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Gender Role Strain in Women Across Generations

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

College Honors

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Gender Role Strain in Women Across Generations

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A thesis submitted to the Honors Committee of

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requirements of the Honors Program

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Abstract

The present study sought to generate a theory to explain how women of different generations with varying gender identities are dealing with multiple roles. A mixed qualitative/quantitative design was used to analyze data gathered from multi-generational family groupings. Data were collected from five family groupings that included a daughter between the ages of 20 and 30 years, her mother, and her maternal grandmother. Each individual was interviewed independently. The interviews were semi-structured so that each individual answered the same set of questions, but additional questions were included as necessary to clarify and elaborate upon the individual's responses. Interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed before undergoing content analysis. Preliminary research indicates that a "Best Fit" model is the most appropriate model for explaining female gender role strain. Analysis indicates that the most important predictor of female gender role strain is the degree to which the roles that a woman fulfills match or fit with her own personal feelings about the roles that she *should* fulfill.

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Gender Role Strain in Women Across Generations

For virtually all of us, our most salient personal characteristic is our sex (Donelson, 1999). Whether one is born male or female, this single biological characteristic is bound to impact most (if not all) of one's social experiences. In part, this is due to socially prescribed gender roles. Based on one's biological sex, one is expected to behave, think, and feel a particular way (Kilmartin, 2000). Gender roles are socially constructed by a variety of influences. Family background, historical influences, political constraints, social expectations, and religious beliefs may all contribute to formation of gender roles (see Frieze, Parsons, Johnson, Ruble, & Zellman, 1978; Gillespie & Eisler, 1992; Kilmartin, 2000; Lorber, 2001). Gender roles act to encourage certain behaviors and to restrict others. Adhering to one's gender role brings social acceptance and approval while disregarding it can bring punishment and rejection. Thus, the social pressure is to adhere to one's gender role even if one would rather behave, think, or feel another way (Kilmartin, 2000).

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O'Neil (1981) and Pleck (1981) identified *gender role strain* as a situation in which a person's gender role has negative physical or psychological outcomes for them. Similarly, Sales (1978) defined *role conflict* and *role overload*. Role conflict occurs when incompatible demands are placed on an individual because of their membership in a given group (i.e., their status as a male or female). Role conflict, then, ultimately forces the individual to violate someone's expectations. Biddle and Thomas (1966) enumerated three strategies to resolve role strain. First, the individual can ignore all but one set of expectations, essentially refusing to fulfill one or

more of their roles. Second, the individual can create a compromise position, performing aspects of all roles (but presumably not performing any of them to the level that others may expect). Finally, the individual can avoid choosing a strategy by escaping from the situation. Sales (1978) additionally defined role overload. As opposed to role conflict, role overload emphasizes external time demands rather than inherent contradictions in expectations (Sales, 1978). This concept is most closely aligned with the more contemporary concept of multiple roles. Gender role strain as defined by Pleck (1981) includes all of the concepts listed above, and, thus, will be the term of choice used throughout this paper. In men, gender role strain has been linked to stress, health, and mental health problems (Kilmartin, 2000). The consequences of gender role strain for women, however, have not been as carefully considered. This could be attributed to the fact that the male gender role, as compared to the female gender role, has remained relatively static in recent history. While the Women's Movement has created (and is still creating) greater opportunities for women, many have long noted that the very "process of change may produce conflict and uncertainty for those involved in it" (Marecek, 1978).

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Changes Related to Higher Education

Women began pursuing higher education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in an effort to become better mothers (Mankiller, Mink, Navarro, Smith, & Steinem, 1998). However, once educated, some women decided to pursue jobs in which their new skills could be applied. This pattern became increasingly common over time. For many generations of women, college attendance was seen as incompatible with the ideals of socialized femininity; college attendance

in the 20th century, however, was not considered to conflict with the socially prescribed female gender role. Instead, college attendance was either "consistent with or irrelevant to" society's expectations of female behavior (Graham, 1996, p. 300). In the 1960s, ever-increasing numbers of women were attending college and, later, were finding employment outside the home. Combined with a rising divorce rate (which by the 1970s surpassed death as the number one reason for marriage dissolution) (Mankiller et al., 1998), a variety of new expectations became part of women's gender role. In addition to fulfilling expectations of the private sphere as wives and mothers (or, for some, as single parents and sole breadwinners), increasing numbers of women also fulfilled roles in the public sphere as career women (Mankiller et al., 1998). As summarized by Frieze et al. in 1978, "women who enter young adulthood today are more aware of having choices to make. This knowledge forces them to examine alternative lifestyles, clarify their goals, and orient themselves toward planning for their future. Although many women will continue to follow traditional patterns, they will do so by choice rather than by social imperative" (p. 373).

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Education, for many women, was the gateway to greater choice and increased opportunities outside the home. It is not surprising, then, that women became the majority of college students in the 1979-1980 academic year (Donelson, 1999). In the last few years, however, young adults have been increasingly voicing concerns about their college educations – specifically, wondering if a college education actually prepares one for life in the adult world

(Robbins & Wilner, 2001). It remains to be seen how this concern may affects college attendance trends for future generations.

Changes Related to Work

Until the late 19th century, women worked almost exclusively in the home or in unpaid labor in family businesses (Lewis, 1978). The advent of Industrialization cultivated increased opportunities for women to participate as members of the paid workforce (Lewis, 1978). The occurrence of World War II accelerated this movement of women into the paid labor force (Israel, 2002; Yalom, 2001). As World War II neared its resolution, however, government campaigns began targeting the new problem: "how to get rid of the women" (Israel, 2002, p. 168). In the year or so after the end of the war, women's share of all jobs dropped from 36 to 28 percent (Israel, 2002). The popular media of post-war1950s emphasized only two roles for women: that of the wife, and that of the mother. "Domesticity was back in fashion, and was expected to fulfill a wife's fundamental needs. If it did not, the assumption was that something was wrong with her" (Yalom, 2001, p. 361). Women's gender role dictated that they be content with raising children and taking care of their husbands. If a woman did not have to work, she was not supposed to do so.

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Despite the government's efforts to return women to the exclusive role of homemaker (Israel, 2002; Yalom, 2001), the movement of women in the workplace became even more pronounced. During the decade of the 1960s, the number of women in the labor force grew by 39

percent; during the 1970s, the number grew by 41 percent; by the mid 1980s, 64 percent of all women under the age of 65 years were working (Sidel, 1996).

Some authors proposed that the simple presence of women in the workforce would, in itself, encourage and enable other women to enter the workforce also. In 1978, Frieze et al. commented that "as more women choose to work and there are more role models for young women to emulate, we might also expect further changes in women's work orientation. There is already evidence that women are currently entering adulthood with more crystallized work goals, and that these women show personality strengths of competence, independence, and committedness" (Frieze et al., 1978, p. 372).

At the same time, however, distinctions were still drawn among women on the basis of why they had entered the workforce. Women could enter the workforce because of financial necessity. Conversely, women could work either for personal enrichment (rather than for interest in the job itself), or because they derived their primary satisfaction from their work (Frieze et al., 1978). While working for any reason might require more energy and organization,

> …the woman [who is working for personal enrichment rather than for interest in the job itself] is more likely to accommodate to this willingly since she has freely chosen to work…Furthermore, since her family is first in her priorities, this type of woman experiences little difficulty in her family as a result of her working, but she sacrifices possible satisfactions based on job advancement (Frieze et al., 1978, p. 370-371).

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Thus, while women were seen to have discretion as to whether or not they would enter the workforce, their reasons for doing so – especially as those reasons pertained to their gender role expectations regarding family – are inextricably linked to the satisfaction they might receive as a result of working.

Other research, however, has related women's satisfaction in the workplace to other factors. Karasek, Schwartz, and Theorell (1982) determined that the highest levels of stress (and the highest associated levels of coronary heart disease) are found in those jobs that are both highly demanding and low in autonomy and control. As stated by Barnett, Biener, and Baruch (1987), "the balance between demands and resources to meet the demands is usually better for a company president or a surgeon than for a middle manager or a nurse; women, of course, are more likely to hold the latter jobs" (p. 2).

So, positions that women typically hold in the workplace are highly demanding but offer the women little autonomy and control. Presumably, women who purse traditionally male jobs – which are associated with higher levels of autonomy and control – might avoid the high levels of stress and heart disease linked to traditionally female jobs. However, as recently as 1990, women who pursued traditionally masculine occupations were perceived by men as least desirable heterosexual romantic partners (Pfost & Fiore, 1990). Not only did men themselves perceive these women as least desirable, but other women, too, identified nontraditional women in general as the least preferable romantic partners for men. This finding indicates that women may still have some internalized perceptions of "appropriate" and "inappropriate" career paths. Pfost and

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Fiore (1990) confirmed that women are more likely than men to expect and to suffer negative interpersonal consequences for choosing nontraditional occupations. This finding may be related to Horner's theory regarding women's "fear of success" (1970, 1972, 2000). Horner's theory stated that society teaches women that "individual achievements which reflect intellectual competence or leadership potential" (Horner, 1972, p. 157) are not compatible with femininity. Women who wanted to succeed professionally knew that doing so would result in personal failure – as the result of the "awareness of a discrepancy between oneself and an internalized standard of behavior" (Tresemer, 1977, p. 56). Thus, women may have an inherent "motive to avoid success" – that is, according to Horner (1972), a disposition to become anxious about achieving success because they expect negative consequences (such as social rejection or feelings of being unfeminine) as a result of succeeding. Social definition holds that women do not belong at the top. Knowing this, women can feel fraudulent when they find themselves there (McIntosh, 1985). What Horner called "fear of success" is in reality a manifestation of gender role strain.

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Further research of Horner's theory demonstrated that those who score high on measures of fear of success tend to make internal attributions for failure ("I'm so stupid") and external attributions for success ("The teacher gave a really easy exam") (Canavan, 1989). These same attribution styles are seen in individuals suffering from depression, which is diagnosed in females twice as often as in males (Kilmartin, 2000). Thus, gender role strain may explain not

only Horner's fear of success, but also the higher incidence of depression in the female population.

While changes in the workplace have generally led to more options and increased discretion for women seeking to enter the workforce, their reasons for working, the jobs they work, and the perceptions of the jobs they work may all have larger implications for women's lives.

Changes Related to Marriage

Just as women have more discretion in the realm of work, so, too, they have an increased amount of choice regarding their romantic involvements. The United States has a history of intolerance toward single women (Israel, 2002). Marriage as an institution has historically been deemed a "social good," and drops in marriage rates have been treated as a cause for concern (Mankiller et al., 1998). While marriage rates have remained fairly constant over time – with about 10 percent of women who are eligible to marry never marrying in their lifetimes (Mankiller et al., 1998), public opinion holds that women have enjoyed an increasing amount of choice regarding their marital status:

> The contemporary woman has two central decisions to make in fulfilling her intimacy needs. She has to decide whether or not she wishes to marry, and, if she decides to marry, when this should occur. The recent shift toward later marriages has signified that women may be less subjected to societal pressures to marry in their early twenties, and may use

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this time to accumulate work and love experiences that will clarify their long-range goals (Frieze et al., 1978, p. 362).

Thus, women who delay marriage may use their early adulthood to achieve some of their personal goals – including career-related and romantic goals. However, many "twenty-something" women still feel stigmatized when marriage is not their first priority (Robbins & Wilner, 2001). Many women do, however, have other priorities than marriage. This freedom may ultimately create a great deal of confusion for young adults trying to make decisions about their lives. During the first half of this century, young people entered into their adult roles with less confusion than many have today. "Society presented clear guidelines about the appropriate role choices for men and women, and most followed these directives…Those who chose to deviate from the traditional roles usually could expect pity or disapproval. Women who remained single or did not have children were viewed as unfulfilled, unhappy, and unfeminine" (Frieze et al., 1978, p. 359). One must wonder how much these social assumptions have actually changed.

A consideration for women who do opt to marry concerns the label of *wife*. Wife is an *ascribed* rather than an *achieved* role. That is, when a woman is married, she assumes the label of wife. In contrast, a woman who is promoted to a "manager" has worked to earn her label. Roles that are ascribed carry a particular burden – people in ascribed roles are expected to perform them competently. Because of this expectation, however, competence or success is not well rewarded and, concurrently, failures are dealt with harshly (Marecek, 1978; Sales, 1978). Thus, women who delay marriage, as well as those who do not, may still be subject to traditional

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expectations regarding their role performance. This may be a role performance for which non-traditional females are largely unprepared.

Changes Related to Caregiving

Like the role of "wife," the role of "mother," too, is one for which many women are not trained (Marecek, 1978). Today, as in the past, women bear greater responsibility for domestic chores and childcare than their male counterparts (e.g., Hochschild, 1998; Mankiller at al., 1998; Yalom, 2001). Many researchers have discussed the "double shift" that many women work: the first, outside the home; the second, inside. These days, women who do not work outside the home seem to be in the minority. Society has relegated them to the "just a housewife" category (Mankiller et al., 1998; Yalom, 2001). As most women – even the "class-privileged" – are participating in the paid labor force, full-time homemakers find themselves and their work increasingly devalued (Mankiller et al., 1998).

Not only is the work of full-time homemakers devalued, but these individuals may also find themselves at an increased risk if they are overly dependent on their roles. As stated by Sales (1978), "while young men typically assume work and marriage roles that continue until old age, women's roles and role demands change considerably over time. The patterning is most diverse for women with children" (p. 160). As children mature and leave home to begin their own adult lives, homemakers may suffer as a result of their exclusive commitment to the traditional female gender role (Frieze et al., 1978). This has been cited as one possible

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explanation for the higher rates of depression seen in women. (e.g., Hoffnung, 1998; Jenkins, 1997; Marecek, 1978; Yalom, 2001).

Some researchers have attributed women's depression to lack of employment: "Employed women have the best health; full-time homemakers have the worst health" (Hoffnung, 1998). Others have emphasized that choice is the deciding factor: "The life of a housewife can be fulfilling if freely chosen" (Yalom, 2001). According to the gender role strain model, the most critical factor is whether the choice one wants to make is the choice that is socially endorsed. Whatever the reasons for their decisions to become homemakers, "many women feel compelled to curtail their self-expression, career development, and self-actualization 'until the children are grown'" (Marecek, 1978, p. 266). Despite the possible negative aspects of raising young children (e.g., the possibility of depression and the deferment of one's own needs), most women still report finding a deep satisfaction and pleasure in motherhood (Marecek, 1978). Ironically, it may be the very acknowledgement of the negative aspects of homemaking that allows women to enjoy it more fully.

> If a woman had a problem in the 1950s and 1960s, she knew that something must be wrong with her marriage, or with herself. Other women were feeling satisfied with their lives, she thought. What kind of woman was she if she did not feel this mysterious fulfillment waxing the kitchen floor? She was so ashamed to admit her dissatisfaction that she never knew how many other women shared it (Friedan, 1996).

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The problem Friedan was discussing was "the problem that had no name" – it was the unhappiness of the American Housewife. The ability to even acknowledge negative feelings associated with one's role as wife and mother is a fairly recent development (Friedan, 1996; Wolf, 2003).

Some women decide that, while they want families, they will not be able to perform the role of the housewife. This can lead a husband and wife to decide, essentially, to reverse roles. While househusbands are rare (Yalom, 2001), their existence offers an interesting counterpoint to more traditional arrangements. "On a symbolic level, role reversal households represent a challenge to the various components of traditional gender role ideology, including ideas about motherhood and children's 'needs,' dependent femininity, and men as providers and heads of households" (Pilcher, 1998, para. 3.1). Role reversal households may more clearly illuminate the "conventional patterns of responsibilities and power relations between women and men which are central to the performance of masculinity and femininity" (para. 3.1).

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While some women are redefining their roles associated with giving care to their children, other women are struggling with caregiving of another variety. These women are becoming members of the "sandwich generation" – they are sandwiched between the caregiving needs of their children and the caregiving needs of their aging or elderly parents (Witkin, 1991). This is an increasingly common arrangement. Caregiving is an inclusive concept that acknowledges the multiple ways in which women are responsible for giving care to others. Thus, the word "caregiving" will be used throughout this paper in lieu of the word "parenting."

Overview of Changes Related to the Female Gender Role

It is clear that women's gender roles have been rapidly evolving – especially since the 1950s, when increasing numbers of women sought employment outside the home (Giele, 1998). Giele has stated that this occurrence marked the entrance of multiple roles into the lives of women: "The change was not just a matter of rising employment but of *combining women's work and family roles* [emphasis hers]" (Emergence of Women's Multiple Roles section, para. 6). As this new aspect of women' gender roles developed, women combining work and family roles were first seen as deviant. Today, the combination of work and family is more than accepted; it is virtually expected. While having responsibilities both in the workplace and in the home has long been the paradigm for women of lower socioeconomic status (e.g., Mankiller et al., 1998), it seems that the "double-shift" is also here to stay for today's middle class women. It is easy to identify the presence of multiple roles in women's lives; it is more difficult to know how women are dealing with this redefinition of their gender role.

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Barnett and Baruch (1987) outlined two possible hypotheses regarding women's stress due to fulfillment of multiple roles. The *scarcity hypothesis* suggests that women have a limited amount of energy to distribute among their roles. Therefore, the greater the number of roles, the less energy, and the more conflict a woman will experience. The *expansion hypothesis*, on the other hand, suggests that the rewards of occupying multiple roles offset the costs. Support for these two hypotheses is mixed. Studies have shown that women who fulfill multiple roles as homemaker, paid worker, and caregiver consistently report higher levels of stress than do other

women (e.g., Aneshensel & Pearlin, 1987; Jenkins, 1997; Marecek, 1978; Paludi, 1998). Other studies, however, have indicated that multiple roles are correlated with better psychological well-being (e.g., Hoffnung, 1998; Martire, Stephens, & Townsend, 2000; Paludi, 1998; Waldron & Jacobs, 1989).

The American Psychological Association's National Task Force on Women and Depression published a report in 1990 that seems to support the idea that multiple roles can be a buffer against depression. Women were ranked from least depressed to most depressed. The three categories of women that tended to be the least depressed were: (1) employed wives with low marital strain and low job strain; (2) employed wives with low marital strain but high job strain; and, (3) unmarried women with low job strain. The three categories of women who tended to be the most depressed were: (1) nonmarried, unemployed women; (2) employed wives with high marital strain and high job strain; and (3) nonemployed wives with high marital strain. These results support Aneshensel and Pearlin's (1978) findings: that "the quality of experience of a woman's social roles – the balance between rewarding and distressing role attributes – was more important in explaining role conflict, role overload, and anxiety…than the sheer number of roles occupied or role occupancy per se" (p. 83).

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Whether women, as a group, experience positive or negative consequences as a result of their participation in both the public sphere of paid work and the private sphere of their homes, certain groups have maintained that the overarching effect on society is negative (see Faludi, 1991 for a review). Specifically, the conservative "New Right" of the early 1980s argued that

women's increased participation in the workforce was responsible for the decline of the traditional family (Faludi, 1991; Gerson, 2003; Giele, 2003). Kathleen Gerson (2003) evaluated the two basic positions related to changes in family structure: (1) the changes represent a "family decline" indicative of a larger moral breakdown, or (2) these changes represent necessary and adaptive shifts that ensure the survival of the family. Gerson evaluated the veracity of these two positions by going to those people who were most likely to have been affected: the children. Her conclusions indicated that the modern family is not, in fact, either morally depraved or harmful – at least not any more so than the traditional family. In short, the traditional family does not guarantee a child's long-term successful "trajectory," a feat that the newer family paradigms are able to accomplish in many circumstances – sometimes even where the traditional family fails (Gerson, 2003). Thus, the concerns of the "New Right" seem to be unfounded.

If families do not suffer unduly when women are committed to multiple roles, what can be said about the women themselves? Gillespie and Eisler (1992) developed a scale to examine women's tendency to experience stress when faced with threats and challenges to stereotypical feminine gender role commitments. They identified five categories of gender role stressors including fear of unemotional relationships, fear of physical unattractiveness, fear of victimization, fear of behaving assertively, and fear of not being nurturant. The authors concluded that these stressors are particularly salient for women both as a result of personal agendas consistent with feminine gender role socialization and environmental contingencies that reinforce these agendas. Watkins and Whaley (2000) further emphasized that the five categories

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identified by Gillespie and Eisler revolved around impaired interpersonal functioning. This observation is consistent with the expectation that, for women in the United States, success is equated with interpersonal competence. It is also consistent with the observation that the female gender identity, more than the male gender identity, is threatened by interpersonal separation or disconnection (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1982).

The trend of the changes related to the female gender role indicates that women today have a greater amount of choice than did women of earlier generations. Yet, having a greater number of choices is not, apparently, always considered to be a positive outcome: "Baby boomers often tell their children how lucky they are to have so many more opportunities than there were thirty years ago…But this increasingly long list of choices actually makes it harder to be a twenty-something. With so many more alternatives available, it is more difficult to decide on one particular path" (Robbins & Wilner, 2001). While women of past generations struggled because too many of their life choices were dictated by social norms, younger women may struggle because social norms do not offer enough guidance.

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The Present Study

The present study seeks to generate a theory to explain how women of different generations with varying gender identities are experiencing gender role strain. The degree of gender role strain is an indicator of how well or how poorly individuals are coping with their gender role demands. However, "evidence on gender role attitudes suggests that younger cohorts [or generations] of women are more liberal and egalitarian in their attitudes to sex roles than are

older women" (Pilcher, 1998, para. 1.2). Because so many factors influence the development of one's gender role (Kilmartin, 2000), these roles will vary among individuals to an unknown degree.

It is known, however, that "an individual's location in historical time, via date of birth and death, exposes them to certain experiences, crises, and events and excludes them from others" (Pilcher, 1998, para. 1.1). Hence, women within the same generational cohort are likely to adhere to similar gender roles, having been socialized during approximately the same time period and having been exposed to the same historical circumstances. Similarly, women within the same family are likely to have been subject to similar family expectations, religious beliefs, and social standards and, thus, to similar gender role ideals. A multi-generational design was, therefore, the most effective approach for the present study. This design allowed comparisons of gender roles and gender role strain both within each cohort and within each family grouping.

Further, in keeping with the ideals of feminist research, the present study employed a partially qualitative design. Feminist research emphasizes the importance of personal experience (Ballou & Gabalac, 1985; Reinharz, 1992; Stanley & Wise, 1983). As opposed to many other research methods, feminist research holds that personal experiences should be central to theory and model building (Ballou & Gabalac, 1985). This attention to the personal experience allows a researcher to pay attention both to women as a single category and as differentiated individuals (Reinharz, 1992). Pilcher (1998) commented that cohort studies of women's gender role attitudes using a qualitative research design are rare despite their efficacy. Interviews, the qualitative

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aspect of the present study, are considered to be especially effective for feminist research because interviews allow "access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher….In this way, learning from women is an antidote to centuries of ignoring women's ideas altogether or having men speak to women" (Reinharz, 1992, p. 19).

In addition to the qualitative component– interviews – the present study also involved the use of several quantitative measures with which to correlate the qualitative findings. The quantitative measures reduced the likelihood that data were misinterpreted due to either a lack of understanding or bias. In summary, the present study used a mixed qualitative-quantitative design to generate a theory to explain how women of different generations with varying gender identities are dealing with gender role strain.

Method

Participants

This study involved the participation of five multi-generational family groupings. Each family grouping included a daughter between the ages of 20 and 30 years, her mother, and her maternal grandmother. The ages of the mothers ranged from 46 to 55 years and the ages of the grandmothers ranged from 67 to 83 years. A total of fifteen women participated. All participants were Caucasians who were born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Because it was known that this study would involve a very small sample, efforts were made to reduce the number of confounding variables. Thus, the ethnicity and region of origin were held constant for all

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participants. While this decision reduces the generalizability of the results, it was the most sound methodological solution. For biographical sketches of all participants, please refer to Appendix C.

Materials

Quantitative

Four questionnaires were created for use in this study. One questionnaire sought general biographical information (see Appendix A1); the second sought a history of the participant's immediate family (see Appendix A2); the third questionnaire sought a history of stress-related illnesses (see Appendixes A3 and A4); and the fourth sought information regarding participant's health maintenance behaviors (see Appendix A5).

Additionally, the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) was administered to all participants. The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-II) was originally included. All participants who received the BDI-II, however, reported a complete absence of all symptoms related to depression, which may be explained by a social desirability bias. Thus, the use of this measure was discontinued before the study was completed.

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Qualitative

Other materials used include an interview template (see Appendix B1) that was adapted for each interview, a parenting styles worksheet (see Appendix B2), and a post-interview checklist for the use of the interviewer (see Appendix B3).

Design and Procedure

The present study was partially funded by a Collaborative Undergraduate Research Grant, awarded by Albright College for use during the summer of 2002. Efforts to locate participants began at that time. Possible participants were identified through a college directory. All female students who graduated in the spring of 2002 as well as all female students who would be seniors during the 2002 to 2003 academic year were contacted in writing, either by mail, e-mail, or both. Two of the five family groupings were identified in this manner. Another family grouping was identified through an "all-users" e-mail that was sent to faculty and employees of the college. The two remaining family groupings were identified because the researcher knew members of the family. Alumnae were also contacted as possible participants.

Initial contact was typically made with one family member who became the contact person for her family grouping. This contact person took responsibility for ascertaining whether her family members were interested in participating. Family members were simply told that the study was examining relationships among daughters, mothers, and grandmothers.

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After confirming that all three members of the family were willing to participate, each of the three members was mailed a pre-interview packet. This packet contained a letter of greeting, an informed consent form, the biographical questionnaire, the family history questionnaire, the checklist of stress-related illnesses and illness detail sheet, the health maintenance questionnaire, and the BSRI. All forms included in the pre-interview packet may be found in Appendixes A1

through A6. Participants completed all of the forms and returned them to the researcher. Comparison matrixes of the pre-interview data can be found in Appendixes D1, D2, and D3.

Questionnaires were examined prior to interview sessions. This allowed the interviewer to alter the interview template to suit the experiences of each participant. The BSRI was not scored until after the interview had been completed. Doing so earlier could have biased the content of the interview.

Participants were contacted to schedule a time for their interview. Individuals were interviewed independently in a setting of their own choosing – typically in their own homes, although several participants were interviewed at the library. Participants each received ten dollars for their involvement.

Interviews were conducted in private and were audio taped with the participants' consent. The interviews were semi-structured so that each individual answered the same set of questions, but additional questions were included as necessary to clarify and elaborate upon the individual's responses (please see Appendix B1 for the interview template). During the course of the interview, participants were asked to use the parenting styles worksheet (see Appendix B2). Initially, participants were asked to complete the BDI-II at the conclusion of the interview. However, as previously stated, all participants who received the BDI-II reported a complete absence of all symptoms related to depression, which may be explained by a social desirability bias. Thus, the use of this measure was discontinued before the study was completed. After the interview, the researcher completed a post-interview checklist (see Appendix B3) to note details

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of the interview process. The tapes of the interviews were transcribed before undergoing content analysis.

Results and Discussion

Data were examined for trends regarding gender roles and the strain those roles may be causing. Data were analyzed within each generation (or cohort) and also within each family grouping. Therefore, the results of the present study will be discussed on two levels. First, the experiences of the women in the study will be discussed on a group level. Themes of gender role strain that seem common to all of the women – or themes that seem common to given generations of women – will be discussed. These experiences of gender role strain will specifically be discussed in terms of four domains: Education, Work, Marriage, and Caregiving. A discussion of strain at the individual level will follow. Factors that contribute to or mitigate the experience of gender role strain for individual women will be addressed. Please note that Appendix C contains brief biographical sketches of the participants to which readers may refer while reviewing the following discussions. Additionally, Appendixes D1 through D4 are comparison matrixes that summarize demographic information, family backgrounds, health histories, and gender role strain indexes. Referring to these documents while reviewing the following discussion may also be beneficial.

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Strain at the Group Level

Strain Related to Higher Education

The women who participated in this study had varying experiences with higher education. Of the grandmothers, only one (G6) had received education beyond high school. Of the mothers, two (M1 and M6) attended a four-year college after high school graduation, dropped out, then returned as non-traditional students to finish their degrees. Another mother (M4) had been admitted to a four-year college but decided not to attend. She, too, later returned to finish her degree as a non-traditional student. The two remaining mothers (M2 and M5) opted to attend business school rather than a four-year college after they graduated from high school. Of the daughters, all but one (D4) will have earned a four-year college degree by the end of the 2002-2003 academic year. D4 attended a four-year college after graduating from high school, dropped out, and later attended business school.

While none of the grandmothers possessed a four-year college degree, they all indicated that education was important to them, as in this comment made by G1:

G1: I was very disappointed that I could not have gone into a field of extra education. So what I did do when I did get out of high school which would have been younger than 20, 21, I did go to [Name of Business School] and took some extra bookkeeping and things of that sort.

G1 was not able to attain the level of education that she desired. She had developed a plan that would have allowed her to do so, but it was ultimately unsuccessful.

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G1: 'Cause of World War II, I could've gone in WACS or to the WAVES. And – 'cause they were recruiting at that time. And, 'cause it was in '44, '43, '44, and some in my class did actually go into the service…And I really wanted to do this. It wouldn't have cost my parents a cent…But my mother was the type, "I don't want to lose my one and only." She only ever had me. "You're not going into the service." And you abided. That generation did not oppose their parents. So, I abided. She said, "You can be a good secretary. You'd make an excell…." Well, I did become a private secretary. And I could do it. But it was not really what I wanted to do.

Though social norms made it impossible for her to disregard her mother's wishes, G1 remained committed to education. Like G1, G4 was unable to attend college. In G4's case, however, her brother was able to attend school, though she could not. When asked if she was interested in continuing her education, G4 responded:

G4: Well, at the time, not really, 'cause the money wouldn't've been there. I had a brother who went to college. And, of course, at that time you had to pay for everything. They didn't have these grants and so forth. They had scholarships, but you didn't get too many of those. That was the only one. They could've never afforded to send me…I don't think I had the push. I really don't think I had the push to go…I guess I knew it wasn't gonna be so I didn't even – and ,you know, like I said if I would've had the opportunity, I probably wouldn't have. I just didn't feel like doing it.

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Thus, G4 indicated that she did not have any interest in attending college – perhaps, because she knew it was not a feasible option. G6, too, faced financial barriers to attending college. While she desired additional education, G6 knew that she would be responsible for earning the money to attend.

G6: I went into nurse's training right after high school. I graduated in June and started in August. And that was three full years… Yeah, I wanted, I really would have preferred to go to college, but, but whatever education I got, I had to get myself. I worked, I saved money to go. And I needed enough for three years. Probably, if I would have checked more closely, I probably would have been available for some scholarships, you know, but I didn't. They were, they weren't as prevalent as they are now…

Like G4 and G6, G5 was also aware of the financial limitations of her family of origin and how this limited her opportunity for higher education. Reflecting on this time in her life, however, G5 was also aware that social norms did not emphasize higher education as an option for women.

G5: Years back, you didn't, college wasn't the thing, and besides that, my dad had left when we were small. And when I, as soon as I got out of school, I had to go to work. And my mother could have never sent me to school. And we didn't think about that then.

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What many women of the grandmothers' generation were thinking about instead was marriage. As the following quote from G2 indicates, college was not often seen as an option when marriage was imminent – even when parents encouraged college attendance.

G2: I met my husband – well, I knew him casually until I was 16 and then we started going steady and he went over to Korea, to the war. And I finished high school and disappointed my mother because I didn't really want to go to college although I had all A's. (laughs) But by that time I knew that I wanted to be married to [my husband]… At that point, not too many women were doing other than what I was doing. It was getting to be more [that women were going on to college] but most of them would still just get married and have a family.

Overall, the experience of the grandmother's generation reflects a lack of opportunity to pursue higher education. Financial difficulties were an especially common barrier. Additionally, social norms did not offer support to women who may have wished to pursue higher education.

Despite the difficulties they faced, many of the grandmothers encouraged their daughters to pursue additional education after graduating from high school. As the following quote from G5 demonstrates, encouraging her daughters to attend college still violated social expectations of the times.

G5: When I used to go cash my paycheck at the courtesy desk, they'd -- I'd say "It's from my hands to the bank, it's for educa-- to help educate…" And they used to say, "Oh, that's so foolish for you to work just to sent gir-- That's crazy to send girls to school"… So they all got [some kind of education]. They, uh, we didn't want them to, like I say, we, when I was young, they didn't think about that stuff. But when my girls were growing

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up, I wanted them to have it better than I had it, when I was a kid... We wanted them to get an education. Absolutely.

G6 also encouraged her children to pursue higher education, like G5, working to earn money to help them pay for their educations.

G6: I'm very happy that all four of my children went to college. I wanted them to have something behind, beyond high school… You know, it's not for everybody, but I'm glad my children made the choice. Whether it was something vocational, because they both like working with wood, like their father, or uh, like a trade school, or anything like that, any, anything that was beyond high school. And they made the choice to … Well, I had to go to work to, so they could go, but that, that didn't bother me.

Several of the mothers who participated in the study intended to attend four-year schools immediately after graduating from high school; for a variety of reasons, their plans did not work out. Here, M6 described her thoughts and feelings about college before she left school to get married and give birth to her first child.

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M6: At that point I wanted to go to college and I really thought I wanted to be a teacher, you know, I was going to college. I was going to be an education major, I was a math major. And I really thought that's what I wanted. And, you know, eventually settle down and get married. But really my goal at that time was, you know…you know I had started college and I can't say I was – I liked it, but you know I didn't like exactly what I was doing. You know what I mean. I was taking a lot of courses. It was a lot different than I

thought it would be… It was like there wasn't really any other thing that I wanted to do. And, I really didn't want to work at that time. You know, I worked in summers and stuff like that. But other than that it wasn't like I knew what I wanted to do. Everything that I thought I wanted to do I needed education for, so that's what I was starting.

M6 mentioned that she had decided to major in education though she wasn't positive that this major would crystallize into a long-term career plan. M4 discussed similar feelings.

M4: And when I was going to go to [Name of College] and I was going to go for teaching…which really wouldn't have been me because I'm not fond of kids, it really wasn't – and then for math, you had on top of that, and I wasn't Mrs. Math, so it's like, why did I choose this?… It was just sort of the, you know, like the thing: you're either a teacher, a nurse, a housewife, you know, that kind of thing. So it's like, well ok, I guess I'll be a teacher. So I really didn't have a zest to do that. But, it was sort of the only thing to do, in my mind. And so I was all set to go to [Name of College], the works. I had the roommate and everything. And, I just thought, "The heck with it. I'm not gonna do it." And my mom tried to talk me into it, my girlfriend tried to talk me into it and I just thought, no. I don't want to be bothered.

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M2, like M6, left school to get married. She got a degree from a business school and ultimately completed a four-year degree as a non-traditional student.

M2: I went to, ah, [Name of College] for three semesters. I was a math major and that's where I met my husband. And he finished and got his degree, um, but I had to have some

surgery on my knee after my first semester. And I would not have been able to go back after the winter break, I was laid up in a cast. So, um, I didn't want to get a whole semester behind, so I went to business school and I graduated in a year with a secretarial certification and then I went to work, so… I really wanted to be an engineer. That's why I started out with a math major, I really wanted to be an engineer. But then I met my husband, and my knee thing, so I, uh, gave it up. Because I knew to be an engineer I'd probably have to go on to a different school than [Name of School]. So I knew I wouldn't even be finished after four years. And at that time I was interested in getting married.

While the experiences of the grandmothers' generation generally reflected a lack of opportunity related to higher education, the experiences of the mothers' generation reflected an increased emphasis on education. Several of the mothers pursued degrees from business schools in their young adulthood; three of the mothers ultimately returned to school to complete four-year degrees. Following is what one of the mothers (M4) said about why she decided to attend business school.

M4: Probably just, maybe because I didn't know what else to pick. It probably was, I don't even know why. I probably just did it because maybe somebody else suggested it. "Well then if you're not going to go to college go to business school." Those were probably, maybe, the two most popular options at that time.

M1 stressed to her daughter the importance of a four-year degree. Her daughter voiced some of the advice that her mother offered.

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D1: She [M1] basically quit school to marry my dad. I don't think I would ever do that. Um, and she always tells me, "Please, just finish your schooling before you get married and have a family." So it's just something I would do different.

Overall, the experiences of the daughter's generation were very different from that of the two earlier generations. All of the daughters spoke of higher education as an expectation – not necessarily something about which they had a choice. Consider the following statements:

D1: I think it was kind of expected. Or – not – I don't think I would have been pushed but I was always interested in going. But my parents both went to school so it just seemed something "we do."

D2: I just didn't know what I wanted to do, so I thought it was going to be, like, a waste of time. If I went and just wasted all this money for, you know, something I wasn't sure about. But I didn't know what I wanted to do as a job either, so I thought, well, I can give it a try.

D3: I think that it was just kind of always expected that I would go to college. Along with all my friends. So, it was just kind of me, my whole circle of friends we all just kind of kept on going. My mom and dad always expected me to go to college and when I was that age, kind of all of us were expected to go to college. Like, when my mom would have been younger, not everybody went to school. But I graduated in '92. In '92, pretty much everybody was gonna go to college. So, I think we all just applied places and we all got

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accepted places and we all just picked a place (laughs) and that's where we went. So, I think it was just kind of the normal thing to do.

D5: I really didn't want to go to college. I, I wanted to take a year off because I quite honestly felt like I had no direction. I didn't know who I was. Um, I was very sheltered and I wanted to take time to sort of, I guess, find myself. And my parents thought it would be a better idea if I went to school and they offered to pay and because I was living with them they sort of said, well, you know what, we're going to make this decision for you because we don't think your other decision is very wise. And I think they thought I was gonna throw my future away.

D6: I don't know that I ever chose to go to college, it just kind of like, "So where are you applying?" kind of thing. But I can't imagine doing anything else right now.

The experiences related to higher education expressed by these three generations of women show an interesting evolution of strain. The grandmothers' strain related to higher education generally stemmed from a lack of opportunity (resulting from financial limitations, lack of social support, or pressure related to prevailing social norms of the time). While none of the mothers completed a four-year degree immediately after high school, the majority of them did, ultimately, complete their degrees as non-traditional students. The experiences of the daughters indicate that a new source of strain may be their parents' expectations that the daughters would attend college. In fact, this expectation was so strong that several of the daughters indicated that they did not even consider the decision to attend college to be a choice.

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Strain Related to Work

One of the more unexpected developments of this study was the discovery that all of the grandmothers who participated had extensive work histories. Previous research (e.g., Sidel, 1996; Yalom, 2001) suggested that this finding would be uncommon among the grandmothers' generation. Several of the grandmothers, however, mentioned the role that World War II played in opening opportunities for them to work.

G6: I think it was finally, you … technically, it was right after World War, War II, and after World War II there were more options for women. Uh, you could still, like, raising a family, and working was more of an option than it used to be, because even a lot of people who were school teachers or whatever, they still, um, had problems raising a family and working, uh, mainly a lot of the husbands didn't like it. But think by the time, um, I graduated from high school in forty-nine, and then the Korean War happened, right after that. So women got to be more independent.

While World War II increased job opportunities for women, this increased opportunity was, for some, temporary.

G1: So, I excelled [in my job] and then the fellas were coming back from the World War II. And I had a lady working with me who said, 'You know you're holding down a job that belongs to a servicemen.' Now this bothered me. And I said, 'Oh my word." And "I can't…" They would've placed me into another department but instead I thought I'd get

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into my medical field…And that was not at all the way I wanted it. And then I went back into office work.

Many of the grandmothers discussed similar reasons for pursuing work outside the home.

G1: I didn't really mind working because my husband was underpaid. He worked for his dad and they didn't believe in giving regular raises…and I earned more than he did for a long time. And that kinda hurt him.

G4: Well, actually, my husband was laid off from work, where he worked. So then I went to work to make up for, you know, the loss. And, ah, from then on I kept working, that was it until I retired… Well, after I got started I realized that the extra money helped a lot, you know. So that's why I, I kept right on working.

G4: Well once I got working it was very important. My job was very important to me, to help, like I say, the reason it was important was we could live better and I could help with the girls. To get, get 'em educated.

G6: You know, when I went to work well he seemed very good about it, because I, when I went back to the ho---, He lost his job and I went back to the hospital to work, and when I came home in the morning, he had [our daughter] up, he had given her breakfast, and had her changed…You know I worked full-time then, when she was little, mainly because he had lost his job.

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Clearly, financial necessity was one factor that led several of the grandmothers to work outside the home. This was not, however, the only reason.

G1: [Working] was a natural thing. It was not, uh, you enjoyed going to work. You loved every minute of it. You'd go in there, this was me, in fact, you'd get home Friday and you'd think, "What am I going to do on the weekend?"

G2: Um, I always did office work, for the most part, so. It was important, but, it was like my mom said, when she went into part-time work, to my dad, "At least you get away from the circus for a while." You get into the real world. You start thinking like kids think if you're with them long enough (laughs). So I felt, you know, more, that I was doing something for myself when I went out.

G 4: Well I liked the work; I liked the people that I worked with. It was a pleasant day cause you could talk while you were working and have some fun. Yeah, I enjoyed it, the people and the, and the work, I liked the work.

In general, the grandmothers, found work outside the home to be rewarding personally as well as financially. This is congruent with earlier research that indicates that working outside the home is correlated with greater psychological well-being (e.g., Hoffnung, 1998; Martire et al., 2000; Paludi, 1998; Waldron & Jacobs, 1989). Their commitment to working outside the home may also have set a precedent for their daughters to follow:

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M1: I think [working outside the home] was important to me as a person. For one thing, I always saw my mom doing it, which I guess in that time she was a little bit unusual to work full-time, you know. 'Cause a lot of my friend's moms were stay-at home moms.

In many ways, the themes related to working for pay outside the home transcended generational divides. Here, mothers discuss the financial benefits of working outside the home.

M1: The job's provided well for my family and it gave my husband the opportunity to go back to school. 'Cause if I would not have had that good job he wouldn't have been able to quit his job to student teach which, you know, he needed to do that. So, I feel good about that, that I've been able to do nice things for my family.

M6: You know, I like my job; um I can support a house and my kids in college. You know, their dad helps out, but you know for the most part I can, I can do all that. I can help'em out; I can co-sign for loans. I feel like I'm independent enough that you know and that's important to me, you know, that I can do that.

Financial necessity and family expectations also required that some mothers who would have preferred to stay home enter the workforce instead.

M4: Yeah, for me I don't care if I don't work outside the home. (laughs) Oh my God. I never had, like I said I just never had any passion that I had to pursue and think "Oh I just have to do this or else," you know. So, yeah, I was fine staying home. My husband was the one that says, "Don't you think you ought to get a job?" I thought, "Oh, really?" (both laugh) Oh my God. No, I didn't care…My husband feels that everyone should do their part and that means earning money. He said I should "help out" money wise.

M6: You know, and that was, we tried to keep things, you know, balanced, you know, because I wasn't really working full-time for quite awhile. You know, I still did all the chores

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and stuff, cooking and stuff like that. Because I was home during the day, but ah, I enjoyed working and it you know…it was nice to be out, feel like you did something else. Get a little time away. (laughs)…I mean we needed the money you know to help us get by, you know with expenses and everything and ah. That's mostly why I went to work in the evenings, you know.

In general, however, mothers and daughters, like the grandmothers, indicated that working outside the home was beneficial. And the benefits were not purely financial.

D4: Since I've worked outside of the home for so long, I think I would be bored out of my mind if, if I didn't work. I don't even know if I would know how to spend my time [laughs] because I'm very used to working.

M2: I think after being home with, 'cause I have four daughters, so after being home with them for quite a while, it just gives you a little bit more self-worth to be able to work outside the home, be, know that you can do something besides just taking care of the children and taking care of the house. That you can do something more.

M5: I don't think it was important initially. Um, I think it started to become important when I found that whenever I was with someone, I really didn't have anything to talk about, other than chicken pox and formula, and baby food and um, you know, that kind of gets to the point, "I'm really boring them. This is, this is like my life, you know, I'm not up on current events, and, um, I'm not adding value," and you'd be in social situations where everyone would be talking about their jobs and traveling, and you, you "What did you do

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today?" "Well," you know, "laundry, cleaned the house, played with the baby." and it started to be, um, you, your self-worth begins to be questioned because, for some reason, being a mom, a stay-at-home mom is not…cool. You know, "Oh, you're a mom? Oh." "You stay home? Oh." "You don't work?" "No." So, you know, I, I think it got to the point it was like, "I have to do something."

Even those daughters who do not yet have children expect work to offer a respite from the potentially monotonous responsibilities of working at home.

D6: I hope that I can, maybe even if I take a break for a couple years, that I'm always, if not working, ready to go back at, you know, a moment's notice. I never wanna be, I don't know. Out of practice. Of, you know, working. And even if, maybe, I could work part-time when we're having kids. But I mean, it's all I've done. I've been working since I got out of school and I'm used to it now and I think, I think maybe staying home and not having a job I might get bored. There's only so much you can do around the house. Um, I know it's different when you have kids, you're busy all the time, but I think I'll always be working. 'Til I retire.

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Though work may be perceived as an escape from the responsibilities of the home, women may find that their roles as caretakers are difficult to escape even in the workplace.

M1: My mother discouraged me [from becoming a secretary]. She was a secretary for many years and hated it. And so she told me not to become a secretary and that's what I ended up doing… The people I worked for were very nice, but I just got very discontent with

secretarial work. 'Cause you're just, you're just like everybody's mother. And I got, I, I had to do that at home. And, you know, I didn't want to be a mother of grown men and a few women.

D4: I think that women are still expected to almost be the homemaker of the workplace. In my job now, to use that as an example, 'cause it's the most fresh in my mind, the women are still expected to get the coffee. For the men. So to me it's like we're in a work place but you're bringing back that home maker type feel to it, you know. 'Cause I thought "you're all capable of making a pot of coffee." But they kind of expect one of the girls to make the pot of coffee.

Expectations about "appropriate" or "acceptable" female behavior might also be difficult to escape.

M4: Because if you have something to say, um, I think they almost automatically think you're bitching. Even if it's just to say some, some specific thing you're trying to say. It's, it's viewed as a complaint. Like, "Oh, the bitchy women are complaining again." And it's like, well, how do you say it if you don't say it?

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This is a problem discussed at length by Murphy and Zorn (1996). They commented that "women seem to be in a 'Catch-22,' since communicating in traditionally feminine ways lowers professional credibility, yet not being deferential and sensitive often leads to labels such as 'pushy' or 'bitch'" (Murphy & Zorn, 1996, p. 218). Women may not be fully able to transcend social expectations about femininity and may be expected to carry domestic responsibilities over

to the workplace. Thus, work may not provide the release from housework that some women expect. Additionally, the nature of work that women typically have access to may not be much of an improvement over the routine of working at home.

G2: I had different things to do. That's what I told my first interview. They said, "How do you feel about your job?" And I said, "It's boring." And later on, it wasn't too long after that I was assigned to a man that, you know, I could call and make reservations for his trips. So they must have thought, "Well, ok, she's bored." (laughs)

M1: I need a challenge. That's why I like my job now, 'cause it's something different every day. But when I was a secretary, the letters you typed were all the same and after the initial fun wore off, you know, where you were doin' something new, once you got to the point where it was repetitive, I just got so bored.

G6: I knew I could never work in an office, from day one. It either had to be teaching or nursing. Which were practically the only choices you had, as a woman. Ah, you know, now, you know…. Some of them went to business school, but I, I, that wasn't for me. I just, I couldn't, I knew I couldn't do that. I couldn't sit at a desk all day, I was too restless, so I needed a job with a little more action, and motion.

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Many women experienced a division of labor in their jobs, with certain jobs identified as "male," others as "female," and with little crossover between the two.

G4: They probably expected the men to do different jobs, because they weren't for the women, actually, some of those jobs. They [the jobs] weren't too good for women, so

they expected the men to do them. Well, like in the cold room and on the machinery and so forth. Men worked a lot of that. And the machine work, a lot of men did that… there probably were more women; more women where I worked, there was more women…In the area, yeah because there were, most of the jobs were for the women. The men were there to fix the machines and things like that. And then the cold room, they, they managed the machine that poured the chocolate into the moulds and things like that.

M6: You know, ah, in my job, in my in the field that I'm in it just seems like a lot of the jobs were not filled by women, you know, I'm, up until 6 months ago I was the only woman manager in the whole company in this, in this area…

Women may also find that there is little room for advancement in the workplace, depending primarily on the type of environment in which they work.

M4: It's a dead end. This, this is just a dead end job. It's just a job, that's all it is. A job. It's not a career or anything like that… One thing I like about my job is that it's over at 3 o'clock. And I don't have to think about it anymore. It's a 7 to 3 job and it's done. Um, I'm, I'm a real routine person and so the routine is good for me. It's boring sometimes, but I still thrive on a routine.

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D4: Um, in my job, I don't really have any, it almost sounds really negative to say it, but I don't have any more goals. Uh, which doesn't really sound good (laughs) but, I mean, at the job that I'm at, as a paralegal, the only step up is to become a lawyer. That's not for

me. I don't want the stress, I don't want the hours, I don't want to do that. Um, so I don't think that in my job there's really much more.

So, promotions may be difficult to come by in certain fields of work. Further, pay differentials seem commonplace.

M6: They think of men as breadwinners and they pay 'em more just for the fact that they think they're supporting a family even though, maybe a woman could be supporting her family also. You know, they look at men as this is their main thing in life and women as sorta an extra.

Despite the common recurrence of this theme, some of the daughters remain optimistic about the existence of pay differentials in their own future careers.

D1: Well, again, I've heard, um, about some females that aren't paid as much as males, but I would hope, again, that in a few years that that would change all across the board all over, all over this country… I don't expect to be [viewed differently because I'm a woman] especially since, given a little few more years and we'll be even more equal.

Perhaps because their pay does not offer confirmation that their employers value and appreciate them, women often feel that it is necessary to work harder to earn respect in the workplace.

M2: I think in many ways women have to work harder at this than men do. That it's like you have to prove yourself….Um, I just think about my current situation, ah, we have a few men in the department that, I don't know, I don't think they work as hard as we do but they get recognized the same way.

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D5: I think we still live in a society where women have to work twice as hard to prove themselves half as good. Um, I think that most jobs are considered men's jobs and if a woman wants to do it then, good luck. You know, a man's gonna do it better. Unless it's something that's considered, like I was saying earlier, kind of like a feminine job. Um, but, I, I think women have to work a lot harder. I think women are expected to prove themselves where when men show up for jobs they've already sort of established that.

M5: I think that overall, as much as um, society has changed, I think women have to work twice as hard in the workplace to prove themselves. Uh, because I think that, that there are still men that think the 'little woman' belongs home, in the kitchen. And I don't think that they feel that you have the same value. Um, I'm not so sure that we're ever going to get true equal.

M4: I think as long, as long as you do your job well, although maybe the girls have to work harder to prove themselves more. Uh, yeah, yeah, maybe it's still that way…

Needing to work harder in the workplace puts pressure on women to evaluate (or re-evaluate) their priorities, since the demands related to work may reduce the amount of time available to meet demands related to caregiving.

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D5: And I think for women…I think you're expected to put your family as a priority but you, you're not supposed to have that affect your job.

M5: I think that you have to make that, you have to make your job a priority. Uh, I think that when you're hired, they're very clear on the expectations, and they expect you to meet

those, and they don't care about your personal life. They don't care that you're a mom that was up all night with a sick child, they don't care that you have no one to watch the baby, um, they want you to do what they hired you to do... Um, they expect the same out of you as they do from a male worker, and male workers don't have those responsibilities, most times.

Thus, employers may be unsympathetic about women's responsibilities at home. This may contribute to the decision that many women make to take time off work when their children are young, then return to work at a later point. This is one solution for dealing with conflicting work and caregiving responsibilities.

M4: So, you know, I had some years that I knew I'd just be with her and I didn't worry about the future so much as far as what I was gonna do with it. And then, then after, well then, after…I didn't work for 11 years. So, I guess she was about 11 or 12, and then, um, I got back, I didn't have any skills because I took CP in school, college prep. So I didn't really have any skills… I basically, at that point, didn't care so much what I did or didn't do, you know, I didn't have a big idea that I had to be something or do something.

M6: I think the first half of my lifetime I worked more inside the home, you know, and a little bit outside the home and then the second half is definitely mostly outside the home. I think, I'd say the last ah 10 years were probably outside the home and, you know, the 10 or so before that were mostly inside.

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G4: Oh, after I graduated from high school, okay, I worked, ah, for long in a dentist's office. And after I got married, then I ah, of course I had [my daughter] and I was home and then I had my son in '52. I think I started back to work in 1958 and then I worked from then on. I think I was 30 when I started back to work again.

G5: Well, I did work when the, uh, when my oldest daughter was thirteen, I started to work just two days a week. I, uh, two evenings a week, in town. It was a B [name of store], and I worked in there. Just Friday nights and Saturdays, and my husband stayed home with the girls. And then when they got older, I went to work for [name of local department store], and I worked for them for seventeen years… So I worked for them for seventeen years to help get the girls educated.

The strains that many women experience as a result of working transcend generations. Largely, this can be attributed to the fact that strain results from the conflict between raising a family and working. This conflict will be further explored later in this paper. It is important to note that women's working roles change as women move through various stages of the life course, largely because the demands of family roles change (Aneshensel & Pearlin, 1978). This contributes to the M-shaped, or bimodal, trend of women's involvement in the workplace (Sidel, 1996). That is, a peak in involvement early in life, a reduction of involvement during child-bearing years, and then an increased involvement, again, after children are grown. Men's involvement in the workplace, on the other hand, is typically shaped like an inverted U – consistent work throughout

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their life until they retire. Women's work roles, then, are particularly characterized by the cycling of involvement in and withdrawal from employment (Frieze et al., 1978; Yalom, 2001).

Strain Related to Marriage

Many of the grandmothers and mothers indicated that they often did what was expected of them when it was expected of them. This decision to act in accordance with social expectations was seen most commonly in decisions to marry.

G5: When I graduated from high school, I went to work. And then I met my husband, and when I was eighteen, and, and we went together for two years, and then we got married when I was twenty…But you know years ago, when you were twenty, you got marri—I mean it was just, unless you were going to go away to school or something, that was just the ordinary thing. In fact, a lot of my friends were married at eighteen. Right after they got out of high school they were married. But years back, that was the thing to get married when you were young.

M5: And then you know, you, you, you find someone—I think there's a lot of, um, I don't think it's peer pressure, as much as expectations as what society has for you at a certain period of your life. I was twenty-six, twenty-five, twenty-six, and you were supposed to be married. And you know, I met [my daughter's] dad, and, you know, we clicked. We had fun. There wasn't a lot of responsibility, and you know after a certain period of time, you're just expected to get married. And um, that's we did…. So, you know we just kind of did what society thinks you should do. You know, you date for a considerable amount

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of time, and then you're married for a certain period of time, and then you have a baby. And, and that's what we did…. I think I'm very independent, yet I think that I'm very into that mode of 'this is where you should be at that time.' And whether you're ready or not, that's what you do. And, but, and I think that's, that's kind of what happened. We followed this pattern or this map or… and it just isn't always the right path.

While the mothers and grandmothers expectations of and feelings about marriage were very similar, the variety of responses from the daughters indicated that there may be a greater degree of ambivalence in their feelings about marriage.

D6: I'm excited. I, um, for a while I thought it would never happen, you know. I always wanted to get married and I believe in marriage, like, as an institution. But, you know, sometimes you just think, "Arrgh." You know, you go through meeting all these people and they're, they're so icky.

D4: I was engaged to my son's father but before we got married I think we realized that we wouldn't have made it. It, it would've ended in divorce. So, we never did get married. I still want to get married, and I still hope that when I do get married it lasts. I don't want to be, I don't want to be one of the statistics, so, I hope that – which, I guess everybody hopes that (laughs) but I do definitely still want to get married.

D5: I have a lot of mixed feelings of marriage. Based on all the people in my life who are married and aren't married, um, my parents didn't have a good marriage and stayed in their marriage for the wrong reasons… My idea of marriage based on their marriage is

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not healthy at all, um, but then again on both sides of my family I have grandparents who have been married for 50, 60 years. And I have a lot of respect for that. Um, I have a lot of negative views on marriage because I don't think I've personally had a great many positive examples of it in my life.... I think people look to marriage to validate them. I, I think especially women look for marriage for validation. That instead of them becoming more of their own person they look to their male counterpart to fill in all those other voids. And I don't want to do that myself... But, right now I, I don't feel like marriage is, is something that I'm looking for because I haven't really found someone who I feel that I can grow with.

While some of the daughters seem to have a fairly positive view of marriage, others, perhaps as a result of their observations of their mother's experiences, question the stability of marriage as an institution. Regardless, the above comments seem to indicate that while some of the daughters want to be married, their happiness is not wholly dependent upon achieving this goal. All the same, they are not impervious to the pressures that still exist.

D5: I feel a lot of pressure. Especially now I have child um... I didn't so much feel the pressure, I, I felt pressure from my family. Like, I, not to get married but that I should have found someone. Like, you know, "What's wrong with you? You know, you're this, you're that, you're a good girl and you're smart and why haven't you found someone?" And you can't meet the right person out of nowhere. Or, if someone's there you can't mold them into what's good for you...I, I just don't like this view that at a certain age

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certain things have to happen. Because everything that happens in your life should come at a natural pace. I mean, if you do meet the right person for you, and you do get married and start a family and that's the direction you, but, it feels good and feels positive then by all means do it. But to feel that you're forcing that I don't agree with.

Another major theme related to marriage concerned the division of labor within the family. Mothers, daughters, and grandmothers all reflected a strong awareness of the unfair division of household labor.

G2: Um, at times you feel like he's going out and doing all these jobs and I'm washing the clothing and then I'm washing the clothing and I'm washing the clothing. So there were times when you thought, "Uh. Is this really all there is…(laughs)…to life?"

D4: I mean, my dad doesn't do the laundry. My dad doesn't clean. My dad doesn't cook. So my mom still does all the, all of the things she always did. But she also works full-time. And I think that even for my friends that are married, that have kids, that are my age, it's kind of the same thing. I mean, all the women that I work with. They still have all the responsibilities in the house that they did. And they work. And they raise the kids. The dads just don't seem to do as much, I, I [laughs], I don't know. Men, I think, have it easier. [both laugh]

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G1: I think at [the time I was starting my own family], the men didn't take the responsibility [for duties in the home]. They stuck to their jobs, more or less. Their responsibility was

their job and the financial portion…Today I think it's a struggle between the two – who's gonna do what?

M4: My husband feels that everyone should do their part and that means earning money. He said I should "help out" money wise. I guess he felt that my daughter didn't need a full-time mom anymore and my time could be better spent earning money. Even though I was helping him earn money, he didn't see any need to help me out with housekeeping and that was a huge source of contention with us – but mostly on my end, since he didn't think anything was amiss.

G4: [My husband] used to help with the children when they were little, but not with housework. I always did my own housework….[Even after I was working], I always came home and did that. I feel like (laughs) a drudge sometimes. Yeah, I always worked and then I'd come home and I hadda start right in cause if I would've sat down, I woulda never got up again. I'd come home and start right in. Then I'd make my supper and then I'd finish what I didn't do before…Yeah. It used to make me, mmm...you know…I used to get cross and grumpy.

M5: There are partnerships. But, I think overall, men go to work, they come home, and if you go to work and you make money, and help out financially, it doesn't really change their life. You know the sacrifices are more on the, on the woman's side. Ah, because if you're working and you have a child and you're trying to be a mother and a partner, and do a good job, there's not a whole lot, there's not going to be a lot of time left for

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yourself. So you sort of put your life on hold, um, for a while anyway. In honesty, there are many times there's, there's a lot of resentment there. There's a lot of love there, but there's a lot of resentment.

While the division of labor between husbands and wives may be unfair, there is an increasing proportion of women who have a different set of pressures. Women who are not married do not have anyone with whom to divide the work – there is no division of labor, not even one that is unfair.

D4: I think that even now, even though women are working more, I think that their expectations are still the same. I think they're just supposed to do two things at once now. Whereas before the expectations would have been the man works and the woman stays at home and takes care of the home. Now I think the expectation is even if you're a woman and you work outside of the home, you should still come home and take care of the home. Obviously, in my situation, I do that because I don't have a husband [laughs]. So it is my job to come home and take care of the home.

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Other daughters indicated an awareness of the division of labor that existed between their parents – and maintain that such a division will not occur in their own future marriages.

D2: Well, he'd have to treat me like an equal. And, um, be intelligent. He doesn't have to have gone to college or anything, but can carry on a good conversation would be nice. And, uh, be willing to help out, you know, all around, not necessarily being just like women's work and men's work.

D1: [I'm looking for] someone that is responsible and not lazy…someone that can hold a job, help out in the house, ah, take care of, you know, to help pay the bills and everything like that.

One final strain is worth noting, though it had only been experienced by one of the women who participated in the present study: the death of her partner. This is a strain with which many women must ultimately contend.

G5: But I'm not, I can't say I'm really unhappy. But I get lonely. That's the main thing. You know you have a lot of nice memories, wonderful memories, but you can't live with your memories, either. It's a, it's I mean, we were married, like I told you the other night, we were married sixty years. We went together for two years, and it's, when you get older-- I was gonna be eighty when he died –it's hard. It's hard to readjust your life. You just can't. You try, but it, and I'm trying. I'm trying to do all I can, but it's not—It's not easy, no it isn't. Unh-unh. Nope.

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Thus, the strains associated with marriage are diverse. Mothers and grandmothers may have felt pressure to marry by a particular age in their lives. This strain may be less pronounced for the daughters but is certainly not absent. Unfair divisions of labor within a marriage are widespread and also contribute to the stress of wives' roles. Ultimately, the death of one's partner is also a strain of marriage with which women must cope. The degree of strain related to certain issues (especially issues such as the pressure to marry and the division of labor) seems to vary

according to generation. Overall, however, these themes appear to be relevant to the lives of all of the participants.

Strain Related to Caregiving

One of the primary areas of strain related to caregiving that was expressed by the women in the present study was related to the lack of appreciation felt by housewives. This lack of appreciation has also been documented in previous research (see Mankiller et al., 1998; Yalom, 2001). Consider the following statements.

M5: I think that the perception out there is that when women aren't in the workplace, we don't really work. They [men] work. [in a deep voice] "I'm tired, I really worked hard today; what did you do? Oh, yeah, right. You 'worked'." So I, I think that the perception is that men work, and women don't work.

G4: It is so, valued so little and respected so little. That it's just, like, drudgery and no one wants to do it and no one cares of the person who does do it. They just think, "Well then, go ahead, you do it and tough on you."

Many of the women discussed the pressure to combine caregiving with working – either out of desire to do so or financial need. One pressure that they experienced as a result was related to childcare. On occasion, other family members offered assistance.

G1: [My mother] always made it easy for me to be outside the home by taking care of my daughter for me…I was more or less out in the working field like the women are today.

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And that was unusual, 'cause there were not that many people did that [that were out working].

For some, husbands were able to offer the most assistance. As the first comment indicates, however, the concept of fathers helping to take care of their children may have been unfathomable just a few generations ago.

G6: I was lucky, I, my husband, um, was not beyond changing diapers, 'cause I did go, if I went back to work, he took care of the kids. I mean, that was, that was just the way it was… I was working in a doctor's office, and the girl who took over for me, um, had a miscarriage, so that doctor called me. And my mother-in-law lived close by, and I said, can you, I'm only going to work in, I worked a couple hours in the afternoon, and then at night. I said, can you watch [Daughter's Name] in the afternoon, and then [Husband's Name] will do it at night. And she said, "He can't do it." I said, "He's [laughs], if he's going to be a father he can take care…" I mean that was a fact for me.

M1: [My husband] was a wonderful father to an infant. Me being an only child, I had no clue what to do…Because he had experience with her being a small child, he was just very good with her. And so he did, he brought a lot into it.

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M6: We both did everything. We both cooked, we both cleaned, you know. I mostly did wash and stuff, but it was easier for me, but, um I went to work when [our daughter] was like maybe 6 months old; maybe 4 to 6 months old. I went to work in the evenings, just to help out with money, and you know, and then her dad and so he fed, he made formula,

he washed her, changed her, you know, he did all. We both have done child care and shared it, you know.

Most women, however, did not receive as much assistance from their husbands as they might have hoped.

M2: You know, I think raising the children was mostly women, the woman's job. I mean, the men were just there to support them and, you know, give some time to the children but not necessarily be the one responsible for raising them.

G2: There was a definite line as far as the men and what they were expected to do. Changing a diaper wasn't one of them.

G4: When I started my family, mmm…yeah I guess then it was take care of your children, the women you know mostly. Of course the men had part in it too, but you were expected to do the boiling bottles and making formulas and so forth.

While many of the women in the study worked while their children were quite young, others discussed the personal importance of taking time off work while their children were young.

G4: I think it's important to stay home with your children, at least for a while. I was glad I was home with 'em as long as what I was. Because I didn't know if I could handle that getting babies up and taking them out 6 and 6:30 in the morning. (laughs) oh, oh, geez. It's so unsettling. I guess you can get into a routine, but I, I just can't see taking little 6 weeks old babies to a baby sitter. Then you're gone all day and then come home, then

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you're tired, and you have to cope with the baby crying. I don't know, I just don't know if I coulda worked that out too well.

M1: My husband and I had decided that I wouldn't work when she was an infant. We didn't want to give her over to a stranger and my mother was working and my mother-in-law really had no interest in babysitting…So, ah, we decided that we always wanted her to be with one parent. So, if I did work, I would work at night or on the weekends when he was home…Well, you know, I was very proud of my job and I wanted to keep my job, and hoped to advance. But I also wanted to have a family and, so, when that worked out for us, you know, I put my work aside and raised her.

D5: If you think you wanna be a stay home mom so you can have down time, or to watch t.v., or, you know, like, catch up on your reading, it, it's not gonna happen…Um, but I definitely think you need, you need to understand that your life is not your own anymore. Um, because I, I get caught up sometimes and think, you know, "God, I'd kind of like to go to sleep when I wanna sleep" or, you know, "I, I'd like to go a movie" or "I'd like to do this," but, you know, it's like, you know what it's gonna have to wait… I, I think sometimes, you know, a lot of women do this but I wonder if they do it successfully because it's <u>really</u> hard to put almost <u>all</u> your needs aside. But I think that that's what it's about. You, you have to put everything that your child's going through first… The, the only purpose to me to have a job outside the home with a young child is financial. Once

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he's more school age and things are more secure at home, I think I would like to have a career. It would be important to then but it's not now.

M4: I, I wanted to [stay home]…I don't think I would've been very happy trying to do two things like that. Because, like I said, I'm not a kid's person, so that part of it also was, um, let's say hard for me because I wasn't the motherly type, so, having, having a kid is tedious and then if I would've had to work yet and then come home and have a kid whining or moaning I would've went bananas. So, it was better for me to just be there. Plus, I always was of the thing, why have them and then send them somewhere? What's the point of that?

The issue of staying home to raise one's children was also a concern for some of the women who do not yet have a family.

D6: Well, you know, when, I think I will [feel I should stay home] - if I have kids I'm not gonna want to leave them with somebody else all day. You know, um, I'll want to be there. Or, you know, [my fiancé] and I talked about this and it's fine if I'm the one that works and he can stay home with the kids if that's what it comes to. Um, I just think some, one of the parents should stay at home when their kids are little.

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D1: If you have a family there is no sense in letting daycare or someone else raise your kids.

Whatever the arrangements for work, many of the women interviewed spoke articulately about the strain that occurred because of conflicts between their work and caregiving roles. For single mothers, the two roles may be nearly inseparable.

D4: Well, first and foremost [the most important thing to me] would be my son. Um, but because I'm single, I would also have to say that, that my career probably is a very close second to that. Because to me they almost are tied together. If I don't have a good career and make decent money, [my son] will suffer because of it. So, they're kind of related.

Many women discussed their efforts to be both a good caregiver and a good worker. Fulfilling both roles proved to be a difficult balancing act.

M1: It's hard because when you're a woman you're kind of – and a working woman – you're kind of a superwoman. You know, you come home and now you gotta catch up for everything that you know if you were home you would have been doin' the whole day and try to do it well… I was trying to have both things. You know, I wanted to have a career and I was lucky that I did have a nice job – you know, a good paying job with good benefits – but that I could still have, you know, a nice family life. And a lot of those who moved up really had to put their family on hold, you know, a lot of their kids spent a lot of time with their parents or with babysitters and I really didn't want to do that.

M5: I juggled a lot, you know, I think. Uh, jeez, it's hard, you know many times my priorities were not what they should have been. I was trying to have a career, I was trying to have a successful marriage, and be a good mother. And that takes a really special person. And I think there were times that I put my career first. Looking back, would I do that again? No. Uh, because I think what I've learned over the years is that the commitment from a company is for a period of time, and when you look back over your life, you know, you

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can't get those special moments back…And you know I, I did not have a college degree, I had gone to business school for, uh, several years. And I really had to work harder to prove myself. And that meant a lot more sacrifices. If I had to do it over again, would I do the same things? No. No, I, I wouldn't.

Many women felt a keen awareness that something may be sacrificed when women attempt to fulfill both work and caregiving roles.

M4: But there are, to me there are some limitations and, and, and there's some sacrifices. You're gonna give up things 'cause you can't have it all. I mean, yeah, it looked like the men were having it all because they went to work and they got out of the house and they had the power of the money and they could meet other people and their circle was so much bigger than this woman sittin' at home with the kids. But, now that the woman's out doing the same thing, who's watching the kids? So, somewhere along the line something has to suffer or be left behind. Be it good or bad. I don't know.

M5: I think it takes a very special person to be able to, to juggle and do both. And I am a, I am a true believer that something does suffer. You, you just can't do it all. You, you cannot get up at five in the morning and get a baby ready, take them to a babysitter, work all day, come home, make dinner, give the baby a bath, read to the baby, especially if you don't have a really good partnership. And not feel some kind of resentment at the end of the day.

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Despite the strain that might result from the combination of work and caregiving roles, many women reflected an awareness that society's expectations of women have changed. Women today may be expected to have both a career and family. For some of the daughters, this prospect does not pose a problem.

D6: Right now I probably think it's gonna be equally divided, I use my mom as a model, who worked all the time when we were growing up and then came home and did everything. So, I just, you know, she's burned out, I guess, at the end of the week, and she always was. I don't know. It sounds like that super mom thing with working all day and then coming home and, like, being a perfect mom. I hope that I can say, I'd rather spend more of my time working with, at home. And doing things with the family. But, at the same time, my career is important to me so hopefully I can fit them all in.

D2: I'd really like to just get married and take care of the kids, be a nice housewife. On the other hand, there's so much out there, so much that I'd love to do. And I wouldn't want, you know, like, having a family to limit that…It's just hard because everyone in my family has sort of been doing, like, the stay-at-home family and the mom thing. So it's sort of challenging breaking the mold and trying to do something different…I guess that's pretty much my biggest expectation is try, try to, like, break the routine mold, see what's out there, and find what I'm looking for. I don't know.

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While women coming of age today may be able to have a career and children without violating the expectations of their gender role, women in the past might have felt the need to justify their decision to work even after they became mothers.

M5: I, I think that expectations over all have changed. I think that, um, that, that society has come a long way. I think that some, I mean being out in the working world, I certainly don't think that everybody's gotten there, but from a self-worth standpoint, I think that the society has accepted that, for your own self-worth, sometimes just being a mom is not enough. Um, I think financial situations have driven women to go to work. Although, I think if, if women wanted to be truthful, I think most women go to work because they want to have self-worth, and being a mom is the most wonderful thing that you will ever experience, but it is not going to keep you motivated. And I think women say they have to go back to work because of financial reasons, but I don't think that's the motivation... I think sometimes men or, and society, thinks 'Oh, she's just a mom.' And I think women feel that, you know: 'she's just a mom.' So I think that they need, they need to feel more than 'she's just a mom.' Although being a mom is a lot harder than you going to work everyday.

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One additional source of strain is worth noting, since it may become a future concern for some of the women in this study. For many years, G1 was responsible for the care of her own family and also the care of her father. Researchers have discussed the "sandwich generation" – individuals who are sandwiched between the caregiving needs of their children and the caregiving needs of

their aging or elderly parents (Witkin, 1991). This phenomenon may become increasingly common in coming generations.

G1: After my dad died, which was just 10 years ago, ah, it was the first time in our life – now, we were married in '48 and he [my father] died in '92, so you can see that we had all these years of married life with somebody there unless we took a walk [by ourselves].

With the variety of caregiving responsibilities for which women are accountable, plus the addition of new social expectations about participation in the workforce, it follows that the ensuing lack of time may impact on marital relationships. As in the quote above, the following quote addresses the marital strain that may result.

M5: You know, living with someone is certainly different than dating someone, and children, as much as they should, initially children do not initially help a relationship. They put a tremendous amount of strain on a relationship... I think that if your relationship has not had a stable foundation, once that child is born, that baby is your life. And the husband takes a back seat. And if there's problems initially, it, it's going to get worse.

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Again, the strain that may result from women's caregiving responsibilities is extensive. In the present study, the most salient theme regarding caregiving is related to the combination of women's work and caregiving responsibilities. As previous research has indicated, women who do not work may feel like they're "just housewives" (Mankiller et al., 1998; Yalom, 2001). Women who do attempt to combine work and caregiving roles may find that they experience higher levels of stress than do other women (e.g., Aneshensel & Pearlin, 1987; Jenkins, 1997;

Marecek, 1978; Paludi, 1998). But fulfilling these roles may also contribute to better psychological well-being (e.g., Hoffnung, 1998; Martire et al., 2000; Paludi, 1998; Waldron & Jacobs, 1989).

Strain Related to Changes in Gender Role Expectations

Participants reflected a great degree of insight regarding how gender role expectations have changed over the last three generations. In general, responses indicated that gender role expectations for the grandmothers were more defined and, thus, they may not have felt they were free to make choices that might have deviated from the socially prescribed path.

D4: I couldn't say for sure, because I didn't live like back when my grandmom was my age. But I would, not that there weren't things to stress about, but, I think that maybe their lives didn't have so many choices so they knew what was expected, they knew their role, and they just, and they lived it and they made the best of it and that was all they knew at the time.

G6: I don't think I had it, as many options as I've given my own kids. Um, you know, I want them to go to college, and I knew it meant going to work and I didn't want them to have a lot of college bills, um, and they didn't. And we were able to do, you know, my going to work paid for it so they didn't have loans to pay off. Right. That was important. So I, the choices I made kind of helped them, whether they are aware of it or not, it, you can't say, because they were raised in a different generation. And uh, things are so different. You can't hold that against the kids. The things came a lot easier to them, than they did to

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me... I think most of the people that raised kids in my generation, we felt that way. But I think it's the background we had growing up. You know that we did better than our parent, so we expect our kids to. 'Cause more is available now. I expect them to have a better life than I had. Mine wasn't that bad, for the time. But I, I, I'm very happy that they're doing very well.

M2: I think a lot of limitations, you know, back then it was mostly either you worked in a factory or you worked in an office. There weren't many opportunities available to them. You know, they had to, they had basically, maybe two choices or stay home and be a mother. And that was it.

G4: I just graduated and then did what came next…I would say that I probably figured that's what I was destined to do, (laughs) get married and have a family… I think I've been steered more than true choices. Yeah. More or less because that's what would come next, that's what I did…Well, I guess I do have a feeling for that's the way things were gonna be, ya know; I didn't try to change them in any way.

M1: Well, [women of my mother's generation] didn't have to choose between home and work because they only knew home. So, I think you know, my mom did have to deal with some things because she did work. The big thing there is being looked down upon. They were looked down upon if they went out to work because the role was to stay home.

Overall, the mothers' generation was perceived as the origin of a new conception of gender roles. Namely, a gender role that allowed women either to work or to blend their working and

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caregiving roles. While participants indicated that the mothers' generation had a greater degree of choice, however, many traditional expectations of women were still in operation.

M2: I guess when I was [my daughter's age] age it was just starting to be that women weren't as limited anymore. That they could do what they wanted to do. And so, it would just start, and the possibilities were just starting to open up for everybody. It was still a little bit of a struggle but not as much as, like, my mother would have had… I was glad that some women, say, in the sixties when I was too young had, um, fought to have those opportunities available for the women in the future.

M1: There were pretty many women in the workforce. Probably more so than my mother experienced, but nothing like [my daughter]'s experiencing now. I mean, you can do anything you want and you may still have some people that would hold you back or there might be some men that still think you should stay at home. I think in my generation, we're pretty much the in-between. Our mothers started it and we were kind of seeing it through. And now you can do anything you want to.

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While the daughters' generation benefits from an increased opportunity, the comments of many women from all three generations indicate the same concern: is *so* much opportunity really a good thing?

D2: Things were more defined back then [when my grandmother was my age.] Now, it's, like, you know, a lot of gray. You know, like, how much should you be in the home, how much should you focus on your career…And you'll never make everyone happy.

M2: Maybe because there are so many opportunities, you know, there's so many more decisions to make. Where maybe back when my mother, you know, things were decisions were made for them a lot of times. Where now we, and it's tough sometimes deciding between things, but, you know, there's so much more open to us.

D5: Yeah, I think what goes along with that is, like, in the past you were, like, things like, ok, being a mom, you were expected to stay home. You were expected to take care of the kids, have food on the table, things like that. And now, if you do that it's like, "Oh, you're not going to have a job?" Like, it's almost totally flipped… Um, I think there's a drawback that as much as I'm saying women can be seen as multifaceted, in some ways I think they – society wants women to do one thing at one time.

G1: I think the expectations are high today, compared to what we had. Much higher. Maybe it's good. Maybe you should know the sky's the limit. Maybe that's good. I don't down it. Maybe you should think positive and not have that negative feeling within you. That's one thing I did have. I didn't have the push; if I would have had the push I think I could've excelled more.

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M4: Yeah, trying to do everything and be good at it. I would say that's a huge disability. Because at least in the old days, when my mom was young or starting out or whatever you want to say, you were pretty programmed, you know. You were gonna do this, this, and this. It might have been stifling, but, the competition – and the tenseness, I would think…well, maybe it was tense because then you were miserable. And you stuck in these

> bad marriages and whatnot, so maybe it was just as cheesy then, too, but to me some, some of the pressure that's to be out working, raise a family, do this, do that, do it all, and be good at it, and…to me, that's a drawback.

Most of the women in the study indicated that they viewed the increased opportunity available to the daughters as just as much of a disadvantage as the lack of opportunity experienced by the grandmothers. While this belief reflects the sentiments of some authors (Robbins & Wilner, 2001), it has yet to be reflected in empirically tested research. If this study is any indication, however, the question of the effects of increased (excessive?) opportunity is well worth studying.

Strain at the Individual Level

The discussion of strain at the individual level will center on two of the scores provided by the quantitative components of this study. First, the number of stress related illnesses self-reported by participants on the Health History Checklist and, second, participants' scores on the BSRI. The significance of these scores will be discussed in terms of the number of domains (education, work, marriage, and caregiving) in which participants were experiencing strain.

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The Health History Checklist (see Appendix A3) listed several illnesses that have been linked to stress by current research. Theoretically, then, the greater the level of strain each participant experienced, the greater the number of illnesses she would self-report. Clearly, age is also a factor. The daughters, who may indeed be experiencing strain, may not have been experiencing strain long enough for physical conditions to manifest. Conversely, the illnesses of the grandmothers are difficult to discuss as measures of strain because their advancing age may

be a confound. Thus, the discussion of this index of strain will focus primarily on the middle generation, the mothers.

The number of stress-related illnesses reported by the mothers ranges from 2 to 10. The analysis of the interviews of the two mothers who reported only 2 stress related illnesses (M2 and M6) were consistent with this report. In other words, both the interview content and the self-reports suggest that M2 and M6 have experienced very little gender role strain at the individual level. Their interviews indicated that they have not experienced great personal conflict regarding their decisions about education, work, marriage, or caregiving. While expressing a great deal of insight regarding their life choices, these two women expressed little, if any, regret.

The middle range of self-reported illnesses, with 3 and 5 stress-related illnesses respectively, were reported by M4 and M1. The content analysis of the interviews with M4 and M1 suggested that they experienced mild to moderate gender role strain at the personal level. The analysis of M4's interview suggested that she had experienced some level of conflict regarding her decisions in two of the four domains considered in the present study: caregiving and work. Similarly, the analysis of M1's interview suggested that she had experienced some level of conflict regarding her decisions in three of the four domains considered in the present study: education, caregiving, and work. Again, then, the analysis of the interviews was consistent with the number of self-reported illnesses.

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M5 reported 10 stress-related illnesses. Consistent with this measure, the analysis of her interview suggested that M2 had experienced significant levels of conflict regarding her decisions in all four domains: education, work, marriage, and caregiving.

Understanding the significance of participants' BSRI scores also lends greater understanding to interpretations of their indices of gender role strain. Research by Bem (1981) and Frable (1985, 1989) indicates that gender-typed individuals are also *gender schematic.* Individuals who are gender schematic are said to process information about themselves and others using gendered explanations (Bem, 1981; Frable, 1989; Frable & Bem, 1985; Kilmartin, 2000). Scores on the BSRI indicate, then, whether or not individuals are gender typed (strongly masculine or strongly feminine as opposed to androgynous or undifferentiated)– and, by extension, whether they are likely to also be gender schematic.

As an illustration of gender schema theory, consider M5. She is gender typed strongly in the feminine direction. So, she's probably also gender schematic, meaning she is very much focused on gender in her interactions with the world around her. It is not surprising that she would experience strain in so many domains if she is constantly comparing her behavior to the feminine ideal. Take her comments about work, for example:

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M5: I think society has accepted that, for your own self-worth, sometimes just being a mom is not enough. Um, I think financial situations have driven women to go to work. Although, I think if, if women wanted to be truthful, I think most women go to work because they want to have self-worth, and being a mom is the most wonderful thing you will ever

experience, but it is not going to keep you motivated. And I think women say they have to go back to work because of financial reasons, but I don't think that's the motivation.

So, M5 wanted to work even though she had a young child. Her perception was that she needed to use financial necessity to justify her desire to work. To meet the feminine ideal would be to accept that "motherhood was enough." She could not do this, and may have continued to compare her actions to that ideal. Potentially, this is the source of a huge amount of conflict.

As a counterpoint, consider M2, who is also gender typed in a feminine direction. Analysis of her interview suggested that she has virtually no strain associated with her gender role. M2, is family oriented, loves children, and had a financial need to return to work. Currently, she works as an aide in an elementary school, which did not require that she "choose" between her work and caregiving roles. Her career is a very good fit for someone who is gender schematic, and gender-typed in a feminine direction. It makes sense that she would experience very little strain, especially as related to her work environment. Her work squares with what she wants to do and also with what she thinks everyone else thinks she should do.

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Conclusion

It is clear that women's gender roles have been changing: In the 1950s, women who wanted to work were seen to be atypical. By the year 2000, women who wanted to stay home were seen to be atypical. "Gender is constantly created and recreated out of human interaction, out of social life, and is the texture and order of that social life" (Lorber, 2001). And as conceptions of gender alter the texture and order of our social life, certain individuals will

inevitably find that they are in conflict with that which society has declared to be the norm. Women's gender roles have been (and continue to be) in a state of transition. The gender roles of the last several decades, in all stages of evolution, are still in operation. Given this, it is not surprising that some authors have argued that "sex-role extremes are associated with psychological disorder and not reflective of the general population" (Marecek, 1978, p. 273). In other words, those individuals who hold the most rigid and extreme definitions of gender roles may reflect the highest degree of gender role strain. This is largely because "flexibility in gendered behavior is important for optimizing health. Not only are the extremes of prescribed femininity and masculinity unhealthy, but behavioral adaptability results in greater satisfaction in a number of contexts" (Tavris, 1992). This statement also confirms the importance of gender schema theory in assessing gender role strain. Those who constantly evaluate their actions against the social gender role ideal, who constantly compare their actual selves to their ideal selves, will experience the most strain.

As previously mentioned, the purpose of the present study was to generate a theory to explain how women of different generations with varying gender identities are dealing with gender role strain. The data from the present study support a "Best Fit" model of gender role strain: the most important predictor of female gender role strain is the degree to which the roles that a woman fulfills match or fit with her own personal feelings about the roles that she *should* fulfill. In keeping with Gender Schema Theory, the greater the degree of schematization, the more important it may be to have a match between ideal and actual roles.

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To paraphrase Whittaker and Connor (1998), the personal stories and experiences of the three generations of women who participated in this project provide a powerful way of speaking about the bodily experience of gender role strain in a way that affirms the links between society and the self. As Whittaker and Connor further stated, "in its existential nature, stress is like emotions in that it is a subjectively constituted mode of linking various forms of experience" (Whittaker & Connor, 1998, p. 112). Because of their subjective natures, stress and, by extension, gender role strain, are somewhat amorphous topics of study. The socialized nature of gender roles dictates that they, too, will be difficult to operationalize. Thus, despite the valiant efforts of the present study, the surface has barely been scratched.

Limitations of the present study include its small sample size and the ethnic homogeneity of its sample. In addition to the quantitative measures included in the present study, future research should include measures of attributional style, since this may correlate with Horner's "fear of success," (1970, 1972, 2000) which may, in itself, correlate with gender role strain. Further connections among these concepts – fear of success, attributional style, depression, and gender role strain – remain to be made. Additionally, connections almost certainly exist between gender role strain and the drops in self-esteem reported by many adolescent girls report (e.g., Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Orenstein, 1994). The gender role intensification experienced by many girls at the same approximate age as the notorious drop in self-esteem (Donelson, 1999, Paludi, 1998) may be the onset of gender role strain.

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While the results of the present study suggest that the "Best Fit" Model may be the most appropriate model for explaining how and why women experience gender role strain, future research should submit this theory to greater scrutiny. One hypothesis suggested by the present study is that women who are gender schematic are at greater risk for experiencing gender role strain than women who are not gender schematic. This hypothesis should be tested in future research.

The next step, as far as the present study is concerned, is to contact participants with the interpretations included here. In keeping with the ideals of feminist research (Ballou & Gabalac, 1985; Reinharz, 1992; Stanley & Wise, 1983), responses from participants will be included as an addendum to the present document. Because all individuals see their interactions with the world through a unique set of "lenses," the interpretations presented in this document were almost certainly influenced by the author's own experiences. As such, dialogue with the participants regarding these interpretations is critical. In the meantime, however, the "Best Fit" theory generated by the present suggests (courtesy of G2) the following strategy for avoiding gender role strain:

G2: They claim it's a lot more stressful but if you don't like stress you just lay back and do what you want… Just know what's right for you. 'Cause you're going to have to deal with it.

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Individuals must make choices that are in accordance with their true desires. While the availability of choices may be limited or obscured by one's socialized gender role, ultimately it is the individual that must contend with the consequences of her own choices.

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Biographical Information

Please provide the following information. Indicate your answers by placing a check mark or an "x" in the box beside the appropriate answer or by writing in your answer where appropriate.

1. Identification Code:

2. Race or Ethnicity:

3. Date of Birth:

4. Place of Birth:

5. Please list the cities and states in which you have lived and the approximate dates that you lived in each location. Use the back of this sheet if more room is needed.

City & State	Approximate Dates

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6. Would you characterize the area in which you were raised as urban, rural, or in between?

- □ Urban – City life
- □ Rural – Country life
- □ Suburban – In Between

7. Would you characterize the area in which you currently live as urban, rural, or in between?

- □ Urban – City life
- □ Rural – Country life
- □ Suburban – In Between

8. What is your current marital status?

- □ Married
- □ Remarried (married for a second or third time)
- □ Separated
- □ Divorced
- □ Widowed
- □ Never married → please go to question 10.

9. How old were you when you were first married?

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10. How many children, if any, do you have? Please list the date of birth and sex for each of your children.

11. How old were you at the time your first child arrived?

12. What is your political affiliation, if any?
    - ☐ No affiliation
    - ☐ Republican
    - ☐ Democrat
    - ☐ Independent
    - ☐ Other

13. Do you consider yourself to be politically active?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No

14. What is your educational background? (Please check only the one option that currently applies.)
    - ☐ No high school
    - ☐ Some high school
    - ☐ High school diploma
    - ☐ Some college
    - ☐ Undergraduate degree → please answer question 14a.
    - ☐ Some graduate work
    - ☐ Advanced degree → please answer question 14b.

    14a. Please list the degree received and area of study for your undergraduate degree.

    14b. Please list the degree received and area of study for your advanced degree.

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15. What is your religious affiliation, if any?

16. Are you currently practicing your religion?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

17. Have you worked for pay outside the family home?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No → please go to question 19.

18. Please list the type of work, the approximate dates of employment, whether the work was full-time or part-time, and approximate salary. Please use the back of this sheet if more room is needed.

Type of Work	Approximate Dates	Full or Part Time	Salary or Hourly Wage

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19. How much do you think your family of origin has influenced the choices you have made in your life?
    - ☐ Strongly influenced
    - ☐ Somewhat influenced
    - ☐ Not at all influenced

20. Were you primarily raised by both of your parents, your mother, your father, another family member, or other individual(s)?
    - ☐ Both parents
    - ☐ Mother
    - ☐ Father
    - ☐ Another family member
    - ☐ Other individual(s)

21. Who in your family of origin was the breadwinner?
    - ☐ Both parents
    - ☐ Mother
    - ☐ Father
    - ☐ Another family member
    - ☐ Other individual(s)

22. Who in your family of origin was the caretaker?
    - ☐ Both parents
    - ☐ Mother
    - ☐ Father
    - ☐ Another family member
    - ☐ Other individual(s)

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Family History

Please provide the following information. If the information is not applicable, please write "N/A" in the space provided. If you need more room, please use the back of this sheet.

	Year of Birth or Age	State of Health (e.g., excellent, good, fair, poor) and Major Illnesses	Occupation	Age of Death (If Applicable)	Cause of Death (If Applicable)
Significant Other					
Father					
Mother					
Brothers					
Sisters					

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Health History

Please indicate with an "x" or check whether you are currently or have ever suffered from the following conditions. Please write in additional information where requested to do so. If you answer "yes" to the following conditions, please provide details on the next sheet (For example, specific diagnosis, date of diagnosis, treatment of condition, etc.).

	Yes	No
Musculoskeletal Pain (joint pain, carpal tunnel, arthritis)		
Backache		
Frequent or Severe Headaches		
Chronic Pain Syndrome		
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome		
Autoimmune Diseases (e.g., Lupus)		
Cancer		
Unexpected Absence of Menstruation		
Endometriosis		
Fibroid Tumors		

	Yes	No
Heart Disease		
High Blood Pressure		
Low Blood Pressure		
Ulcers		
Lower Abdominal Cramps		
Colitis		
Irritable Bowel Syndrome		
Sexual Dysfunction		
Insomnia		
Other Sleep Problems		

	Yes	No
Eating Disorder		
Depression		
Anxiety		
Panic Attacks		
Dermatological Conditions		
Other Major Conditions Not Listed (please write in blank space below)		

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Health History Details

Musculoskeletal Pain_____

Backache_____

Frequent or Severe Headaches_____

Chronic Pain Syndrome_____

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome_____

Autoimmune Diseases_____

Cancer_____

Unexpected Absence of Menstruation_____

Endometriosis_____

Fibroid Tumors_____

Heart Disease_____

High Blood Pressure_____

Low Blood Pressure_____

Ulcers_____

Lower Abdominal Cramps_____

Colitis_____

Irritable Bowel Syndrome_____

Sexual Dysfunction_____

Insomnia_____

Other Sleep Problems_____

Eating Disorder_____

Depression_____

Anxiety_____

Panic Attacks_____

Dermatological Conditions_____

Other_____

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Health History

Please indicate your answers by checking the answer that best applies or writing in your answer where appropriate.

1. Please estimate the number of colds you had last year.

2. Have you been hospitalized in the last year? If you have, please explain why and list the approximate dates of your hospitalization.

3. How frequently do you exercise?
   - ☐ Every Day
   - ☐ 3 to 5 Times a Week
   - ☐ 1 to 3 Times a Week
   - ☐ Less than once a week
   - ☐ Almost never

4. Do you feel that you eat a healthy diet?
   - ☐ Almost Always
   - ☐ Sometimes
   - ☐ Rarely
   - ☐ Never

5. Do you smoke?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No → please skip to question 7.

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6. How many cigarettes do you typically smoke in one day?
   - ☐ More than a pack
   - ☐ About Half a pack
   - ☐ Less than Half a pack

7. Do you drink alcohol?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No → please skip to question 9.

8. How many alcoholic drinks do you have in one week?
   - ☐ More than 5
   - ☐ 3 to 5
   - ☐ 1 to 3
   - ☐ Less than 1

9. When you are feeling stressed, what do you do to cope?

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10. Are there certain people that you talk to and/or depend on for support? Describe your emotional support system (are they friends, relatives, colleagues, etc.).

Interview Template

- Describe a typical day in your life. What's it like? How do you usually spend your time?
    - What activities do you complete at work? What activities do you complete at home?
    - How do you feel at the end of the day?

I'd like to spend a little bit of time talking to you about your life (when you were your daughter's/granddaughter's age) (your life right now). I'd like to know…

- What were (are) you thinking about doing with your life? What did (do) you want to do?
    - What did (do) you think about getting married?
    - What did (do) you think about having children?
    - What did (do) you think about going to school/college?
    - Was (Is) there anyone in particular that you would talk to about your plans?

- I saw on the questionnaire that you _____ (went to school, got a job, got married, etc.) (are going to school, working, married, etc.)
    - How did you come to… ?
    - Was there something that pushed or motivated you to…?
    - How did (do) you feel about your decision to …?
    - Describe whether or not you were (are) satisfied with this decision. Was (Is) it a reasonable decision?

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- (When you were your daughter's/granddaughter's age), what do you think most women believed they should be doing in their early adulthood?
    - (At that time,) what (did) (do) you think about this view? (What do you think about it now?)
    - (At that time,) did (do) you feel any pressure to live up to this expectation?
    - Describe what you think most women today think that they should be doing with their lives.

- Tell me about the expectations you had (have) for yourself. Were (Are) they the same kinds of expectations that your parents had (have) for you?
- How did (do) you feel about their expectations? Did (Does) this pressure you to make certain decisions?
- Did (Do) you share your plans with your parents?
- Did (Do) your parents encourage you to follow your own plan? Were (Are) they supportive of the plan you chose to follow?
- (Describe how expectations for men and women were different when you were your daughter's/granddaughter's age.)

- How much do you think your parents influenced the choices you have made in your life so far?
  - Do you believe you identified (identify) more with your mother or your father? In what ways?
  - What about your mother? Describe how you felt about the choices she made in her own life.
  - Describe your mother's reaction to the choices you have made.

- Outside the home:
  - What did (do) you have to do to be considered a good worker?
  - Did (Do) you feel you were (are) viewed differently because you are a woman? In what ways?
  - Were (Are) there different expectations for women than for men?
  - Were (Are) you able to move up, be promoted? Tell me about this experience.
  - Would you describe the work you did as "women's work"? Did (Do) you work with equal numbers of men and women?
  - Did (Do) you feel, overall, that you were (are) paid fairly? For what reasons?
  - Did (Do) you feel a sense of control over what you were (are) doing at work? How did (do) you feel about that?

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- Would you describe the environment you worked (work) in as competitive or cooperative? Which kind of environment would make you feel more comfortable?
- What did (do) you like most/least about your job?

- Inside the home:
  - Tell me what you believe a person has to do in order to be considered a good mother/homemaker? (Both personally and generally.)
  - When you were starting your own family (If and when you start your own family), were there (do you think there will be) different expectations for women than for men in respect to what they were (are) responsible for in the home?
  - Did anyone (Do you expect anyone to) help you with the housework/childrearing? Was the work (Will the work be) shared equally?
  - Did you feel valued (Do you expect to feel valued) for the work you did (will do) inside the home? Did you (Do you expect to) feel satisfied? Did you (Do you expect to) feel appreciated?
  - What did you (What do you expect to) like most/least about working inside the home?

- When you had (If you have) your own children, did you have (do you think you will have) expectations for what they will do with their lives?
  - What kinds of expectations?
  - (How would you describe your parenting style? Do you think it is different from how you yourself were parented?)
  - Do you believe that men should help to give care to children if they are living in the same house? Was that your experience as a child? (Will you expect it) As a parent?
  - What have been (What do you expect to be) some of the joys of parenthood for you?
  - What have been (What do you expect to be) some of the stresses?
  - Do you think you've had (Do you think you will have) influence over your daughter's (child's/children's) life choices so far? How? To what extent?

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- How do you feel about the life choices you've made so far?
  - Parenting choices?
  - Educational experiences?
  - Work experiences?
  - Would you do anything differently or make different choices knowing what you know today?
  - Are they true "choices"? Do you feel like you've had complete control over these decisions?
  - How much of your identity is tied up in what you do (motherhood, work, etc.)? More one than another?

- Who or what has been the greatest influence on the choices that you've made so far?

- Who are some men and women that you have looked up to as role models? (Both past and present.)

- How do you define success? What do you have to do in life to feel that you have been successful?

- What's the most important thing to you in life?

- What do you think is the most wonderful aspect of being a woman today (as opposed to when you were younger/when your mother/grandmother was your age)?
  - Do you think there are any drawbacks today that you have to deal with that your mother/grandmother did not have to deal with? Examples?
  - Do you think there were (are) drawbacks for your daughter/mother/grandmother that you have not had to deal with? Examples?
  - Are there limitations for what women can do today? What do you think they are?

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  - Do you feel that society today values women?
  - How do you feel about the way women are represented in the media (on television, in magazines, etc.)?
  - Do you feel pressure to live up to the standards of women in the media? In what ways?

- If you could change something from your past, what would it be?

- What would you definitely keep the same?

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PARENTING STYLES

I

Strict
Rules must be obeyed
Use of punishment
Expect compliance of child(ren)

II

Respect for family members
Democratic – opinions matter
Explain why rules should be followed
Give and take between parents & child

III

Let children do whatever they want
Few demands placed on children
Little parental control

IV

Uninvolved with children
May be punitive/punishing

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Post-Interview Checklist:

Identification Code:

Beginning Time:
End Time:

Location of Interview:

Comfort Level of Interviewee:

Personal Comfort Level:

Rapport: (excellent, good, fair, poor)

Dress & Manner of Interviewee:

Problems during Interview:

Other comments & impressions:

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Biographical Sketches – Family 1

Daughter 1 (D1):

D1 is an only child. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, D1 was approximately 21 years of age and attending a small, private, liberal arts college in Southeastern Pennsylvania. She was also working part-time as an assistant counselor. At the time of the interview, she was planning to pursue a career as a guidance counselor.

Mother 1 (M1):

M1 is an only child. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, M1 was approximately 46 years of age. She was married at the age of 20 and had her only child at age 24. Her husband currently works as a teacher. At the time of our interview, M1 was working full-time as a Customer Advocate.

Grandmother 1 (G1):

G1 is an only child. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, G1 was approximately 76 years of age. She was married at the age of 21 and had her only child at age 29. Both she and her husband are retired; he is a former butcher and her extensive work history includes clerical, secretarial, and retail positions.

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Biographical Sketches – Family 2

Daughter 2 (D2):

D2 has three sisters and one half sister. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, D2 was approximately 21 years of age and attending a small, private, liberal arts college in Southeastern Pennsylvania. She was also working part-time on her college campus.

Mother 2 (M2):

M2 has two brothers. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, M2 was approximately 46 years of age. She was married at the age of 23 and had the first of her four daughters at the age of 24. Her husband currently works as a Pressman; M2 works full-time as an Instructional Aide in an elementary school.

Grandmother 2 (G2):

G2 is the youngest of six children. She has three brothers and two sisters. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time of our interview, G2 was approximately 67 years of age. She was married at the age of 19 and had the first of her three children at age 21. Her husband is a retired Pressman; G2 is currently a self-employed Bookkeeper.

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Biographical Sketches – Family 4

Daughter 4 (D4):

D4 is an only child. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, D4 was approximately 28 years of age. She is a single mother of a son to whom she gave birth at age 20. At the time of our interview, D4 was working full-time as a Paralegal.

Mother 4 (M4):

M4 has one brother. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, M4 was approximately 53 years of age. She was married at the age of 21 and had her only child at age 25. Her husband works as an Electrician. At the time of our interview, M4 was working full-time as in Food Service.

Grandmother (G4):

G4 has two brothers and one sister. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, G4 was approximately 74 years of age. She was married at the age of 19 and had the first of her two children at age 21. Both she and her husband are retired; he formerly worked for a utility company and she is a former factory worker.

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Biographical Sketches – Family 5

Daughter 5 (D5):

D5 is an only child. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, D5 was approximately 28 years of age. She is a single mother of a son to whom she gave birth at age 27. At the time of our interview, D5 was taking time off from work to care for her son. Her work history includes positions in retail stores, the theater, and libraries.

Mother 5 (M5):

M5 has two sisters. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, M5 was approximately 55 years of age. She was married at the age 25 and had her only child at age 27. She is currently separated from her husband. At the time of our interview, M5 was working full-time as an Administrator.

Grandmother 5 (G5):

G5 is one of eight children. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, G5 was approximately 83 years of age. She was married at the age of 20 and had the first of her three children at age 21. She was widowed 3 years ago. Her husband was a Pipeline Operator; G5 is a retired Buyer.

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Biographical Sketches – Family 6

Daughter 6 (D6):

D6 has one brother and one sister. She is Caucasian and was born and raised primarily in Southeastern Pennsylvania, though she lived in California for several years growing up. At the time she was interviewed, D6 was approximately 27 years of age and was planning for a wedding before the end of 2002. At the time of our interview, her fiancé was a student and D6 was working full-time as a Librarian.

Mother 6 (M6):

M6 has two brothers and one sister. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, M6 was approximately 48 years of age. She was married at the age of 20 and had the first of her three children at age 20. She and her husband are divorced. At the time of our interview, M6 was working full-time as a Manager.

Grandmother 6 (G6):

G6 has three sisters and one brother. She is Caucasian and was born and raised in Southeastern Pennsylvania. At the time she was interviewed, G6 was approximately 71 years of age. She was married at the age of 21 and had the first of her four children at age 23. At the time of our interview, her husband was a self-employed Computer Consultant; G6 is a retired Nurse.

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Demographic Comparison Matrix

Appendix D1

D1	D2	D4	D5	D6
• Born 1981 • Never married • No children • Republican (inactive) • Protestant (active) • Some college	• Born 1981 • Never married • No children • Independent (inactive) • Protestant (active) • Some college	• Born 1974 • Never married • One child at age 20 • Democrat (active) • Lutheran (inactive) • 2-year degree	• Born 1974 • Never married • One child at age 27 • Independent (inactive) • Catholic (inactive) • Undergraduate degree	• Born 1975 • Cohabiting • No children • Republican (active) • Catholic (active) • Advanced degree
M1	**M2**	**M4**	**M5**	**M6**
• Born 1956 • Married (age 20) • One child at age 24 • Republican (inactive) • Protestant (active) • Undergraduate degree	• Born 1956 • Married (age 23) • Four children; First child at age 24 • Democrat (inactive) • Protestant (active) • 2-year degree	• Born 1949 • Married (age 21) • One child at age 25 • Democrat (inactive) • Lutheran (inactive) • Some college	• Born 1947 • Separated (mar. age 25) • One child at age 27 • Republican (inactive) • Catholic (active) • Some college	• Born 1954 • Divorced (mar. age 20) • Three children; First child at age 20 • Republican (inactive) • Protestant (inactive) • Undergraduate degree
G1	**G2**	**G4**	**G5**	**G6**
• Born 1926 • Married (age 21) • One child at age 29 • Republican (inactive) • Protestant (active) • High School Diploma	• Born 1935 • Married (age 19) • Three children; First child at age 21 • Democrat (inactive) • Protestant (active) • High School Diploma	• Born 1928 • Married (age 19) • Two children; First child at age 21 • Democrat (inactive) • Protestant (inactive) • High School Diploma	• Born 1919 • Widowed (mar. age 20) • Three children; First child at age 21 • Republican (inactive) • Lutheran (active) • High School Diploma	• Born 1931 • Married (age 21) • Four children; First child at age 23 • Democrat (inactive) • Protestant (inactive) • Undergraduate degree

Abilene Christian University Library

Family Comparison Matrix

Appendix D2

D1 • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Mother* • Caretaker: ➢ *Both parents* • M=3.85/F=5.85	**D2** • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Father* • Caretaker: ➢ *Mother* • M=4.85/F=4.65	**D4** • "Somewhat influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Both parents* • M=4.75/F=4.5	**D5** • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Parents & Grandparents* • M=4.5/F=6.15	**D6** • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both Parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Both parents* • M=4.55/F=4.9
M1 • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Both parents* • M=4.35/F=4.85	**M2** • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Mother* • M=3.9/F=4.95	**M4** • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Both parents* • M=4.35/F=3.63	**M5** • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Father* • M=4.6/F=5.8	**M6** • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Mother* • M=5/F=5.65
G1 • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Mother* • M=3.67/F=5.3	**G2** • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Father* • Caretaker: ➢ *Mother* • M=4.25/F=5	**G4** • "Somewhat influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Both parents* • M=3.5/F=4.17	**G5** • "Strongly influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Mother & other family members* • Caretaker: ➢ *Mother* • M=4/F=6.05	**G6** • "Somewhat influenced" • Breadwinner: ➢ *Both parents* • Caretaker: ➢ *Mother* • M=5.4/F=5.22

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Health Comparison Matrix

Appendix D3

D1	D2	D4	D5	D6
• 3 colds last year • Exercises 1-3 times/wk • Sometimes eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • 1-3 drinks/wk • No stress-related illness	• 7 colds last year • Exercises 3-5 times/wk • Almost always eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • 3-5 drinks/wk • 1 stress-related illness	• 5 colds last year • Exercises less than once a week • Sometimes eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • Less than 1 drink/wk • No stress-related illness	• 1 cold last year • Exercises 1-3 times/wk • Sometimes eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • Does not drink • 1 stress-related illness	• 2 colds last year • Exercises 1-3 times/wk • Almost always eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • Less than 1 drink/wk • No stress-related illnesses
M1	**M2**	**M4**	**M5**	**M6**
• 1 cold last year • Almost never exercises • Sometimes eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • 1-3 drinks/wk • 5 stress-related illnesses	• 2 colds last year • Almost never exercises • Sometimes eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • Does not drink • 2 stress-related illnesses	• 2 colds last year • Exercises 3-5 times/wk • Sometimes eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • Does not drink • 3 stress-related illnesses	• 1 cold last year • Exercises less than once a week • Sometimes eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • 3-5 drinks/wk • 10 stress-related illnesses	• No data on colds • Exercises 1-3 times/wk • Almost always eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • Less than 1 drink/wk • 2 stress-related illnesses
G1	**G2**	**G4**	**G5**	**G6**
• 2 colds last year • Exercises 3-5 times/wk • Almost always eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • Does not drink • 9 stress-related illnesses	• 1 cold last year • Exercises less than once a week • Almost always eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • Does not drink • 1 stress-related illness	• 1 cold last year • Exercises every day • Sometimes eats a healthy diet • Non-smoker • Does not drink • 5 stress-related illnesses	• 1 cold last year • Exercises 1-3 times/wk • Almost always eats a healthy diet • Smokes half a pack/day • Less than 1 drink/wk • 4 stress-related illnesses	• 1 cold last year • Exercises every day • Almost always eats a healthy diet • Smokes one pack/day • 1-3 drinks/wk • 5 stress-related illnesses

Acadia Christian College Library

Gender Role Strain Comparison Matrix

Appendix D4

D1 • M=3.85/F=5.85 • No stress-related illness • Little strain	D2 • M=4.85/F=4.65 • 1 stress-related illness • Strain related to: ➔ Education	D4 • M=4.75/F=4.5 • No stress-related illness • Strain related to: ➔ Parenting	D5 • M=4.5/F=6.15 • 1 stress-related illness • Strain related to: ➔ Parenting	D6 • M=4.55/F=4.9 • No stress-related illness • Strain related to: ➔ Work
M1 • M=4.35/F=4.85 • 5 stress-related illnesses • Strain related to: ➔ Caregiving ➔ Work	M2 • M=3.9/F=4.95 • 2 stress-related illnesses • Little strain	M4 • M=4.35/F=3.63 • 3 stress-related illnesses • Strain related to: ➔ Caregiving	M5 • M=4.6/F=5.8 • 10 stress-related illnesses • Strain related to: ➔ Caregiving ➔ Work ➔ Marriage ➔ Education	M6 • M=5/F=5.65 • 2 stress-related illnesses • Little strain
G1 • M=3.67/F=5.3 • 9 stress-related illnesses • Strain related to: ➔ Education ➔ Caregiving	G2 • M=4.25/F=5 • 1 stress-related illness ➔ Little strain	G4 • M=3.5/F=4.17 • 5 stress-related illnesses • Strain related to: ➔ Education	G5 • M=4/F=6.05 • 4 stress-related illnesses • Strain related to: ➔ Education ➔ Work	G6 • M=5.4/F=5.22 • 5 stress-related illnesses • Little Strain

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