
$\$$
This is to certify that the

> The Effects of Uesis entitled Educational Level, Marital Status, and Race/Ethnicity on Women's Attitudes Towards Feminist Issues presented by Rosanne Lisa Roraback
has been accepted towards fulfillment of the requirements for
Masters degree in Sociology

## Thehssa A Banker <br> Major professor

Date August 12, 1988


The Effects of Occupational Type, Educational Level, Marital Status, and Race/Ethnicity on Women's Attitudes Towards Feminist Issues

By

Rosanne Lisa Roraback<br>A THESIS<br>Submitted to<br>Michigan State University<br>in partial fulfillment of the requirements<br>for the degree of<br>MASTER OF ARTS<br>Department of Sociology

# The Effects of Occupational Type, Educational Level, Marital Status, and Race/Ethnicity on Women's Attitudes Towards Feminist Issues 

By

Rosanne Lisa Roraback

This research examines the effects of occupational type, educational level, marital status, and race/ethnicity on women's attitudes towards the Equal Rights Amendment (E.R.A.), legalized abortion, and commitment to work in the paid labor force. Analysis of 1985 data collected by the Roper Center indicated that support for the E.R.A. is highest among the following groups: highly educated, separated, divorced, single, black, and Latina women. Support for the legal right to abortion was highest among well-educated, single, divorced, and white women. Finally, the highest levels of commitment to work in the paid labor force were found among women who are in "professional" occupations, highly educated, single, and divorced women.

I would like to thank my advisor, Melissa Barker, who was extremely supportive, and generous with her time and energy. Her encouragement, as well as her speedy reading and commenting on rough drafts was greatly appreciated. Thanks also to my committee members, Nan Johnson and Rita Gallin, for their careful readings and helpful recommendations on the thesis.

I owe thanks to my family, who provided support and encouragement when I needed it the most. Thanks to Mary McCormack, for being a truly wonderful teacher. I would also like to express appreciation to the many friends, especially Brianna Bill, who helped me keep my sense of humor during a long, hot summer of working on this thesis. Russell Kruska was a true friend throughout my graduate program. To Andrea Rother and Susan Joel, thanks for your friendship during the past two years. Finally, to my sister Eileen, who taught me about feminism at a tender age.

TABLE OF CONTENTS
Page
LIST OF TABLES ..... V
Chapter
I. INTRODUCTION ..... 1
Review of Recent Literature ..... 4
Research on Attitudes Towards the Equal Rights Amendment ..... 6
Research on Attitudes Towards Legalized Abortion ..... 8
Individual Work Commitment. ..... 10
II. DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA. ..... 14
Limitations of the Data Set ..... 14
Operational Definitions of the
Dependent Variables ..... 18
Statistical Technique ..... 21
III. RESULTS OF THE DATA ANALYSIS ..... 24
Attitude Towards the Equal Rights Amendment ..... 24
Attitude Towards Legalized Abortion ..... 31
Individual Work Commitment ..... 38
IV. CONCLUSION ..... 44
Suggestions for Further Research. ..... 45
APPENDIX A. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTIONS ON MARITAL STATUS, EDUCATIONAL LEVEL, AND OCCUPATIONAL TYPE FOR BLACK, LATINA, AND WHITE WOMEN ..... 52
LIST OF REFERENCES ..... 54

## LIST OF TABLES

Table Page
1 One-way ANOVA for RACE on E.R.A. Attitude ..... 2
2
Scheffe Test for RACE on E.R.A. Attitude ..... 3
3 One-way ANOVA for MARITAL STATUS on E.R.A.Attitude4
4
Scheffe Test for MARITAL STATUS on E.R.A. Attitude ..... 5
5678One-way ANOVA for OCCUPATION on Abortion13
11 Scheffe Test for OCCUPATION on Abortion ..... 14
1213Scheffe Test for OCCUPATION on WorkCommitment18
16
One-way ANOVA for MARITAL STATUS on Work Commitment. ..... 18
17 ..... 17
Scheffe Test for MARITAL STATUS on Work Commitment ..... 19
18 Percentage Distributions on Marital Status for Black, Latina, and White women ..... 52
19 Percentage Distributions on Educational Level for Black, Latina, and White women............. 52
20 Percentage Distributions on Occupational Type for Black, Latina, and White women............ 53

The second wave of feminism in the United States has made substantial progress in its efforts to achieve equality for women. It has also had a significant impact on popular perceptions of appropriate roles for women and men, and on attitudes towards women's rights. However, many women do not identify themselves with the women's movement, even though they may be in support of many "feminist" aims. One reason critics of the women's movement cite for the failure to achieve a broad base of support among American women is that the mainstream movement has not adequately addressed issues of particular importance to women of color, working class women, and women who are not currently employed in the paid labor force (Davis, 1981, Reid, 1984; Torrey, 1979). Such issues include involuntary sterilization of black, Latina, and Native American women, economic inequality, and institutionalized racism (Davis, 1981; Hooks, 1984; VelezI, 1980).

The clear underrepresentation of housewives, minority women, and working class women in feminist organizations has sometimes been explained by advocates of the women's movement as resulting from working class women's more traditional values regarding gender issues, and black
women's greater involvement in opposing racism (Carden, 1974; Reid, 1984).

However, recent research on gender attitudes challenges such assumptions. For example, several studies have indicated that women of color are more likely than white women to favor women's rights (see Burris, 1983; Gill, 1985; Mason and Bumpass, 1975). Though research on the effect of socio-economic class on attitudes towards issues of gender equality is less conclusive, research by Ferree (1980) indicated the potential for the development of a strong feminist consciousness among working class women, and emphasized the importance of employment experience over class differences in analyzing gender attitudes. Other researchers, however, have pointed out the greater likelihood of support by highly educated and "professional" women for such feminist issues as the Equal Rights Amendment and legalized abortion (Burris, 1984; Gill, 1985; Granberg and Granberg, 1980). Finally, several recent analyses of women's attitudes have indicated that housewives are as much in support of the Equal Rights Amendment as women working in the labor force (Gill, 1985; Burris, 1983; Huber and Spitze, 1981).

These recent efforts to identify factors that affect attitudes towards feminist issues provide the research direction for the primary question of this paper: how do women's attitudes towards specific "feminist" issues vary by race, occupational type, educational level, and marital
status? These issues include support for the Equal Rights Amendment, abortion rights, and women's level of commitment to working in the paid labor force. Race, marital status, education and occupation (as separate indicators of class position) were chosen as the independent variables because they are the most frequently cited factors affecting women's sense of inclusion or exclusion from the feminist movement.

Although the initial intention was to examine the influence of a socio-economic "class" variable, in accordance with Acker's definition, the data set did not provide an adequate indicator that would allow for the determination of non-employed women's class position. Acker's (1979) work constructed a class measure based on a woman's usual occupation in the labor force, regardless of her current employment status. An attempt to create a combined measure of social class based on education and occupation was explored but did not prove to be useful. Thus, educational level and occupational type were analyzed separately.

The decision to analyze differences by occupational group (i.e. managerial, technical, clerical, etc.) rather than by employment status (i.e. currently employed fulltime, part-time, etc.) was based on research by Gill (1985) and Huber and Spitze (1981) which indicated that a woman's current labor force status is unrelated to her attitude towards the Equal Rights Amendment. Also, while

Ferree (1980) found that women who have had some work experience (regardless of current employment status) were more likely to support the Equal Rights Amendment, the survey used in this analysis did not ask respondents about past work experience. Thus, occupational type, rather than current employment status, will be analyzed. This research is important to the process of feminist theory exploration, because it helps to elucidate the relationships between gender, race, and class oppression. It is also an essential first step to broadening the base of support for feminist goals and achieving equality for all women.

## Review of Recent Literature

In order to begin a discussion of women's attitudes towards issues of gender equality, it is helpful to distinguish between various components of feminist attitudes. There appear to be at least three distinct dimensions of feminist attitudes: support for political and economic change to improve the status of women (equal rights), a desire for changes in roles assigned to women and men, and a sense of the personal relevance of the women's movement (Ferree, 1981).

One important question in an analysis of women's attitudes towards feminism is whether most women consider gender issues as a coherent whole, or view them as separable issues. Studies by Mason and Bumpass (1975),
and Welch (1975; p. 225) indicated that most women do not demonstrate clear "ideological" consistency between their beliefs about legal and economic equality for women, and their sex-role attitudes. In other words, most women do not organize their attitudes towards such issues along either "feminist" or "traditional" lines. These findings were consistent with recent analyses which indicated that women's attitudes towards sex roles and equality for women were either unrelated, or only weakly related, to their attitudes towards legalized abortion (Blake and Pinal, 1980; Finlay, 1985; Granberg and Granberg, 1980; Jaffe, Lindheim, and Lee, 1981).

The studies by Welch, and Mason and Bumpass also considered group-level characteristics to determine their effects on attitudes. Both found, as Welch stated, that "different attributes were relevant to different issues" (Welch, 1975; p.221). For example, Mason and Bumpass found that while women's employment status was "markedly related" to their gender-role attitudes, it was unrelated to their attitudes towards equal opportunities for women in the labor force (Mason and Bumpass, 1975). Since this paper considers gender issues which are not identical to those considered in either of the aforementioned studies, direct confirmation of the previous findings is not possible. However, it is expected that while group-level differences will be found to affect women's gender attitudes, these group-level differences will not be able
to predict consistently "feminist" or consistently "traditional" attitudes. Thus, hypotheses to predict the effects of each of the independent variables on each of the individual dependent variables will be based on previous research findings that directly address each issue individually.

Research on Attitudes Towards the Equal Rights Amendment

Two of the most comprehensive analyses of nation-wide data on attitudes towards the Equal Rights Amendment (E.R.A.) were conducted on survey data collected before the failure of the state legislatures (in 1982) to ratify the Amendment. Burris analyzed 1980 American National Election Study results, and Gill used data from a 1977 National Opinion Research Center survey. Thus, one contribution made by the present study is the analysis of more recent survey data, collected in 1985, after the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment to be ratified (despite its widespread popular support). Furthermore, the continued high levels of support for the Equal Rights Amendment evidenced by this 1985 data lends support to the notion of continued liberalization of sex role attitudes, noted by other researchers (see Thorton, et. al., 1985).

Burris and Gill each analyzed numerous social and demographic characteristics to determine their effects on attitude towards the E.R.A. Of relevance to this paper,
are their analyses of the effects of race, marital status, education, and occupation. Gill's and Burris' findings were consistent on three of these four variables. Both found that women of color were more likely than white women to support the E.R.A. Additionally, divorced, single, and separated women were found to be more likely to favor the E.R.A. than married women. In addition, both found that women in professional and managerial jobs were more likely than women in "working class" occupations to support the E.R.A. More specifically, Burris reported clerical workers as the most likely to oppose the E.R.A. Thus, the research hypotheses in relation to these three variables will be as follows:

1. Black and Latina women are more likely than white women to favor the E.R.A.
2. Divorced, separated, and single women are more likely than married and widowed women to favor the E.R.A.
3. Women in executive, managerial, and technical jobs will be more likely than women in other occupations to support the E.R.A.

Education was the only variable on which Burris' and Gill's findings differed. Burris found that support for the E.R.A. was "extremely high" among women with advanced degrees. Gill, however, reported that the "most surprising finding of this multiple regression analysis" was that education did not make a significant independent contribution to ability to explain E.R.A. attitudes, when
a feminist measure of social class (see footnote \#1, supra) was entered into the regression equation. Since the present study did not control for occupation when considering the effect of education on E.R.A. attitude, the research hypothesis will be based on Burris' findings:
4. Women who are college-educated will be more likely than women who are not college-educated to favor the E.R.A.

Research on Attitudes Towards Legalized Abortion

Numerous analyses of national surveys have been conducted to determine the effects of certain social and demographic characteristics on attitudes towards legalized abortion. Some of these analyses have also considered whether women's attitudes towards legalized abortion are correlated with sex-role attitudes, and beliefs about women's rights. Most have found that these are only very weakly correlated (Blake and Pinal, 1980; Finlay, 1985; Granberg and Granberg, 1980). Rather, such social and demographic characteristics as religion, educational level, and age were more important determinants of attitude towards legalized abortion (Blake and Pinal, 1980; Granberg and Granberg, 1980).

The particular variables of interest in this study which have previously been found to have an effect on attitude towards abortion are race, marital status, and educational level. Few studies have considered the effect
of occupation.
Most recent research, including an analysis of eight national surveys (ranging from 1965 to 1980) by Granberg and Granberg, has indicated that black Americans are less likely than white Americans to support legalized abortion. Granberg and Granberg noted that "this difference may be a genuine subcultural difference which cannot be explained completely by variations in socioeconomic status" (Granberg and Granberg, 1980; p. 254). From a feminist framework, this difference may be understood by considering the complexity of the issue of reproductive rights for black, Latina, and Native American women.

While women of color have been especially likely to suffer because of laws prohibiting abortion, they have also been the victims of sterilization abuses carried out by various medical and governmental agencies (Davis, 1981; Velez-I, 1980). In addition, the forerunner to the abortion rights movement was the birth control movement of the early $1900^{\prime}$ s, which was influenced by the racist eugenics movement. Thus, as Angela Davis has noted, black women "adopted a posture of suspicion" towards the abortion rights movement of the early l970's. Given these findings, the research hypothesis is:
5. White women are more likely than black and Latina women to favor legalized abortion.

Recent studies of abortion attitudes, based on nation-wide surveys, have found that marital status and
educational level both affect attitudes towards legalized abortion. However, marital status does seem to have some effect, with married women being more likely to oppose legalized abortion (Finlay, 1985). Educational level has consistently been found to be one of the best demographic predictors of abortion attitude, with more highly educated respondents being more likely to favor legalized abortion (Granberg and Granberg, 1980). Thus, two of the research hypotheses on attitude towards abortion are:
6. Single, divorced, and separated women are more likely than married and widowed women to favor the legal right to abortion.
7. Highly educated women will be more likely than other women to favor the legal right to abortion.

While few analyses of abortion attitudes have considered the effect of a woman's occupation, Granberg and Granberg (1980) considered the effect of occupational prestige on attitude towards legalized abortion. They found that in eight nation-wide surveys (conducted between 1965 and 1980), occupational prestige was never found to exert an effect on attitude towards abortion. Thus, the research hypothesis regarding occupational type is:
8. Occupational type will not have a significant effect on women's attitudes towards legalized abortion.

Individual Work Commitment

The last dependent variable to be considered is based on a woman's expression of what she believes would be the
most personally satisfying combination of work, marriage, and children. Since the survey question addressed a personal, rather than an abstract dimension of gender roles, it is reasonable to assume that sociodemographic variables such as marital status, occupation, and educational level will have some effect on women's opinions about what a personally satisfying combination of work, marriage, and children would be.

Previous research of a similar nature provides some clues. For example, Welch's (1975) research on two distinct dimensions of feminist attitudes--attitudes towards labor-market rights and familial sex roles--may provide a useful comparison. As previously mentioned, Welch found that women apparently considered these two types of issues to be separable. While group-level characteristics were found to affect attitudes, "ideological" consistency between the issues was absent. In recent research on women's levels of "work commitment," Bielby and Bielby (1984) found no difference by race/ethnicity. Thus, the research hypothesis on the effect of race/ethnicity is:
9. Race/ethnicity will not have an effect on women's level of work commitment.

Welch found education to have the "most pronounced" effect on both attitudes towards equal labor-market rights and gender roles (Welch, 1975). More highly educated women were more favorable towards equality for women in
both areas. Thus, it is hypothesized that:
10. Women who have a college education will express a higher level of commitment to work than will women who do not have a college education.

Welch did not find marital status to exert a significant impact on women's attitudes towards either of the scales. However, in the present study it is hypothesized that marital status will have a significant effect. It is assumed that there is some degree of consistency between a woman's actual marital status and her family orientation. The survey question on level of work commitment refers to a more personal dimension of gender roles than the questions analyzed by Welch. Thus, the research hypothesis is:
11. Single, divorced, and separated women will express a higher level of commitment to work than married and widowed women.

Finally, occupational type, which was not considered by Welch, is hypothesized to have an effect on level of work commitment. Women who are in occupations which may offer better pay, more self-determination, and opportunity for advancement will likely express a greater attachment to being in the labor force than will women who are in occupations which are are low-paying and deskilled. Thus, the research hypothesis is:
12. Women in executive, managerial, and technical occupations will express a higher level of commitment to work than women in other occupations.

After a description of both the data set and the research design to be used, these hypotheses will be tested, and the findings will be discussed. This analysis will illustrate the differences among women's attitudes towards several feminist issues, and may help to further an understanding of the underlying meanings of such variations.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA

Data for this analysis were drawn from a survey entitled "The 1985 Virginia Slims American Women's Opinion Poll" conducted by the Roper Organization. The 3,000 women and 1,000 men interviewed represent a nationwide cross section of the population of the Continental United States, age 18 and over (exclusive of institutionalized segments of the population). The sampling methodology employed was a multi-stage stratified probability sample of interviewing locations. Quotas for sex and age of respondents, as well as for the number of employed women, were imposed to ensure adequate representation in the sample.

The survey from which the data were drawn was the third in a series of studies sponsored by Virginia slims. The previous surveys were conducted in 1974 and 1980. These surveys focus on American women's and men's attitudes towards changes in the status and roles of women in society. In this study, only the responses from the women were analyzed.

## Limitations of the Data Set

Although the survey addressed a number of important feminist issues, the framing of some of the questions
reflected unexamined gender biases. Among the underlying assumptions in the questionnaire were the notions that women are and should be primarily responsible for housework and childcare, and that women are less attached 1 to the labor force than are men. Also, the wording of some of the questions revealed a false dichotomy between 2 "working women" and "homemakers." Such a dichotomy fails to acknowledge the double burden of wage employment and domestic labor which many women perform, and does not describe the fluidity of women's movement into and out of the paid labor force.

The question on work commitment revealed a class bias, by use of the term "career" rather than "work," ${ }^{3}$ which implied that all women have access to high-prestige, well-paid jobs which offer opportunities for advancement. Also, the analysis of women's attitudes towards legalized abortion was limited by the fact that the survey did not ask women about legalized abortion for varying reasons. Research on abortion attitudes reveals a higher level of support for legalized abortion for such "hard" reasons as rape or a pregnancy which threatens the mother's life, and less support for "soft" reasons such as inconvenience or economic hardship. Nonetheless, the survey provided a large, useful pool of data from which comparisons among various groups of American women could be made.

Another limitation of this data set was that the two questions which referred to race and ethnicity excluded
some significant racial/ethnic minorities; the questions also produced categories that were not necessarily mutually exclusive. The first question separated respondents into four groups: "white," "black," "other," and "not ascertained." The second question separated respondents into "Hispanic," "non-Hispanic," and "not ascertained." Thus, it was not possible to separately analyze the responses of Native American and Asian American women, nor could the racial composition of the Hispanic category be determined without recoding.

In this study, the two variables were combined and recoded into three groups--Latina, black, and white women. The new category "Latina women" included those women who responded as "Hispanic," regardless of race ("black," "white," or "other"). The new category "black women" included only those respondents who indicated they were "black" on the first question and "non-Hispanic" or "not ascertained" for the question on Hispanic ethnicity. The new category "white women" included only respondents who were "white" and "non-Hispanic," or who were "white" and whose Hispanic ethnicity was not ascertained. Responses which fit into both "other" (than black or white) and "not ascertained" (for Hispanic/non-Hispanic ethnicity) were 5 eliminated from the analysis.

After recoding, $82.3 \%$ of the respondents were categorized as "white," $12.7 \%$ as "black," and 4.2\% as "Latina." Although Latina women were somewhat
underrepresented in this sample, the total number surveyed (one hundred and twenty-six) provided a pool large enough to warrant analysis.

After grouping responses by race/ethnicity, percentage distributions were created to determine if any of the key demographic characteristics (occupational type, educational level, and marital status) varied substantially among the three groups of women (see Appendix A). There were several notable differences among the subgroups of respondents. For example, one clear difference revealed in the distributions was the marital status of respondents; $36 \%$ of the black women interviewed were married, $57.1 \%$ of Latina women surveyed were married, and $66.7 \%$ of white women were married.

When considering labor force characteristics, other clear differences emerge. Black women were the most likely to be employed (54.2\%), followed by white women (51.4\%) and Latina women (45\%). The modal responses for educational level showed that white women received the most education, followed by black women, and Latina women received the least education. Although these distributions suggested the possibility of interaction effects, two-way analyses of variance for race paired with each of the other independent variables revealed no significant interaction effects (using $\mathrm{p} \leq .05$ ).

Operational Definitions of the Dependent Variables

In order to analyze the differences among the three subgroups of women, three questions from the survey were operationalized into ordinal level dependent variables. The first question and response choices were stated in the questionnaire as follows:

The various State Legislatures voted against an amendment to the United States Constitution which would assure women equal rights under the law. As I'm sure you know, there is a lot of controversy for and against this amendment.

Do you think a Constitutional Amendment insuring equal rights for women should or should not again be put to a vote, or don't you care one way or the other?
(57.2\%) 1. Should be proposed (20.9\%) 2. Should not be proposed (17.2\%) 3. Don't care one way or the other (4.8\%) 4. Don't Know

These choices were recoded to establish attitude towards the E.R.A. as one of the dependent ordinal level variables. The first choice, "should be proposed," was assigned the value "5" and given the value label "support." The second choice, "should not be proposed," was assigned the value "1," and labeled "opposed to the E.R.A." Those responses under "don't care one way or the other" were assigned a value of "3" and labeled "neutral." Finally, the $4.8 \%$ of the responses which fell into the "don't know" category were eliminated from the analysis. The question on attitude towards legalized abortion was
stated as follows:
Now, turning to another subject, let me read you some statements. For each, please tell me whether you tend to agree or disagree.

Laws making abortion legal should be repealed.
(40.4\%) 1. Agree
(47.0\%) 2. Disagree
(12.5\%) 3. Don't Know

Those who responded "agree" were assigned a value of "1" and labeled "oppose" to indicate opposition to legalized abortion. Data from women who disagreed with the statement were assigned the value "3" and given the value label "support" to indicate support for legalized abortion. Finally, those data from women who did not know how they felt about legalized abortion were eliminated from the analysis, which was consistent with the elimination of this category for attitude towards the E.R.A. and level of work commitment. The data for abortion attitudes indicated the stability in support for legalized abortion over the decade 1975-1985.

The work commitment measure was based on a survey question which was administered to two subgroups of respondents. Participants were randomly divided into two groups and asked the same question with a slightly different set of responses provided. As noted earlier, the question indicated a class bias, by using the term "career" rather than "work":

Now let me ask you a somewhat different question. Considering the possibilities for combining or not combining marriage, children, and a career, and assuming you had a choice, which ONE of these possibilities do you think would offer YOU the most satisfying and interesting life?
(3.1\%) 1. Having a career and not marrying or having children
(4.3\%) 2. Having a career and marrying, but not having children
(63.7\%) 3. Combining marriage, a career and having children
(25.8) 4. Marrying, having children and not having a career
(.7\%) 5. Marrying, but not having children or a career
(1.9\%) 6. Don't Know

The only difference between the two forms of the question was that half of the participants were given an additional choice, which was "Having a career and children, but not marrying." Data for the .5\% of the sample which fit in this category were eliminated from the analysis, because this question was not asked of both groups of women. Those who responded "don't know" (1.9\% of the total sample) were also eliminated.

Responses in the other categories were combined for the two forms of the question, and recoded to treat the data as ordinal level variables. Responses were scaled from 1 to 5, with "1" being the most family-oriented life style choice. and "5" being the most work-oriented choice. That is, women who wanted to marry and have children without a "career" were assigned the value "1." Those who
wanted to marry only were assigned the value "2." Data for those who wished to combine work, children, and marriage, were assigned the value "3." Women who chose "Having a career and marrying, but not having children," were assigned the value "4." Finally, the respondents who expressed a preference for "having a career and not marrying or having children" were assigned the value "5."

The decision to scale the responses in this manner was based on feminist research which has explored recent changes in the range of choices open to women regarding combinations of work and familial responsibilities (cf. Hess and Sussman, eds., 1984). The scale developed from the "work commitment" variable in this study attempts to tap changes in the gender division of labor into the spheres of production and reproduction, and to illustrate women's current levels of commitment to working in the employed labor force.

Statistical Technique

The analysis consisted of three main steps. First, two-way analysis of variance tests were performed to determine if there were any significant interactions between race and the other three independent variables. Once it was determined that there were no significant interaction effects, one-way analyses of variance were conducted, to separately analyze the effect of each of the independent variables on each of the dependent variables.

Finally, a multiple comparison procedure, the Scheffe test, was calculated for each of the one-way ANOVAS to provide a more stringent test of significance, and to reveal differences among the means of categories within the independent variables.

As previously indicated, the percentage distributions for Latina, black, and white women revealed clear differences by marital status, occupational type, and educational level. Therefore, two way analyses of variance were performed in order to identify any significant interaction effects between race, and each of the other independent variables. Thus, race and education, race and occupation, and race and marital status were paired as factors in two-way analysis of variance tests, on each of the dependent variables. These 9 ANOVAS revealed no significant interaction effects.

Since the two-way analyses showed no significant interaction effects, the next step was to determine separately the effects of race, marital status, education, and occupation on the dependent variables, by performing one-way analysis of variance tests. In addition to the $F$ values and probabilities, the results of a more stringent test, the Scheffe Procedure, have been reported. This multiple comparison procedure is "...conservative for pairwise comparisons of means. It requires larger differences between means for significance than most of the other methods" (Norusis, 1983; p. 111). The Scheffe

Procedure tests pairs of means for significant differences, thus making it possible to identify significant differences between specific categories of the independent variables.

## RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Attitude Towards the Equal Rights Amendment

The first data to be reported concern women's attitudes towards the Equal Rights Amendment, considering the following four independent variables: race, marital status, education, and occupation. One-way analysis of variance tests were performed to determine the effect of each of the independent variables on women's attitudes towards the E.R.A. Of the four independent variables analyzed, race, marital status, and education were significant. Occupation, however, was not statistically significant ( $\mathrm{F}=1.25$, $\mathrm{df}=8, \mathrm{p}=.26$ ).

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of race on attitude towards the Equal Rights Amendment tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of black, Latina, and white women. The null hypothesis of no difference among group means was rejected, as it met the pre-established criterion of $p \leq$ .05 (see table 1).

TABLE 1: One-way ANOVA for RACE on E.R.A. Attitude

| Source | D.F. | Sum of <br> Squares | Mean <br> Squares | F <br> Ratio | F <br> Probability |
| :--- | :---: | :--- | :--- | :---: | :---: |
| RACE | 2 | 165.76 | 82.88 | 31.27 | .0000 |

Results of the Scheffe Procedure revealed that even when this relationship was subjected to a more stringent test of significance, black and Latina women's attitudes remained significantly different from white women's attitudes towards the E.R.A., ( $\mathrm{p} \leq .05$, see Table 2). The finding that black women were more likely than white women to support the E.R.A. is consistent with Gill's (1985) analysis of the 1977 National Opinion Research Center's survey, Burris' (1983) analysis of the 1980 National Election Study, and the results of a 1984 survey commissioned by MS magazine and carried out by Louis Harris and Associates. These studies considered the attitudes of black, but not Latina, women.

By including a separate analysis of Latina women's attitudes, the present study extended previous research on the effect of a woman's race/ethnicity on her attitude towards the E.R.A. The finding that Latina women were also significantly more likely to support the E.R.A. than white women, provides additional evidence that it may be minority group status which makes black and Latina women
more likely to support the E.R.A. Perhaps the discrimination experienced by women who are members of oppressed racial/ethnic minority groups increases their sensitivity to and awareness of patterns of gender as well as racial discrimination.

Table 2: Scheffe Test for Race on E.R.A. Attitude

| Mean | Group | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |

3.65 White (1)
4.14 Latina (2) *
4.34 Black (3) *
*In the tables showing the results of the Scheffe tests, the symbol (*) indicates pairs of groups that are significantly different at the . 05 level. *Scoring: opposed to E.R.A. $=1$, in support $=5$.

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of marital status on attitude towards the Equal Rights Amendment tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of married, single, widowed, divorced, and separated women. The null hypothesis of no difference among group means was rejected, since the pre-established criterion of $\mathrm{p} \leq .05$ was met (see Table 3).

TABLE 3: One-way ANOVA for MARITAL STATUS on E.R.A. Attitude

| Source | D.F. | Sum of <br> Squares | Mean <br> Squares | F <br> Ratio | F <br> Probability |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| MARITAL <br> STATUS | 4 | 129.12 | 32.28 | 12.15 | .0000 |

The Scheffe test revealed that divorced and single women were significantly more likely (than married and widowed women) to support the Equal Rights Amendment. This finding was consistent with Gill's research (1985) and Burris' analysis (1983). Yet, although the mean attitude score for separated women was closer to the mean attitude scores of divorced and single women, it was not significantly different from the mean attitude scores of widowed and married women (see Table 4). This finding partially refuted the research hypothesis, which stated that separated women would be significantly more likely than married and widowed women to favor the E.R.A.

This unanticipated result may indicate that separated women are similar to married and widowed women in terms of economic dependence on men if, as Burris suggests, it is a direct confrontation with the need for economic independence which makes divorced (and presumably single) women more likely to favor the E.R.A. (1983). Women who are faced with the need for economic independence may be more likely to realize the importance of laws prohibiting
discrimination against women in various aspects of social life, including the labor force. Future research would benefit from more information on the degree of financial independence of women, grouped by marital status, in order to explore the possibility that economic dependence on men makes women more traditional in their attitudes towards "feminist" issues, such as passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Table 4: Scheffe Test for MARITAL STATUS on E.R.A. Attitude

| Mean | Group | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |


| 3.63 | Married | $(1)$ |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 3.64 | Widowed | $(2)$ |  |  |
| 4.06 | Separated | $(3)$ |  |  |
| 4.12 | Divorced | $(4)$ | $*$ | $*$ |
| 4.14 | Single | $(5)$ | $*$ | $*$ |

*Scoring: opposed to E.R.A. $=1$, neutral $=3$, support $=5$.

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of education on attitude towards the Equal Rights Amendment tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of women grouped by educational level. The null hypothesis of no difference among group means was rejected as it met the pre-established criterion of $\mathrm{p} \leq .05$ (see Table 5). This finding, that education had a significant effect on women's attitudes towards the E.R.A., is consistent with the Harris survey (1984), and with Burris'
findings (1983). However, it differs from Gill's (1985) research which found that "the most surprising result" to emerge from her analysis was that "education (did) not make a significant independent contribution to the 1
...ability to explain ERA attitudes."

TABLE 5: One-way ANOVA for EDUCATION on E.R.A. Attitude

| Source | D.F. | Sum of <br> Squares | Mean <br> Squares | F <br> Ratio | F <br> Probability |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| EDUCATION | 6 | 41.54 | 6.92 | 2.57 | .0172 |

When the effect of educational level on attitude towards the Equal Rights Amendment was subjected to the Scheffe Procedure it did not remain statistically significant, and thus was consistent with Gill's (1985) findings. Although women with a college degree and/or a post-graduate degree were the most likely to favor the E.R.A., women with some college had a lower mean attitude score (thus indicating less support for the E.R.A.) than women who had some high school education or who were high school graduates. Women with a grade school education were slightly less likely than women with some college to support the E.R.A. The subgroup of women with no education was too small to allow meaningful statistical 2 analysis.

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of occupational category on attitude towards the E.R.A. tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of women grouped by occupational type. The null hypothesis of no difference among group means cannot be rejected at the .05 significance level $(F=1.25, ~ d f=8$, $\mathrm{p}=.27$ ). Thus, the research hypothesis, that women in executive, managerial, and technical jobs are more likely to support the E.R.A. than women in other occupations, is not supported. This finding differs from research by Gill (1985) and Burris (1983) which found that women who hold or have held professional or managerial jobs are more likely to favor the E.R.A. than similar women with working-class occupations.

In the studies conducted by Burris and Gill, educational level was controlled for when analyzing the effect of occupational type. The fact that the present study did not control for educational level may explain the inconsistency of the findings; it suggests the importance of controlling for educational level, in future research. These conflicting findings also underscore the importance of further refinement of a class indicator for women, in future research, as well as the need for more research on how a woman's position in the stratification system affects her attitudes towards issues of economic equality for women.

Attitude Towards Legalized Abortion

The data to be reported next concern women's attitudes towards laws legalizing abortion. Again, the results of the one-way analysis of variance tests (with $F$ tests with probabilities), and the results of the Scheffe Procedure will be reported. Of the four independent variables analyzed, marital status, education, and occupational type were significant. However, race was not statistically significant.

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of race on attitude towards legalized abortion tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of black, Latina, and white women. The null hypothesis of no difference among group means could not be rejected at the .05 significance level ( $\mathrm{F}=.18$, $\mathrm{df}=2, \mathrm{p}=.82$ ). Thus, the research hypothesis that white women are more likely to support legalized abortion than are black and Latina women was not supported.

This finding differs from the analyses of Blake and Pinal (1980), Granberg and Granberg (1980), and Finlay (1985), all of whom found whites to be significantly more likely to support legalized abortion than blacks. However, the finding is consistent with the analysis of Jaffe, Lindheim, and Lee (1981), who found a significant narrowing of attitudinal differences by various social and demographic characteristics, including race; although they
offered no explanation of this trend, and described the rapidity of this change as surprising. Thus, while the finding of this study is consistent with this research, the interpretation of these findings may require future research and analysis.

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of marital status on attitude towards legalized abortion tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of married, single, widowed, divorced, and separated women. The null hypothesis of no difference among group means was rejected, as it met the preestablished criterion of $p \leq .05$ (see Table 6).

TABLE 6: One-way ANOVA for MARITAL STATUS on Abortion

| Source | D.F. | Sum of <br> Squares | Mean <br> Squares | F <br> Ratio | F <br> Probability |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| MARITAL <br> STATUS | 4 | 61.52 | 15.38 | 15.81 | .0000 |

The effect of marital status on attitude towards legalized abortion remained statistically significant when subjected to the Scheffe test ( $\mathrm{p} \leq .05$, see Table 7). Single and divorced women were significantly more likely to favor legalized abortion than married and widowedwomen. The finding that married women were more likely to oppose legalized abortion is consistent with the findings
of Finlay, who analyzed data from the 1977 General Social Survey (1985).

The unanticipated finding that separated women were not significantly more likely than married and widowed women to favor legalized abortion refuted part of the research hypothesis. Perhaps this result is due to differences in the presence of children, among women of various marital status. Future research should control for the effect of the presence of children, when analyzing the effect of marital status on abortion attitudes.

Table 7: Scheffe Test for Marital Status on Abortion

| Mean | Group | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |


| 1.94 | Widowed | $(1)$ |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 2.00 | Married | $(2)$ |  |  |
| 2.08 | Separated | $(3)$ |  |  |
| 2.30 | Single | $(4)$ | $*$ | $*$ |
| 2.41 | Divorced | $(5)$ | $*$ | $*$ |

*Scoring: opposed to abortion $=1$, in support $=3$.

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of education on attitude towards legalized abortion tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of women grouped by educational level. The null hypothesis of no difference among group means was rejected as it met the pre-established criterion of $\mathrm{p} \leq .05$ (see Table 8). The finding that educational level had an
effect on attitude towards legalized abortion, is in agreement with an analysis of 1980 General Social Survey results by Granberg and Granberg (1980), and research by Tatalovich and Daynes (1981), and Blake and Pinal (1980).

TABLE 8: One-way ANOVA for EDUCATION on Abortion

| Source | D.F. | Sum of <br> Squares | Mean <br> Squares | F <br> Ratio | F <br> Probability |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :--- | :---: | :---: |
| EDUCATION | 6 | 85.36 | 14.23 | 14.76 | .0000 |

When the effect of education on attitude towards legalized abortion was subjected to the Scheffe Procedure, it remained statistically significant ( $p \leq .05$, see Table 9). When group means are compared, it is evident that women with college and post-graduate degrees were the most likely, of any of the women grouped by educational level, to favor legalized abortion. Women with post-graduate degrees were significantly more likely to support legalized abortion than women who had some college education or fewer years of education. Women with college degrees were more likely to support the legal right to abortion than were women with a high school education or less. High school graduates and women with some college were similar in their level of support for legalized abortion; both were significantly more likely to favor
legalized abortion than women with a grade school education. The clear relationship between educational level and attitude towards abortion is consistent with the findings of Granberg and Granberg (1980). The Scheffe test provided a more detailed break-down of differences among women, grouped by educational level, than much of the recently reported research provides.

Table 9: Scheffe Test for EDUCATION on Abortion

| Mean | Group |  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1.74 | Grade | $(1)$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1.92 | SomeHS | $(2)$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2.04 | HSgrad | $(3)$ | $*$ |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2.13 | Somecoll | $(4)$ | $*$ |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2.37 | Colgrad | $(5)$ | $*$ | $*$ | $*$ |  |  |  |
| 2.52 | Postgrad | $(6)$ | $*$ | $*$ | $*$ | $*$ |  |  |

*Scoring: opposed to abortion $=1$, in support $=3$.

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of occupational category on attitude towards legalized abortion tested the null hypothesis of a difference between the mean attitude scores of women grouped by occupational type. The null hypothesis of a difference among group means could not be rejected. Thus, the research hypothesis of no difference by occupational type is not supported (see Table 10).

TABLE 10: One-way ANOVA for OCCUPATION on Abortion

| Source | D.F. | Sum of <br> Squares | Mean <br> Squares | F <br> Ratio | F <br> Probability |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| OCCUPATION | 8 | 31.85 | 3.98 | 4.226 | .0001 |

The effect of occupational category on attitude towards legalized abortion remained statistically significant when subjected to the Scheffe test (p $\leq .05$, see Table 11). The breakdown of mean attitude scores by occupational type revealed that women in sales and women in executive positions were similar in their mean attitude scores, and were significantly more likely than women in unskilled occupations to support the legal right to abortion. These were the only group means which were significantly different. In future research, it would be useful to control for the effect of educational level when analyzing the effect of occupational type on abortion attitudes, as suggested by the work of Gill (1985).

Table 11: Scheffe Test for OCCUPATION on Abortion

| Mean Group | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |


| 1.82 | Unskill | $(1)$ |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 2.04 | Owners | $(2)$ |  |
| 2.07 | Service | $(3)$ |  |
| 2.13 | Skilled | $(4)$ |  |
| 2.24 | Clerical | $(5)$ |  |
| 2.26 | Tpmngmnt | $(6)$ |  |
| 2.34 | Tech | $(7)$ |  |
| 2.37 | Exec | $(8)$ | * |
| 2.40 | Sales | $(9)$ |  |

*Scoring: opposed to abortion $=1$, in support $=3$.

An understanding of the differences among women of various educational levels, occupational types, and marital status in attitudes towards legalized abortion may be furthered by considering the work of Luker (1984). Luker studied the composition of the pro-choice and prolife movements, by examining differences in the social and demographic characteristics of women involved on both sides of the abortion debate. Luker described the much greater family orientation of "pro-life" women, and the greater career orientation and higher educational level of "pro-choice" women. She argued that motherhood has a "political dimension," and that the "life commitments" made by women on both sides of this issue may "limit their ability to change their minds." The values that lead prolife and pro-choice women into different attitudes towards abortion "are the same values" that earlier in their lives
led them to adopt different lifestyles (Luker, 1984; p. 199). Thus, women's attitudes towards abortion may emerge from their own life style choices, ranging from a family to a work orientation.

## Individual Work Commitment

The last data to be reported regard women's level of commitment to work in the paid labor force. Again, the results of the one-way analysis of variance tests ( $F$ tests with probabilities), and the results of the Scheffe Procedure will be reported. Of the four independent variables analyzed, education, marital status, and occupational type indicated significant results. However, the results for race were not statistically significant (F = 2.37, $\mathrm{df}=2, \mathrm{p}=.093$ ).

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of education on work commitment tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of women grouped by educational level. The null hypothesis of no difference among group means was rejected, as it met the preestablished criterion of $p \leq .05$ (see Table 12).

TABLE 12: One-way ANOVA for EDUCATION on work commitment

| Source | D.F. | Sum of <br> Squares | Mean <br> Squares | F <br> Ratio | F <br> Probability |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :--- | :---: | :---: |
| EDUCATION | 6 | 104.26 | 17.38 | 17.10 | .0000 |

When the effect of education on work commitment was subjected to the Scheffe Procedure, the results remained statistically significant $p \leq .05$ (see Table 13). There was a clear relationship between educational level and work commitment, with some college training being the line of demarcation between women grouped by educational level. Women who had some college education, college graduates, and women with post-graduate training were more likely to have a greater work orientation than women with a grade school, some high school education, and high school graduates. In addition, women with a high school education had a significantly greater work orientation than women with a grade school education.

Table 13: Scheffe Test for EDUCATION on work commitment

| Mean Group | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |


| 2.26 | Grade | $(1)$ |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 2.37 | SomeHS | $(2)$ |  |  |  |
| 2.52 | HSgrad | $(3)$ | $*$ |  |  |
| 2.71 | Somecoll | $(4)$ | $\star$ | $*$ | $*$ |
| 2.83 | Colgrad | $(5)$ | $\star$ | $\star$ | $\star$ |
| 3.01 | Postgrad | $(6)$ | $*$ | $*$ | $*$ |

*Scoring: family orientation $=1$, work orientation $=5$.

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of occupational category on work commitment tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of women grouped by occupational type. The null hypothesis of no
difference among group means was rejected as it met the pre-established criterion of $\mathrm{p} \leq .05$ (see Table 14).

TABLE 14: One-way ANOVA for OCCUPATION on work commitment

| Source | D.F. | Sum of <br> Squares | Mean <br> Squares | F <br> Ratio | F <br> Probability |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| OCCUPATION | 8 | 34.83 | 4.35 | 5.80 | .0000 |

The effect of occupational type on commitment to work passed the Scheffe test $p \leq .05$ (see Table 15). The breakdown of attitudes of women grouped by occupational type revealed that only women in executive positions were significantly more work-oriented than women in other occupations; they were significantly different from women in occupations classified as "unskilled," "service," and "skilled" (see Table 15). Although no other occupational group means were significantly different when subjected to the Scheffe test, the ordering of group means revealed that women in "technical," "managerial," and "executive" positions had the greatest "career orientation"; women in/ unskilled and service jobs had the greatest "family orientation." It is not particularly surprising that
 women in occupational groups which are largely deskilled and poorly paid expressed, on average, a lesser commitment to work.

Table 15: Scheffe Test for OCCUPATION on work commitment

| Mean Group | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |


| 2.53 | Unskill | $(1)$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 2.67 | Service | $(2)$ |
| 2.70 | Sales | $(3)$ |
| 2.72 | Skilled | $(4)$ |
| 2.78 | Clerical | $(5)$ |
| 2.92 | Owners | $(6)$ |
| 2.97 | Tech | $(7)$ |
| 2.99 | Tpmngmnt | $(8)$ |
| 3.05 | Exec | $(9)$ |

*Scoring: family orientation $=1$, work orientation $=5$.

The one-way ANOVA for the effect of marital status on commitment to work tested the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean attitude scores of married, single, widowed, divorced, and separated women. The null hypothesis of no difference among group means was rejected, since it met the pre-established criterion of $\mathrm{p} \leq .05$ (see Table 16).

TABLE 16: One-way ANOVA for MARITAL STATUS on Work Commit.

| Source | D.F. | Sum of <br> Squares | Mean <br> Squares | F <br> Ratio | F <br> Probability |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| MARITAL <br> STATUS | 4 | 164.70 | 41.17 | 41.36 | .0000 |

The Scheffe Procedure allowed comparison of group
mean scores on the work commitment variable. The effect of marital status remained statistically significant when subjected to the Scheffe test ( $\mathrm{p} \leq .05$, see Table 17). Single and divorced women were significantly more likely to have a greater work orientation when compared to widowed and married women, who had a greater family orientation. This result was expected and may indicate that women who may be, out of necessity, economically self-sufficient, have on average a greater work orientation. The group means of separated and married women were similar, with both being significantly more likely to have a work orientation when compared to widowed women, who were the most likely of all the women grouped by marital status, to have a family orientation.

TABLE 17: Scheffe for MARITAL STATUS on work commitment

| Mean | Group |  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2.22 | Widowed | (1) |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2.49 | Married | (2) | $*$ |  |  |  |  |
| 2.70 | Separated | (3) | $*$ |  |  |  |  |
| 2.91 | Divorced | (4) | $*$ | $*$ |  |  |  |
| 3.02 | Single | (5) | $*$ | $*$ |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

*Scoring: family orientation $=1$, work orientation $=5$.

The finding that race/ethnicity was not significantly related to work commitment supported the research hypothesis. This finding is consistent with an analysis of levels of work commitment, done by Bielby and Bielby
(1984), which found no difference by race. While the inital frequency distributions (see Appendix A) indicated that black women are the least likely of the women, grouped by race/ethnicity, to be married and the most likely to be employed in the paid labor force, black women were similar to white and Latina women in their responses to the work commitment question. It may be that these differences, which would seem to indicate a greater work orientation, are outweighed by a reaction against the long history of economic necessity which has allowed most women of color and working class women little choice but to work. When expressing commitment to work in the paid labor force, many women who must carry a double burden of paid employment and family responsibilities, may express a desire to fully commit their energies to family responsibilities (see Hooks, 1981). This finding may provide evidence for the idea that "liberation" may have wholly different meanings for women located at various points in the stratification system. Future research might analyze the effect of race on level of work commitment, while controlling simultaneously, for the effects of marital status, educational level, and 3 employment status.

## CHAPTER IV

## CONCLUSION

Much of the previous research on attitudes towards gender issues is exploratory, offering tenative explanations regarding the sources of differences in women's attitudes towards feminist issues. The present study, also of an exploratory nature, attempts to confirm and extend previous works in two areas, feminist theory and practice.

For example, one contribution to feminist theory made by the present study is a further understanding of the impact of race/ethnicity on gender issues, gained by separately analyzing the attitudes of Latina women. While most previous studies have grouped women of color together, this separate analysis provided additional evidence that membership in an oppressed racial/ethnic group may influence women to be more aware of gender as well as racial discrimination. Futhermore, by providing survey data from 1985, the present study allowed a comparison of levels of support for legalized abortion between 1975 and 1985; it suggested remarkable stability in the level of support for legal abortion (see Blake, 1975). Finally, one finding of this study may have implications for a feminist agenda. By providing data collected after the failure of the E.R.A. to be ratified,
this study indicates that, most women continue to favor the E.R.A., lending support for a renewed effort at passing this constitutional amendment.

The findings of the present study indicate that for women, being highly educated, black or Latina, and being single, divorced, or separated were factors strongly associated with a favorable attitude towards the E.R.A. The greatest support for the legal right to abortion was among women who were highly educated, single or divorced, and in "sales" or "executive" positions. Finally, the greatest commitment to working in the paid labor force was found among highly educated, single or divorced, and "professional" women. Of the four variables considered, educational level and marital status were the most consistently useful predictors of women's attitudes towards "feminist" issues.

Suggestions for Further Research

Before suggesting avenues for further research, several limitations of the present study must be acknowledged. There are many important factors, such as age, religion, region, rural/urban residence, which were not considered, but which have been shown by previous research to affect attitudes towards the E.R.A., legalized abortion, and/or choices about family and work commitments. Another limitation of this study was that the type of analysis chosen (one-way ANOVAS) did not
determine the presence or absence of interaction between all of the possible combinations of the independent variables. (Two-way ANOVAS which were run to determine possible interaction between race and the other independent variables revealed no significant interactions).

In future research, it would be useful to determine the degree of interaction (if any) between the following pairs of variables: age and marital status, education and occupation. Since it is reasonable to assume that widows are on average older than other women grouped by marital status, the possibility of interaction between marital status and age should be explored. Also, older women may belong to cohorts which are less likely to divorce. Thus, controlling for age when analyzing marital status would take this effect into account. Similarly, analyzing the interaction between occupation and education might provide information useful to further refinement of a socioeconomic "class" variable for women, and greater clarification of the ways in which these two variables operate on women's gender attitudes.

Controlling for the effects of age and religion when analyzing attitudes towards abortion would be especially helpful, as previous research has shown these two factors to be strong predictors of women's attitudes towards abortion (Blake and Pinal, 1980). Finally, further study of women's commitment to work in the paid labor force
should consider possible interaction between a woman's socio-economic class and status as a parent with dependent children. Such an analysis may indicate that a demand for greater availability of and access to child care (especially among working class women) is an essential component of a feminist agenda.

Another limitation of this study, which has already been noted, is that it is exploratory in nature. However, this exploratory stage is an essential first step in building a comprehensive feminist theory which incorporates an analysis of the complex intersection of gender oppression with oppression by race and class. One problem which such a theory should address is how a woman's awareness of and opposition to oppression is influenced by her position in these interwoven stratification systems. The present study attempted to provide some insight into that problem, by exploring the effects of a woman's class position (measured separately here by education and occupation) and her race/ethnicity on gender issues. A deeper understanding of the factors which influence women to be aware of oppression, is essential to the feminist movement which was, and continues to be, built upon "consciousness raising."

One important result of this study was that among the factors considered, educational level and marital status were the most consistently useful predictors of women's attitudes towards "feminist" issues, with single divorced,
and highly educated women being the most likely to express "feminist" attitudes. This pattern suggests that a useful line of enquiry for future research may be an exploration of whether it is work experience, the need for economic independence, socio-economic class, education, or some combination of these factors, which influences women's attitudes towards "feminist" issues. Burris (1983) advances the notion that economic dependence upon on men may influence women to be more traditional in their gender attitudes. However, analyses of the gender attitudes of housewives and women in the paid labor force have frequently shown no difference between these two groups (Burris, 1983; Gill, 1985). Thus, the effects of and interactions between a woman's current employment status, occupational type (when in the labor force), educational level, marital status, and parental status should be explored further, to better understand the factors which may influence women's gender attitudes.

In addition to providing possible directions for further research, the present study may have implications for the further development of a feminist agenda. The continued high level of support for the E.R.A. indicates that despite a recent right-wing backlash against gains made by the feminist movement, substantial liberalization of attitudes towards "feminist" issues has been achieved. This continued support for the E.R.A. may suggest that another attempt to pass this constitutional amendment may
be worthwhile. Also, the lesser likelihood of support for feminist goals among women in working class occupations, and women who are less educated, may suggest that issues such as the "feminization of poverty" and "comparable worth" may have more direct relevance to working class women than other "feminist" issues. Thus, incorporating these issues may be significant in terms of broadening the base of support for feminist goals for change. Finally, the finding that black and Latina women were more likely than white women to express support for the E.R.A., but similar in their attitudes towards legalized abortion and work commitment indicates the importance of understanding how the experiences of women of color vary from the experiences of white women. Understanding the history of racial and class oppression is an essential first step to incorporating analyses of these issues in feminist theory and practice.

## CHAPTER I

1. See Joan Acker, "Women and Class in late capitalism," presented at seminar on women and work, Inter-University Center for Advanced Studies, Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia. 1979.
2. Discriminant function analysis was performed, to try to establish educational level as a predictor of a woman's usual occupation in the labor force. Data from women who were in the labor force at the time of the survey were used, but educational level did not prove to be a good predictor of occupation.

## CHAPTER II

1. For example, question nine asked "When do you think it is alright for women to have a job outside the home--when their youngest child is at what age?" This question thus reveals the assumption that women, rather than men, should stay at home with young children. Similarly, question twenty asked women whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "Having a loving husband who is able to take care of me is much more important to me than making it on my own." The survey administered to male respondents had no question parallel to this question, and thus implies an assumption that women are more likely than men to place higher priority on relationships than on work commitments.
2. For example, question eight asks, "There are working women and there are homemakers.... do you think the women's movement has helped working women, or made little difference to them, or hurt them?," thus ignoring the fact that many women fufill dual roles as workers in the paid labor force and as homemakers.
3. See text below, p. 20, for the full text of the question.
4. See text below, p. 19, for the full text of the question.
5. In doing so, data were lost for only twenty-four women, or .8\% of the total sample. 6. See Robert $0^{\prime}$ Brien, "The use of Pearson's $r$ with ordinal data," American Sociological Review 44: 851-57. 1979.

See also, Robert o'Brien, "Using rank order variables to represent continuous variables," Social Forces 59: 1149-62. 1982.
7. Thus, the new distribution for E.R.A. was as follows:

| Oppose | $21.9 \%$ |
| :--- | :--- |
| Neutral | $18.06 \%$ |
| Support | $60.0 \%$ |

8. See Judith Blake, "The Supreme Court's Abortion Decisions and Public Opinion in the United States," Population and Development Review, 3: 45-62. Blake cited data from the National Opinion Research Center (1975) which indicated that $44 \%$ of the respondents were in favor of legal abortion.
9. Since stratified random sampling was used, the test of statistical significance ( $p \leq .05$ ) was established as the criterion for rejecting or failing to reject the null hypotheses.

CHAPTER III

1. See Sandra Gill, (1985) "Attitude Towards the Equal Rights Amendment: Influence of Class and Status," Sociological Perspectives, 28: 441-462.
2. Only three women had "no education."
3. It is likely that among widowed women, age has a confounding effect on attitudes towards gender issues.

APPENDIX

## APPENDIX A: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTIONS ON MARITAL STATUS, OCCUPATIONAL TYPE, AND EDUCATIONAL LEVEL FOR black, latina, and white women

table 18: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR MARITAL STATUS

| GYOUP MARR | SNGL | WIDW | DIVR | SEP | N |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| BLACK 36. | 23.9 | 17.1 | 12.6 | 10.5 | (381) | (100.1\%) |
| LATINA 57.1 | 20.6 | 7.1 | 11.1 | 4.0 | $(126)$ | $(99.9 \%)$ |
| WHITE 66.7 | 11.9 | 11.5 | 8.2 | 1.8 | $(2469)$ | $(100.1 \%)$ |

TABLE 19: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

| Group None | Grade SmeHS | HSgrd | SmeCol | Colgrd | Pstgr | $N$ |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| BLACK | 0. | 15.7 | 25.7 | 34.6 | 15.2 | 5.2 | 3.1 | (381) | $(99.98)$ |
| LATINA | .8 | 19.0 | 30.2 | 30.2 | 13.5 | 4.0 | 1.6 | (126) | (99.38 |
| WHITE | .1 | 5.9 | 13.4 | 44.1 | 20.7 | 10.8 | 4.9 | (2469) | (99.98 |

*Numbers shown in tables represent percentages
within each racial/ethnic group.
**Totals do not always sum to loot due to rounding error.

## APPENDIX A (cont'd)

TABLE 20: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR OCCUPATIONAL TYPE

| Group | Noansw/ <br> Notapp | Tpmngmt | Exec | Own | Tech | Clerc Sales | Skill |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| BLACK | 45.8 | 1.1 | 5.8 | .5 | 3.2 | 11.6 | 1.1 | 10.3 |
| LATINA | 54.8 | 2.4 | 3.2 | 2.4 | 4.0 | 8.7 | 4.8 | 7.1 |
| WHITE | 48.6 | 3.4 | 7.2 | 2.8 | 4.4 | 11.9 | 3.7 | 7.7 |

N for Table 20

| BLACK | $(381)$ | $(100.2 \%)$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| LATINA | $(126)$ | $(100.1 \%)$ |
| WHITE | $(2469)$ | $(100 \%)$ |

LIST OF REFERENCES

Acker, Joan. 1979. "Women and class in late capitalism." Presented at seminar on Women and Work, Inter-University Center for Advanced Studies, Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia.

Alwin, Duane, Donald Camburn, and Arland Thorton. 1983. "Causes and Consequences of Sex-Role Attitudes and Attitude Change, American Sociological Review, 48: 211227.

Andersen, Margaret L. 1983. Thinking About Women: Sociological and Feminist Perspectives. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.).

Bielby, Denise Del Vento and William Bielbly. 1984. "Work Commitment, Sex-Role Attitudes, and Women's Employment," American Sociological Review, 49: 234-247.

Blake, Judith. 1977, "The Supreme Court's Abortion Decisions and Public Opinion in the United States, Population and Development Review, 3: 45-62.

Blake, Judith, and Jorge H. Pinal. 1980. Abortion Parley, James Burtchaell, ed. (Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel, Inc.).

Burris, Val. 1983. "Who Opposed the ERA? An Analysis of the Social Bases of Antifeminism," Social Science Quarterly, 64: 305-317.

Davis, Angela Y. 1981. Women, Race, \& Class. (New York: Random House).

Ferree, Myra Marx. 1980. "Working Class Feminism: a Consideration of the Consequences of Employment," The Sociological Quarterly, 21: 173-184.

Finlay, Barbara Agresti. 1985. "Correlates of Abortion Attitudes and Implications for Change," in Perspectives on Abortion (ed. Paul Sachdev). (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, Inc.).

Gill, Sandra. 1985. "Attitudes Towards the Equal Rights Amendment," Sociological Perspectives, 28: 441-462.

Granberg, Beth and Donald Granberg. 1980. "Abortion Attitudes, 1965-1980: Trends and Determinants," Family Planning Perspectives, 12: 250-261.

Green, Pearl. 1979. "The Feminist Consciousness," The Sociological Quarterly, 20: 359-374.

Hess, Beth and Marvin Sussman, (eds.). 1984. Women and the Family: Two Decades of Change. (Haworth Press, Inc.).

Hooks, Bell. 1981. Ain't I A Woman: black women and feminism. (Boston, Massachusetts: South End Press).

Jaffee, Frederick, Phillip Lee, and Barbara Lindheim. 1981. Abortion Politics: Private Morality and Public Policy. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.).

Johnson, Nan and Shannon Stokes. 1984. Southern Traditionalism and Sex-role Ideology: A Research Note," Sex Roles, 10: 11-18.

Katzenstein, Mary Fainsod. 1984. "Feminism and the Meaning of the Vote," Signs, 10: 5-22.

Luker, Kristin. 1984. Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood. (Berkeley: University of California Press).

Malveaux, Julianne. 1985. "Current Economic Trends and Black Feminist Consciousness," The Black Scholar, 16: 2631.

Mason, Karen Oppenheim, and Larry L. Bumpass. 1975. "U.S. Women's Sex-Role Ideology, 1970," American Journal of Sociology, 80: 1212-1219.

Norusis, Majrija J. 1983. Introductory Statistics Guide: SPSS-X. (Chicago, Illinois: copyright, SPSS-X, Inc.).

Petchesky, Rosalind Pollack. 1981. "AntiAbortion, Antifeminism, and the Rise of the New Right," Feminist Studies, 7: 206-246.

Reid, Pamela Trotman. 1984. "Feminism Versus Minority Group Identity: Not for Black Woman Only," Sex Roles, 10: 247-254.

Self, George D. and M. Dwayne Smith. 1981. "Feminists and Traditionalists: An Attitudinal Comparision," Sex Roles, 7: 183-188.

Smith, Barbara. 1985. "Home Truths on the Contemporary Black Feminist Movement," The Black Scholar, 16: 4-14.

Steinem, Gloria. 1984. "Exclusive Lou Harris National Survey: How Women Live, Vote, Think...." MS: 51-60.

Tatalovich, Raymond, and Byron Daynes. 1981. A Study of Community Conflict in Public Policy Making. (New York: Praeger Publishing Co.).

Torrey, Jane W. "Racism and Feminism: Is Women's Liberation for Whites Only?" Psychology of Women Quarterly, 4: 281-289.

Velez-I, Carlos. 1980. "Se Me Acabo La Cancion: An Ethnography of Non-Consenting Sterilizations Among Mexican Women in Los Angeles," in Mexican Women in the United States, (Magdalena Mora and Adelaida Del Castillo, eds.). (California: UCLA Chican Studies Research Center).

Welch, Susan. 1975. "Support Among Women for the Issues of the Women's Movement," The Sociological Quarterly, 16: 216-227.
 31293005344506

