50	50	50	50

It appears that the men in Groups I and III can reasonably assume that little will interfere with their projected plans. Women, on the other hand, can not make this assumption. In addition to the possibility of interference from children (since the burden of kids and housework generally falls on women) they must consider how to work their own education into their husband's career pattern, knowing that their own interests must come second. It may be that the men in Group II experience

the future in somewhat the same way--feeling that they may have to take into consideration more than just their own career plans.

Another dimension where there are wide differences between the data for men and women concerns interruptions in university education. Virtually all of the women in Group I (46/50) and 66 per cent of the women in Group II have had their education interrupted one or more times.

TABLE 15
INTERRUPTIONS IN EDUCATION, BY GROUP

	Group I	Group II
No. whose education has been interrupted	46	33
N=	50	50

A further indication of the relative ease with which women drop out of school is the turnover in students between Fall and Spring quarters. Since the sample was from Fall quarter records and the interviewing was done in the Spring, it was possible to note some gross differences in the attrition rates of men and women. Roughly 20 per cent of the women who were in school in the Fall were not in school by Spring quarter. The comparable figure for men is 6 per cent. Furthermore, men in Group II are five times as likely as men in Group III to have dropped out by Spring quarter--another factor highlighting their marginal status.

TABLE 16
ATTRITION RATES, BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Out Temp. (plan* to return	9	--	8	5	--	1
Out permanently*	2	--	2	0	--	0
Still in school**	39	--	40	45	--	49
N=	50	--	50	50	--	50

*About 20 percent of the women students interviewed were out of school Spring quarter. It would be interesting to compare their response to those of the other 80 percent especially on the open-ended questions.

**Includes those students who were not in school Spring quarter by reason of having completed degree requirements Fall or Winter quarter.

Men in Group III had significantly higher grades than persons in any of the other groups. The lowest grades were reported for the men in Group II and the women in Group III.

TABLE 17
GPA, BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Less than 3.0	15	--	12	21	24	9
3.0 or aboe	35	--	38	37	30	40
N=	50	--	50	50	50	50
Mean	3.37		3.45	3.25	3.28*	3.55

*G.P.A. when last in school

One possible explanation for the variation in GPA is the differential number of credits for which student are enrolled. A high proportion of the men in Group II are enrolled in an overload (more than 16 credits) and at the same time very few are enrolled in four credits or less. Although the women in Group II are also very likely to be taking an overload they are also somewhat more likely than Group II men to be taking four or less credits. Men in Group III, on the other hand, are least likely of the four groups of students to be taking a large credit load and most likely to be taking a very light load.⁶

TABLE 18
CREDIT LOAD, BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
4 or less	10	--	8	4	--	19
5-6	7	--	3	5	--	2
Totals	17	--	11	9	--	21
14-16	11	--	8	12	--	9
over 16	3	--	7	8	--	2
Totals	14	--	15	20	--	11
N=	50	--	50	50	--	50

⁶The differences in credit load and GPA can be partially explained, by the fact that more of the men in Group III are graduate students.

There are large differences between men and women in their choices of major field. While over 3/5 of the women are in education, only 1/4 of the men are. Also men are enrolled in a much wider variety of fields than are the women. In several ways, however, the men in Group II are more similar to the women than to the men in Group III. Men in Group III are three times as likely as men in Group II to be in Business.⁷ The other unexpected finding is the high proportion of Group II men who are in the social sciences--26 per cent as compared to 6 per cent of the men in Group III and 11 per cent combined total for the women. This may suggest that those men who marry women who continue in school after marriage are somehow different from those men whose wives do not. They certainly show gross differences in choice of major field. However, on the other hand perhaps their choice of field is a result of their type of marriage rather than a basic underlying preference. Some fields such as business and the hard sciences may demand a certain rigid, total commitment which doesn't allow for any variation from the traditional male lifestyle.

Women are more likely than men to be going part-time, which can variously be seen as either an increased option or as a handicap. However, while there are considerable advantages to going part-time,

⁷A study by Alice Pilotti and George Walton (1970) showed that there was perfect inverse correlation between the number of full professors in a department (an indicator of the relative prestige of the department) and the number of women faculty in that department. Business had the highest number of full professors.

attendance (professors have less interest in part-time students, fellowships and assistantships are not generally available to them), and that this handicap falls mainly on women. For women in Group I, going to school part-time is positively correlated with age.

TABLE 19
FIELD, BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Education	31	--	30	14	--	11
Social Work	2	--	0	1	--	1
Home Ec.	1	--	2	0	--	0
Psy,Soc,Pol.Sci.	4	--	7	13	--	3
Business	0	--	2	4	--	12
Math,Hard Sciences	4	--	0	5	--	7
Other	8	--	9	13	--	16
N=	50	--	50	50	--	50

TABLE 20
FULL VS PART-TIME ENROLLMENT, BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Part-time	29	--	18	13	--	16
Full-time	21	--	32	37	--	34
N=	50	--	50	50	--	50

TABLE 21

AGES OF FULL AND PART-TIME STUDENTS IN GROUP I (WOMEN ONLY)

	Full-Time	Part-Time
29 and under	12	7
over 29	9	22
N=	50	50

In considering the type of job held by the subjects, several interesting comparisons can be made. First there are no women represented in the category of Prof., lawyer, M.D., minister, etc., although 16 men from Group I and one from Group III are in that category. Also there are more men than women at the GTA, GRA, or instructor level. Women, on the other hand, are most likely to be teachers, social workers, secretaries or nurses--there are 72 women as compared to 36 men in these categories (about 1/2 of the women highly represented in the "other" category--42/150 of the men compared to only 12/150 of the women. This is similar to the finding that women are represented in fewer academic fields than men (see Table 20).

Summary of Part II

In virtually all the preceeding results there is a hierarchical distribution--with the males in Group III getting more of the rewards that are most valued by the dominant culture and those males in Group I already having attained them. Women in Group I are next in some respects, but not in others. The men in Group II share many things in common with

the women although with respect to number of degrees expected and major field they are more similar to the men than to the women.

TABLE 22
TYPE OF JOB, BY GROUP AND SEX

	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Clerk,sales, etc.	0	3	10	14	5	5
Secretarial	1	0	2	0	3	0
Nurse	2	0	2	0	3	0
Teaching, Sec. Work	20	3	12	4	10	7
Instruc.,GTA,GRA	6	4	4	7	0	11
Prof.,MD,Lawyer,etc.	0	16	0	0	0	1
Military	0	3	0	3	0	1
Business	0	5	0	0	0	2
Other	3	13	4	10	5	9
Not employed	18	1	16	12	22	14
N.D.	0	2	0	0	0	0
N=	50	50	50	50	50	50

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The results consistently point to the fact that it is the exception rather than the rule for married women to get the education that they need, want, and /or are capable of. Men and women, at this point in time, are expected to want different rewards from the system. Women should want family related "expressive" goods. Men should want work-related, "instrumental" ones. The problem is that the rewards which men should want (independent income, status directly rather than vicariously acquired, education and certain kinds of jobs--doctoring, and lawyering) are more highly valued by the dominant culture than are the rewards women should want. Furthermore women are systematically denied access to the more highly valued rewards. All this is complicated by the fact that our culture gives conflicting messages to women which encourage them to believe that they should aim for the goods that are in reality reserved for men (or unusual women). It is usually not until marriage that women find out how difficult it will be for them to continue to aim for those rewards. Women are made to feel they have lost in a fair game when in reality the cards have been stacked against them. In addition to systematic discrimination against women by universities they are also hindered by their own expectation that they do not have the right to devote time to themselves as long as their families need them. The answers to the open-ended questions bear testimony to this last point.

Married women students are older than married male students, meaning primarily that they have put off their own education until their husbands' and children's needs were taken care of. Although a case can be made for education being more meaningful to older people than to young adults, the fact still remains that a person who doesn't get the necessary degree(s) until age 40 will be excluded from, or at least severely handicapped in the pursuit of, most careers.

The presence of children increases the likelihood that a woman will not try to go to college since primary responsibility for their care generally falls on the wife even when the husband "helps out." That many go anyway should not be taken as proof of there being no problem. The energy, resourcefulness and stamina required in going to school with kids, as compared to without, is tremendous.

Many married women do not go to college because they have to work to support their husbands' college careers. That they could probably find a way to get along without the wife's money is a moot point, since things one has never learned to expect cannot be part of one's behavioral repertoire.

That adequate income is a very relative concept comes across very clearly in this study. Couples with combined incomes of \$16,000 say the wife dropped out of school because they didn't have enough money, while other couples put both spouses through college on \$2-3,000 per year.

Considering both of these variables--children and income--it seems that those women who really feel entitled to an education (and whose husbands feel similarly) will find a way. However, the long

years of socialization where a girl learns not to see a career as a reasonable expectation for herself predispose women to compromise for earlier and for far less than would a man of comparable talents.

That women expect to get less comes not only from their socialization as children and teenagers but also from their knowledge of the reality of the university. It is obvious that fewer women than men ever obtain PhD's, that more women than men have their education interrupted, and that women are represented in fewer good jobs than men. As a result, women experience and express a great deal of uncertainty about their future goals. This is often cited as a character trait (flaw?) of women in general--they cannot make decisions. At least one aspect of this is that women have correctly perceived their reality--the truth is that they can not make decisions. Not because of some inner defect, but because the objective conditions of their lives make it impossible for them to act autonomously. The ability to make valid choices in the light of one's needs is difficult when one's choices are always contingent on (secondary to) another's choices.¹

While it seems to me problematical whether getting a college education is the best step in the direction of becoming an autonomous person, it is clear that no kind of autonomy can develop when a person is blocked from making her own decisions about the direction of her

¹The question of true autonomy is, of course, much broader, and the case can be made that at present it is exercised by only a few people (men or women) in this society.

own life. Women have systematically been denied this option. It is easy to document this with regard to people getting the education they want and I have therefore used that as an example in this study. But women experience daily instances where other people have control over their (women's) lives either directly or through the mechanism of the woman "wanting" always to do what is best for her husband and family and in the process denying her own needs. While (as cited in the text) male's educational goals increase with marriage, women's goals decrease and with good reason. Marriage for a man makes a good career both more possible and more necessary. The opposite is true for women.

Looking at the future, I imagine there will be an increasing demand for equal access to education with little questioning of the validity of the present educational system. Only after this is attained will there be a widespread concern with changing some of the basic assumptions underlying the present educational system. The former is perhaps a necessary step toward the latter. Women are just beginning to change from simply wanting a bigger share of the customary rewards of a male-dominated society to wanting to change the emphasis of those very rewards.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- * 1. Are you currently a student?
- * 2. Year in school
- * 3. (For graduate students only) beginning, middle or end of program
- * 4. Field
- * 5. (If not now a student) amount of school completed
- 6. Full or part-time
- * 7. Grade point average
- 8. (If not now in school) were you in Fall or Winter, and do you plan to return to school?
- * 9. Number of credits this term
- *10. Age
- 11. How long married?
- 12. Number of children
- 13. Ages of children
- *14. How much school had you completed before marriage?
- 15. What interruptions, if any, have you had in your education-- include duration and reasons?
- *16. What degree are you currently working on?
- *17. When do you expect to get it?
- *18. Do you plan to get any other degrees?
- *19. If so, when do you plan to get it (them)?
- 20. What are your main reasons for going to school?
- 21. What did you do during the time you were not in school?
- 22. If tuition scholarships were provided specifically for married women students do you think it would make a difference in their going to school? (then asked them to elaborate)
- *23. Are you employed?
- *24. Full or part-time
- *25. Type of work
- 26. How does your husband feel about your going to school?
- 27. Total family income
- *28. Father's education
- *29. Mother's education
- 30. Among your three closest female friends, how many are currently students?
- 31. Are there any things that would make it easier for you to go to school?
- 32. Many husbands get more education than their wives, do you see this as a problem? (then asked them to elaborate)

*Starred items indicate that data was collected (from the women) on the husband as well as the wife on these variables.

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