DIFFERENCES AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS' CONCEPTIONS
OF THE ROLE OF THE FEMALE

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Approved by Committee:

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Dean of the Graduate Division
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Psychological and sociological literature abound with research findings, interpretations, and speculations concerning the changing nature of female roles. However, the literature reveals a conspicuous lack of empirical research data concerning female role conceptions held by college students. College students are most often young people passing through the final stages of socialization into adult statuses and attitudes. Particularly in the case of resident college, this passage is accomplished largely within the boundaries of what approaches a total institution. Resident colleges shape the students toward roles and statuses for which they have never been eligible. Thus it appears that there is a need for a better understanding of the factors involved in the formulation of role expectations of college students today than is presently known. It is hoped that the present study is one attempt to partially satisfy this additional research need.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The specific purposes of this study are: (1) to determine the extent to which college students' expectations reflect companionship-equalitarian or traditional conceptions of female role; and, (2) to determine whether or not a relationship
exists between role expectations of college students and sex, residence affiliation, and year in college.

II. PROCEDURE

Data were collected by the Sociology Research Methods Class. Questionnaires were sent to 250 Drake University Undergraduate students to participate in a study of student opinions and attitudes. The questionnaire was delivered to the students either personally or by mail. Responses were obtained from 160 (64% of the total subjects) and this respondent group constitutes the study sample. Items from the questionnaire were scaled to determine the conceptions of the role of the female. Use was made of parametric statistics for group comparison, including t and analysis of variance.

The first portion of the study presents the review of literature which will give a perspective for the present study.

The framework for the research portion of this study is then presented in the form of a theoretical statement with subsequent hypotheses. This is followed by a presentation of the methodology and findings. The discussion and summary of the present study is treated next, and the findings are related to the general theoretical framework of the study. Also included in this later section are suggestions for the further study of this aspect of female role conception. The last sections contain the bibliography and the appendix.
III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

**Family type.** The index of family type is based on two sets of responses, one referring to the division of labor in the family and the other with the division of power.

**Traditional family.** A family was classified as traditional if the husband possessed a relatively high degree of power, and the tasks were characteristically not shared. It is characterized as patriarchal in decision making, highly sex-typed in its division of labor, and places a high value on the rearing of children.¹

**Companionship family.** A family was classified as companionship if husband and wife shared both power and tasks. The companionship family is equalitarian, marked by high degree to which both tasks and decisions are shared and concerned primarily with affectionate ties between husband and wife.²

**Dominance.** Dominance implies control over other persons as well as control over possessions.³

**Power.** Power is defined as the degree to which one person

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²Ibid.

makes decisions which might control another person's behavior or makes decisions about objects which affect another person in an important way.¹

**Conventionality.** Conventionality is a preference for conventionally feminine roles and interests.²

**Passivity.** Passivity is lack of aggressiveness, of dominance, modesty, manipulativeness, and moral sensitivity.³

**Institutionalization.** Institutionalization involves those standards which have been internalized by members of a society which orient their behavior. Conformity to these standards both satisfies the needs of the individual and maximizes favorable reaction of others with whom he is interacting.⁴


²N. Sanford (Ed.), "Personality Development during the College Years," *Journal of Social Issues*, XII (December, 1956), 3-70.

³Ibid.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Two phases of literature were reviewed and will be reported on in conjunction with present study. The first phase includes studies concerned with the conception of female role by residence affiliation, sex, and year in college. The second phase deals with those studies which were conducted to determine whether the differences among the students are due to socialization.

I. LITERATURE ON FEMALE ROLE CONCEPTION

From an analysis of books by Gruenberg and Kreck,¹ Komarovsky,² Mead,³ and White,⁴ this writer concludes that the three areas of (1) homemaking, (2) child rearing, and (3) leisure time are generally accepted as comprising the major portion of women's role.

Kirkpatrick recognized three separate feminine roles in

marriage which may be played by a modern woman. Each role may be either congenial or hostile to the roles played by husband and to those which he conceives for himself.

First, there is the wife and mother role which carries with it the privilege of security, respect, domestic authority, economic support, and loyalty of the husband and obligation of rearing children, making a home, and rendering domestic services. In the second place, there is the companion role. This implies sharing pleasure with the husband, receiving emotional response and leisure from society and education. A third role is that of partner with economic independence, equal authority in the family finances, and social acceptance on equal footing. 1

The existing literature contains numerous studies which have dealt with the effect of the wife's employment on family decision making and family power structure. One traditional element of masculinity in American society is the dominance of the male in his family. Cluecks compared 500 delinquents with 500 match non-delinquents and reported that for both the samples, the working mother is more apt to determine the final outcome of family affairs than the non working mother. 2


studied a sample of 138 Irish Roman-Catholic families and reported that both in the working class and in the middle class the working wife exerts more influence in family decision making than the nonworking wife. Their findings also revealed that whether they are employed or not, wives in working class families have more authority in family decision making than wives in middle class families.¹

However, study by Middleton and Puteney, utilizing 40 married couples, revealed that nonworking wives were more dominant in decision making than the working wives in all areas except purchases and living standard, where there was no significant difference.² Blood and Hamblin studied the effects of the wife's employment on the power relationship between the husband and wife and reported a smooth-working pattern of getting the necessary task done by whosoever is available, without either partner feeling superior or inferior in power no matter who does what.³ Hoffman, in investigating the effects of the mother's outside employment on task participation, routine decision making, and power structure in 324 Detroit families,


reported that working wives had less control and their husbands more than in families where wives did not work. In relation to the power component, no difference was found between working women and matched nonworking women. Although the husbands of the working wives may have participated more in household tasks after the women went to work than they had before, this did not affect family power structure.¹ Mogy reported that a wife with with her own income is less subject to her husband.² Hartley, in a sample of 40 working mothers reported that most of the working mothers consider their work as an aspect of their nurturant function. They do not substitute work for family obligations—they add it to the traditional roster of womanly duties and see it as another way in which they can serve their families. Their husbands are still seen as the major and responsible breadwinner—the women consider themselves merely as "helping" persons in this area.³

Literature reveals numerous studies which indicate the relationship between social stratification and female role conception. Marvin reported that transition from traditional


to the companionship type of family is more evident in families within the broad middle status category, and less evident in high and low families.\(^1\) Slater, in a sample of 365 married women found that female role perception differed by socio-economic class. His data suggests that the working-class definition of the role of the wife is likely to conflict with the demands of active membership in voluntary association and within this group there are few alternative self Definitions which might favor membership. In the upper-class, the role of the "wife" appears more compatible with membership, and a greater variety of self conceptions seem available. In the least active stratum, women were more likely to stress the concrete household tasks and to see themselves exclusively in the domestic role.\(^2\) Middleton and Puteny in a sample of 40 married couples in four groups—White professors, White skilled workers, Negro professors, and Negro skilled workers reported no significant differences in relative dominance of husband and wife. Neither were there significant differences in dominance between groups on specific problems. Equalitarian pattern

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\(^1\) Olsen E. Marvin, "Distribution of Family Responsibilities and Social Stratification," *Marriage and Family Living*, XXII (February, 1960), 60-65.

appeared to predominate in all four groups.¹

Gold and Slater found that the lower the status, the less likely it is that the husband will be dominant. Furthermore, the older the family, the less likely it is that the husband will dominate.²

Searls, investigated the background characteristics and perceptions of homemaking tasks of 181 women’s college alumnae as related to patterns of leisure participation and reported that basic satisfaction with fundamental components of a woman’s role as homemaker is related to her active participation in leisure pursuits, with those married 12 years or longer indicated greater participation. Older homemakers are more represented at the high activity level and the younger, at lower level of participation. College major and place of residence were not significant in their relationship to leisure role emphasis.³

Turner investigated ten high schools representative of the central metropolis area and concluded that very few girls think in terms of a choice between career and homemaker roles. The choice, on which they are evenly divided, is between having

¹Middleton and Puteny, loc. cit.


³Laura G. Searls, "Leisure Role Emphasis of College Graduate Homemakers," Marriage and Family Living, XXVIII (February, 1966), 77-82.
or not having a serious career in addition to their homemaker role. Forty-eight per cent of the girls are undeterred by frequent discussions of the supposed difficulties in combining the two major roles. So with few exceptions, these women choose to add a special role rather than substitute for the traditional homemaker role.¹

Christensen and Swihart, in a sample of 223 women Seniors, reported that percentage desiring full-time home making rose rapidly, reaching a peak of nearly 90 per cent during the 6-10 year period after graduation. Full-time home making preferences decreased from the 6-10 year period and part-time home making preferences increased. It was also reported that marriage-minded coeds, in contrast to the employment minded were satisfied with the feminine role but they also think that women should be encouraged to seek public office.²

A study by Mower revealed that the married woman in the suburbs definitely is housewife, with little deviation from the pattern. The major role of the father is provider, and the role of the mother is the expressive-emotional leader and often the authority figure as well.³


²Harold T. Christensen, and Marilynn N. Swihart, "Post-graduate Role Preferences of Senior Women in College," Marriage and Family Living, XVIII (February, 1956), 52-57.

Numerous studies reported that the resources the partners had available influenced their respective roles. Gold and Slater, in a sample of 612 families, reported that the power of a family member depends upon the ability to facilitate movement toward a group goal. They found that wives who played a role in family mobility had more power in family decision making. They further reported that women are now receiving more training for a dual role; on the one hand, the modern woman is trained to take her place as a homemaker to her husband and on the other hand, to occupy a position in the productive economy outside the home. In view of their greater resources in the economic sphere, women are now forcing men to modify their traditional masculine roles.1

Wilkening, working with a sample of 614 farm operators and their wives, reported that joint decision making increased as the status of the wife increased. Status of the wife was measured by her educational level and the degree of her formal participation.2 In a study of 869 married couples, Blood and Wolfe concluded that as one partner's education exceeded that of the other, his or her share of the marital decision making also grew larger.3 Kenkel, in a sample of 25 married college

1Gold and Slater, loc. cit.


students reported that the influence pattern of the family and the degree of influence possessed by the partners was related to dominance, persistence, and self-confidence. Dominant husband was more likely to have his own way than was less dominant husband. When the husband was dominant, wife was more likely to outperform the husband in expressive behavior and less likely to out-talk her husband and less likely to be involved in problem solving attempts.¹

Alexander, investigating the relationship of husband and wife in decision making in 225 couples, found that 39 per cent of the decisions made were joint, with husband being clearly dominant 27 per cent of the time and wives 4 per cent of the time.² Kenkel, working with a sample of 25 married college couples, found a positive relationship, among husbands, between the contribution of ideas in a decision making session and the influence on the family decision.³

In a study involving 284 respondents representing 232 families, Jansen reported that family solidarity was greater in families favoring authority equally distributed between the


husband and wife, and in families tending to favor dominance by the husband, than in families which tend to favor dominance by the wife.¹ Maslow found that best marriages seem to be those in which the husband and wife are at about the same level of dominance-feeling or in which the husband is somewhat higher in dominance-feeling than the wife. In those marriages in which the wife is definitely dominant over her husband, trouble ensues in the form of both social and sexual maladjustment unless they are both very secure individuals.²

In a study concerning the roles of husbands and wives in the economic affairs and purchasing decisions, Volgast reported that in the more general areas of handling the money and bills and in saving some money, responsibility is often shared; where it is not, the wife plays a dominant role. At the same time, with increasing age there is a decreasing number of joint decisions. As age increased, the division of labor was more clearly understood and each partner had specific areas where the decision was entirely his or hers.³ Study by Sharp and Mott however, showed conflicting results. In a

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study based on interviews on 749 wives, they concluded that age of the wife had little effect on decision making.  

Jacobson, working with a sample of 400 persons, 100 divorced and 100 married couples, reported substantial variation in the respondents' view about the power which should be wielded by the husband and wife. He described these role conceptions as varying along a continuum from "traditional" to "equalitarian." He reported that divorced couples exhibit a greater disparity in their attitudes toward the roles of the husband and wife in marriage than do married couples.  

Robart conducted a study to investigate whether romanticism during courtship is reflected in adolescents' attitudes toward role behavior. Sample of 831 undergraduate students consisted of 250 of whom were in the "no particular date" category, 150 were favorite daters, 159 were going steady, 122 were engaged, and 120 were married. Freshman men, senior men, and senior women tended to be underrepresented in this sample. The findings revealed that (1) the marital role opinions of subjects differed at different stages of courtship; (2) engaged females showed the most divergent marital role opinions instead of going steady group; (3) for both males and females maximum

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homogeneity of opinion occurred at the engagement stage rather than at the going steady stage.¹

Lipman studied a sample of 100 retired couples and concluded that both husband and wife make accommodations to the new male status, which is reflected in their altered role conceptions. Low morale was associated with failure to give up traditional role conceptions for both husband and wife. The substitution of expressive for instrumental attributes is functional for the personality system of the retired male and the adherence to traditional instrumental conceptions of behavior, dysfunctional. This substitution operates in the same fashion for the female, she must undergo a change in role conception toward expressiveness.²

Dyer and Urban, in a study involving male and female single students and married couples, concluded that as compared to single men and women, the married people operate in terms of equality of action although institutionalization around equality of action was the case in certain areas of family activity but not in others. Significantly larger number of married women felt that husband alone should be the head while


more single girls responded that functions should be handled equally. All distinguished between head of family and boss of the family. The majority in each group felt that no one person should be the "boss."\(^1\)

Christopherson, Vandiver and Krueger, working with a sample of 203 married student couples, reported that the traditional division of labor has given to a more equalitarian arrangement whereby young couples feel free to interchange domestic work roles as a function of necessity and/or interest.\(^2\)

In a study of 436 White, High School Seniors consisting of 238 girls and 198 boys, Dunn concluded that more women than men tend to hold traditional conceptions with reference to homemaking responsibilities. Equalitarian conception of marriage roles was evident in the areas of authority. Only one-third of the boys expected to be "boss who says what is to be done." Almost three-fourths of both sexes responded that the wife's opinion should carry as much weight as the husband's in making decisions concerning the family as a whole. Study suggests that the degree to which role expectations reflect equalitarianism is influenced by the situation in which the role is expressed. The least progress toward equalitarian

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expectations was noted in the two role areas most clearly sex-ascribed in the traditional patriarchal family—those of the wife as homemaker, and of the husband as breadwinner. The greatest progress toward equalitarian expectations was evident in the areas of child care, social participation, and personal characters. This study suggests that although expectations tend to be predominantly equalitarian, vestiges of traditional concepts were evident.\(^1\) This also demonstrates Kirkpatrick's contention of a trend in present day role conceptions from a "clearly defined division of labor" to a "blurred division of labor."\(^2\)

Motz, working with a sample of 337 married student couples, reported there was a conflict in how men and women looked at spousal roles. His findings revealed that wives still tend toward more traditional roles while husbands are beginning to switch to a more companionate role.\(^3\) Ekpee and Sherriffs, in a sample of 200 college students, also reported that the roles of men and women are changing and as a result there is some confusion concerning the definitions and interpretations of the

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roles of the sexes. Study by Kenkel and Hoffman revealed that husbands and wives had troubles recognizing a clear cut role arrangement in the families.\(^2\)

Seward, in a sample of 147 women Sophomore students, reported culture conflict concerning "the feminine role." The results indicated an emphasis on equality between men and women in educational and vocational opportunities, community activities, working conditions, and social contacts. Inconsistent with this liberal trend was a reinforcement of the traditional subordinate feminine role as far as mother and wife relationships were concerned.\(^3\)

Bernard, investigated the attitude toward marriage and the family held by men and women students and reported an acceptance of equal status within the family. The students even approved of outside careers for wives provided they do not "harm" the family.\(^4\)

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\(^2\) William F. Kenkel, and Dean E. Hoffman, "Real and Conceived Roles in Family Decision Making," Marriage and Family Living, XVIII (February, 1956), 311-316.

\(^3\) Georgene M. Seward, "Cultural Conflict and the Female Role; An Experimental Study," Journal of Social Psychology, XXII (November, 1945), 177-194.

Kirkpatrick reported cultural confusion and sex antagonism reflected in the uncertainty and inconsistencies of role expressed by students, especially the men, with respect to the various issues on the scale measuring attitude toward feminism. There was a tendency in the case of both sexes for greater inconsistency in regard to domestic issues and issues pertaining to conduct and status than in regard to economic or political-legal issues.¹ Kirkpatrick, in attempting a quantitative comparison of attitudes in successive generations in regard to feminism, further reported that sex differences in attitude toward the feminine role tended to be somewhat greater than for the parental generation. This suggests that men and women are farther from mutual understanding than ever.²

Komarovsky, in a study of women college Seniors concluded that they commonly face serious contradictions between "feminine" role and "modern role," the conflict centering about academic work, social life, vocational plans, excellence in specific fields of endeavor, and a number of personality traits. A girl's family and her male friends are the agencies through which she meets the inconsistencies between the ideal of homemaker and that of "career girl." The findings revealed that

¹Clifford Kirkpatrick, "Inconsistency in Attitudinal Behavior with Special Reference to Attitude toward Feminism," Journal of Applied Psychology, XX (September-October, 1936), 535-552.

In dating and other paired relationship with men, the college woman "plays dumb" and adopts the inferiority and subordinacy of the more traditional feminine role.¹

In a replication of Komarovsky's investigation, Wallin's data supported Komarovsky's findings that a substantial proportion of college girls pretend inferiority to males in dating situations. However, the incompatibility of two feminine sex roles was not as disturbing an experience for the college girl as Komarovsky had suggested in her original paper.²

Kammeyer, in a sample consisting of 209 college girls, reported that interaction with others in the college milieu, and, for that matter, interaction with parents, helps the college girl to develop an internally consistent set of attitudes about the feminine role rather than throw her in a state of confusion and uncertainty. The findings revealed that attitude contradiction, one which may produce anxiety, is likely to be diminished as the girls become integrated into the college social system.³

In a sample of 372 Junior Class, Raymond and Goudy


suggest that males are more likely to anticipate role conflict between family and occupational responsibilities than are females in family vs. career variety.\textsuperscript{1} Hacker reports that conflict between home and job is more salient and universal for men than for women.\textsuperscript{2}

II. RELATED STUDIES

In the light of the fact that the current study is concerned with whether or not differences in female role conceptions exist due to socialization, some review of research related to development or modification of beliefs and attitudes of students while in college is needed.

Studies by Sanford calls for measuring changes that occur in students at the college. Five freshmen classes, with N's ranging from 430 to 441 were tested, always in September and always within three days after their arrival on the campus. Four senior classes, with N's of 280 on the average, were tested in the spring semester before their graduation. Findings revealed that the seniors are more educated and more mature but less "feminine" and less stable. In comparison with freshmen, seniors reject traditional feminine roles. None of the students

\textsuperscript{1}J. A. Raymond and W. J. Goudy, "Identification, Sex, and Change in College Major," Sociology of Education, XXXIX (Spring, 1966), 183-199.

admitted to being content solely with the conventional notion of mother and wife but rather sought activities and duties outside the home.¹

Webster reported that seniors tend to become more "masculine" in the sense of being less conventional, and less passive, but more "feminine" in their inner life as measured by the lengthened version of MFIII.² A study by Adorno et al. revealed that freshmen are made up of conventionality, compulsiveness, and lack of self confidence.³ Erikson points out that experimentation with new identities is a common feature of the college years.⁴ Corey reported no statistically reliable changes in attitudes of students after one year of college.⁵ In a freshman-senior follow up of 97 college students with the Pressley Interest-Attitude Test, Kuhlen found significant personality

¹N. Sanford (Ed.), "Personality Development During the College Years," Journal of Social Issues, XII (December, 1956), 3-70.


⁵S. M. Corey, "Changes in the Opinions of Female Students after One Year at a University," Journal of Social Psychology, XI (May, 1940), 341-351.
changes, including: first, a marked decrease in disapprovals; second, a definite broadening of interests in women students; and third, increased sensitivity to certain human qualities with such characteristics as tolerance, cooperativeness, broad-mindedness, and democratic attitudes. In a study at Bennington college, Newcomb reported significant change from freshman political and economic conservatism to senior nonconservatism.

After reviewing the available research on personality changes and higher education, Webster, Freedman, and Heist states:

In sum, researches on attitudes and values carried out prior to the end of World War II showed that, in general, students in college changed in the direction of greater liberalism and sophistication in their political, social, and religious outlooks.

When reviewing recent and contemporary studies, Webster et al. state that "... recent studies of particular attitudes and values have shown changes resembling those reported before 1945."  

1 R. v. Kuhlen, "Changes in Attitudes of Students and Relations of Test Responses to Judgments of Associates," School and Society, LIII (April, 1941), 514-519.


CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

The framework for the research portion of the study is presented in the form of a theoretical statement with subsequent hypotheses. The theoretical framework to be applied in this analysis of female role conception consists of the interrelation of socialization, self, norm, and status.

Socialization was defined by Ross as the training process by which an individual who is inexperienced in a given culture learns about and acquires the culture as an aspect of his behavior. Acquisition of the culture is the result of the process of socialization.\(^1\) Ross further states that the most important type of socialization is the primary socialization that children receive in all societies. Primary socialization takes place in the context of primary groups—parents, playmates, or neighbors. The goals of primary socialization are the acquisition of language, control of instinctual behavior, and the introduction of the child into the basic ideas and norms of the socializing culture.\(^2\)

Socialization does not end with the primary stage, but continues throughout life. Socialization process beyond


\(^2\) Ibid.
infancy is in part formalized and is accomplished largely within the boundaries of a total institution. College students are people who are acquiring cultural knowledge in the context of formal education. But most of the secondary socialization is not formalized and comes about informally and unconsciously in ordinary social interaction. Johnson defines socialization as a process of learning that enables the learner to perform social roles. Thus, not all learning is socialization, because some learning is irrelevant to the motivation and ability necessary for participation in social systems. Socialization involves a process of social interaction between a socializing agent and the person. The socializing agent guides the process by presenting cues for discrimination, controlling the pupil's negative reactions to frustration, and rewarding the pupil for doing the new things that are expected of him. Throughout the process, the person's personality is gradually changing in approximately the direction aimed at by the socializing agent.

The socialization of adults is easier than the socialization of children for at least three reasons: (1) the adult ordinarily is motivated to work toward a goal that he already envisions; (2) the new role that he is trying to internalize

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2 Ibid.
has many similarities to roles already existing in his personality; and (3) the socializing agent can communicate with him easily through speech.

Nevertheless, the socialization of adults can be prolonged and difficult process. This is especially true when the skills to be learned are complex and the responsibilities of the role are heavy; when the role requires the deep internalization of norms and attitudes that run counter, in some way, to norms already established in the personality; and when the socializing process has not been routine.

Parson and Bales state that the central focus of the process of socialization lies in the internalization of the culture of the society into one the child is born. From this focal point the most important part of this culture consists in the patterns of value which in another aspect constitute the institutionalized patterns of the society. The conditions under which effective socialization can take place will include being placed in a social situation where the responsible persons are themselves integrated in the cultural value system in question.

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1Ibid.

2Ibid.

Most sociologists subscribe to the theory that attributes the origin of the conscious self to primary socialization. According to this theory, self-consciousness (the act of regarding the self as an object) requires the possession of language, as well as the ability to adopt the point of view of other people. Both of these are gained through the child's interaction with his parents and other socializing agents.¹

Mead defines self as a process in which the conversation of gestures has been internalized within an organic form. This process does not exist for itself, but is simply a phase of the whole social organization of which the individual is a part. The organization of the social act which is imported into the organism becomes the mind of the individual. It includes the attitudes of others which are highly organized and become social attitudes rather than the roles of separate individuals.

This process of relating one's own organism to the others in the interactions that are going on, in so far as it is imported into the conduct of the individual with the conversation of the "I" and the "me" constitutes the "self."²

Johnson defines self as the internalized object representing one's own personality. It includes one's own conception of one's abilities and characteristics, an evaluation of these

¹Ross, loc. cit.
aspects of one's personality, and certain feelings of pride, shame, and self-respect, any one of which can be activated under certain circumstances. The formation of the self involves "taking the role of the other"—seeing oneself in imagination, as an object seen by someone else.¹

Social group which gives to the individual his unity of self is called "the Generalized Other," and it is in the form of the generalized other that the social process influences the behavior of the individuals involved in it and carrying it on, i.e., that the community exercises control over the conduct of its individual members. There are two general stages in the full development of the self. At the first stage, the individual's self is constituted simply by an organization of the particular attitudes of the other individuals toward himself and toward others in the specific social acts in which he participates with them. At the second stage, in the full development of the individual's self that self consists of an organization of these particular individual attitudes as well as an organization of the social attitudes of the generalized other or the social group as a whole to which one belongs. What goes to make up the organized self is the organization of the attitudes which are common to the group. The individual possesses a self only in relation to the selves of the other members of

¹Johnson, op. cit., p. 116.
his social group; and structure of his self reflects the general behavior pattern of this social group to which he belongs, just as does the structure of the self of every other individual belonging to this social group.¹

A third concept that needs to be investigated and clarified is that of norms. The following definitions of norms illustrate differences and certain points of agreement among sociologists.

Bierstedt defines norm as a rule or a standard that governs our conduct in the social situations in which we participate.² Homans defines norms as a statement made by a number of members of a group, not necessarily by all of them, that the members ought to behave in a certain way in certain circumstances.³ For Johnson, a norm is an abstract pattern, held in the mind, that sets limits for behavior. An 'operative' norm is one that is not merely entertained in the mind but is considered worthy of following in actual behavior; thus one feels that one ought to conform to it. This feeling means that one 'accepts' the norm.⁴

Morris states that norms are generally accepted, sanctioned prescriptions for, or prohibitions against, others' behavior, belief, or feeling, i.e. what others ought to do, believe, feel or else. Norms must be shared prescriptions. Norms always include sanctions.\(^1\) Williams states that norms are rules of conduct; they specify what should and should not be done by various kinds of social actors in various kinds of situations.\(^2\)

Inspection of the above definitions reveals two points of agreement. First, none of these suggests that a norm is simply a uniformity in behavior. Second, none of the definitions identifies a norm as a shared frame of reference in a strictly psychological sense. However, beyond these two points there is very little agreement among the definitions.

Norms of a group are internalized by its members in the socialization process. People want to conform to norms that form a part of their social selves and they feel uncomfortable, or guilty, when they violate these norms. The members of a group form expectations of each other's behavior based on the norms. When these expectations are not fulfilled by one member, others in the group indicate their disapproval in various


ways. Contrariwise, when an individual's behavior conforms closely to the norms, others approve it. These expressions of approval and disapproval of behavior, called sanctions, direct one's behavior into normative channels.  

The socialized individuals appear to want to conform. In such an individual, the internalized generalized other has become a part of the self.  

This concept of norm relates to the concept of status and role. Social position or status positions are the units of social organization. It is they that "fasten down" norms by indicating which individuals are responsible for observing which norms. Statuses can be regarded as bundles of norms, and society is a bundle of statuses arranged in a particular manner.  

The concept of role is associated with that of status. Role refers to the actual behavior performed in fulfillment of the norms of a status. Status is abstract, whereas role is concrete. Role is what we see in real behavior, and status is deduced from it. Since role is individual's behavior, it is less uniform than status. People occupying the same status

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2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.
and subject to the same norms can produce very different behavior.\footnote{Ibid.}

Linton defines a status as a position in a pattern of social relations. It is a collection of rights and duties, or of norms. Role is the dynamic behavioral aspect of status, the acting out of the normatively prescribed behavior. The individual is socially assigned to a status and occupies it with relation to other statuses. When he puts the rights and duties which constitutes the status into effect, he is performing a role.\footnote{\textit{Ralph Linton, The Study of Man} (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1936), pp. 113-119.}

The division and ascription of statuses with relation to sex is basic in all social systems. All societies prescribe different attitudes and activities to men and women. The comparative study of the statuses ascribed to women and men in different cultures seems to indicate that these ascriptions are almost entirely determined by culture.

Since socialization is learning to participate in social role, the most important objects to be internalized are the social roles themselves. But in order to perform any social role adequately, one must know the other social roles in the same system. An individual must internalize the role he will be expected to perform himself and also the roles of the other
persons with whom he will interact. Internalized roles with which one "identifies" are the main focus of one's "self." At each stage of socialization, the child internalizes a system of roles, not just one role.¹

One is said to identify with a social role if one not only internalizes the role but adopts it as one's own, striving to attain the necessary skills and to conform with the role norms. One is said to identify with a social group if one internalizes the role system of the group and considers oneself a member of it. Identification in the first sense links a boy with his father and brother, not with his mother. Identification in the second sense links a boy with his family, including both parents and siblings. The selective character of identification helps us to see how the mother can also help the boy to make proper sex identification. Being a socialized adult, the mother has already internalized both the female and male role, and she rewards the boy selectively for choosing the right one for him.²

Implicit in what has been said so far is the fundamental idea that socialization involves a process of social interaction between socializing agent and the individual. Throughout the process, a personality is gradually changing in

¹Johnson, op. cit., p. 123.
²Ibid.
approximately the direction aimed at by the socializing agent.

In the foregoing it has been pointed out that the acquisition of culture does not end with the completion of primary socialization. Particularly in a complex society, there is always more to culture than the individual already knows, and he is always learning and thus continuing his socialization. Moreover, culture is man made and is always changing and it must be relearned. At the same time, the individual joins new groups with new subcultures and leaves old groups, abandoning former subcultures.1

College students are most often young people passing through the final stages of socialization into adult statuses and attitudes. A student acquires more information on different topics and becomes more skilled at performing certain tasks. Moreover, there are changes in interests and attitudes toward the self and the world. And in some cases, there are fundamental personality changes, accompanied by new values. Today's college students become more "liberal" in the sense of being more sophisticated and independent in their thinking, and placing greater value on individual freedom and well being.

The older students are more developed, more mature, and more free to express impulses than the younger students. In many colleges the system of fraternities and sororities seems

1Ross, op. cit., p. 151.
to magnify even further the dominating influence of the students in the continuous development of the student culture.

The student's social surroundings are viewed here as a variety of social systems. "A social system is conceived of as being composed, not of individuals, but of the actions of individuals, the principal units of which are roles and the constellations of roles."1 Most American colleges are stable formal organizations, within which a variety of informal organizations or social systems operate. The informal institutions tend to inculcate in the students new values and new attitudes. The same student's attitudes to his role and his conception of others' role may undergo considerable changes during a given time interval, and such changes may be due primarily to changes in the social environments of the college.

From the above theoretical framework and review of the related literature the substantive hypotheses are:

1. Junior and Senior students, being longer exposed to socializing agencies of the University, tend to support equalitarian conception of female roles whereas Freshman and Sophomore students, being less exposed to socializing agencies, support traditional female role.

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2. Those affiliated with fraternities and sororities hold equalitarian concept of female role whereas those not affiliated tend to support traditional conception of female role.

3. The difference exists among college students' conception of the role of the female by sex.
CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

This thesis study is a portion of a larger study concerning student opinions and attitudes being completed under the direction of Dr. Albert P. Anderson, Associate Professor of Sociology, Drake University. The design of the larger attitude research, included obtaining information from the students concerning their conception of the female role. The research design of the present study follows.

I. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The study involved the use of one questionnaire which was constructed by Sociology 159 Research Methods Class. The questionnaire contained questions which provided background information of the students. These questions dealt with sex, residence, age, and year in college.

The other area of this questionnaire dealt with the part played by the husband and wife in the family decision making process, participation of the women in political parties, and her job outside the home.

A copy of the questionnaire is in the appendix.

II. THE SAMPLE

A random sample of 250 Drake Undergraduate students
was selected to participate in the study of student attitudes and opinions. This number was reduced to 160 students who had completed and returned the questionnaires mailed to them in March, 1966. This group was composed of 73 males and 87 females. 100 of these 160 students were not affiliated with fraternities and sororities and 60 were affiliated. Sample consisted of 44 Freshmen, 33 Sophomores, 52 Juniors, and 31 Seniors. The age of the students ranged from 20 to 24 years.

III. COLLECTION OF DATA

The data were collected by the Sociology 159 Research Methods Class of 25 students. Each student was assigned to deliver and collect 10 questionnaires either personally or by mail. Information sheet explaining the purpose of the study was attached to each questionnaire. The information sheet is attached in the appendix. Each of these questionnaires was numbered so that the returned questionnaire could be identified.

IV. PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING DATA

The data obtained from the questionnaires were tabulated by hand. Each item was scored individually and weighted score for each question depended upon the nature of the answer. The responses to the various items were scored in such a way that a response indicative of the most favorable attitude was given
the highest score. For instance, on Item No. 17 i.e. "Important matters should be discussed between husband and wife," weighted scores four for "strongly agree," three for "agree," two for "undecided," one for "disagree," and zero for "strongly disagree," were assigned to the answer. On Item No. 19 i.e. "A wife's first concern should be to maintain her home for the pleasure and comfort of her husband," weighted score, zero for "strongly agree," one for "agree," two for "undecided," three for "disagree," and four for "strongly disagree," were assigned. In the first example (Item No. 17) "strongly agree" was given "more" weight because it supported equalitarian conception of female role, and in the second example (Item No. 19) "strongly agree" was given "low" weight because it supported traditional conception of female role.

Each individual's total score was computed by adding his item scores.

Use was made of t and analysis of variance in analyzing the data.
CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

As shown in Table I, t test analysis revealed there is significant difference between Junior-Senior non-affiliated females and Junior-Senior affiliated females. Non-affiliated ones had the higher scores indicating, therefore, that they are more liberal toward equalitarian conception of female role. Freshmen-Sophomores non-affiliated also scored higher but difference was not statistically significant. It is further substantiated from the observation that females always scored higher than Freshmen-Sophomore males.

Opposite seems to be true for the males. Junior-Senior males who were affiliated scored higher than non-affiliated ones. The difference was significant. Freshman-Sophomore affiliated also scored higher than the non-affiliated ones but the difference was not significant. As shown in Table I, there are significant differences between males of Freshman-Sophomore and Junior-Senior groups. Junior and Senior students scored higher as hypothesized. In the case of females, Junior-Senior group also scored higher than Freshman-Sophomore group but difference was not statistically significant.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>t-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Males of Freshman-Sophomore and Junior-Senior groups.</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.44*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Females of Freshman-Sophomore and Junior-Senior groups</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between affiliated Freshman-Sophomore and non-affiliated Freshman-Sophomore Female groups.</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between affiliated Junior-Senior and non-affiliated Junior-Senior Female groups.</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.83*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between affiliated Freshman-Sophomore and non-affiliated Freshman-Sophomore Male groups.</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between affiliated Junior-Senior and non-affiliated Junior-Senior Male groups.</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 5 per cent
Analysis of variance as shown in Table II revealed that the main effects of sex, year in college, and residence affiliation on the female role conception were not significant. However, interactions between sex, and affiliation, sex and year in college, and affiliation, sex, and year in college were highly significant.

**TABLE II**

**ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR SEX, YEAR IN THE COLLEGE, AND AFFILIATION TO FRATERNITY AND SORORITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>67.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in college</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>96.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliation X Sex</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1313.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliation X Year in college</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex X Year in college</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>366.65*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliation X Sex X Year in college</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>320.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>55.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at 5 per cent
DISCUSSION

This study revealed that the differences in college students' conception of the role of the female by sex were not statistically significant. However, interaction between sex and affiliation, and sex and year in college were highly significant.

For our hypothesis to be fully substantiated, Freshman-Sophomore females who were not affiliated with sororities should have held the traditional conception of female role. They should have supported the subordinate role for the females. But findings revealed that the difference was not statistically significant between Freshman-Sophomore groups of both affiliated and non-affiliated females. Both groups hold equalitarian conception of female role. This indicates that affiliation has no effect on the females, particularly at the Freshman-Sophomore level.

On the other hand, in Junior-Senior groups, non-affiliated females scored higher than those affiliated Junior and Senior females, but both of these groups scored higher than those of Freshman-Sophomore males.

In the case of males, Junior-Senior males who were affiliated with fraternities scored higher than non-affiliated ones. Freshman-Sophomore affiliated also were more liberal than those non-affiliated ones but the difference was not significant.
It seems to this writer that under a more ideal research setting, other factors could have been controlled so that it would be possible to see what was causing the results to be as they are. This would also apply to the other variables which were under consideration.

When a hypothesis is not substantiated, it would seem advisable to account for the lack of support by reconsidering the theory and methodology of the study. It is possible that the selection of respondents, the rate of return for the questionnaires, and the questionnaire itself may account for this lack of support, but assuming that it did not, other variables may have affected the variables under consideration. It would seem that the universe from which the sample was drawn could have an effect on the findings.

If the sample size had been larger, it would have been possible to make finer distinctions within the group and this would have allowed a deeper, more thorough look at this part of the sample and could have had an effect on the outcome of some of the findings.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

The specific purposes of this study have been: (1) to determine the extent to which college students' expectations reflect companionship-equalitarian or traditional conceptions of female role; and (2) to determine whether or not a relationship exists between role expectations of college students and sex, fraternities or sororities affiliation, and year in college.

To secure this information a questionnaire was administered to a random sample of 250 Drake undergraduate students. The final sample consisted of 160 students, (73 males and 87 females) who completed and returned the questionnaires. The questionnaire was delivered to the students either personally or by mail.

As far as has been determined, no investigator has explored if differences exist in the conceptions held by the college students of the role of the female by residence affiliation, sex, and year in college.

After the review of literature and theoretical framework three substantive hypotheses were developed. These are: (1) The difference exists among college students' conception of the role of the female by sex; (2) Juniors and Seniors tend to
support equalitarian conception of female role whereas Freshmen
and Sophomore hold traditional conception of female role; (3)
Those affiliated with fraternities and sororities tend to sup-
port equalitarian conception of female role and those not af-
filiated tend to support traditional female roles.

The data obtained from the questionnaires were tabulated
by hand. The responses to the various items were scored in
such a way that a response indicative of the most favorable
attitude was given the highest score. Each student's total
score was computed by adding his item scores.

Use was made of t and analysis of variance for comput-
ing the results.

Analysis of variance revealed that Junior and Senior
males who were affiliated with fraternities held equalitarian
conception of female role whereas non-affiliated Juniors and
Seniors held the traditional conception of female role. The
difference was statistically significant.

It was further substantiated from the data that both
non-affiliated and affiliated females scored higher than
Freshman-Sophomore males. In the case of within the females
themselves, Junior-Senior females who were not affiliated with
sororities scored higher than those who were affiliated.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering future studies in this area, data indicate only limited evidence of the importance of the selected variables as factors that influence female role conception. Because only partial support was found for the hypotheses, future study is indicated. Such studies could deal with some of the same variables, emphasizing sex differences, year in college and residence affiliation, but it is suggested that some other variables such as religious affiliation, socioeconomic status of the students, rural or urban residence, and marital status of the students should be taken into consideration.
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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C. UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL

Drake University
Sociology Department

Name ____________________________

QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a scientific survey of student opinions and attitudes. You are one of 250 students selected, at random, to participate in this project. This study is intended to supply many important facts about what young people of your age feel, think and do. You will help us establish these facts by giving answers to questions in this questionnaire.

Read each question carefully and answer to the best of your judgment, because your answers are the basis of this research. If question is not clear or does not apply to you, please indicate this on the questionnaire.

We ask you to identify yourself on this page; this will allow further contact if a follow-up study is conducted at some future date. Your responses will not be considered individually but as a part of the total comprised by 250 students. You will not be identified individually; all your responses will be kept confidential.

1. Sex
   Male______ Female______

2. Year in College
   Freshman____ Sophomore____
   Junior____ Senior____
   Yes____ No____

3. Fraternity or Sorority Affiliation
   Fraternity or Sorority____

4. Residence
   Dormitory____ Home____
5. A woman should be more concerned with learning to be a good housekeeper and mother than interested in intellectual pursuits.

6. Most men prefer women who are very feminine.

7. Women probably pursue careers because they are not very well adjusted.

8. It is not fair that women compete with men for jobs and promotions because women can use sex.

9. Career women seem to lose their femininity by aggressively competing with men.

10. If a woman and a man have equal skills, they should receive equal pay.

11. Today, most women have little reason to feel that their sex limits them.

12. If a woman wants a career, then she probably should not have children.

13. A woman should not take a job that a man could hold if she does not have a family to support.

14. A woman should always put her husband's career before her own.

15. Women should neither smoke or drink in public.

16. The husband should manage all money matters within the family.

17. Important matters should be discussed between the husband and wife.

18. The husband should make all final decisions.

19. A wife's first concern should be to maintain her home for the pleasure and comfort of her husband.
20. It is disgusting to see a woman painting a fence while her husband hangs out the laundry. SA A U D SD

21. If a woman would like to date a man, she should take a considerable part in initiating the relationship. SA A U D SD

22. Being a wife and mother does not allow a woman to make good use of a college education. SA A U D SD

23. Most women in graduate school are there because they are not married and nothing better to do. SA A U D SD

24. In general, boys take harder courses than girls. SA A U D SD

25. Husband and wife should have a joint checking account. SA A U D SD

26. Women should be encouraged to join in the work of political parties. SA A U D SD

27. The wife should not be required to remain in the background while her husband is in the spotlight. SA A U D SD

28. Our vote should not be influenced by the sex of the candidate. SA A U D SD

29. Our national image would suffer if we had more women involved in government. SA A U D SD

Thank you for your cooperation.

Would you be interested in participating in a similar study again in the future? Yes________ No________