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*The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between attitudes toward feminism and patterns of economic decision-making. In addition, these other related topics were investigated: (1) the difference between the wife's attitudes toward feminism and the husband's attitudes toward feminism as perceived by the wife, (2) the relationship between attitudes toward feminism and selected demographic variables, and (3) the relationship between patterns of economic decision-making and selected demographic variables.*

*Subjects were 156 randomly selected married women from Greensboro, North Carolina. Data on attitudes toward feminism were collected using a scale developed by Richey (1972) which was adapted in order to obtain, in addition to women's attitudes toward feminism, the women's perception of their husbands' feminist attitudes. Data on decision-making was obtained through a scale developed by the researcher concerning the conceptualization of a framework for viewing the family economic decision-making process. The scale provided information concerning who makes decisions concerning four economic functions of the family: (1) the production function, (2) the expenditure function, (3) the savings and investment function, (4) the investment in human capital function.*

*Findings of the study can be summarized as follows:*

*(1) Statistically significant relationships were found between both wife's and husband's attitudes toward feminism and the pattern of economic*

*decision-making reported for the entire decision-making scale and for each of the four functions within the scale.*

*(2) Small differences were found between wives' attitudes toward feminism and husbands' feminist attitudes as perceived by the wife, with wives generally scoring .3 units higher than husbands on the 5-point feminist scale.*

*(3) The demographic and social variables which were related to attitudes toward feminism at different significance levels were the wife's education, the husband's education, the wife's employment status, the husband's age, the relative age of the spouses, and certain categories within the husband's occupational status.*

*(4) The socio-economic status of the family was the only one of nine different sets of dichotomized social and demographic variables significantly related to the pattern of economic decision-making reported.*

*The major conclusion of this study was that the two phenomena, attitudes toward feminism and patterns of economic decision-making, can have an interacting effect on each other. Whether spousal attitudes toward the roles of women in society have a causal effect on the way in which families make their decisions, or whether the reverse is true, is not determined. However, families in which both husband and wife espouse attitudes which support equality for women in society generally have a tendency to experience a type of decision-making in which spouses play an equal part.*

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ATTITUDES TOWARD FEMINISM AND  
PATTERNS OF FAMILY ECONOMIC  
DECISION-MAKING

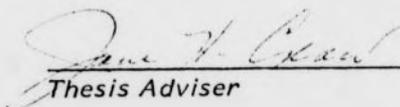
by

Deborah D. Godwin

A Thesis Submitted to  
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Approved by

  
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APPROVAL PAGE

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*A special note of appreciation is due my mother for instilling in me a strong conviction in the value of education and for her unfailing encouragement, moral support, and assistance provided throughout all my endeavors.*

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

*It is generally assumed in popular literature that the advent of the Women's Liberation Movement has altered the lifestyle of and the power structure within many American families. The current feminist movement has, indeed, drawn much attention to women and their clamor for equality. Certain visible changes have been highly publicized; among them, the right of women to legally retain their maiden names after marriage, to participate in what have been traditionally men's sports, to obtain credit from lending institutions upon their own merit, and to obtain legal abortions. Koontz (1970) noted that the economic and legal status of women has been greatly affected by the passage of equal employment acts, day care legislation, abortion laws, and other legislation aimed at aiding women in their quest for equality under the law.*

*The status of women in today's society has become a controversial and highly publicized topic. Much more scarce than inflammatory headlines is empirical evidence of possible changes in attitudes toward the rights and status of today's women. Although there has been considerable research done on the appropriateness of sex roles with the family structure (Komarovsky, 1962a; Kammeyer, 1966; Papanek, 1969; Seward and Williamson, 1970; Sannito et al, 1972; Gordon and Hall, 1974; and others), only relatively recently has there been an evaluation of the effects of the current focus on*

*the elimination of attitudes, conditioning, and stereotyping which assumes the inferiority of the female sex. With the exception of Clifford Kirkpatrick's 1936 studies, the majority of research into attitudes toward feminism and its effect on the status of women has been done in the seventies (Spence and Helmreich, 1972; Richey, 1972; Dahlin, 1973; Pawlicki and Almquist, 1973; Fowler et al, 1973; Miller, 1973; and others). The primary focus of that previous research was (1) to develop and validate a feminism scale to measure attitudes toward feminism, (2) to determine if persons can be divided into two groups, those whose attitudes are supportive of feminism and those whose attitudes include rejection of the goals and objectives of the feminism movement, and (3) to determine any distinguishing personal and demographic characteristics that affect or are affected by these attitudes.*

*Another assumption currently publicized is that there have been substantial changes in the family power and decision-making structure. Much research has been done to determine if, indeed, there has been a shift from the one-sided male authoritarianism structure to the sharing of decision-making by husbands and wives. Herbst (1952) pioneered a classification system of family power which became the basis for much later research in which he divided relationships into three types--autocratic, where one spouse is dominant over the other; syncratic, where there is equal shared power; and autonomous, where there is equal power but divided decision-making areas in which the spouses operate separately.*

*Few studies have focused on solely economic decisions in reviewing*

*the power structures of families. Nor has any attempt been made at putting the decisions which are made by families into any sort of system in order to more completely understand the behavior which occurs. Much potential lies in viewing the economic decisions of a family according to the different functions every family unit must perform. Most previous research has focused on decisions made by the family as a consuming unit by asking such questions as "Who decides on the purchase of a car?" The present study will attempt to analyze the role of the husband and wife in decision-making according to a framework of the following functions of the family: (1) to provide or procure resources for its members, (2) to distribute resources among the different alternative expenditures for provision of the needs and wants of its members, (3) to save and/or invest resources for the future needs of its members, and (4) to acquire and allocate resources for its members as an investment into human capital.*

#### *PROBLEM STATEMENT AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY*

*The primary purpose of this study is to attempt to investigate the relationship between an individual's attitudes toward feminism and the pattern of economic decision-making which is perceived in the marital relationship, according to four economic functions of the family. If an individual's attitudes are supportive of the ideas and goals of the feminist movement, will these attitudes reflect the pattern of decision-making which exists with the marital relationship? Of central importance in this study is the relationship between*

*these two phenomena--attitudes toward feminism and perceived patterns of economic decision-making within the family.*

*A secondary purpose is to determine the discrepancy between a woman's attitude toward feminism and her perception of her husband's attitude toward feminism through the use of a discrepancy score. Also of interest is the relationship between the two phenomena, attitudes toward feminism and patterns of decision-making; the variables of age of husband and wife; number of years married; occupational status of the husband and of the wife, if employed; the employment status of the wife; income of husband and wife; the number and age of children; and the socio-economic status of the family.*

#### HYPOTHESES

*The hypotheses of this study, stated in null form, are as follows:*

*Hypothesis 1. There will be no statistically significant relationship between a subject's score, her perception of her husband's score, and their relative score on the feminist attitude scale and the pattern of decision-making in the marital relationship as reflected by her score on the decision-making scale.*

*Sub-hypothesis A. There will be no statistically significant relationship between a subject's feminist attitudes score, her perception of her husband's score, and their relative score and the pattern of decision-making in Function 1, the production function, of the decision-making scale.*

*Sub-hypothesis B. There will be no statistically significant relationship*

*between a subject's feminist attitudes score, her perception of her husband's score, and their relative score and the pattern of decision-making in Function 2, the expenditure function, of the decision-making scale.*

*Sub-hypothesis C. There will be no statistically significant relationship between a subject's feminist attitudes score, her perception of her husband's score, and their relative score and the pattern of decision-making in Function 3, the saving-investment function, of the decision-making scale.*

*Sub-hypothesis D. There will be no statistically significant relationship between a subject's feminist attitudes score, her perception of her husband's score, and their relative score and the pattern of decision-making in Function 4, the human capital investment function, of the decision-making score.*

*Hypothesis II. Respondents' attitudes toward feminism will be independent of the variables of age of husband and wife; number of years married; occupational status of the husband and of the wife, if employed; the employment status of the wife; income of the husband and wife; the number and age of children; and the socio-economic status of the family.*

*Hypothesis III. Respondent's pattern of family economic decision-making will be independent of the variables of age of husband and wife; number of years married; occupational status of the husband and of the wife, if employed; the employment status of the wife; income of the husband and wife; the number and age of children; and the socio-economic status of the family.*

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

*For the purpose of clarifying the meaning of the terms used in this*

*study the following terms are operationally defined:*

*(1) Feminist attitudes--"attitudes which are accepting and supportive of the ideas and goals of the women's liberation movement. Basically this includes the belief that women are discriminated against because of their sex and that women should receive equal opportunities in all areas of life. Within the context of the family, feminists favor an equalitarian or egalitarian type of role structure" (Richey, 1972: 5).*

*(2) Non-feminist attitudes--"attitudes which are accepting and supportive of the current role of women as appropriate and satisfactory. Non-feminists evaluate the women's liberation movement as negative, disruptive, and unnecessary. The traditional male-female division of labor within the family setting is congruent with the non-feminist attitudes" (Richey, 1972: 5).*

*(3) Perceived marital power in decision-making--a spouse's perception of the extent to which he or she influences a family choice of a course of action among different alternatives. Influence is the degree to which overt or covert pressure which is exerted by a spouse is successful in imposing his or her viewpoint about a pending choice on the other spouse. In this study one's perceived decision-making power was measured by a self-report response to a questionnaire designed to measure who makes certain specific decisions in the family situation.*

*(4) An autocratic pattern of decision-making--a pattern in which decisions tend to be made by one member only without consultation of the other member. If the husband tends to make decisions without consultation*

*of the wife, the pattern is husband-dominant. If the wife tends to make decisions without consultation of the husband, then the pattern is wife-dominant.*

*(5) A syncratic pattern of decision-making--a pattern in which the husband and wife make decisions together with mutual consultation.*

*(6) An autonomous pattern of decision-making--a pattern in which the husband and wife have equal power in decision-making but each spouse makes decisions in a specific decision area without consultation of the other spouse.*

#### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

*This study has some limitations of which the reader should be aware. First, there are so many situational variables related to the processes and outcomes of a decision choice that it is unrealistic to attempt measurement and identification of them all, especially using only a self-report by the wife. This study makes no attempt to measure moves and countermoves, threats and promises of trade-offs that undoubtedly occur when a contested decision has to be made. Instead, the focus of the research is on the outcome of a particular set of decisions as perceived by one spouse, the wife.*

*Another limitation is due to the use of a random sample from the Greensboro telephone directory. It has been thought that this procedure fails to represent two groups, those in the highest socio-economic category, who have a higher instance of telephone numbers that are unlisted in a*

*directory, and those in the lowest socio-economic category, who may not have telephones at all. However, this procedure, given the limitations of time and money, was judged by this researcher to be the most effective method of obtaining a random sample of the residents of Greensboro.*

*A third limitation arises from the use of the wife as a reporter of her husband's attitudes toward feminism. Use of a mailed questionnaire precluded an attempt to solicit separate responses from both husband and wife because of the presumed problem of collusion between the spouses in completing the questionnaire. Ideally those separate responses would be obtained. However, presuming an honest evaluation of a husband's attitudes as perceived by the wife, the use of the wife's perception of her husband's attitudes is the best alternative method available.*

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

*This review of literature indicates an increasing amount of research has been done in recent years on the topics of attitudes toward feminism and on decision-making and power within the family. This review is divided into four main categories: research done on attitudes toward feminism, research done on power in familial relationships, research done on decision-making in the management process, and research done on the economic functions and behavior of the family.*

*Within the area of research on feminism, the following sub-categories are discussed: (a) changes that have affected women's economic, legal, and political status, (b) the study of sex roles within family relationships, and (c) the study of attitudes toward feminism and variables related to it. Within the area of family power, the discussion is divided into the following sub-categories: (a) theories explaining marital power in decision-making, (b) the concept and methodological problems involved in this study, (c) the study of marital power relationships classified into three different types, syncretic, autocratic, and autonomous. Within the area of decision-making in the family, the discussion focuses on the development of theories attempting to explain the role of decision-making in the family process. Within the study of the economic functions of the family, the efforts at developing a*

*conceptual framework for the study of family economic behavior are discussed.*

### THE STUDY OF FEMINISM

#### The Status of Women in Today's Society

*There have been obvious and highly publicized changes in the status of women in recent years. Many theories and myths regarding the proper roles of men and women have been questioned and some have been overturned as the feminist movement has become more widespread in recent years. Following is a discussion of the changes that occurred which have and will continue to affect women's economic, legal, and political status.*

Economic status. *It has been over ten years since Betty Friedan authored her now famous book, The Feminine Mystique, a publication which charged that women had traded their brains for brooms. She maintained that women after World War II had reverted to their former positions of home-and-family centered housewives with their total energy being devoted to no more than maintaining that role. The disillusionment that many of them felt, she claimed, was due to their lack of involvement in the world outside of their homes.*

*However, whether because of economic necessity or the increased freedom of women to become gainfully employed, today women are participating in the labor market in ever-increasing numbers. More and more women are rejecting the housewife role totally and many are combining the roles of housewife, mother, and career woman with serious commitment to long-term goals. Nye (1967) cited the following developments which ease a*

woman's entry into the labor market today: smaller families, the rejection of marriage as an alternative, the sense of fulfillment and accomplishment a career brings, as well as the numerous economic rewards which are involved in labor force activity. Regardless of the reasons, women are becoming increasingly involved in the paid labor force, which brings with it a rise in economic status.

In spite of the passage of equal employment laws, however, women still face discrimination in employment which restricts their quest for improved economic status. Madden (1973) documents three types of discrimination that continue to produce economic inequality for women: wage, occupational, and cumulative discrimination. What Caroline Bird (1968) calls the "Invisible Bar" has in the past and continues to restrict women to a secondary status, economic and otherwise, in society. She cites numerous examples of the injustices perpetuated by the notion of the inferiority of women in the work force and documents many instances of the social and personal costs of restricting women from employment. Even today role conflict and attitudes which were developed by years of discrimination restrict women from realizing their full economic potential.

Although changes have certainly been made which make economic equality a reality for many women, Holter (1971) suggests the following strategies for achieving equal employment status for women: (1) the awakening of political consciousness and activism of all women, (2) an increase in the educational level of women through equality of educational opportunity,

and (3) the introduction of legislation in all levels of government which would secure for women the position to legally exercise their power.

Legal status. Great strides have been made in the legal status of women in America. Many of the changes in law have been highly visible, such as the right of women to obtain credit on their own, the right of women to retain their maiden names, the right of young girls to play Little League baseball, the right of a female jockey to ride in the Kentucky Derby, and the right of women to enter previously all-male institutions such as West Point. The legislation which laid the groundwork for such changes was indeed monumental: the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, all of which prohibited some type of discrimination against women based on sex. Many of these federal laws have applied primarily to the area of employment, often having wide ranging implications and applications.

However, equality under the law has yet to be achieved. According to the Citizen's Advisory Council on the Status of Women (Women's Bureau, 1966: 3-4) the following examples of discrimination still existed, many of which were based on existing laws:

1. Restrictions on the working hours and weight limitations applied only to women.
2. Occupational restrictions regarding only women.
3. Restrictions which exclude women from government supported educational institutions.

4. *Discrimination in employment by state and local governments.*
5. *Unequal pay rates for men and women public school teachers.*
6. *Unequal application of alimony laws for men and women.*
7. *Restrictions on the legal domicile of married women.*
8. *Restrictions of the establishment of a business by women.*
9. *Unequal application of social security benefits to men and women.*
10. *Discrimination in the application of child custody laws.*
11. *Unequal application of guardianship laws for minor children.*
12. *Unequal ages for males and females in child labor laws, age for legal marriage, juvenile court jurisdiction, and for cutoff of the right to parental support.*
13. *Unequal application of the Military Selective Service Act of 1967.*
14. *Unequal application of sex-based exemptions for the selection of juries.*
15. *Unequal application of penalties for criminal offenses based on the sex of the offender.*

*Not all of these examples of discrimination exist today, but a number of them are still resistant to change. Many of these would be eliminated by the passage of an equal rights amendment and, although support has been shown for one during state-wide referendums, the necessary support for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution has not yet been garnered. While many changes have indeed occurred which have greatly affected the legal status of women, it is apparent that feelings and attitudes about the status of women under the law may be far more resistant to change than many feminists would hope.*

Political status. *Women's political status may be an outcome or an integral part of their social and economic and legal status. Until very recently women's participation in political affairs, voting, running for office, being appointed to political positions, and participating in election campaign organizations has been minimal (Mead and Kaplan, 1965). Suggested reasons have included the low proportion of women who are prominent in private high level occupations such as business and law, as well as in the middle and upper level government civil service positions. Jennings and Thomas (1968) hypothesized that more than legal or employment discrimination, however, women's perception of their role in life and their perceived inferiority has limited their efforts at political participation.*

*However, some evidence exists to suggest that many women are becoming politically aware and active, as witnessed by the increased number of political candidates who are women, the appointment of a woman to the President's cabinet, and the newspaper reports of the inclusion of more women in positions of responsibility in political parties at the local, state, and national levels (Spence, 1975). She maintains that as more women feel the impact of the changes in social roles that are in progress, mass political participation by women in every level of government will become a reality.*

#### The Study of Sex Roles

*Considerable research has been done on the perceived sex roles of men and women in familial relationships. Traditional dimensions of role behavior that have been intensively studied are the perceived power relation-*

*ships of men and women, the dual role of the modern woman as homemaker and career woman, and the relationship of role theory and the division of household work. Some changes which researchers have hypothesized in recent years are changes: (1) from traditional to quasi-equalitarian roles, (2) from a position of unawareness of role behavior to self awareness of the role behavior one experiences, and (3) from role homogeneity to role heterogeneity (Komarovsky, 1962a; Kammeyer, 1966; Papanek, 1969; Seward and Williamson, 1970; and others).*

*Haavio-Manila (1972) surveyed attitudes toward the sex roles of men and women in Finland and found that in general, sex role attitudes have become more egalitarian in orientation. Reasons cited for this change included the processes of urbanization and industrialization, the increase in the educational attainment of women, and the increased employment rates of women, all of which have aided in creating equality in economic roles of men and women.*

*Gordon and Hall (1974) studied female roles and the perception of them by both men and women, expressed as stereotypes, and the role conflicts experienced by women because of these stereotypes. Findings of their study resulted in the theory that women's perceptions of the male stereotype of women's role are related to conflicts as experienced by women, and secondly, that men's control of women exists not only through acts of discrimination, but also through their influences on women's attitudes and actions.*

*Hall and Lawler (1971) classified the following methods of resolving*

*role conflicts created by women's and men's stereotypes of the female role: (1) the redefinition of role expectations held by others, (2) the modification of one's own expectations of the parameters of his or her role, and (3) the modification of one's response to the expectations of others when not accompanied by a change of expectations on the other's part.*

*Overall, these studies have dealt with individual's perception of the proper roles of men and women within the family. While this literature is helpful in attempting to gain a basic understanding of the value base from which attitudes toward feminism and decision-making structures within the family arise, it is merely of background importance in attempting to understand the current effects of the Women's Liberation Movement on such role attitude and behavior.*

*Femininity-Masculinity Studies.* *Similarly, of minor importance in studying the relationship between attitudes toward feminism and family power in decision-making are the studies dealing with masculinity-femininity scales, such as the one developed by Terman in 1936 (also, Thorne, 1965; Sannito et al, 1972; Gough, 1952; and Jenkins and Vroegh, 1969). The concept of femininity and its measurement differ emphatically from the concept of feminism in that the term femininity has been traditionally defined at the end of a bipolar continuum opposite the term masculinity. It is usually considered to be the epitome of certain behavioral characteristics to which most professed feminists strongly object. Such a stereotyped view of the proper role of*

women perpetuates the very role structure which is opposed by the advocates of the Women's Liberation Movement. Such measures as the masculinity-femininity scales conceptualize the most "feminine" women as being those women who score high on such categories as the female homemaker role, the family centeredness role, and the feminine social role. Thus, these studies viewing this concept of femininity as a desirable state are of limited value in the current study.

#### The Study of Attitudes Toward Feminism

Although there has been much publicity surrounding the Women's Liberation Movement for about a decade, relatively little empirical research has been done until the last few years. One early exception was a study conducted by Clifford Kirkpatrick (1936b) which was completed well before the modern social movement began. He pioneered modern research with his Belief-Pattern Scale for Measuring Attitudes Toward Feminism, a modified Likert-type scale containing 80 agree-disagree statements concerning the economic, legal, domestic, and conduct status of women.

Findings of Kirkpatrick's study included an inconsistency in the attitudes of college students and their parents and among individuals of different sexes and religious preferences regarding feminism. Regarding the consistency or ambivalence with which a particular individual viewed the subject of feminism, Kirkpatrick found that those persons scoring lowest on the feminism scale, i.e., the non-feminists, tended to express the most inconsistency in

these attitudes. Conversely, he found that individuals with low inconsistency ratios were those scoring high on the feminism scale, i. e., the pro-feminists. In another study Kirkpatrick found that although feminist attitudes appeared to be generally related to marital adjustment, there appeared to be particularly more marital maladjustment when the husband's attitudes were extremely dogmatic and patriarchal.

Within the past ten years a second wave of interest has surfaced regarding the development of feminism scales. Several studies have focused on the revision and revalidation of old scales or on the development of new scales designed to tap attitudes toward feminism. Dempewolf (1974) attempted a revision and revalidation of the Kirkpatrick scale using items that were validated through factor analysis and analysis of variance, whereas Kirkpatrick's scale categories were developed and judged on a conceptual basis. Dempewolf's results showed the revised scale and two 28-item sub-scales to be valid and reliable in tapping attitudes toward the goals of the feminist movement.

Richey (1972) also revised the Kirkpatrick scale by omitting some items because of their obsolescence, altering others to update them, and including newly relevant items. Using two panels of judges, she grouped the statements into four categories: economic, domestic, political-legal, and conduct and social status. In addition to validating the scale as a reliable measure of feminist and non-feminist attitudes, she documented the following results of the 447 females questioned: (1) Education level, employment status, and number of children desired by the female were related to scores on the femi-

nism scale; (2) Mother's employment, hopes for marriage, birth order, and number of siblings were not related to feminism scores. Also noteworthy is the finding that actual mean scores on the attitude scale and self-ratings of support or rejectance of the Women's Liberation Movement were highly significant.

Some distinction must be made here between attitudes toward feminists goals and beliefs and attitudes toward radical feminists and the Women's Liberation Movement itself. In an interview published in The Greensboro Record, Betty Friedan cited a Harris poll taken within the last six months that dealt with this difference in attitudes. The survey "reported that 65% of all women endorsed most efforts to strengthen and change women's status in society, but that only 17% felt that most organizations trying to get changes were helping the cause of women" (Nemy, 1976: 9). It may be contended that an individual may agree with the issues espoused by the advocates of the Women's Liberation Movement, yet because of the negative publicity by the members of the movement and its perceived radicalism, that same individual may have negative attitudes toward the movement itself. Distinctions between the two have been made in many of the studies discussed.

Spence and Helmreich (1972) attempted the development of another scale, The Attitudes Toward Women Scale, which was designed to measure the attitudes of individuals toward the rights and roles of women in contemporary society. Items were divided into the following categories: vocational, educational, and intellectual roles of women, freedom and independence, dating,

*courtship, and etiquette, sexual behavior, and marital responsibilities and obligations. Their results, when surveying 713 male and 768 female college students and 292 mothers and 232 fathers of these students paralleled those of Kirkpatrick's in that (a) females were found to be more feminist in their attitudes than were males; and (b) more college-age individuals of both sexes were found to hold feminist attitudes than did their parents.*

*Attempting a validation of the Spence-Helmreich scale, Kilpatrick and Smith (1974) administered the questionnaire to 13 women members of the National Organization of Women (NOW), an activist feminist group, and to a control group of non-members. They found*

*the scale appears to be useful in distinguishing feminists from an overall population, but the maximum scores obtained by many of the women indicate it may be of limited use in making fine discriminations among women who actively adhere to feminist ideology (Kilpatrick and Smith, 1974: 462).*

*The questionnaire did, however, distinguish advocates of the feminist movement from those whose attitudes reflect opposition to the movement.*

*Several personality scales and inventories have included sections and subtests which attempt to measure one or more dimensions of an individual's attitudes toward appropriate sex roles, masculine-feminine traits, or autonomy in women. Among these are the Edwards Personality Inventory, the California Psychological Inventory, the Guilford-Margin Inventory of Factors (GAMIN), the Guilford-Zimmerman Temperment Survey, and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Buros, 1970). However, the treatment of attitudes toward feminism is, at best, only partially covered in these scales and inventories.*

Differentiation between feminists and non-feminists. Several researchers have focused recent studies on the comparison of self-proclaimed feminists and other neutral subjects in attempting to discern differences between the two groups (Fowler and Van de Riet, 1972; Cherniss, 1972; Fowler et al, 1973; Frankel, 1974; Arnott, 1973; Pawlicki and Almquist, 1973; and Miller, 1973). Fowler and Van de Riet (1972) examined through the application of an adjective checklist eighteen self-professed feminists, sixteen university undergraduates, twelve uninstitutionalized elderly women, and seventeen institutionalized elderly women to determine differences in terms of such traits as nurturance, autonomy, succorance, self-control, and personal adjustment and achievement. Although no significant differences in any dimension were found in the responses of feminists women and their age-contemporary peers, both of these groups of younger women did differ significantly in their responses from the elderly women of both groups in terms of independence, internal self-control, and autonomy.

Worrell and Worrell (1971) explored the question of differences in personality characteristics of men and women who support and oppose the Women's Liberation Movement. Their findings, based on a survey of 1400 college students, suggest that anti-feminist men are more concerned with social status and respectability than men who favor the feminist movement. Furthermore, non-feminist individuals, both male and female, tend to be more externally controlled and perceive their world in a predetermined way, which results in a feeling of helplessness in changing their environment.

*In contrast, persons who support the feminist movement were found to be more independent, thoughtful, and possessive of self-deterministic characteristics, which lead them to believe that they are less dependent on the opinions of others and more capable of influencing their own environment.*

*Cherniss (1972) attempted to discover possible common personal and social characteristics associated with "conversion" to the feminist ideology. Studying twelve women aged 21-28 who were actively involved in the Women's Movement and eight comparison women matched on the basis of age, occupation, and marital status, he found that life style was an important variable in distinguishing between the two groups of women with the Women's Liberation subjects leading more active, assertive, autonomous, and mobile lives. Other variables found to characterize conversion to feminism were maternal influences on one's development as a child, social alienation in adolescence, social-political perspective, and one's sense of community. He further documented the women's experience of personal change which seemed to accompany increased participation in the Women's Liberation Movement.*

*Arnott (1973) found equally convincing results in her study of 20 feminist and 40 non-feminist women regarding their differences in personal and social characteristics. Hypothesizing that proponents of opposing ideologies are drawn from different sociological and personality pools, she found that in terms of background variables, age, socio-economic status, education, religious interest, and attitudes toward one's self, husband, children, and life goals these groups of feminist and non-feminists were as divergent as*

*their ideologies.*

*Pawlicki and Almquist (1973) tested the hypothesis that a relationship exists between a behavioral indicator, joining a Women's Liberation group, and various personality measures such as authoritarianism, locus of control, and tolerance of ambiguity. Forty-four college students and thirty-one members of a national Women's Liberation group were found to differ significantly in that (a) the feminists were, of course, more favorable in their attitudes toward the goals and ideas of the Women's Movement; (b) the feminists reported lower levels of perceived authoritarianism and a higher tolerance of ambiguity; and (c) the feminists felt that they were more internally controlled; that is, they had more personal control over themselves and their environment in their own opinions. Other significant differences were found between the subjects who were in favor of the Women's Liberation Movement and the female control group in the variables of age, educational attainment, and political attitudes. Other demographic variables studied were found to produce no significant differences between the two groups.*

*Feminism and other factors.* *There have been several recent attempts to study a relatively homogeneous sample to determine factors which differentiate women who favor the ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement. Most prolific are the attempts to relate attitudes toward feminism and background variables of the respondents, such as age, educational attainment, family background, and educational and social experiences.*

*Goldschmidt et al (1974) studied 448 undergraduate females in an attempt*

*to relate their attitudes toward feminism and various aspects of the individuals' (a) family background: parents' education, occupation, politics, religion, the quality of the parents' marriage, and the family composition; (b) educational and social experiences: one's educational major, grades, and the amount and quality of heterosexual involvement; (c) expectations and aspirations of the future: career expectations, hopes for marriage, and plans for further education; (d) personal beliefs and values: religious and political preferences.*

*Findings of this study included: (a) that the mother's characteristics of education, political inclinations, and religious preferences were of special importance in predicting a daughter's orientation to feminist ideology; (b) that both one's major in college and grades achieved are to a more limited extent correlated with support of the Women's Liberation Movement; and (c) that both quantity and quality of heterosexual relationships were related to both attitudes and behavior of support for the movement. However, they cautioned that the interpretation of particularly the last reported finding could be misleading. They concluded that "in no sense do the results support the popular stereotype that liberation activists are primarily frustrated in their heterosexual relationships" (610).*

*Goldschmidt et al also found a significant relationship between attitudes toward feminism and marriage and career expectations. As expected, they found that in predicting active behavioral support of the Women's Liberation Movement, the single most powerful predictor is an individual's attitude toward*

*feminist ideology, indicating that favorable attitudes toward feminism are much more likely to be followed by and/or precede activism in the Women's Liberation Movement groups than are unfavorable attitudes.*

*Evaluating the responses of almost 20,000 readers of Psychology Today, an admittedly biased sample in that the readers of the magazine were younger, better educated, more politically liberal, more liberal in religious attitudes, and were in higher social and economic levels than the average American, Tavris (1973) attempted to explore some background factors which contribute to a person's support of or opposition to the feminist movement. Factors examined included: (a) family background: parents' perceived life styles, education, income, and occupation; (b) respondent's experiences and satisfaction with work, sex, and marriage; (c) the relative traditionalism/equalitarianism of the respondent's life style; and (d) the respondent's beliefs about the nature of psychological and physiological differences between the sexes. Primary indicators of support for the Women's Liberation Movement included political radicalism, religious liberalism and the perception of a cultural origin of sex differences rather than a genetic origin. Additional variables which were important in predicting support of feminist ideology were educational attainment and reported experiences with employment discrimination.*

*Frankel (1974) attempted to determine if a relationship exists between attitudes toward feminism as measured by feelings of the appropriateness of sex-role behavior and one's self-concept as it is related to inhibiting the need for achievement in women. Her results suggested that non-goal-oriented*

women, who felt less positive about themselves and their role, viewed themselves as consistently less dynamic and active than other women. In addition, goal-oriented women felt more positive about themselves and about the active, dynamic female role. However, neither group believed that they epitomized the ideal woman, even though both groups viewed the traditional concept of the feminine role as elusive and not altogether desirable.

Hymer and Atteins (1973) surveyed 56 females using an Attitudes Toward Women's Liberation Movement scale and aggressive contact scenarios to analyze the relationship between feminism attitudes and the mode of aggressive expression in women. Their findings revealed that of six masculine-feminine stereotyped aggression modes, four yielded significant differences among supporters and non-supporters of feminist ideology.

Another student researcher, Dahlin (1973), attempted to determine the relationship among feminist attitudes, equalitarianism in a marriage, and marital satisfaction, using three six-item scales. In general, although her measurement instruments were limited, she found a high correlation between the three concepts.

A study conducted by Landis, Sullivan and Sheley (1972) attempted to resolve one of the methodological problems related to the study of attitudes toward feminism. Their study utilized male and female interviewers to determine the effect of the interviewer on an individual's expression of feminist attitudes. They did find that the sex of the interviewer was an important variable in determining the response patterns of individuals.

*A review of the literature, in summary, reveals that there has been both increased interest in and considerable progress made toward an understanding of attitudes toward feminism. In addition to the recent development and validation of several scales designed to measure attitudes toward feminism, research attempts have centered on the differentiation between feminists and non-feminists and on the factors which are related to attitudes toward feminism. The variables that researchers have generally found to be correlated to attitudes toward feminism have been husband-wife differences in occupational type, the respondent's level of education, the wife's employment status, the number of children present or desired, and the employment status of the respondent's mother. In addition, such traits as need for achievement, locus of control, tolerance of ambiguity, and autonomy have been found to be correlated to an individual's attitudes toward feminism. Suggestions gleaned from this review of literature for further research include the application of the feminist attitude scales to a random sample of the population, the study of the male's attitudes toward feminism or the female's perception of the male's attitudes, and the study of feminism and other variables which have not yet been analyzed.*

#### **THE STUDY OF FAMILY POWER**

*A second major topic under investigation is the perceived patterns of power structure with regard to family decision-making. Of specific importance are the decision-making patterns of families concerning economic decisions. Since a basic understanding of the concepts and research findings*

*of the general area of family power is necessary to an in-depth look at economic decision-making, this review will examine research that has attempted to explain the theoretical base of family power, some conceptual and methodological problems involved, and some findings which have shown correlations between family power and other factors. A final emphasis will be on the development of patterns of family power related to decision-making. Due to the prolific research efforts of the past decades which have focused on family power, an exhaustive review would be impractical. Emphasis will, therefore, be placed on research studies which are most representative of the work done.*

#### Theoretical Background

The resource theory. *The theory outlined by Blood and Wolfe (1960) in their work, Husbands and Wives, was, according to Broderick (1971: 141), "the theory of spousal power which dominated the decade." Maintaining that there exist several differences in marital power structures of couples within cultures and societies, they concluded that the balance of power in a marital relationship is determined by the amount of resources brought into the relationship by each partner. The greater one spouse's resources in relation to those of this partner, the greater his power will be.*

*A resource may be defined as anything that one partner may make available to the other, helping the latter to satisfy his needs or to attain his goals. The balance of power will be on the side of that partner who contributes the greatest resources to the marriage (Blood and Wolfe, 1960: 12).*

*Not a deliberate or conscious process involving overt actions, this may occur without it being realized by either partner. According to Blood and Wolfe,*

*this concept of power involves*

*an automatic readjustment which occurs as the contributing partner discovers that he has a lot to offer to the marriage, while the receiving partner feels indebted for what has already been given and dependent upon what he hopes to receive in the future (Blood and Wolfe, 1960: 13).*

*Although economic resources, actual income derived from work in the marketplace, amounts of savings, or return from investment and entrepreneurship are an important part of the resource theory, it is too confining to limit conjugal power to the procurement of solely economic resources. Heer (1963) mentioned attractiveness to the spouse as a particularly female resource. Waller (1951) observed that the power of one spouse may derive from the relative courtship desirability he or she possesses. Weeks (1972: 22) maintained that "a spouse's resources accrue not only from the competences which he brings to the marriage but also from his participation in the external social system" especially when the decision involves transactions between the family and the social system. Blood and Wolfe also mentioned competence in decision-making skills as a resource which may tend to give one spouse power in a particular area of decision-making. Thus, economic resources, although important in this theory, are not the only sources of marital power.*

*The application of this theory in the study of equalitarianism in decision-making patterns is particularly useful. According to the resource theory, the marital relationship is designed to meet the needs of its participants. When each spouse contributes to the need satisfaction of his or her partner, a relationship of mutual respect and consultation should occur. But when one spouse contributes more to the give-and-take process of need satisfaction,*

situations occur where that partner has a more than equal influence in decision-making.

*In summary, the power to make decisions stems primarily from the resources which the individual can provide to meet the needs of his marriage partner and to upgrade his decision-making skills (Blood and Wolfe, 1960: 44).*

The theory of resources in cultural context. Blood and Wolfe's resources theory stimulated a number of important cross-cultural family power studies which resulted in findings contradictory to their theory (Rodman, 1967; Michel, 1967; Buric and Zecevic, 1967; and Safilios-Rothschild, 1967 and 1969). For example, Safilios-Rothschild in her 1967 study of the power structure of urban Greek and French families maintained that education and occupation cannot be considered as power resources, citing several studies to support her argument. She found that in Greece and Yugoslavia a husband's power in the family decreased as his education, occupational status, and income increased, while in France and the United States, a positive relationship was found between these variables and a husband's power.

*In an attempt to explain these contradictions, Rodman (1967) developed his theory of resources in a cultural context. He maintained that the simple resource theory explains the power structure of families only in those cultures or subcultures which forego the traditional norms of husband-dominant patterns to embrace a belief system that allows an equal distribution of marital power between the spouses. He concluded that*

*The balance of marital power is influenced by the interaction of (1) the comparative resources of husband and wife and (2) the cultural or subcultural expectations about the distribution of marital power (Rodman, 1967: 322).*

*Thus, in Greece and Yugoslavia, the variables of higher education, income and occupational prestige were more likely to result in the husband who, in spite of traditional patriarchal norms, was willing to allow a more equalitarian power structure. In the cultures of France and America, the positive relationship between a husband's occupational prestige, education, and income and equality in power was the result of the cultural emphasis on equality in marriage and the high degree of flexibility that their cultures allow concerning the distribution of power.*

Exchange theory. *Another perceived inadequacy in the resource theory as developed by Blood and Wolfe resulted in the conceptualization of the adapted exchange theory by Heer (1963). He questioned the adequacy of the resource theory in dealing with factors external to the family--their stage in the family life cycle, external social controls, and especially the attractiveness of alternatives outside the marital relationship. Two particular situations which he felt were inadequately explained by the resource theory were that the power of the wife seemed to be greater before the birth of her children than when they were preschool aged, and that the power of the wife seemed to vary inversely with the number of children in the home. Heer maintained that, according to the resource theory, the non-economic resources contributed by a mother of children should be greater than those contributed by a wife*

*with no children.*

*Attempting to reconcile this contradiction, he proposed the theory that the balance of power in a family was determined not by the resources which each spouse brought into the relationship but by the value of the resources in a marriage as compared with the resources which could be obtained in exchange outside the marital relationship. This theory is an extension of the resource theory in that the more one contributes to his marriage, the more he or she will be likely to gain from an alternative relationship, and consequently, the more power he is likely to accrue within the current marital relationship (Rodman, 1967).*

*According to the revised theory, the greater the difference between the value to the wife of the resources contributed by the husband and the value to the wife of the resources which she might earn outside the marriage, the greater the power of her husband, and vice-versa (Heer, 1963: 138).*

*Heer theorized that in such a case, the mother of preschool-age children holds less power because of the difficulty of finding a superior alternative to her present relationship. With the presence of young children, her "bargaining power in the marriage market is probably not very high" (Heer, 1963: 138). When the children reach school age, her alternatives may become more desirable for labor force participation and the prospects for remarriage are more attractive. Heer also explains the finding that the wife's power again declines after the school-aged children have been launched from the home. He explains that during this later stage of a woman's life, the sex ratio decreases her chance of finding a better alternative to her present relationship, thus her power base*

*is weakened. Her resources for exchange may no longer be as valuable as when she was a young, childless woman.*

*Heer's revised theory is self-admittedly "congruently with Waller's principle of least interest" (Heer, 1963: 138) in which he postulates that the spouse with the least amount and intensity of interest in the survival of the marital relationship is the spouse who is most likely to exploit the other. Heer maintains that his theory differs from Waller's in that it explains why one partner has the least interest in the marital relationship. He explains that "the partner with the least interest is the one for whom the discrepancy between actualized and potential return for contributed resources is greater" (Heer, 1963: 138).*

*With regard to the application of his theory to the decision-making process and how it is affected by family power, Heer agrees with Blood and Wolfe in that he views "relative competence in decision-making as a base of power within the family" (Heer, 1963: 139). Heer maintains that in the case of an uncontested decision, the partner who has the greatest knowledge of the decision-making area and the best relative ability to make logical deductions about the most effective action will be the one who makes the decision. However, if a decision is contested, relative competence of each partner may be obscured by the relative power that each spouse holds.*

*Another factor that Heer postulates to be of importance as a base of family power is the interest each partner expresses regarding a particular decision-making area. He maintains that decisions about the different aspects*

of a purchase such as an automobile are often traded, with the wife, if she is more interested in the appearance, choosing the car's color, and with the husband, if he is more interested in the performance, choosing the car's make and model.

In summarizing five possible bases of marital power as it affects familial decision-making, Heer listed the following: (1) external social control, (2) the prior internalization of norms, (3) the difference between actual return and expected return of an alternative to the existing relationship, (4) the relative competence of each spouse, and (5) the relative involvement of each partner in a particular area of decision-making (Heer, 1962).

The Instrumental-Expressive Role Theory. Parsons and Bales, in their publication Family Socialization and the Interaction Process (1955), proposed a differentiation of family roles based on a two-dimensional paradigm in which the husband's role is fulfilled in instrumental areas and the wife's role in expressive areas. According to this pattern, the husband's role is superior in power and has instrumental priority, whereas the wife's role is also superior in an expressive priority (46). The instrumental role of the husband is based upon the expectation that he will be primarily responsible for the financial support of the family, the technical expert, the primary status bearer in the community, and the manipulator of the family's environment. The expressive role of the wife includes her duties as "cultural expert," expert in human relations and mediator of family conflicts, as well as representative of the family in the children's point of view.

*Rollins (1963) tested an application of the predictions of the Parsonian theory and found the hypotheses supported when the responses of females only were analyzed, but they were not supported when either the responses of the males or the combined male-female responses were analyzed. Rollins reported that his finds agreed with those of Godfrey (1951) in failing to confirm or articulate the Parsonian ideas.*

*However, Mowrer (1969) in testing the tenets of the Parsonian theory maintained that role differentiation in a marital relationship may be expressed in terms of the dimensions of power, instrumentalism, expressiveness, and companionship. Among the findings that he reported were that (1) there has been a diminution in the traditional power and instrumental roles of the husband and (2) there has been increased sharing of the expressive role of the wife by the husband (Mowrer, 1969).*

*The four theories discussed above represent the most notable and most widely quoted attempts at dealing with the concept and origin of power in decision-making. By no means is there a consensus among researchers concerning one theory as the most authoritative on the subject. Indeed, each theory as it has been researched has been found to have conceptual and methodological problems which continue to plague researchers of family power and decision-making. Following is a discussion of the most widely recognized conceptual and methodological difficulties which remain existent.*

#### Conceptual Considerations

*There are numerous conceptual problems which plague researchers of*

*the family power structure. First, there exists considerable confusion as to the definition of such terms as power, marital power, decision-making, and authority. Family power has been defined in several not so precise ways. Many researchers refer to it simply as the ability to influence or control the behavior of other persons. Phillips (1967: 36) defines it as the "chances of a man or group to realize their own will." Blood (1963: 14) refers to family power as "the relative influence of the two partners allocating resources of time, energy, and money," including the relative influence over each other as persons and their unilateral areas of influence in family operations. Hallenbeck (1966) defines power in terms of its sources. She differentiates between five types of power, according to the source from which each type originates: reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, referent power, and expert power.*

*Little consistency exists regarding the definition and conceptualization of any of these terms among the various researchers. Sprey (1971: 235) noted that most family sociologists "define the concept of family power structure in terms of familial or marital decision making." Many researchers even define these and other terms such as authority and influence interchangeably. Indeed, other researchers have simply ignored the conceptual problem by instead studying the concept of power surely with an empirical approach. Sprey attempts to explain the approach of some researchers who ignore the conceptual problems and instead concentrate on the empirical approach:*

*This approach does raise the question of how one can judge the validity of a measure without knowing exactly that which it aims to measure. The answer... seems to be that everyone knows what we mean by family power structure; therefore, let's start measuring it (Sprey, 1971: 235).*

*Even when there has been a vague attempt to define the terms involved, few reports have focused on conceptual definitions of power. Instead, most studies are designed to test a measurement technique. In many studies each of the definitions of power is related to the decision process. Sprey (1971) questioned the validity of defining power in terms of its association with decision-making when the relationship is only hypothetical to begin with.*

*Secondly, past research has not only failed to conceptualize family power and decision-making, but it has also generally failed to distinguish between power in its different forms. Concepts such as predicted power, process power, and retrospective power have not been conceptually distinguished from one another. Even authors who propose to be developing a conceptual definition of these terms end by defining them in operational terms specific to their particular study. For example, Olson and Rabunsky (1972) claim to have defined power and its components conceptually when they have in reality merely placed them in an operational framework:*

*The major objectives of this paper are to describe a methodological study of family power which attempts to clarify some of the conceptual distinctions between various measures of family power... (224).*

*The following is a brief definition of the major concepts used in the study and how they were operationally defined. The criterion measure used in this study is 'outcome power'... 'Predicted power' was derived from the initial questionnaire (Phase I) responses of each individual... 'Retrospective power' was obtained... 'Authority' was derived by asking... (Olson and Rabunsky, 1972: 227).*

*Nowhere do they include in their self-reported attempt at clarifying some of the conceptual problems of the subject any other definitions than the purely operational ones listed above. Even in this supposed attempt to develop a concept of power that is independent of empirical measurement techniques, the terms are not clearly conceptualized.*

*One of the few nominal definitions of power was offered by Safilios-Rothschild (1970b) in her widely quoted survey. After a voluminous review of the literature, she suggested the following theoretical concept of power within families that articulates much of what underlies previous attempts:*

*It is a multidimensional concept that is measured indirectly through behavioral acts in which the degree of one's power is put to the test. Thus, familial power can be measured through the outcome of decision-making, the patterns of tension and conflict management, or the type of prevailing division of labor. . . . Furthermore, even by restricting family power to decision-making, the latter is also a multi-phasic process. The different stages involved in making a decision point to other crucial dimensions of power, such as influence and authority (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970b: 450).*

*Premises included in this conceptualization are that (1) power, being multidimensional, contains among other things dimensions of authority, influence, and decision-making, (2) family power is verified only indirectly through measurement of overt acts which are outcomes of decision-making, conflict management, or division of labor, and (3) decision-making as a multi-phasic process represents the idea that factors other than outcomes must be involved. This appears to articulate the basic principles underlying much of the research on the topic and is the most relevant and complete definition found in this search of previous literature.*

*Whatever definition one chooses, it is important to note Safilios-Rothschild's distinctions between family power and the subconcepts of which it is composed. She maintains that too often researchers generalize about family power when their data are limited to only a portion of the total concept. Recent research has focused on differentiating between such terms as power and authority. Power is differentiated from authority in that the latter is defined to mean the right of a certain individual to make a decision. Safilios-Rothschild (1967: 349) states that a spouse has the authority to make a decision when "cultural or social norms designate him as the ex-officio 'rightful' person." In Hallenbeck's concept of the five types of power, authority is considered to be equivalent to the term legitimate power, which is based on "the influenced one's belief that the powerful one has the right to control his behavior or opinions" (Hallenbeck, 1966: 200).*

*Regardless of the lack of a conceptual definition and the differentiation of factors which compose the traditional concept of power, recently researchers have begun to question the usefulness of this type of conceptualization of power at all. Until the past few years it had been assumed that the traditional concept of power with its integral parts was a theoretically useful one and that its difficulty had been that researchers had not created a valid measurement of it. Into this type of thinking has been injected thoughts that the term power in its traditional sense restricts rather than aids the study of family power. Researchers who have expressed doubts about the traditional concepts of family power include Olson and Rabunsky, and Jetse Sprey whose comments follow:*

*The concept has not been appropriately defined to describe the family process at all, but rather the outcome of process, i.e., who finally makes a particular decision. . . . As a result, family investigators have not only operated under the mistaken assumption that they are learning about family process when they have studied family power, but they have not even obtained valid information about the outcome of family process (Olson and Rabunsky, 1972: 232).*

*Sprey agrees in arguing that*

*Family power structure is a theoretical concept, not an empirical fact. Its relation to the real world of the family thus lies in its potential to make sense of that which we observe; the ongoing processes of decision-making, bargaining, and negotiation between its members (Sprey, 1972: 236).*

*Others have maintained that in the traditional concept of family power researchers do not know or delineate whether they are reporting who decides about a particular issue, who decides who is to make the decision about the issue, who decides who has the authority to designate who will make the decision, etc.*

*The underlying premise in most of these arguments is that marital power should not be viewed in the context of a decision-making situation which always produces a winner and a loser. They argue that marital relationships are not analagous to a sporting event, but that they are of long and presumably intimate nature. Conflicts in decision-making are not supposed to produce a winner whose power rules, but are supposed to be resolved in such a way as to facilitate joint acceptance and ultimately satisfaction with the course of action decided upon.*

*Family researchers have traditionally defined power as an outcome of a given disputed decision as a "win" for the spouse who gets his way, ignoring the ongoing process of conflict management, bargaining, and negotiation.*

*In their studies of the outcome of family process, they have also mistakenly used a "static" model which is analogous to the zero-sum game where it is assumed that there is always a winner and a loser (Olson and Rabunsky, 1972: 232).*

*Suggestions for the rectification of this problem are few and vague. Olson and Rabunsky (1972) suggest the use of a dynamic model that deals with the reciprocal nature of family interaction, communication, discussion, and negotiation. This concept would focus on the communication process in attempting to discern the strategies and counter-strategies that are used by spouses to resolve conflicts.*

*Sprey agrees that a concept more useful to family research would include facets such as moves and counter-moves in decision strategy, threats and promises of trade-offs, aggression, and appeasement. Both agree that there has yet to be developed such a theory that is both conceptually valid and empirically verifiable, but they argue that it is the rationale behind the concept rather than the empirical validation of such a hypothesis that is important.*

*Safilios-Rothschild (1970) argues that it is not practical to try to develop a theory of family power without having the reliable data to back it up. She asks, "How can a theory explain why the one spouse rather than the other is powerful when there are not data identifying who is the most powerful?" (547). She maintains that until all the dimensions of power have been thoroughly examined and their interrelation understood, no systematic and adequate conceptualization can possibly be developed. Her approach of facts first, then theory to explain them is an approach accepted by many researchers of the concept.*

### Methodological Problems

*Although the majority of past research has focused on the investigation of factors which may affect the power relationships of marital couples, attention in recent years has been given to the various methodological problems which continue to plague researchers of family power structures. Following is a discussion of the five most widely discussed problems in this area.*

*One of the current dilemmas facing the researchers of family power, and, indeed, social researchers in general, is the question of the use of self-report survey techniques versus the use of observational measures. Family researchers until recently have relied predominantly on self-report measures which obtain information from respondents by means of a questionnaire or interview. Observational techniques, a relatively new measurement device, rely on the observance of interaction between the spouses in a home or laboratory setting. As Wilkening and Morrison (1963) relate, there are some drawbacks to each method. The self-report measures are limited in that a person's response to a particular question is influenced by*

*the scope of what he observes, the accuracy of his observation, the cultural norms with respect to the roles of interacting persons, and by personal biases relating to the interaction (Wilkening and Morrison, 1963: 34).*

*However, the observational technique has problems, too, in that (1) to observe a large enough sample to make this technique useful requires a prohibitive amount of time and money, (2) the technical problems involved in isolating a certain observed factor from the numerous other interacting variables, (3) the expectations of the observed subjects may influence his or her behavior,*

and (4) there exists a discrepancy between the subject's idea of what took place and what was observed to take place by the observer. In the latter case, researchers have often posed the question of whose judgment is to be termed the more accurate.

Olson and Rabunsky (1972) cited other limitations of self-report measures. First, they maintained that requiring a respondent to describe a power situation or who makes a decision is difficult because individuals cannot accurately report such a central act of behavior. Secondly, the use of self-report measures requires individuals to recall past experiences, which is a practice usually resulting in considerable inaccuracy. Thirdly, they reiterate that respondents tend to bias their descriptions of their relationships according to socially accepted norms. They found that husbands were likely to overestimate their actual power, while wives tended to underestimate the power they hold.

Safilios-Rothschild (1970) argued, however, that the tapping of "perceived" family power structures is not without value:

*Actually, the familial power structure (that is, authority, decision-making, and influence) as perceived by the wife, the husband, the children or other family members are most probably very 'significant' variables since it is each person's perceived 'reality' that affects his behavior, the style and quality of interpersonal relationships and, finally the type of husband-wife and parent-child relationships (544).*

A second major methodological limitation is encountered by researchers who, when using the self-report method, limited the subjects queried to only wives. Although there is little evidence to justify such a procedure, this exclusive reliance on wives' reports has been done mainly because of time and money

limitations and for convenience. *Safilios-Rothschild (1969)* argues that by limiting reports to the wife's responses, researchers are perpetuating only a wives' family sociology. Attempts to justify this include *Blood and Wolfe's* assertion that any individual differences where a husband would give a different report would "get lost in the shuffle when large numbers of cases were considered" (*Blood and Wolfe, 1960: 123*).

When both husband and wife responses have been evaluated, however, contradictory results have been reported. A few studies have reported agreement between the spouses at a significant level (*Blood and Hamblin, 1958; Buric and Zecevic, 1967; and Centers et al, 1971*). However, in the majority of studies where both spouses were sued, significant discrepancies have occurred between husbands' and wives' reports of existing power structures (*Burchinal, 1965; Scanzoni, 1965; Heer, 1962, 1963; Wilkening and Morrison, 1963; Safilios-Rothschild, 1969; Olson, 1969; and Turk and Bell, 1972*).

Even among these studies, however, the direction of the discrepancy between husbands' and wives' reports is disagreed upon. *Olson (1969)* found that when a discrepancy resulted in reports of perceived power and actual power, the husbands overestimated their actual power and wives underestimated theirs. He reported that, contrary to previous research findings, "there was no tendency for these subjects to attribute less power to themselves than their spouse attributed to them" (*Olson, 1969: 549*).

*Turk and Bell (1972)* differed in maintaining that when the responses of husbands and wives over who had the real power were different, there

was a tendency for each to underreport himself or herself and to attribute more power to the spouse. Heer (1963) reported that his findings support this position, but only in the case of the wife. He summarized that wives in general claimed less power for themselves in decision-making than they actually held.

While there is disagreement over the tendencies toward accuracy in reporting one's own power and that of his or her spouse, some researchers maintain that these findings can reveal insights into family dynamics. Far from discarding these findings as by-products of faulty methodology, a comprehensive study of family power structure should utilize them for maximum understanding of the processes and outcomes of power. Thus, instead of relying on one set of answers, which reflect only how a particular family member perceives the power structure, researchers should analyze the discrepancies between the responses of both husbands and wives in attempting to obtain the entire picture of the family power structure (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970: 542).

A third major methodological problem is the lack of comparability between the measures of family power. Recently a barrage of research has found that there are wide discrepancies between various measurement instruments designed to tap family power. Various comparisons of observational findings with self-report findings have found that they tap different dimensions of power and result in incomparable data. For example, Safilios-Rothschild (1970) cites the following two measures which have been com-

pared when there is little base for such a comparison: (1) the scores on a decision-making questionnaire regarding decisions concerning family size, type or location of home, social activities, location or type of employment of husband, and money contributed to charity, which are arbitrarily chosen and neither typical nor representative, and (2) the power scores developed from the SIMFAM game which measures power in a simulated crisis or non-crisis situation. Obviously these measures are neither based on the same concept or power, nor do they produce comparable results.

Probably the most sophisticated validation studies have been conducted by Olson and Rabunsky (1972) and Turk and Bell (1972). Olson and Rabunsky investigated the validity of five measures of power: predicted power, process power, retrospective power, outcome power, and authority. They attempted to tap predicted power, outcome power, and retrospective power through two questionnaires administered to couples over a period of five to ten months. Actual process power was tapped through the observation of the couple discussing the decision and arriving at a conclusion as to which alternative was best. Authority was measured by asking who had the legitimate right to exercise power.

Findings reported by Olson and Rabunsky (1972: 227) were as follows. First, there was no significant relationship found between any of the three power measures, predicted power, process power, or retrospective power, with the criteria measure of outcome power. "None of these four measures proved to be valid measures of who exercised power." Secondly, of all the

*interrelationships of the various measures (excluding comparison of the previous four to each other) only two of these interrelationships are significant: authority and process power and authority and retrospective power. However, the two measures of process power and retrospective power were not related to each other or to outcome power. Thirdly, decision-making measures, although not related in any way to power measures or authority, do have a greater construct validity than the power measures. In explaining this occurrence, Olson and Rabunsky related that*

*In regard to decisions, the individuals had only a dichotomous choice, of whether they made the decision or not, whereas with the power measures, they had at least four choices regarding who exercised the power, i.e., husband, wife, equally shared, neither. Perhaps the most important reason for these discrepant findings between power and decision making is that the power dimension is a more abstract construct and, therefore, is more difficult to comprehend and report. Decisions, however, often related to more concrete phenomena and are, therefore, easier for subjects to describe (Olson and Rabunsky, 1972: 229).*

*Olson and Rabunsky concluded that there was a great variety of power measures which do not overlap or tap the same factor. Furthermore, they maintain that because reports of predicted power, process power, outcome power, and retrospective power are not interrelated, these four measures describe only "subjective reality," that is, what is perceived by the individual to be true.*

*Turk and Bell (1972) also conducted a validity study, replicating and comparing nine previously used measurement techniques. They found that "the degree of association among all measures were found to be so low that it is clear the measures are not equivalent" (215). In addition, compared in groups, the self-report measures using questionnaires and the observational*

measures were found to vary widely according to the conclusions they reached about the factor they tapped.

The methodological issue posed here had led Olson and Rabunsky and other researchers to comment on the powerlessness of the family power concept as it has traditionally been measured. Suggesting a revitalization of the theory behind the measurement procedures, they call for the utilization of a dynamic conceptual model that deals with the processes of communication and strategy instead of the static model which focuses only on the outcome of the decision.

A fourth methodological consideration deals with the internal consistency and reliability of measuring instruments designed to tap family power. Two studies are of interest in discussing this problem. Stephen Bahr (1973) administered Blood and Wolfe's eight-item measure of family decision-making to 258 wives and 221 husbands in an attempt to determine the degree of internal consistency for the instrument. Using Guttman's scalogram analysis and Schuessler's test of significance to determine the co-efficient of reproducibility of the measure, he found that, although its reproducibility is less than .90 and its cutting points are somewhat arbitrary, "the internal consistency of Blood and Wolfe's measure is substantial" (Bahr, 1973: 294). He concluded that the instrument did tap one aspect of power, that being decision-making. However, he cautioned that inferences about other dimensions of power must be made with care.

Turk and Bell (1972) reported that the replication of the nine measures of power showed that the instruments produce basically similar results to

those found in the original studies. In a comparison of the results of the original studies with their replication they reported

*if the measures could be assumed to have face validity, one might be encouraged by the reliability from sample to sample to conclude that the measures are good and/or that North American society shows a consistent pattern of power structure in the family (Turk and Bell, 1972: 221).*

However, one must remember the previous discussion of the wide discrepancies between the measures, the reports of the low correlation between husbands' and wives' responses, and the assertions that the instruments are really only capable of tapping "subjective" reality. However, when the use of the instruments has been replicated, generally similar results have been found by the original study and the replication.

A fifth methodological consideration related to the practice of measuring power is the use of an overall power score. In the calculation of such a score, most researchers have simply weighted each decision item equally, whether it was the job type, location of the home, or which car to purchase, or how much to spend on food. This difference in importance of the decisions is accompanied by another problem, that of the frequency with which the decisions are made. Some decisions are made daily or weekly, while some are made only every few years or even less frequently. Safilios-Rothschild (1969) discussed the problems encountered when these different types of decisions are considered: "Some decisions are 'important' and frequent, others are frequent but not 'important,' others 'important' and not frequent, and others not 'important' and not frequent" (297).

*She maintains that the measurement of family power should not be based only on the decisions that one appropriates for himself or herself because the natural preference of each spouse would be toward these decisions which he or she feels is important and not too time-consuming. She reported that husbands tend to perceive as wife-dominant only those decisions which involve considerable time and are relatively unimportant, while the husbands perceive all "important" decisions to be either made by them or made jointly.*

*Safilios-Rothschild (1970) suggests the calculation of four different scores to measure the four types of specific decisions: (1) important decisions made frequently, (2) important decisions made infrequently, (3) unimportant decisions made frequently, and (4) unimportant decisions made infrequently (542). Furthermore, it was suggested that the evaluation of specific decisions as important or unimportant and frequent or infrequent be made by the respondents themselves.*

*The degree of specificity also affects the responses of husbands and wives and the compilation of an overall decision score. For example, the question, "Who decides about the purchase of a car?" is a fairly specific question, while "Who decides about the rearing of children?" is a more general decision-making area involving several more specific decisions. The multi-dimensional aspect of some areas makes it possible, for example, for one spouse to decide what make of car to buy and the partner to decide on its color.*

*In conclusion, there are several areas of consensus regarding methodological improvements to be made. The most relevant suggestions include:*

(1) the use of and comparison between the responses of both husbands and wives, (2) the examination of the discrepancy between the two spouses, (3) the measurement of separate bases of power, such as only outcome power, and (4) only careful calculation of an overall score.

#### Power and Other Factors

From a review of the research done on variables related to family power comes the conclusion that it is of obvious value to an understanding of the family decision-making process to determine the relationship of certain demographic variables and power in decision-making. That marital power is related to a variety of factors is supported by a plethora of studies. Following is a summary of the factors which have been examined in attempts to correlate them with the relative power of the spouses.

Husband's occupation. In general, research findings have supported the theory that a husband's power in family decision-making is positively correlated with his occupational level and prestige (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Komarovsky, 1962; Michel, 1967; Oopong, 1970; Centers et al, 1971). In all of these studies, high occupational status husbands were found to have more decision-making power than low occupational status husbands. Only the cross-cultural studies of Greece (Safilios-Rothschild, 1967, 1969, 1970), Yugoslavia (Buric and Zecevic, 1967), and Ghana (Feldman, 1967) showed a significant negative correlation between the husband's occupational status and the extent of his decision-making power. These researchers have used Rodman's theory

*of resources in cultural context, which considers the prevailing cultural ideologies about equalitarianism, to explain some of the contradictory findings.*

Husband's income. *Since the occupational status of husbands and their incomes are so closely correlated, the expected positive correlation between a husband's income and his power in decision-making has also been generally found (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Winch, 1953; Komarovsky, 1962; Sirles, 1970). Sirles (1970), studying income independent of the other variables in assessing marital power structures of military families, found that when the husband's income level increased his power also increased.*

*Safilios-Rothschild (1967) found a contradictory condition in her findings in Greece that "uneducated and unskilled husbands who earn less money enjoyed more decision-making power than more educated, skilled, and higher wage earners" (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970a: 547). Komarovsky explained this contradiction in terms of the resource of education:*

*The effect of educational inequality appears to explain the lower power of the skilled workers in comparison with the semi-skilled. . . By virtue of their relatively high earnings skilled workers may be able to marry better educated women, but by marrying 'upward' they lose the degree of power enjoyed by the semi-skilled over their less educated wives. (Komarovsky, 1962: 229).*

*Thus, the semi-skilled, lower income husbands had more power than the skilled, middle-to-high income husbands because they had relatively more education than their wives, which is a factor which will be discussed further.*

Wife's employment. *One of the most often measured variables in family power studies has been the employment of the wife in the labor market. A barrage of*

studies have indicated that the wife's employment has a positive correlation with her power in family decision-making (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Blood and Hamblin, 1958; Blood, 1967; Hoffman, 1960; Komarovsky, 1962; Heer, 1958; Lupri, 1969, Buric and Zecevic, 1967; Michel, 1967; and Davis, 1971). Furthermore, full-time working wives have been found to have more power than even part-time working wives (Blood and Wolfe, 1960: 160). In addition, Blood and Hamblin (1958) found that employed wives and their husbands have a greater expectation of equalitarian authority patterns (who should have the power) than do non-employed women and their spouses. Safillios-Rothschild (1967) in her cross-cultural comparison of the marital power structures of Greece, France, and the United States found that in all three cultures the wife's employment is likely to increase her power and decrease the power of her husband.

A contradictory finding was reported by Middleton and Putney (1960), whose data from the revealed difference technique showed that non-working wives were more likely to dominate marital decisions than were employed wives, especially in the decision areas of childrearing and recreation. In the decisions about living standards and consumer purchases, when the working wife might be expected to dominate because of her greater contribution of resources, there was no significant difference between the groups.

Udry (1974) accounted for this difference in findings by explaining that the subjects surveyed and the method of measurement, the revealed difference technique versus the self-report questionnaire usually employed by

researchers, could have produced the opposite results. He maintains that the question of which results are correct and closest to "real" marital decision-making has not been established. In any case, the majority of research reports that employed wives have significantly more power and influence in the family than do non-employed wives.

Wife's income. Again, since there is a direct correlation between the wife's employment status and her income, there exists a positive correlation between a wife's power in decision-making and her earned income (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Perella and Waldman, 1966; Lupri, 1969; Oopong, 1970). Lupri's (1969) study of authority patterns in West German families showed that a husband's power decreased as his wife's contribution became equal in terms of income, education, and work participation. Perella and Waldman (1966) also found that when the wife contributed a second income to her family, she is likely to have enhanced power in the family decision-making.

Relative education. Although there have been studies that have focused on the educational attainment of only the wife or only the husband, it is more succinct to say that, in general, the spouse with the higher educational attainment relative to his spouse has been found to have more than his share of power and influence in decision-making. Generally, education as a resource has been positively correlated with power in decision-making (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Komarovsky, 1962; Michel, 1967; Lupri, 1969; Oopong, 1970; Centers et al, 1971; and Davis, 1971). Only Papanek (1969), who

*found no significant relationship between a husband's education and power in decision-making, and Safilios-Rothschild (1967), who studied the cross-cultural implications of the resource theory, disagreed with the finding that relative education is a power source.*

*Safilios-Rothschild cites data from her cross-cultural studies where there existed a negative correlation between the husband's education and the extent of his decision-making power, in maintaining that education cannot be considered a power source. She found that in Greece and Yugoslavia, husbands who had higher levels of education had less power than did husbands with lower levels of educational attainment. However, she ignored the concept of relative education of the spouses in making her conclusions about the resource of education. The large majority of evidence, in any case, supports the positive relationship between relative education and power in family decision-making.*

*Socio-economic status. Although findings related to the variables of occupation, income, and education, the three most widely used indicators of socio-economic status, have been generally consistent, there appears to be little consistency in the findings of the relationship between socio-economic status and marital power. Whereas many researchers (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Blood and Hamblin, 1967; Komarovsky, 1962; Michel, 1967; Centers et al, 1971; and Heer, 1958) have found a positive relationship between the components of socio-economic status and power, several studies reported a negative correlation between marital power and socio-economic status (Rainwater, 1959;*

Heer, 1958; King, 1964; Buric and Zecevic, 1967; and Safilios-Rothschild, 1967). In addition, some findings have resulted in which no correlation was found between socio-economic status and marital power (Papanek, 1962; Hampe, 1970). Since then, more research has been done on the topic of the measurement of socio-economic status and its relationship to other variables. Further research is needed to clarify the relationship between this factor and marital power.

Life cycle. About the only point of consensus concerning the relationship between marital power and the stage of the family in their life cycle is that the balance of power between husbands and wives does tend to change over time. There is considerable disagreement over the direction and intensity of the change. Blood and Wolfe (1960) found that the longer the couple had been married, the more power the wife had and the less the husband had. In relation to the stage in the family life cycle, they found that the husband's power increased from the honeymoon period through the child-rearing period, whereas the entrance into the post-parental and retirement periods saw his power gradually decrease. This pattern was corroborated by several later studies (Hill, 1965; Campbell, 1968; Centers et al, 1971; and Davis, 1971). These studies generally report a decrease in husband dominance from the early stages of the marriage along with an increase in the wife dominance and equalitarian patterns in the later stages of the life cycle. In general, this finding is based on the loss of power by the wife as she bears children and experiences an accompanying withdrawal from the external social system and

*labor force, thereby losing her resource-producing capabilities (Blood, 1963).*

*However, there is some evidence showing that the opposite pattern is existent. Lewis (Udry, 1974) found that husbands and wives with teenage children felt that the wife's decision-making power had been steadily increasing since marriage and was yet to reach its peak. It is also reported that couples whose children were grown felt that the wife's power was at its lowest point. Heer (1963) also maintained that the husband's power was lowest during the child-rearing period and subsequently increased. In general, however, research seems to support the finding that over the life cycle of a family there occurs a gradual increase in the wife's power concomitant with a decrease in the husband's power, which is a pattern that results in a more nearly equalitarian power structure during the post-parental stages.*

Children. *Because the presence and number of children in the family is inextricably linked to a family's stage in their life cycle, findings concerning this variable are similar to those previously discussed. In general, it has been found that childless couples are much more equalitarian in power structures than are couples with young children present (Blood and Wolfe, 1960). This has been attributed to the wife's availability for employment and her increased chances of procuring relatively equal resources as her husband. There is also some evidence to suggest that the more children there are in a family, the more influence the husband has (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Heer, 1958; Safilios-Rothschild, 1967; Davis, 1971; and Centers et al, 1971). In general, their findings are based on the supposition that a woman burdened with children,*

*especially those under school age, is both unable to contribute resources to the family (resource theory) and is unlikely to have a great availability of alternatives open outside of the marital relationship (exchange theory).*

Age. *As demography has changed, the pattern of age difference between husbands and wives has changed. Whereas a century ago age difference of five years or more was common, with the husband usually being the older, today the age difference between spouses has declined to under two years on the average (Udry, 1974). Where there is a large difference in age, the older spouse, nearly always the husband, is more powerful, but when the age difference is small, there have been insignificant differences in the power of the husband and wife (Blood and Wolfe, 1960). Thus, for the vast majority of couples, the relative age of the spouses has no relationship to the power structure of the family.*

Age at marriage. *Relatively little attention has been given to the variable of age at marriage. However, its correlation with educational attainment and employment status has been documented (Campbell, 1968). Therefore, the findings concerning the power of a wife and her age at marriage have taken the expected direction. Campbell (1968) reported that wives who married early, especially before the age of eighteen, had less power than wives who married later at age 22. Again, these women who married at younger ages would be those who had relatively lower educational attainment and fewer years spent in a career-oriented job, as well as those who have larger families,*

*relative to those women who married later in life (Campbell, 1968).*

Previous marriage. *Again, relatively little research has been reported on the relationship between an individual's power and his or her failure at a previous marriage. In the only report of this variable, Centers et al (1971) found that when the husband had the greatest power in a first marriage, his remarriage significantly reduces his power in the family. The wife's remarriage, on the other hand, does not affect her conjugal power. They cautioned, however, that since couples who were now in their second marriage were likely to be relatively older than couples in their first marriage, the effects of the age difference could produce some of the effects of remarriage on the power of the spouses. One reason given for a decrease in power that accompanies remarriage is that a prior divorce might serve to undermine the confidence in a partner to exercise influence on the other.*

Race. *According to most arm-chair sociologists, the American Negro family is predominantly matriarchal in character. Udry (1974) maintains that this assertion is properly viewed as a proposition still in need of critical analysis and empirical verification. Many researchers recognize that there are some differences in family structure. For example, it is documented by census figures that "father-absent families are relatively more frequent among blacks" (Udry, 1974: 272). This difference has been given as the basis for differences in power structures of families according to race:*

*The comparison of Negro and white blue-collar marriages shows significant differences in many variables in the direction of greater deprivation for Negro wives. In decision-making they get less cooperation so they must make more family decisions unaided. In the division of labor at home, their husbands less often come to their aid in difficult circumstances (Blood, 1965: 46).*

*However, research has shown few differences in marital power in decision-making according to race, if the other variables are held constant. Fortune (1964) reported no significant differences between decision-making by white and Negro wives in comparable social classes. King (1964) concluded that differences among power structure was not related in any statistically significant way to the variable race. Only Kandel (Udry, 1974) found some significant differences between the power structure of families according to their race. For example, he found that black women were less likely to consult their husbands when making decisions concerning especially their daughters. Gillespie (1971) maintained that lower class black males might derive power from a different source than does his white counterpart. He explains that the threat or use of physical violence may be used by the black male to gain power much in the same way that the white male uses his education and earning power as a lever to gain power. He concludes that much more research is needed on the differences between black and white families and within the black family itself concerning the familial structures of power in decision-making.*

Summary. *Based on the preceding review of literature, the following variables appear to be significantly related to marital power, although the direction and intensity of correlation is not always agreed upon: the occupational status*

*of the husband, the income of the husband, the wife's employment outside the home, the income of the wife, the relative educational attainment of the spouses, the socio-economic status of the couple, and the position of the couple in the family life cycle (which is related to the presence of children, as well as the age at marriage). Not enough research has been reported on the existence of a previous marriage and its relationship to power, and on the variables of relative age of the spouses, and the race of the individuals. Also lacking in research documentation are situational variables which differ from family to family and attitudinal variables, which could affect and/or be affected by the demographic and social variables discussed above.*

#### Patterns of Power Structures

*In an effort to classify the types of decision-making utilized by families, P. G. Herbst (1952) pioneered a classification of decision-making power structures which was to become the basis for a number of subsequent studies (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Heer, 1962; Papanek, 1969; Centers et al, 1971; Hempel, 1974; and others). Herbst divided power relationships which may exist within a group into three types: autocratic, syncratic, and autonomous. An autocratic power relationship was defined as one in which decisions tended to be made by one member only without consultation of the other member(s). Applied to marital power relationships, this could be divided into two sub-divisions, a husband-dominant pattern and a wife-dominant pattern. The syncratic (derived from syn, meaning "together," and kratos, meaning "power") pattern was defined as a pattern in*

*which the husband and wife made decisions together with mutual consultation. The autonomous power pattern referred to a pattern in which the husband and wife have equal but separate spheres of decision-making jurisdiction (Herbst, 1952).*

*Traditionally, the assumption of the superiority of the husband in most family decisions was well recognized and respected. He was by tradition the arbitrary decision-maker and the director of family policy. Generally, each of the studies discussed previously have tried to analyze the existence of such a tradition, while hypothesizing that a change toward more equalitarian power relationships has occurred in recent decades.*

*With respect to distinctions between syncratic and autonomous types of equalitarianism, Blood and Wolfe in 1969 found that as the length of marriage increased, the division of tasks and labor, as well as the division of power in decision-making, became more segregated. However, they pointed out that the interpretations of equalitarian patterns among different age groups are difficult because of factors such as the length of marriage, historical and cultural changes which had taken place in the interim, and individual aging rather than age per se.*

*Safilios-Rothschild (1969: 13) noted that "the only significant change that age seems to bring about in women's behavior is 'mellowing.'" She generalizes that as women age they are more likely to concede to their husbands' wishes, whereas, at an earlier age, perhaps under 30, women tend to follow their own wishes whether or not they have their husbands' approval. Blood and Wolfe's*

(1969) findings corroborate this to the extent that most of the elderly couples indicated a husband-dominant pattern existed within their families. However, the very highest husband-dominant power scores were indicated by couples under 30 years of age.

Mowrer (1969) reported an important finding in his study of 1180 Chicago wives. Testing the hypothesis that there had been a diminution in the traditional power of the husband, they first asked the following three questions: "Which of you is the more dominant person?" "Who makes decisions in matters of mutual concern?" "Who is the more important person in the family?" Almost 75% of wives indicated their husbands were dominant in each of these three questions. However, when asked about family budgeting, deciding on a place of residence, and the discipline of the children, from 60% to 75% of the wives indicated equal or superior power for themselves. "This suggested that the husband's superiority is primarily a matter of lip service to the traditional pattern of husband dominance" (Mowrer, 1969: 535).

Several studies have suggested a relationship between the two types of equalitarianism, syncratic patterns and autonomous patterns, and one's socio-economic status. With respect to syncratic equalitarianism and socio-economic level, Rainwater (1959) and Wilkening (1963) suggest the existence of a curvilinear relationship. They found that among upper and lower social classes syncratic power relationships are relatively rare with the majority of couples reporting either a husband-dominant pattern or autonomic power pattern. In the American middle class, however, they found the existence to a greater

*extent of the syncratic pattern of power in decision-making.*

*However, Oeser and Hammond (1964) found autonomic power relationships existed predominately in families where the husband was either an employer of others or self-employed, a condition which is generally associated with higher socio-economic status. They also found the prevalence of syncratic patterns in families of skilled workers and husband-dominant patterns in families of semi-skilled and unskilled workers. Dahlin (1973) reports that Kinley (1964) also found a more equalitarian emphasis within the pattern of decision-making in the middle class than in either upper or lower socio-economic groups.*

*Most researchers have summarized their findings with support of Blood and Wolfe's resource theory, which maintains that the balance of power goes to the partner which contributes relatively greater resources to the marital relationship. However, others have suggested that although the philosophy of equalitarianism is espoused more strongly among the better educated, higher income, higher socio-economic status families, these men are likely to concede philosophically more rights and power than they in fact grant, while the opposite occurs among the lower class families.*

*Methodological considerations.* *Throughout the study of family power researchers have attempted to measure the relative decision power among spouses so that a score could be used to express their position relative to other couples. Researchers have applied various questions to a variety of decision areas: "Who decides?" "Who has the final say?" "Who was primarily responsible?" Possible responses*

to these questions have ranged along a 5-point Likert scale from (1) husband always or entirely husband, (2) husband usually or mostly husband, (3) both husband and wife or husband and wife equally, (4) wife usually or mostly wife, and (5) wife always or entirely wife.

The early power studies merely weighted the responses either from one to five or from minus two (-2) to plus two (+2) (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Heer, 1962; Safilios-Rothschild, 1967; Centers et al, 1971; Weeks, 1972; and others). These coded scores were then summed and divided by the number of responses to yield a power score. Typically the scores of 5.0 or 2.0 were interpreted to mean husband-dominance; scores of 1.0 or -2.0 were interpreted to mean wife-dominance; and scores of 3.0 or 0.0 were interpreted to mean that there existed a balance of power between the two spouses.

However, since the development of these scoring systems, the development of the theory underlying research into power in decision-making has focused on the difference between the two types of equalitarian power patterns--the syncratic pattern and the autonomic pattern. Although the syncratic pattern (husband and wife have equal, shared decision-making power) may be said to most closely reflect the equalitarian concept, an argument can be made for the equalitarian properties of the autonomous pattern (in which the husband and wife operate equally but in separate areas of decision-making). In an attempt to differentiate between the two types of decision-making power, which had been obscured by previous scoring systems, researchers developed new methods of scoring and interpreting respondents' answers.

Two researchers have utilized a simple count system of classifying respondents into groups. Dahlin (1973) computed a score in the following manner from responses to a six-item questionnaire:

To integrate both types of equalitarianism, a total score for each respondent was computed which consisted of the sum of:

- a. a syncretic equalitarianism score (total number of "Husband and Wife" responses given), and
- b. an autonomous equalitarianism (relative dominance) score based on the following coded values:

- 4 = H and W make same number of separate decisions
- 3 = One spouse makes one more decision than the other spouse
- 2 = One spouse makes two more decisions than the other spouse
- 1 = One spouse makes three or more decisions than the other spouse (48).

This method of counting responses yielded a range of scores from one to ten. She divided her respondents into groups, a high equalitarianism group, whose scores were either 9 or 10, and a low equalitarianism group, whose scores were 8 or below.

Hempel (1974) classified respondents into one of four categories on the basis of the following system (295):

<u>Family Role Structure</u>	<u>Relevant Decision Pattern</u>	<u>Range of Dominance Index</u>
Husband dominant	Husband dominates or shares all five decisions	12 to 15
Wife dominant	Wife dominates or shares all decisions	5 to 9
Syncretic	At least three of the five decisions are joint and dominance is balanced	10 to 11
Autonomic	Not more than two of the five decisions are joint but dominance is balanced	10 to 11

He scored the responses as follows: A value of one was given when the wife was perceived as dominant, a value of two for joint decisions, and a value of three for husband dominant responses. "An overall index of perceived dominance was computed for each spouse by adding the scores for five major purchase decisions..." (295).

A much more complex and empirically sound system of scoring and classifying the response patterns of families was developed by Papanek (1969). For a 16-item questionnaire a possibility of the same five responses was included: (1) It's entirely up to wife, (2) It's mostly up to wife, (3) It's up to wife and husband equally, (4) It's mostly up to husband, and (5) It's entirely up to husband. The items were then scored twice to divide the subjects into four groups. First, to obtain a measure of the degree of role division, the responses were assigned weights from 0 to 2. Answers one and five ("entirely up to") were assigned a weight of two, answers two and four ("mostly up to") were given a weight of one, and answer three ("up to both equally") was assigned a weight of zero. She then assigned the lower quartile of this ranked distribution according to the degree of role division to Group I, the syncretic pattern.

Then in order to divide the remaining subjects into the other three groups, she again scored the responses to obtain a measure of the direction of marital role differentiation. The responses were scored from one to five as numbered previously. This distribution was then divided into thirds to produce the remaining three classifications. The lower third became Group II, the wife-dominant group; the upper third became Group III, the husband-

*dominant group; and the middle third became Group IV, the autonomic pattern of decision-making within the family relationship.*

*Of all the scoring methods discussed, the latter one, developed by Papanek (1969), although it was developed for use with different data and for a different purpose, seems to be the most effective for use in the present study. Rather than relying on counting the number of responses or assigning scores subjectively to a certain pattern, this method creates an empirically accurate method of separating the response patterns while providing for the separation of the syncratic and autonomous patterns of decision-making. It can also be adapted to accommodate any number of decision statements.*

#### THE STUDY OF DECISION-MAKING IN THE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

*A third major topic under investigation is the concept of decision-making as a part of the management process. The attempts at understanding the concept have developed over the years from relatively simple step-by-step diagrams to much more complex attempts at systems analysis. Decision-making has been called the crux of the family management process and a process which has been the center of much research for many years. Following is an attempt at a chronological summary of the concepts which have been developed over the years.*

*The definition and conceptualization of such terms as decision, decision-making, and choice have been attempted from the beginning of the study of the*

management process. Webster (1954: 680) defines a decision as a "determination or result arrived at after consideration." However, recent study has focused on the concept of decision-making as a process rather than an outcome or a result. The American Heritage Dictionary (1970: 342) defines a decision as "the act of reaching a conclusion or making up one's mind." This puts the emphasis where research has determined it should be--on the process of making some choice among alternatives available.

Frances Magrubi (1962) attempted to refine this idea by differentiating between the conceptualization of the terms decision-making and choice. Decision-making is "an entire process, including identification of objectives and alternatives, gathering and evaluating information, and selecting a single alternative" (61). She further explained that while this concept has a dynamic connotation, the concept of choice is static. Choice is "one step in the decision process, that of selecting one alternative from a set of two or more alternatives" (Magrubi, 1962: 61).

On an individual level, decision-making may be a relatively simple process because of the lack of possibility of conflict among persons who may have different values and goals. However, when the outcome of decision-making involves more than one individual, as it usually does within a family, the process may involve moves and countermoves between individuals, each attempting to maximize the result of the decision in favor of his or her own needs and desires.

Whether it has been researched at an individual or family level, decision-

making has been viewed as a step-wise process. Gross and Crandall (1954), while restricting their concept of decision-making to genuine choice-making, proposed the following three successive steps to making a decision: (1) seeking alternatives, (2) thinking through the consequences of the alternatives, and (3) selecting one of the alternatives (20). They viewed decision-making in the home management process as a mental series of acts to accentuate the fact that management is more than merely the performance of tasks.

They maintained that in family situations decision-making is slower but the decision process may result in an outcome decision of greater strength. They also listed six possible outcomes of adjustment whenever there is a conflict between parties during the decision process: (1) struggle and victory of one side, resulting in dominance; (2) voluntary submission of one side; (3) compromise; (4) integration; (5) conversion, which is a possible outcome of voluntary submission, compromise or even of dominance; and (6) the acceptance of differences where unified action is not essential and integration is not possible (Gross and Crandall, 1954: 25).

Irene Oppenheim (1972: 55) added another attempt at classifying the steps involved in the decision process: (1) recognizing that a problem or choice-making situation exists, (2) weighing the alternatives available, (3) deciding upon an alternative, and (4) living with the consequences of the decision. The latter, as envisioned, would include some evaluation of the outcome of a particular decision.

Marketing analysts and consumer behaviorists have long proposed

*similar steps in the decision-making process; however, their theories mainly concern themselves with the buying process. Granbois (1963) employed traditional formulations of problem-solving behavior in attempting to explain the decision process: problem recognition, determination of alternatives via search, and selection from among recognized alternatives. Jaffe and Senft (1966) proposed an even more elaborate explanation of the component parts of the decision process, including information seeking, a pre-purchase stage, a buying stage, and a post-purchase stage of using and evaluating. However, most of these marketing and consumer behavior theories are constrained to the purchase of consumer commodities and are of limited use when explaining other decisions made by the family.*

*Maloch and Deacon (1966) proposed an adapted version of traditional home management theory utilizing an information systems approach to study the decision process. Their model used in addition to the traditional concepts of planning and controlling, a system of inputs, one's demands and resources, and outputs in the form of utilization of resources. An important point noted by these authors was that a process of feedback or evaluation occurs at any and all stages of the management process. They viewed decision-making as a process which occurs in every phase of management. They define an evaluated decision as "a value judgment about a course of action" (33), and distinguished between decision-making and planning by conceiving of planning as "a series of decisions concerning standards and/or sequence of action" (Maloch and Deacon, 1966: 32).*

*Another attempt at conceptualizing the decision process was made by Schlater (1969), who proposed that the decision-making process should include a process of decision-implementation, which encompasses the planning, controlling and evaluating processes of early management theory. She maintained that in addition to such process as identifying alternatives, the steps of actually choosing and/or buying the alternative product or service should be included.*

*She viewed decision-making as including four components: "recognizing the problem, seeking alternative solutions, analyzing the alternatives, and choosing one alternative" (95). She further postulated that the decision-implementation process contains the following concepts: (1) assigning or designating the member to do the task, (2) delegating the degree of responsibility to be given to the performer, (3) actuating, or using incentives to motivate the performer, (4) guiding or exercising surveillance during the performance, (5) coordinating the relationship of one task to another, and (6) evaluating by comparing results with expectations and applying corrective measures (Schlater, 1969: 95-96).*

*Within her theory of a framework of goal-oriented family behavior, Kay Edwards (1969) included much discussion of the role of decision-making in such a model. She maintained that decision-making*

*is the action mechanism by which the family system (1) develops its goal complex, (2) allocates its stock of resources among competing goals, (3) develops actions relevant to resource allocation which will produce the desired end, (4) devises a plan or pattern of behavior by which resource allocation and the appropriate actions can be transformed into goal achievement, and (5) initiates associated activities which make a contribution to the successful implementation of decisions in the first four areas (29).*

*She believes that in each step of goal-oriented family behavior, whether it be the setting of goals or the allocation of resources to achieve these goals, some type of decision-making occurs. When attempting to set goals a family may experience conflicts over what the family as a unit or as individuals will try to achieve. Choices that resolve conflict and integrate the preferences of each family member must be made in order to arrive at a satisfactory consensus about which goals are to be strived for.*

*Similarly, in the step of goal effectuation, the process of decision-making including decision-implementation occurs. "Here decision-making is of an economic and technical nature" (Edwards, 1970: 654). Questions such as who is to allocate resources over what particular management area and, within each area, who is to decide how much resources go for which products are some of the questions that are resolved in this process. If the existent quantity and quality of resources are not sufficient to achieve a certain goal, then decisions must be made about how additional resources may be developed or how the quantity of existing resources may be increased. Goal implementation then includes the results of decision-making about how to utilize resources and achieve goals. Decision-making also includes the process of diverting some portion of the current supply of resources available to the family to invest in resources development for future consumption. She summarizes that the two processes of goal setting and goal effectuation and the decision-making that occurs within each are continuous and occur simultaneously throughout the life of a family. "Relative to any one goal, however, they occur in sequence*

*and have a beginning and an end" (655).*

*In general, then, management is viewed by today's theories and practitioners as a series of interrelated and interdependent decisions. In recent years the focus has shifted from concern for task-oriented decisions to emphasis on human-centered ones. However, no one conceptual framework has successfully answered all the questions about the process of decision. Questions still abound such as those posed by Gross in the mid-sixties: Where does decision-making belong in the managerial process? Is it just one of the steps or does it permeate all of the steps? Recent attempts at developing frameworks for viewing family behavior have considerably advanced the body of theory; however, no consensus exists concerning the aforementioned questions.*

*This review of literature on decision-making draws heavily from the discipline of home economics and, more specifically, from home management. However, one must realize that varied disciplines have long been interested in the decision process. The primary focus of the present study, and subsequently this review, is in viewing decision-making within the family unit, especially regarding the economic functions they perform.*

#### *THE STUDY OF THE ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY*

*The functions of the family as a unit of society has been the subject of armchair commentary for centuries. A variety of functions of the modern family have been studied--those it performs for other social institutions, for the larger society, the individual family members, and those activities performed for the*

*family unit as a group. For example, the family unit may perform several vital functions for the society of which it is a part, namely, the reproduction of the species, the physical maintenance of its members, the socialization of the younger members, and the supply of labor for the functioning of the larger economic system.*

*T. Lynn Smith (1953: 680) summarized as follows the functions families perform for the larger society:*

*reproduction of the species;*

*support, care, and education of the descendents, especially during their infancy and their years of complete dependency;*

*education and training of the children;*

*presentation of the new cogeners to a large society, especially helping them find their place in the different social groups;*

*recreation;*

*protection of the members from enemies and dangers, especially shielding them against psychological isolation;*

*care of the old people and other members and parents who are crippled or disabled.*

*These tasks, he maintains, are the duties of all family units and result in benefits to all of society.*

*Throughout human history analysis of the family as an economic unit has focused on the family as a provider of food, clothing, and shelter for its members. However, until recently, the focus of theory and research has been on the family as a consuming unit. The act of consumption or utilization of resources has received the bulk of attention when investigating the economic activities of the family. Theories related to consumer decision-making in the*

*quite complex and advanced frameworks in the disciplines of economics, social psychology, consumer behavior and psychology, focus almost entirely on the decision process as it is practiced in consumption. Even in the home economics discipline, theorists such as Rice (1966) formulated supposedly comprehensive frameworks for viewing the economic functions of the family without even including the item of production.*

*Rice's preliminary theory, self-admittedly premature and incomplete and later revised, focused solely on the family as a consuming unit. According to Abdel-Ghany (n.d.: 3), the trend of*

*studying the family economics which pays little consideration about how resources are obtained and developed influenced her thinking and let her forget that from the economic point of view, the family is, simultaneously, a producing and consuming unit.*

*Slowly, theorists have realized that consumption is not the only economic function of the family unit. Some recent conceptualizations of these functions have gone beyond the sterile concept of consumption as the sole and/or primary family economic activity. Marguerite Burk (1966) recognized this need when she summarized the problems in developing a conceptual framework for the analysis of family behavior. She proposed that both the income-earning and income-spending aspects of family economic behavior be covered in such a framework. Ayers (1973) also proposed that the family unit is not only the basic consumption unit in society, but that it is also the basic production unit in an economy. He acknowledged that individuals may execute production and consumption functions outside the milieu of the family, however, "they are*

*constrained by definition to devote a substantial part of such activities to the family benefit" (11). Ferber (1973) urged economists to integrate into research on aggregate consumption and savings behavior the findings about how household decision-making is accomplished.*

*One of the first attempts at such a conceptualization was proposed by Marúll (1966) in a discussion of all the economic aspects inherent in the family's behavior in modern society. He first divided the economic roles of the family into two divisions: (1) the family as producer, and (2) the family as consumer. Referring to the production process as "the creation of everything which satisfies human needs" (265), he lists numerous necessities which demand that the family act as a producing unit, such as the human needs of housing, furnishing, health, nutrition, personal care, transportation, recreation, etc. In this sense, every act of transforming some product gained outside the home into a more usable form is a type of production activity--a conceptualization which parallels the term household production, which will be discussed later. Therefore, his concept of production is limited to within a very narrow parameter of those processes which occur within the household itself. Activities such as preparing meals from raw materials constitutes his idea of production. His concept of consumption parallels previous theory in that he views it as the destroying of goods and services in order to satisfy needs and wants. Although still incomplete, this framework improves over those which ignore the production function.*

*Marguerite Burk (1966) also developed a conceptual framework for study-*

ing family economic behavior. She first summarized some economic conditions which are the causes of problems within family decision-making:

1. *Disequilibrium between family resources and needs or wants*
2. *Difficulty in making decisions about income-earning, use of income and other resources, and accumulation of assets*
3. *Unsatisfactory timing of decision-making and allocation of resources*
4. *Undesirable or unexpected aftermaths of decision-making, stemming from the sequential nature of decisions*
5. *Interrelationships with social and psychological problems*  
(Burk, 1966: 443).

Her situational framework involved concepts included under three main headings: (1) "work related forces affecting income-earning decisions and actions of family members," (440); (2) "the unmeasurable process of motivation and cognition which lead to decision and action" (444); and (3) the family related forces, the usual demographic factors studied in addition to such factors as mobility history, and the structure and organization of the family.

Her framework views the ultimate output as satisfaction, a family process which accrues to both work-related forces and family-related forces. A complex set of interactions both result from and in turn influence this ultimate result of satisfaction.

The degree of satisfaction achieved by family action, whether on the side regarding income-earning or on the family side related to consumption, represents reinforcement and leads to learning (Burk, 1966: 444).

In a revision of her earlier framework Rice (1970) produced a second framework which gives equal importance to the function of production of goods

and services through the use of resources. She labels production as the creation of goods and services "done within the home for pleasure and for the conservation of other resources, and in the community to earn the income with which to finance consumption" (10). Thus, she added another dimension to Marull's view of production as occurring only within the household. Her framework proposes that:

*Change occurs in the family... when its values are expressed in terms of wants (or goals) strongly enough to cause decisions which direct behavior in the use of resources to increase or decrease production and consumption. This consumption and production of goods and services affects (raises or lowers) the standard of living aspired to and the socio-economic status and style of life achieved. When the standard, the status, and the life style of the family are interpreted in terms of satisfactions derived by the groups and the individuals within the group, they are a measure of the family's welfare (6).*

Rice still conceives of consumption as being the key concept in this framework, with a central importance and linkage to three other areas of concentration: behavior or the allocation of resources, which embodies both mental decision-making and physical choice-making; socio-economic status; and standards and levels of living. However, this framework represents considerable improvement by giving equal importance to the production function in viewing an economic framework for the study of family behavior.

Rice makes one further assumption which is of interest to this study. She maintains that power structure and roles in the family, particularly regarding decision, may be affected by such economic concepts as those relating to production and consumption of income and expenditure.

*In a general discussion of the economic functions of the family Fitzsimmons and Williams (1973) proposed the most comprehensive conceptual framework for the study of the family economy yet developed. They maintained that precise divisions between social, physical, biological, and economic functions of the family are not always possible. They suggest, though, that the family economy operates much in the same way any larger economic system does. "Wealth and services are produced, apportioned and distributed, and consumed" (2). The general difference between the economic functioning of the family and the economic functioning of an individual is that in a family external and internal influences are dealt with, insofar as feasible, so that all members of the group may derive benefit.*

*In attempting to model economic behavior of the family, Fitzsimmons and Williams listed first, four functions of the family: (1) allocation of resources, (2) production of wealth (or commodities) and services, (3) distribution of the product among family members, and (4) consumption of the product (Fitzsimmons and Williams, 1973: 5). Following is a discussion of their conceptualization of these functions and the relationship they have with each other.*

*Allocation. This function entails the assignment of various resources to various usages. These resources include human resources controlled directly by family members such as their own time, energy, skills, and abilities, as well as human resources which they may be able to obtain from others for hire. Also included in the allocation function is the assignment of non-human resources: capital*

or producer's goods, money income, durable and non-durable consumer goods, and external economic arrangements like those for marketing and credit. Resources not controlled by the family members may also be available for their use, such as schools, streets, parks and playgrounds, which are non-human resources, and human resources such as the knowledge, skills, and energy of people employed in the general economy.

Fitzsimmons and Williams maintain that families generally allocate resources to the following functions: (1) production, or "the creation of utilities or want-satisfying characteristics of goods" (Fitzsimmons and Williams, 1973: 5), (2) household production, or the involvement in decisions as to the uses a family member makes of resources, and (3) consumption, or the use of commodities and services for current satisfaction. They further stipulate that "most goods consumed in the family result from some form of household production so that most allocations of resources to consumption are indirect" (5).

Production. Fitzsimmons and Williams equate the concept of production of resources with the creation of utilities which is rewarded economically with money income or purchasing power and in non-economic terms with "income in kind" resulting in gains in housing, recreational facilities, medical care, food, paid vacations, and pension arrangements. "Utilities realized may be of time, place, form, miscellaneous and service" (6). Thus, their framework allows for the production of resources other than merely those which accrue from, for example, active employment in the marketplace. The return from

*the production function may be in monetary or non-monetary form. This income or non-monetary return may be then either directed (or allocated) to consumption for the satisfaction of the family or allocated toward durable goods for future consumption, or may be returned to use in production of other resources.*

Household production. *Described by Fitzsimmons and Williams as "an intervening function in the family economy between production and consumption" (6), the household production function consists of decisions about the ways and means of converting income derived from production outside the home into a form in which the family can realistically utilize it. For example, food is one commodity which usually is converted through the use of time, human skills and abilities, and durable goods into a form which better satisfies the needs and wants of the family. Fitzsimmons and Williams maintain, in fact, that it is very hard to imagine very many goods that satisfy the needs and wants of the family without undergoing something in the way of household production.*

*Again, the human resources of time, skills, and abilities are utilized in this function as well as the non-human resources, such as household appliances and utensils. This function is interrelated with the production function in the larger economy in industrialized societies since few families are entirely self-sufficient. Household production necessitates that the basic goods and services in the larger economic system be available to the family unit at prices they can afford and at the quality they desire. The results of household production include finished goods and services, which result in their use by the*

*family, which itself results in a psychic income or satisfaction.*

Distribution. *According to Fitzsimmons and Williams, this function includes the decisions of the family unit about which resources are to be used to satisfy which needs and wants of which family member. Intertwined in this process is the goal-structure and value-complex of the family as individuals and as a unit. Decisions must include the allocation of real income, goods, and services on the basis of needs, wants, and interest. Then, psychic income is derived from the satisfactions of the family members in the utilization of their share of the commodities and services. "The problem is to decide the total satisfaction for all concerned while reconciling sometimes conflicting and numerous interests with limited goods in the time involved" (Fitzsimmons and Williams, 1973: 7).*

*Fitzsimmons and Williams describe savings as one of the alternative uses to which resources can be distributed. The function of savings is the "abstinence from consumption (or use) in the present in anticipation for future use" (8). Withholding some resources for future utilization assumes their use at a later time, which in itself may provide a service to the family. They view savings of the family as a necessary function for the general economy because it improves or increases the output of goods and services.*

Consumption. *This function entails the utilization of commodities, which include both goods and services, to satisfy the needs and wants of family members. In the framework developed by Fitzsimmons and Williams, most*

*consumer goods must be processed through some type of household production before being consumed. The typical example is that of the homemaker preparing a balanced meal from the various food items she buys. The food is then consumed by the family in a current time frame for the satisfaction of hunger. "Strictly speaking, consumption in the family economy includes only those activities in the use of commodities and services which an individual must perform currently for himself" (9). Therefore, any savings of consumer goods and services for future use would not undergo the function of consumption until the goods are actually utilized to satisfy the family member. Decisions regarding consumption are generally so individualized that it is difficult to conceive of a set of consumption-oriented decisions which would apply to every individual or family unit.*

*In addition to their discussion of the economic functions of the family, Fitzsimmons and Williams (1973: 11) listed the following economic processes or activities which generally occur among middle-class families in today's society:*

- 1. Allocating resources (human abilities, time, energy, consumer's goods and capital) to various family members for production or consumption to support a desired life style.*
- 2. Obtaining and holding employment or developing a family business to provide income.*
- 3. Obtaining money income--regular, dependable and capable of being increased to keep up with the rise in prices, to support the level of the family.*
- 4. Establishing more than one source of income, especially if the principle source is human effort, which can become incapacitated.*

5. *Increasing resources that are available and useful to the family.*
6. *Helping family members attain educational levels desired.*
7. *Learning and controlling the uses of non-human resources to supplement human resources and provide a continuing sources of income.*
8. *Identifying needs for which to provide commodities and services.*
9. *Acquiring knowledge of goods available in the marketplace.*
10. *Learning the relative worth of various goods for attaining values sought.*
11. *Ranking values in order of importance or attainment and reconciling diverse wants.*
12. *Developing a plan for reaching goals based on awareness of a system of values.*
13. *Developing skills for production outside the household and in the household.*
14. *Attaining the desired quality of surroundings.*
15. *Reacting to new and customary goods available, buying goods, assuming rights and responsibilities of consumers.*
16. *Creating a reserve or surplus of consumers' durable goods and capital to provide security against unpredictable future needs and/or to support other family members.*
17. *Dividing income over the years through stages of the family life cycle and among types of goods desired to balance the uses of past, present, and future income.*
18. *Achieving a balance among production, consumption, saving, and sharing.*

*Although this conceptual framework does not prominently include the concepts of savings and the development of human capital, a later discussion in the Fitzsimmons and Williams publication (1973: 9) does include them :*

*Through household production, distribution, and consumption of real income, some consumers' durable goods will be saved to improve future consumption. Some human capital will be created and allocated to production.*

*This review reveals that, although no comprehensive framework has been developed to encompass all the concepts involved in the family economic process, much progress has been made in recent years. Theory has developed from concern for the family unit operating in a world of increasing complexity and scarcity of resources. Theory concerning the economic functions of the family has, however, by no means kept pace with the development of economic theory regarding the processes of the larger society but recent efforts have, indeed, resulted in much progress toward this goal.*

CHAPTER III  
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

*Although it was not the purpose of this study to develop a framework for viewing the economic behavior of the family, the researcher concluded after an exhaustive review of the literature that such a framework was needed to attack the research problem in an organized manner. The body of knowledge concerning economic decision-making by the family has expanded considerably beyond the early one-dimensional conceptualizations of the family as solely a consuming unit, which acts upon or is acted upon, but does not interact with the larger economy. Indeed, several recent attempts at viewing the economic behavior of the family (Burk, 1966; Rice, 1970; and Fitzsimmons and Williams, 1973) have made many improvements over previous conceptualizations.*

*However, to this researcher's knowledge no attempt has been made to apply the concept of decision-making to the different aspects of economic behavior of the family. On the one hand, researchers of family decision-making, or family power in decision-making, as it is usually called, have generally employed very short, haphazardly constructed instruments to gain information about a variety of biological, social and economic decisions which are neither equal in importance, nor in frequency, nor universal to all families. For example, researchers have compared decisions on how many children to have with the decisions concerning what the family will have for dinner. On the other hand,*

researchers of family economic behavior have yet to apply the basic concepts of decision-making to a study of the economic functions which a family perform.

*Kay Edwards (1969: 3) maintains that*

*The theoretical structure underlying any applied social science must be linked not only to the empirical world with which the applied science must deal, but also the the theoretical structures underlying the basic disciplines upon which it is founded.*

*According to Rudner (1966) research should not merely collect disconnected, unrelated pieces of information, but it should organize the information in a manner which will engender its explanatory and/or predictive use. In this study, the framework will aid in explaining an event which has already occurred. For future research, it may aid in providing a background for further study in predicting events which may occur in the future.*

*Therefore, in order to adequately explore the relationship of the two phenomena in question--attitudes toward feminism and patterns of family economic decision-making--it is useful to develop a framework for viewing the latter in a more scientific manner. An attempt will be made to integrate the basic concepts of macro-economics with existent knowledge about family economic behavior and current theory about the decision process to produce a framework for an organized view of family economic decision-making.*

#### ASSUMPTIONS

*This framework for viewing the economic decisions of the family is exploratory and descriptive. According to Edwards (1969: 4) "a theoretical*

*framework consistent with the present state of knowledge can be formulated and tested, and as new knowledge is gained by testing theoretical structures in both the basic sciences and the applied, explanation can be refined and extended." Davies (1965: 10) lists two criteria for judging the usefulness of any theory: "that it must unify and show the relationship between previously unconnected quantities and it must be simple enough for critical experimental checks to be formulated." This framework attempts to classify decisions made by families into categories according to which economic function the decision is related. The conceptualization is based on the following assumptions:*

- 1. That there can be developed a universe of decisions which are characteristically made by the "average" American family.*
- 2. That these decisions can be grouped according to the universal economic functions which the "average" American family performs and which are similar in nature to the economic processes carried out in the larger economic system.*
- 3. That information regarding who makes these decisions can be gathered through the use of self-report measures.*

#### *FRAMEWORK FOR VIEWING ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING WITHIN THE FAMILY*

##### *Inputs*

*Within the framework the family is viewed as an economic unit composed of individuals with different goals and values. Inputs into the system include*

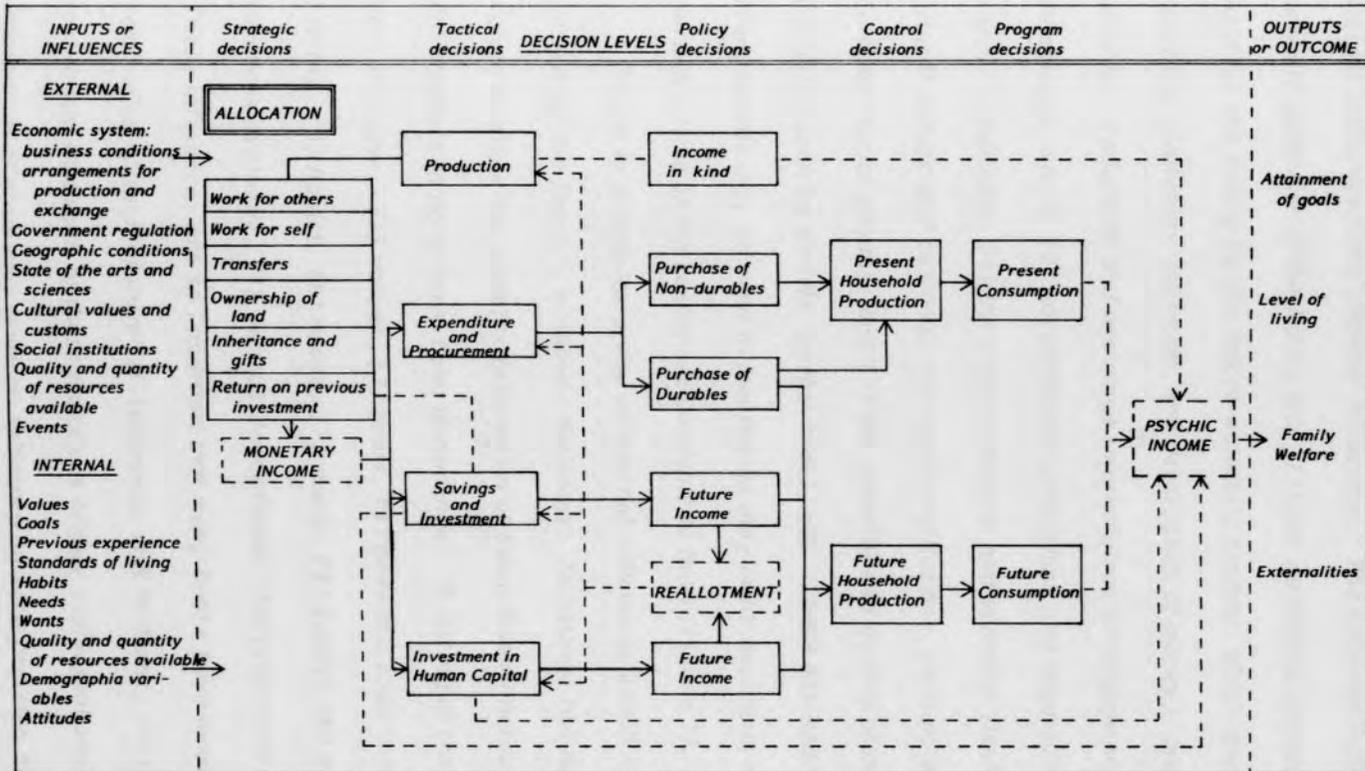


Figure 1. Proposed Framework for Viewing Family Economic Decision-Making

—————> Creates a decision  
 - - - - -> Results in

*external influences and internal influences. The external influences on the economic behavior of the family are: (1) the conditions imposed on or provided for the family by the macro-economic system, which are (1) business conditions (inflation, deflation, the devaluation of money), and (b) arrangements for production and exchange (marketplace arrangements for credit, advertising, etc.); (2) governmental provisions and regulations; (3) geographic conditions; (4) the state of the arts and sciences (technology); (5) cultural values and customs; (6) social institutions, such as the church, cults, and other social groups; and (7) the quantity and quality of non-human resources available, such as streets, parks, trees, etc. These external influences and arrangements may be vital to families as they make decisions regarding the alternative use of the resources available to them (Figure 1).*

*There is a complex array of internal influences which may affect and be affected by the family's economic decisions. No attempt has been made to explain or show the complex interaction of these factors because many divergent attempts to do so have been documented. A listing of these internal influences includes: (1) values, (2) goals, (3) previous experience, (4) standards of living, (5) habits, (6) needs, (7) wants, (8) quality and quantity of human resources available, (9) various demographic characteristics, and (10) attitudes. "These influences are so important that many books have been devoted to an examination of each of them" (Fitzsimmons and Williams, 1973: 3). It is sufficient to say that each of these factors is highly individualized and a different combination of them may have an influence on each decision that is made. The*

*cognizance of each family in recognizing the influences may differ according to the specific decision to be made.*

### Outputs

*The outcomes or outputs of family economic decision-making are also an important facet of this framework. A derived outcome of family decisions is the attainment of their goals which leads to their level of living which ultimately results in the welfare of the family.*

*Family welfare in the economic approach depends upon the use made of resources to provide physical necessities deemed necessary by the consensus of opinion, and psychic necessities which grow out of the relationship of an individual to the family or of the family to its society (Rice, 1970: 6).*

*It has been increasingly emphasized in most discussions of the outcomes of family economic behavior that the attainment of monetary income is not an end unto itself. It is merely a tool which families use to gain psychic income or satisfaction, an entity which ultimately results in family welfare.*

*A type of outcome which has been rarely discussed are the externalities which are shown in the framework. Such outputs may result from unintentional acts by the family or from intentional acts. For example, when the family decides to buy a car (as an unrecognized alternative, perhaps, to riding a bicycle, taking public transportation, etc.) they may choose one which uses gas, an energy resource, at a disproportionate level and which emits pollution at a rate which harms the ecology. The resulting outcome of this decision produces an externality which may affect themselves and others, although this may not enter into their decision and although this may be unintentional. An example*

*of an externality created intentionally would be the case when an individual produces a work of art for the enjoyment and cultural enrichment of others who then benefit from experiencing it.*

*These externalities can result in utility for the family and for others or they can result in disutility. For example, if an individual decides to produce or procure resources for himself or his family by burglary, this may result in disutility for the victim and for society in general. So, whether they are intentionally or unintentionally created or whether they produce utility or disutility for the individual, the family or society, these externalities are important to consider when viewing economic behavior of families.*

#### *Economic Functions of the Family and Decision-making Levels*

*An attempt has been made within the development of this framework to delineate the various economic functions every family performs and the level of decision-making which occurs at various points in the framework. Some families who have a greater amount of resources available may perform these functions on a larger scale than families who have relatively few resources at their disposal, but generally these functions are common to all families.*

*Allocation.* *The grand or ultimate function which families perform is the allocation function, or the assignment of various human and non-human resources at its disposal to various uses and users. This very general term refers to achieving a subjective balance in the use of resources for the four major economic functions: (1) production, (2) distribution, (3) savings and invest-*

ment and (4) investment in human capital. Some resources may be allocated to the production of other monetary and psychic resources. In turn, those resources produced and resources acquired by other means may be assigned to one of the three major uses.

The best example of the level of decision-making which occurs here is to imagine a family at the very beginning of a marriage. Some allocation decisions which would have to be resolved would be (1) who will (be assigned to) work in the marketplace to procure resources for the family to live on, and (2) who will allocate any resultant resources to distribution, savings, investment, or the investment in human capital for the ultimate production of other human resources? This type of decision is termed a strategic decision because it is

*crucial in the life of the decision-maker and is usually carefully considered. After it is made, reallocation of the decision-maker's resources takes place for an indefinite period of time. A strategic decision is recognized by its generation of several satellite decisions (Plonk, 1964: 5).*

These decisions may occur infrequently, maybe even once in a lifetime, yet they are very important because they generate an intense and usually lasting effect on the subsequent decisions and, therefore, on the ultimate welfare of the family. As one may imagine these are very general decisions, and, in the author's opinion, are ones that cannot be accurately verbalized by family members. Families are usually not cognizant that a decision at this level is being made. If a researcher asked a family to specify who makes a decision regarding the allocation of resources to production, expenditure, savings and investment, and human capital investment, very few families except those

*trained to think in these very broad terms would be able to give an accurate response. Therefore, decision-making at this level, being all-inclusive, is too general a level in which to ascertain accurate patterns of family economic decision-making. It does, however, generate decisions at the next level of decision-making which may be able to be more accurately reported.*

Production. *The function of production of resources involves the creation of utility in resources which results in either money income or income in kind, which ultimately results in psychic income. For some individuals, the act of working productively itself creates a certain satisfaction which can be regarded as a utility. But for most families, the main desired function is to procure resources, either monetary or in kind, for their use to satisfy their needs and wants. The six main sources of monetary income are (1) work for others, (2) work for self, (3) transfer payments, (4) ownership of land or other non-human capital, (5) inheritance and gifts, and (6) return on previous investment. An important point to note here is that all of these alternative ways of accruing resources presuppose the existence of resources. That is, for example, that an individual cannot gain income from work for others if he or she does not have the human resources of time, skills, knowledge, or ability to work. Nor can one accrue a return from a previous investment unless capital or other resources were available at some previous time. This illustrates the cyclical, never-beginning, never-ending characteristic inherent to this framework and any framework that presumes to study human behavior on a grand scale.*

*The function of production creates utilities which are rewarded with either monetary income or income in kind. Types of income in kind an employed individual receives may be provisions, recreational facilities, provisions for meals, paid vacations, and pension arrangements. These returns from employment provide utility which ultimately result in psychic income, but are not the type which create immediate monetary income, which is the other main type of return from production. This monetary income is not an end unto itself, but is merely a means to another more important end, psychic income. Before this can be accrued, however, the monetary income must be processed through one of the other three functions.*

*The level of decision-making by the family which occurs here and also within the next three functions to be discussed are termed tactical decisions, which is "an instrumental decision made to begin and/or continue action for the execution of the strategic (central) decision" (Plonk, 1964: 6). Decisions about the production function follow through with decisions made on the allocation (strategic) level. "Its content comprises the detailed application of effort made to complete the core idea" (Plonk, 1964: 6). For example, once a family decides who will produce the resources, the decision must be made concerning what method will be undertaken in procuring the resources, where and how. Essentially, the decision must be made between the six alternative methods of earning income. In the creation of these decision outcomes the family ideally chooses the best combination of quantities and qualities of inputs*

at the lowest cost in terms of human and non-human resources. As Marull (1966: 257) concludes, this decision "is perfectly analogous to that made by the manager of a factory."

Expenditure. According to Fitzsimmons and Williams (1973: 7) "distribution is the assignment of produced goods to their intended uses." The function of expenditure holds a similar place in the present framework; however, whereas Fitzsimmons conceptualizes distribution as a final activity of household production, in the present framework the decision outcomes made in the expenditure function must undergo other processes before household production transforms them into a more usable form. Distributing resources to the expenditure function may result in the decision to assign resources to obtaining either non-durable or durable commodities. The expenditure for the purchase of non-durable goods, such as food, results in present consumption after undergoing some change of form through household production. The expenditure of income for the purchase of durables, such as home furnishings, household equipment, or even a dwelling, may result in either present household production and present consumption, or future household production and future consumption, depending on when the family uses the commodities. In each case the outcome is increased psychic income and ultimately family welfare or well-being.

The type of decision-making which occurs here is still tactical in nature. It is involved with decisions such as "How much money will be spent on food, clothing and appliances?" and "How much money will be used to purchase

housing for the family?" This type of decision begins or continues action which was decided upon in the strategic decision level. In turn these decisions can "set limits and boundaries for other tactical, policy, control, or program decisions"(Plonk, 1964: 6).

Savings and Investment. Although the allocation of monetary income to savings and investment may seem a bit incompatible to be placed in the same category, the process from which each results is the same. Both the savings and investment processes can be generally defined as "the abstinence from consumption (or use) in the present in anticipation of future use" (Fitzsimmons and Williams, 1973: 8). One purpose of savings and investment (primarily the former) is to hold in reserve some monetary income for use in, perhaps, some unexpected emergency. Another purpose of each (primarily the latter) is to produce more monetary income for future use, a purpose which is also one of the six means of production of resources.

Decision-making within this function takes place at a tactical level. Decisions such as whether any monetary income will be allocated to savings and/or investment, and, if so, where (bank, savings and loan, the stock market, etc.) these resources will be placed are included here. These decision outcomes produce other decisions, such as in what form the money will be saved, at what bank, at what savings and loan, or in what stock the money will be placed, and what will be done with the income in the future, all of which are lower level decisions. The monetary income which is an outcome of the savings

*and investment function may be allocated directly to use in future household production and future consumption, or it may be reallocated at some future time back into use within any of the four functions.*

*Investment in Human Capital. Based on a relatively new idea that is gaining more attention all the time, the human capital investment function involves the allocation of resources, human and non-human, to the development of other human skills, knowledge, and ability, which will then be available for future allocation and use. This would include such processes as on-the-job training, the development of management skills and abilities, and the use of time and motion studies designed to reduce inefficiency. The resultant human capital may be reallocated to use in any of the other functions, or it may be allocated to future household production and consumption. Originally the term human capital was used to mean the "forms of human abilities that increase an individual's productivity as a worker" (Fitzsimmons and Williams, 1973: 5). However, the term has been expanded to include the development of human resources from which accrues future utility for the individual. Education has been recognized as one of the chief ways of developing such potential for increased satisfaction. If increased productivity as a worker in the larger economy or in the family naturally accompanies education (as it almost always does), then this is an additional benefit.*

*Decision-making within this function includes tactical decisions such as whether an individual will seek further education, additional job skills, and*

increased sources of information. Again the outcome of such decisions create other decisions such as what school to attend, what cultural opportunities to seek, what particular skills to develop and where this will be done. These decisions are involved, again, in a lower level of decision-making.

Other economic processes. Beyond the level of the four major functions of the family occur three levels of decision-making which accompany other economic processes carried on by the family. Policy decisions include the planning and execution of decision outcomes which were made within one of the three functions of distribution, savings and investment, and investment in human capital. For example, families allocate certain amounts of resources to the function of distribution. Then the money allocated to this function is distributed to the expenditure for either durable commodities or non-durable commodities. The policy decision level is involved with deciding which durable goods, what non-durable services, etc. to make expenditures for. This decision level contains decisions about what type, kind, make, model, price-level, etc., of commodity to be obtained.

The process of household production functions on another level of decision-making, called control decisions. Household production involves decisions about how, when, where, etc. to convert the commodities decided upon in the previous level into a form in which they will produce more utility for the family. This framework assumes, like that of Fitzsimmons and Williams (1973), that very few, if any, goods and services purchased by the family are

*consumed without first being processed in some manner through household production. Decisions such as what foods will be combined and cooked for the evening meal, how it will be served and when the dinner will be eaten are types of control decisions. In essence, the purpose of household production is to facilitate consumption in the most effective manner.*

*A final economic process in which families are involved is the process of consumption. Consumption or the final utilization of commodities for the satisfaction of needs and wants of family members results directly in the production of psychic income. Consumption has been placed in most previous models on the same level as production. This author agrees that the two concepts are equal in importance on a conceptual basis, but when interrelated with decision theory, they are quite unequal. Whereas decisions about how, when, and where to produce resources are major in scope and have a great effect on many other decision levels, consumption decisions are very family-specific and very narrow in scope. Decisions on the consumption level are called program decisions in that they determine specific activities which facilitate the programming of individuals or families for the final process of consumption. Since the expenditure function is the beginning of a process which results in present consumption, this is called the final outcome branch of the model. When viewing the process of consumption as a process which satisfies the family's wants and needs (such as eating, sleeping, bathing, dressing, learning, etc.), the resulting decision level becomes very individualized and occurs only after all other decision levels have been interfaced. Decisions are*

*made concerning how, when and where to consume--who will eat how much food, who will bathe in which bathtub, when the laundry will be done, what magazine will be read by whom, and who will choose what television program to watch.*

*Within the last three levels of decision-making--the policy decisions, the control decisions, and the program decisions--the types of decisions which are typically made by families cannot be accurately ascertained through self-report, structured questionnaires. Too family-specific, these decisions would have to be investigated by other means within the context of each family's available resources. These types of decisions are much too situationally based to uncover in a questionnaire because no set of decisions common to all families could be incorporated. Questions pertaining to the consumption decision of one family, for example, might be totally irrelevant to another because of the individual differences between families' needs and wants and the ways and means they employ to satisfy these needs and wants.*

#### Summary

*It is important to note that this framework describes an ideal model of family economic decision-making. It is quite possible, through lack of communication of needs and wants by family members, impulse spending, unwise money management, overextension of credit, human disabilities which result in the loss of work, and other human frailties, for families to become involved in these economic decision processes quite different from the pattern modeled in this*

framework. There are also circumstances and situations which arise from factors beyond the control of the average family which complicate their decision-making processes.

This model also primarily views family economic decision-making as serial in that one decision of a higher lever produces an outcome which creates new decisions on the next lower level which are dependent on the previous ones. While this view of family decision-making facilitates a conceptual view of the process, it also simplifies the very complex set of interactions which occur in real life. Families may not in actuality practice this step-by-step decision-making process, and if they do, they may not be aware that they do. It is hoped, however, that this framework can be further developed and used as an instrument in identifying not only how but why families make decisions as they do.

CHAPTER IV  
METHODOLOGY

*For this study a survey research design, using a random sample of the residents of Greensboro, North Carolina who were married, was employed in an effort to investigate attitudes toward feminism and perceived patterns of economic decision-making among husbands and wives. Of central importance is the comparison of attitudes toward feminism and patterns of decision-making in families. An investigation of these two phenomena and selected personal characteristics was undertaken through the use of a mailed questionnaire. Also of interest was the differences in a wife's attitude and her perception of her husband's attitude toward feminism.*

SELECTION OF SAMPLE

*The population to be surveyed was those residents of Greensboro, North Carolina whose names were listed in the February, 1976 edition of the Greensboro Telephone Directory. From this directory a preliminary list of 300 names and telephone numbers were selected randomly through the use of a random number table. These numbers were called to ascertain the eligibility of the occupants. Only married couples with both spouses present were included in the sample.*

*It was necessary to replace 92 of the original 300 households selected*

who declined to participate or were ineligible for one of the following reasons: (1) resident was a single male, single female, widow, or widower, and therefore was ineligible for the sample; (2) resident was not available for contact by telephone after five attempts at various hours of the day and during various days of the week and weekend; or (3) the telephone number was not in service at that time and no further number was available. Forty-seven of these 92 households declined to participate because of various personal reasons. No comparison is available of the social or demographic characteristics between the 92 households who declined to participate and the 92 households selected by replacement.

When 300 households which had been contacted agreed to receive the questionnaire, the material was mailed. A letter explaining the purpose of the study and instructions for the completion and return of the questionnaire was included along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope for convenience in replying. The anonymity of the respondents was pledged in an attempt to reassure the respondents. Subjects were asked to indicate if they desired a report of the findings and the investigator requested that all questionnaires be returned within two weeks.

Of the 300 mailed questionnaires, 171 were returned to the researcher. Of these 171 returned, 156 were found to be usable and complete. The remaining 15 questionnaires which were returned were incorrectly completed or not completed at all. In the opinion of the researcher, the return of at least 50% of the sampled respondents was adequate for the investigation of the research

question. Table 1 summarizes the results of the sampling procedure, the return rate, and the reasons for judging the questionnaires incomplete.

### INSTRUMENTS

A questionnaire and data sheet were adapted by the investigator to ascertain attitudes toward feminism and patterns of decision-making within the family and to obtain information about selected demographic characteristics of the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of a feminism scale, developed and validated by Lona Richey (1972), a decision-making scale, which was developed by the investigator, and a demographic data sheet.

#### Measurement of Feminism

The Attitudes Toward Feminism Scale (Richey, 1972) was developed to measure attitudes toward the ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement, with feminist attitudes being defined as those which are accepting and supportive of the goals of the movement. The subject was asked to indicate her attitude toward each statement by circling one of the five responses on a Likert scale: (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) undecided, (4) disagree, and (5) strongly disagree. Each respondent was also asked to indicate her perception of her husband's attitude by circling one of a second set of the same five responses. Fifty-five attitude statements were included in the scale.

The direction of each statement as to whether it was to be worded in agreement or disagreement with the feminist position was determined by chance by flipping a coin and the numerical order of the statements was randomly selected (Richey, 1972: 31).

TABLE 1  
 QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETION AND REASON FOR  
 NON-COMPLETION

<i>Item</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<b>TOTAL TELEPHONE NUMBERS</b>		
<i>RANDOMLY SAMPLED</i>	392	100.00
<i>Participants</i>	300	76.53
<i>Non-participants</i>	92	23.47
1. <i>Refused to participate</i>	47	
2. <i>Ineligible to participate</i>	37	
3. <i>Unable to contact</i>	5	
4. <i>Number not in service</i>	3	
-----		
<b>TOTAL ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS</b>	300	100.00
<i>Total returned questionnaires including not usable ones</i>	171	
<i>Questionnaires returned correctly completed</i>	156	52.00
<i>Questionnaires returned not correctly completed</i>	15	5.00
1. <i>Omitted demographic data</i>	3	
2. <i>Omitted attitudinal data</i>	3	
3. <i>Stating questions "too personal"</i>	4	
4. <i>Returned blank</i>	5	
<i>Questionnaires not returned</i>	129	43.00

*Of 55 total items, 25 were attitude statements for which a "strongly agree" response would indicate a pro-feminist attitude. The remaining 30 items were statements for which a "strongly agree" response would indicate an anti-feminist attitude. The format of the statements was replicated from the Richey study in order to ensure possible future comparability of results.*

*For the present study the scoring system was as follows: the pro-feminist items were weighted: (1) strongly agree--5; (2) agree--4; (3) undecided--3; (4) disagree--2; (5) strongly disagree--1. For the non-feminist items the scoring was reversed so that the strongly agree response was scored one, the agree response was scored two, the undecided response was scored three, the disagree response was scored four, and the strongly disagree response was weighted five. These scores were then summed and divided by the number of responses to yield a score within the range of one to five. This scoring system was applied to both the wife's attitudes and the wife's perception of her husband's attitudes.*

#### *Measurement of Economic Decision-making*

*The decision-making scale was designed to categorize respondents into one of four patterns of decision-making: syncretic, wife-dominant, husband-dominant, and autonomic. Within a framework of four economic functions of the family, the question, "Who decides?" was applied to 24 family decisions. Some of the items had been previously used by researchers in the study of family power (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Heer, 1958; Safilios-Rothschild, 1967;*

*Centers et al, 1971; and others). Many of the items, however, especially those in the first function, have been traditionally excluded from the instruments used in these previous studies.*

*The first step taken by the researcher in the development of the scale was to develop an exhaustive list of the decision statements included in the scales used by previous researchers. Such decisions which were included by previous researchers were : Who decides (1) what people you invite to the house, (2) which car you will buy, and (3) which television or radio program to tune in? Since the purpose of the present study was related to the study of economic decisions, those decisions which did not have as their main focus an economic process experienced by the family were eliminated.*

*Next, a framework for the classification of economic decisions was developed in order to place these decisions into groups. Originally a list of twenty decisions was developed and submitted to four judges for their independent evaluation of the face validity of the instrument. They were first instructed to indicate any clarification needed in the wording and syntax of the items and to indicate any items not pertinent to the stated purpose of the questionnaire. Then they were asked to evaluate the placement of the items into the four classifications as follows:*

- (1) The production function--to procure resources for the provision of the needs and wants of family members.*
- (2) The distribution function--to allocate family resources among the alternative uses.*

(3) *The savings function--to save and/or invest resources to meet the future needs of the family.*

(4) *The investment in human resources function--to acquire and allocate information and resources for the investment in human capital.*

*Many of the judges' comments were suggestions concerning the rewording and clarification of items in the scale. Several judges suggested numerous items in which the separation of one question into two would produce less ambiguous results. The judges' written comments and suggestions during informal discussions were incorporated into the evaluation of the questionnaire. The decision-making scale was then revised to accommodate the relevant suggestions of the judges. The following questions were then listed in order of their presentation within each of the following functions:*

*I. The production function: Who decides*

- 1. What job the husband will take?*
- 2. Whether or not the wife will work?*
- 3. Whether to acquire credit, i.e. borrow money from a bank, savings and loan, credit union?*
- 4. Whether to acquire life insurance for family member(s)?*
- 5. Whether to insure the family with fire, theft, accident and/or other insurance?*
- 6. What doctor to have when someone is sick?*

*II. The expenditure function: Who decides*

- 7. What general location, the city, town, or community, in which the family will live?*
- 8. What particular house, apartment or other type of dwelling in which the family will live?*

9. *How much money to spend on food?*
  10. *How much money to spend on clothing?*
  11. *How much money to spend on furnishing and decorating the home?*
  12. *How much money to spend on appliances for the home?*
  13. *How to budget the money, i. e. balance the checkbook, pay the bills, etc.?*
- III. *The savings and investment function: Who decides*
14. *Whether to save money at all?*
  15. *Whether to make provisions for future financial needs, such as children's education?*
  16. *Where to put any money saved, i. e. in a bank, savings and loan, etc.?*
  17. *Whether to invest in any speculative interests, i. e. the stock market, real estate, etc.?*
- IV. *The investment in human resources function: Who decides*
18. *Whether the husband will continue his schooling?*
  19. *Whether the wife will continue her schooling?*
  20. *Whether the husband will acquire additional job training or skills?*
  21. *Whether the wife will acquire additional job training or skills?*
  22. *Whether to acquire such things as newspapers, journals, books, magazines, and/or encyclopedias?*
  23. *What to do during vacation time?*
  25. *Whether to participate in community efforts, charities, volunteer work, etc.?*

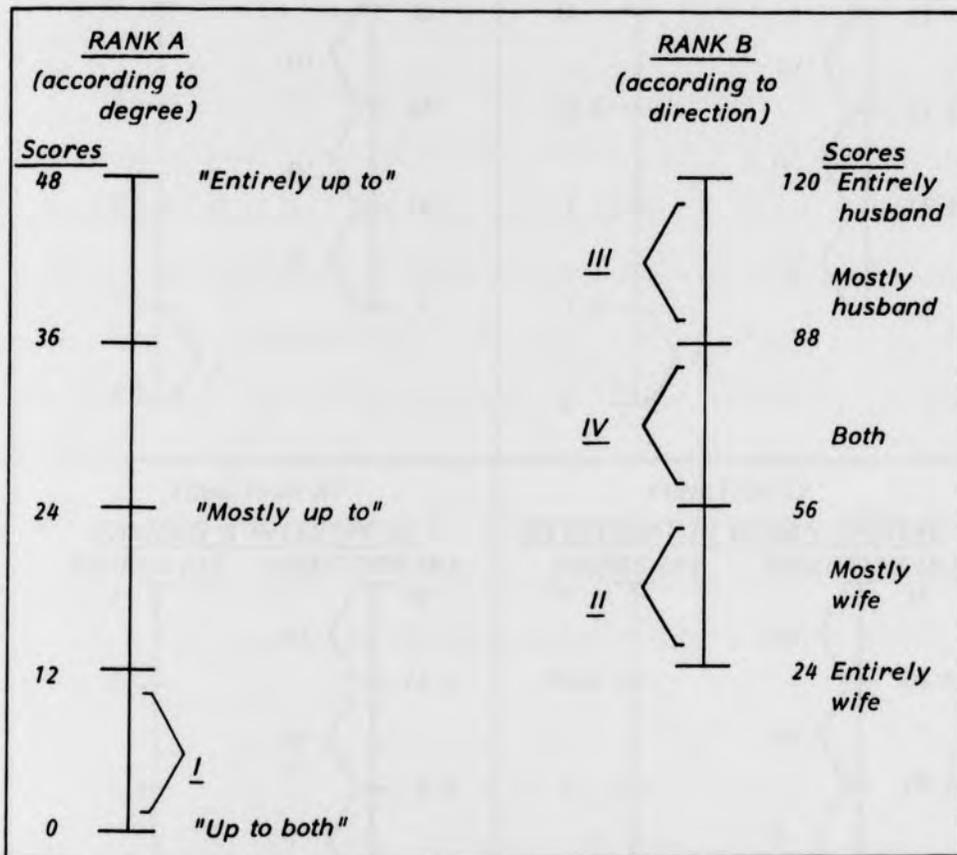
*The scoring system for the scale was developed from a discussion by Papanek (1969) and adapted to produce five different scores or sets of classifi-*

cations--one for the entire scale and one for each of the four major functions. This was developed to facilitate comparison of the decision-making patterns of families according to which functions a set of decisions carried out. Figure 2 illustrates the two ranks, degree and direction, into which each answer was placed when the scoring was done for the entire scale. Figure 3 illustrates the same process for each of the four economic functions of the family. For example, if a respondent's total score on Rank A (according to degree; range: 0-48) added to twelve or less, this respondent was placed in category I, the syncratic pattern of decision-making. If a respondent's total score on Rank A added to thirteen or above, the responses were then scored according to Rank B (according to direction; range: 24-120). If this score on Rank B added to less than 56, the respondent was placed in category II, the wife-dominant pattern of decision-making. If the score added to any number above 88, the respondent was placed in category III, the husband-dominant pattern. If the score ranged anywhere from 56 to 88, then the respondent was placed in the autonomic pattern, category IV. This scoring system produced an empirically accurate and consistent method of separating the response patterns and provided for the separation of two very different patterns of decision-making, syncratic and autonomic.

#### Demographic Data Sheet

The following information was requested from each of the respondents to facilitate comparisons within the sample according to selected demographic characteristics: (1) wife's age, (2) husband's age, (3) the number of years married, (4) wife's education, (5) husband's education, (6) wife's income,

SCORING:	A (DEGREE)	B (DIRECTION)
Entirely up to husband	2	5
Mostly up to husband	1	4
Up to both equally	0	3
Mostly up to wife	1	2
Entirely up to wife	2	1



- I. Syncratic -- husband and wife equal, shared decision-making
- II. Wife dominant -- wife makes majority of decisions
- III. Husband dominant -- husband makes majority of decisions
- IV. Autonomic -- husband and wife equal, but divided decision-making

Figure 2. Scoring for decision-making scale. Based on discussion in Papanek, Miriam. Authority and sex roles in the family. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 1969, 31, 89.

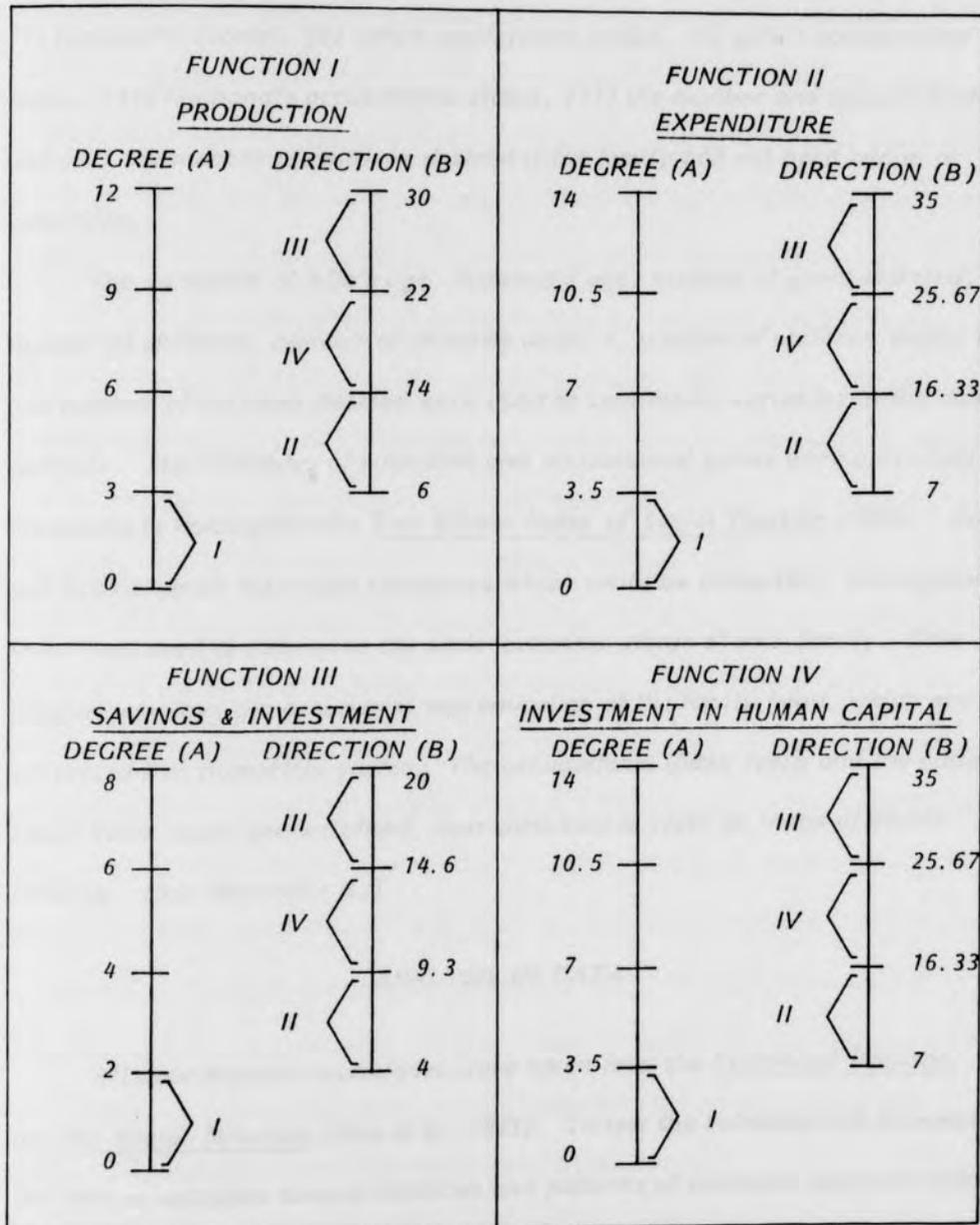


Figure 3. Scoring for decision-making scale within the four functions. Based on discussion in Papanek, Miriam. Authority and sex roles in the family. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 1969, 31, 89.

(7) husband's income, (8) wife's employment status, (9) wife's occupational status, (10) husband's occupational status, (11) the number and age of children, and (12) the number of children desired if the family had not been begun or completed.

The variables of wife's age, husband's age, number of years married, number of children, number of children under 6, number of children under 18, and number of children desired were used as continuous variables in the data analysis. The variables of education and occupational status were classified according to Hollingshead's Two Factor Index of Social Position (1958). Income was broken down into eight categories which could be collapsed. Hollingshead's index was used to determine the socio-economic status of each family. This measure employs the occupation and education of the family head, which are converted into numerical scores. The occupational index score and the educational index score are weighted, then combined to yield an Index of Social Position. (See Appendix B.)

#### ANALYSIS OF DATA

All data analysis techniques were taken from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nye et al, 1975). To test the relationships between the data on attitudes toward feminism and patterns of economic decision-making, the techniques of ONEWAY analysis of variance was used. The subprogram ONEWAY was selected because it can, like other subprograms, provide information about the significant difference across categories of the independent

variable when compared to the dependent variable, and it also provides for additional "a posteriori" tests to discern where those differences lie. The "a posteriori" test utilized within this subprogram was Sheffe's test because it was judged best to use when the groups are unequal in size and because it provides for the strictest testing of the relationships between variables.

To test the relationship of the dependent variables of wife's attitudes toward feminism, wife's perception of her husband's attitudes toward feminism and the difference between these two sets of data, and the independent demographic variables, the subprogram MULTIPLE REGRESSION was utilized. Two different models were used in an attempt to discern the existence of significant relationships between the dependent variables and various combinations of independent variables. Model I tested the following relationships: (1) wife's attitudes toward feminism and (a) age of wife, (b) education of wife, (c) income of wife, (d) employment status of wife, (e) occupational status of wife, and (f) number of children; (2) the perception of the husband's attitude toward feminism and (a) age of husband, (b) education of husband, (c) income of husband, (d) employment status of wife, and (e) occupational status of husband; and (3) the difference in the husband's and wife's attitudes and (a) relative age of spouses, (b) relative education of spouses, (c) relative income of spouses, and (d) the wife's employment status.

Model II tested the following relationships: (1) wife's attitudes toward feminism and (a) relative age of spouses, (b) relative education of spouses, (c) relative income of spouses, (d) number of children, and (e) employment

*status of wife; (2) the perception of the husband's attitude toward feminism by the wife and (a) relative age of spouses, (b) relative education of spouses, (c) relative income of spouses, (d) employment status of wife, and (e) occupational status of husband; and (3) the difference in the husband's and wife's attitudes with the same relative variables as listed in Model I.*

*Since some of the demographic variables were in nominal scale form, the technique of dummy variables was used.*

*Since the numbers assigned to categories of a nominal scale are not assumed to have an order and unit of measurement, they cannot be treated as 'scores' as they would be in conventional regression analysis (Nie et al, 1975: 373).*

*The variables to which the dummy-variable technique were applied were the employment status of the wife, the occupational status of the wife, and the occupational status of the husband.*

*The relationship between the patterns of decision-making and the demographic variables were tested by applying the Chi-square statistic to the sub-program CROSSTABS, which indicates only whether the dependent and independent variables are related. The multiple effect of combinations of other variables are not controlled for use in this procedure. Nine sets of variables were dichotomized for use as independent factors, and in all cases patterns of decision-making were entered as dependent variables.*

CHAPTER V  
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between feminism attitudes and the pattern of economic decision-making within families. Tests of significant differences were made between the overall pattern of decision-making and patterns within the four functions and scores on a feminism attitudes scale. Additional information was gathered on the differences in a wife's attitudes toward feminism and her perception of her husband's feminism attitudes. These differences resulted in the development and analysis of a relative feminism score. Also gathered were data on selected demographic characteristics of the respondents: age, number of year married, education, income, employment of wife, occupational status, number and age of children, and number of children desired. Some of this information was developed into relative variables which compared the characteristics of the husband and wife. The demographic data were analyzed to explain the variance within the sample of scores on the feminism scale and of patterns of economic decision-making.*

*The findings are reported in four parts: (1) the characteristics of the sample compared to the population of Greensboro; (2) the results of comparison between feminism scores and patterns of economic decision-making, (3) the results of comparison of feminism scores with selected demographic variables, and (4) the results of comparison of patterns of economic decision-making with selected demographic variables.*

## SUBJECTS

*The present study employed a random sample from the population of Greensboro, North Carolina who were listed in the February, 1976 telephone directory. Data was collected during April, 1976. This study was confined to married women whose husbands were listed in the directory and, therefore, the data may reflect: (1) the underrepresentation of members of the very highest socio-economic group, whose telephone numbers may be unlisted, (2) the underrepresentation of the very lowest socio-economic group, who may not have telephones, and (3) a slight distortion between the demographic characteristics of the sample and the population of Greensboro in general. Following is a descriptive analysis of the selected personal and demographic characteristics of the population in general and the sample.*

### Age of Women

*Almost one-third of the sampled wives were in the age range from 25 to 34 and exactly half of the total sample were aged 35 to 65. Slightly underrepresented in the sample were the very young and the very old. Wives under 25 in the sample composed 15.4% of the total as compared to 26.5% of the population in general, while 4.5% of the wives in the sample were over 65 as compared to 12.1% of the population in general (Table 2).*

### Age of Men

*About 28% of all husbands in the sample were aged 25 to 34 as compared to 22% in the population in general. The greatest discrepancy between the sample*

TABLE 2  
AGE OF WOMEN OVER 18

<i>Item</i>	<i>Percent Population of Greensboro<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Percent of Sample</i>
<i>Under 25</i>	26.5	15.4
<i>25-34</i>	18.4	30.1
<i>35-44</i>	16.7	16.0
<i>45-54</i>	15.0	18.0
<i>55-64</i>	11.3	16.0
<i>65 and over</i>	12.1	4.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	100.0	100.0

TABLE 3  
AGE OF MEN OVER 18

<i>Item</i>	<i>Percent Population of Greensboro<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Percent of Sample</i>
<i>Under 25</i>	20.9	9.0
<i>25-34</i>	21.8	28.2
<i>35-44</i>	19.0	19.2
<i>45-54</i>	17.7	16.7
<i>55-64</i>	11.4	15.4
<i>65 and over</i>	9.2	11.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	100.0	100.0

<sup>1</sup>Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, census of Population: 1970. Vol. 1, Characteristics of the Population. Part 35, North Carolina, Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1973, Table 24, p. 73.

and the population occurred in the under 25 age range in which only 9.0% of the sample husbands fell as compared to 20.9% of the males in the general population. Approximately one of ten sample husbands were found to be in the over 65 age range (Table 3).

#### Educational Attainment of Women

Significant differences between the sample and the population were found in almost all of the categories of educational attainment of women. Almost half of the total female population attained less than a complete high school education, while less than 9% of the sample had completed less formal education than 12 years. Only about 10% of the population had completed college, while almost one-fourth of the sampled women had attained college graduate status. Only in the post-graduate category was there a similarity between the two groups with 4.8% of the population and 5.8% of the sample falling into this category. In general, the women in the sample reported higher educational attainment than the women in the population in general (Table 4).

#### Educational Attainment of Men

About one-fourth of the sample males reported having completed four years of college; another fourth had completed one to three years of college and another 25% had graduated from high school. These figures were significantly higher than the Greensboro population figures for the same categories with 13%, 13%, and 19.2% having completed college, one to three years of college, and high school, respectively. Only 9.1% of the population had completed post-graduate

TABLE 4  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF WOMEN

Item	Percent Population of Greensboro <sup>1</sup>	Percent of Sample
	(N=40,038)	(N=156)
<i>Eighth grade or less</i>	22.6	1.9
<i>1-3 years of high school</i>	24.4	7.0
<i>High school graduate</i>	23.8	30.8
<i>1-3 years of college</i>	14.8	30.8
<i>College graduate</i>	9.6	23.7
<i>Post graduate</i>	4.8	5.8
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
<i>Median school years completed</i>	12.1	13.9

TABLE 5  
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF MEN

Item	Percent Population of Greensboro <sup>1</sup>	Percent of Sample
	(N=33,792)	(N=156)
<i>Eighth grade or less</i>	25.0	.6
<i>1-3 years of high school</i>	20.7	5.1
<i>High school graduate</i>	19.2	24.4
<i>1-3 years of college</i>	13.0	26.9
<i>College graduate</i>	13.0	27.6
<i>Post graduate</i>	9.1	15.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
<i>Median school years completed</i>	12.2	15.9

<sup>1</sup>Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1970. Vol. 1, Characteristics of the Population. Part 35, North Carolina*, Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1973, Table 83, p. 255.

TABLE 6  
FAMILY COMPOSITION

Item	Percent Population of Greensboro <sup>1</sup>	Percent of Sample
	(N=35,598)	(N=156)
<i>Families:</i>		
With children under 6	26.7	21.2
With children under 18	58.3	45.5
With no children under 18*	<u>15.0</u>	<u>33.3</u>
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

\*Includes childless couples and families with no children under age 18

TABLE 7  
FAMILY INCOME

Item	Percent Population of Greensboro <sup>2</sup>	Percent of Sample
	(N=35,598)	(N=156)
Less than \$5,000	17.2	5.8
\$5,000 - \$8,999	24.7	10.9
\$9,000 - \$14,999	35.2	23.7
\$15,000 - \$24,999	16.2	27.6
\$25,000 and over	<u>6.7</u>	<u>32.1</u>
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Mean income	\$12,161	\$13,152

<sup>1</sup>Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1970. Vol. 1, Characteristics of the Population. Part 35, North Carolina*, Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1973, Table 84, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, Table 89, p. 279.

studies, as compared to 15.4% of the sample. Generally, the level of education was higher for the sampled males than for all males in the population (Table 5).

#### Family Composition

The family composition of sample respondents in general was similar to that of the Greensboro population except for the families with no children, which included childless couples and families with children over 18. In this category one-third of the sample families fell, as compared to less than half that figure for the population in general, of which 15% had no children or children only over 18. Generally, sampled families tended to have fewer children under 18 than did families in general (Table 6).

#### Family Income

The family income of the sample respondents was generally higher than that of the population of Greensboro. Whereas only 6.7% of the Greensboro residents had family incomes of \$25,000 and over, 32.1% of the sample respondents reported that same figure. In the lowest income bracket, 5.8% of the sample fell, while 17.2% of the population in general reported a family income of less than \$5,000. In the combined brackets, however, of \$9,000-\$14,999 and \$15,000-24,999, the percentages of sample residents and general population were very close with 51.4% of the population and 51.3% of the sample falling into these two categories. The mean income calculated for both groups reflects the difference in patterns of family income with the mean income of Greensboro residents being \$12,161, whereas the sample mean was \$13,152. So, in general,

*in the middle income brackets, the two groups reported similar amounts of family income, while there were generally discrepancies in the percentages of the two groups which fell into the highest and lowest income groups (Table 7).*

#### Employment Status of Women

*The employment status of women in the sample and women in the general population of Greensboro were identical with 47.4% of each group being employed in the labor force and 52.6% of the two groups being non-employed. The latter figure includes those women who are unemployed (Table 8).*

#### Employment Status of Men

*Eighty-four percent of the men of the random sample were employed, whereas 78.8% of the male population of Greensboro worked in the labor force. The category of those not in the labor force, which includes those males who are retired, unemployed, in an institution, or in school full time, showed that 16% of the sample and 20.8% of the population in general were not employed in the paid labor force (Table 9).*

#### Occupational Status of Women

*Almost half of the employed women in the sample were employed in the sales and clerical occupations, as compared to 42.5% of the women in the population. Approximately 30% of the sample were lower administrative staffers and teachers, while only 7.7% of the employed Greensboro population were employed in this category. The categories of professionals, skilled operatives, and*

TABLE 8  
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF WOMEN

Item	No.	Percent Population of Greensboro <sup>1</sup>	No.	Percent of Sample
		(N=56,698)		(N=156)
In labor force	26,906	47.4%	74	47.4%
Not in labor force (including unem- ployed)	29,792	<u>56.6%</u>	82	<u>56.6%</u>
		100.0%		100.0%

TABLE 9  
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF MEN

Item	No.	Percent Population of Greensboro <sup>1</sup>	No.	Percent of Sample
		(N=45,299)		(N=156)
In labor force	35,852	79.2%	131	84.0%
Not in labor force (including retired, in school, and unemployed)	9,447	<u>20.8%</u>	25	<u>16.0%</u>
		100.0%		100.0%

<sup>1</sup>Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1970, Vol. 1, Characteristics of the Population. Part 35, North Carolina, Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1973, Table 85, p. 263.*

unskilled workers were underrepresented in the sample with 2.7%, 2.7% and 1.4% of sampled women being employed in each category, respectively. The figures for the general population in these categories were 7.5%, 17.5% and 5.8%, respectively (Table 10).

#### Occupational Status of Men

The employed men of the random sample were divided fairly evenly between the top five categories from professionals to skilled operatives. Within these categories professionals and lower administrators and teachers were overrepresented in the sample with 17.6% and 19.8% of the sampled males and 12.1% and only 3.2% of the general population, respectively, falling into these two categories. Skilled operatives and semi-skilled workers, including 14.5% and 6.9% of the sample, were underrepresented when compared to the 29.1% and 20% of the male population which fell into these categories. The sample was generally weighted toward white-collar occupations, with the blue-collar occupations being underrepresented (Table 11).

#### Summary

An overall comparison of selected characteristics of the sample with those of the population in general shows mixed results. In age of both men and women there was a tendency for the very young and the very old to be underrepresented, while in the middle-aged categories the two groups were similar. In educational attainment, income, and occupational status, the sample tended to report higher levels in most categories than did the population in general. More sample

TABLE 10  
OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF WOMEN

Item	Percent Population of Greensboro <sup>1</sup>	Percent of Sample
	(N=26,901)	(N=82)
Professionals	7.5	2.7
Managers	5.6	5.4
Administrators and teachers	7.7	29.7
Sales and clerical workers	42.5	47.3
Skilled operatives	17.5	2.7
Semi-skilled workers	13.4	10.8
Unskilled workers	<u>5.8</u>	<u>1.4</u>
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

TABLE 11  
OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF MEN

Item	Percent Population of Greensboro <sup>1</sup>	Percent of Sample
	(N=35,687)	(N=131)
Professionals	12.1	17.6
Managers	13.9	16.0
Administrators and teachers	3.2	19.8
Sales and clerical workers	21.6	22.1
Skilled operatives	29.1	14.5
Semi-skilled workers	20.0	6.9
Unskilled workers	<u>.1</u>	<u>3.1</u>
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

<sup>1</sup>Source: Derived from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population: 1970, Vol. 1, Characteristics of the Population. Part 35, North Carolina, Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1973, Table 86, P. 267.*

families reported having no children under 18 than did families in the population, but a generally similar percentage of families in the sample and population had children under 6 and under 18. In one significant variable, the employment status of women, the percentages of the two groups of women employed was identical. The results of the sample generally produced a group of respondents similar to the population from which they were selected.

#### COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES TOWARD FEMINISM AND PATTERNS OF ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING

To test the relationship of attitudes toward feminism and patterns of economic decision-making the subprogram ONEWAY was employed. This procedure produced a basic analysis of variance among groups as well as provided for the utilization of "a posteriori" tests for the comparison of all possible pairs and combinations of groups. Three sets of ONEWAY analyses were performed. In each case the independent variable was the pattern of economic decision-making scale or for the entire scale. For all four functions and for the entire scale, the husband-dominant category and the wife-dominant category were collapsed because of the small number of respondents who fell into the wife-dominant category; this collapsed category was named the autocratic pattern of decision-making. The dependent or criterion variables were: (a) wife's feminist attitudes, (b) the husband's feminist attitudes as perceived by the wife, and (c) the relative feminist attitudes of the spouses, a variable created by taking the difference between the husband's and wife's feminism

scores. The "a posteriori" test selected for use was the Scheffe test at the .01 level of statistical significance, which analyzed the exact variance among all possible linear combinations of groups, even when the group sizes were unequal.

#### Function I--The Production Function

Sub-hypothesis A, as stated in Chapter 1, maintained that there would be no statistically significant relationship between a subject's feminist attitudes score, her perception of her husband's feminist attitudes score, and their relative feminist attitudes score and the pattern of decision-making she reported on Function 1, the production function, of the decision-making scale. Table 12 illustrates the basis on which the sub-hypothesis A was rejected at the .001 level. The high F values for the variation of feminism scores of both wives and husbands among the patterns of decision-making indicate that the two phenomena are statistically dependent at a highly significant level. However, the relative feminism scores of the spouses and the pattern of decision-making reported was not statistically significant. The Scheffe test results footnoted below the table show that there were two pairs of groups which were the primary source of the variation among the groups. These two pairs of groups which produced the significant variation of feminism scores of both the wife and the husband were the syncratic group paired with the autocratic group, and the autocratic group paired with the autonomic group.

The results shown for this sub-hypothesis seem to indicate that for this group there is a relationship between one's attitudes toward feminism and

TABLE 12

VARIATION OF FEMINISM SCORES ACCORDING TO  
PATTERNS OF DECISION-MAKING REPORTED  
ON THE PRODUCTION FUNCTION

<i>Pattern of Decision-Making</i>	<i>Mean Wife's Feminism<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Mean Husband's Feminism<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Mean Relative Feminism</i>
<i>Group I</i>	3.66	2.25	0.32
<i>    Syncratic (N=66)</i>			
<i>Group II</i>	2.44	2.25	0.18
<i>    Wife dominant &amp; (N=3)</i>			
<i>    Husband dominant (N=45)</i>			
<i>Group III</i>	3.68	3.27	0.40
<i>    Autonomic (N=42)</i>			
	—	—	—
	3.29	2.99	0.29
<i>F VALUES</i>	28.460***	26.372***	0.935

<sup>1</sup>The source of variation according to the SCHEFFE test at the .01 level were: groups I and II, and groups II and III.

\*\*\*Significant at .001 level

*the pattern of economic decision-making practiced in the marital relationship. For the production function of the decision-making scale, patterns of decision-making do relate to the wife's and husband's feminist attitude scores. Generally, the higher a respondent's score on the feminist attitudes scale, the more likely it is that the family has either a syncratic or an autonomic pattern of decision-making. When making the tactical decisions concerning the production of resources for use by the family, such as what job a member of the family will take to produce income, the families in which the wives expressed pro-feminist attitudes were likely to also practice either syncratic or autonomic decision-making, each of which gives equal influence or power to both spouses in the family.*

#### Function II--The Expenditure Function

*Sub-hypothesis B stated that there would be no statistically significant relationship between the wife's reported attitudes toward feminism, the husband's attitudes toward feminism as reported by the wife, and the relative feminist attitudes of the spouses, and the pattern of economic decision-making reported for Function II, the expenditure function. This sub-hypothesis was rejected at the .001 level of statistical significance, as illustrated in Table 13. The sources of variation were again groups one and two and groups two and four. This means essentially that the subsets of the syncratic group paired with the autocratic group and the autocratic group compared to the autonomic group produced the significant variation among the feminism scores of both the husbands and wives. Again, the relative feminism scores of the spouses was not*

TABLE 13

VARIATION OF FEMINISM SCORES ACCORDING TO  
PATTERNS OF DECISION-MAKING REPORTED  
ON THE EXPENDITURE FUNCTION

<i>Pattern of Decision-Making</i>	<i>Mean Wife's Feminism<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Mean Husband's Feminism<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Mean Relative Feminism</i>
<i>Group I</i>	3.64	3.35	0.32
<i>    Syncratic (N=65)</i>			
<i>Group II</i>	2.98	2.65	0.18
<i>    Wife dominant &amp; (N=34)</i>			
<i>    Husband dominant (N=11)</i>			
<i>Group III</i>	3.28	2.92	0.36
<i>    Autonomic (N=46)</i>			
	3.29	2.99	0.29
<i>F VALUES</i>	11.745***	10.477***	0.679

<sup>1</sup>The source of variation according to the SCHEFFE test at the .01 level were: groups I and II, and groups II and III.

\*\*\*Significant at .001 level

*significantly related to the pattern of economic decision-making reported.*

*Generally, then, the subjects whose decision-making pattern was either syncratic or autonomic when making decisions concerning the expenditure of resources for the procurement of utility for the family reported higher feminism scores for both wives and husbands. This also means that spouses who reported a high level of agreement with the goals and ideas of the feminist movement were more likely to practice either syncratic or autonomic patterns of decision-making. Those respondents who generally disagreed with the ideas of the Women's Liberation Movement also generally reported the existence of an autocratic pattern of decision-making for decisions concerning the expenditure of income.*

*This economic function, which included decisions concerning the level of resources to be allocated to expenditure for housing, food, clothing, home decoration, appliances, etc., produced the highest frequency, 34 families, in the wife dominant pattern of decision-making, which is a logical result when one considers the traditional role theory about the proper role of women in general. However, the fact that these 34 families represented only approximately 22% of the total sample may indicate an interesting trend for the future. Far more respondents indicated that their decision-making pattern was either syncratic or autonomic (a combination representing 71.2% of the sample) than may have occurred in past years. Approximately 7% indicated that the decision-making pattern practiced in the process of making decisions about the expenditure of resources was husband dominant, which is a result which probably would have been an unlikely occurrence in past years.*

Function III--The Savings and Investment Function

*The third sub-hypothesis stated that no statistically significant relationship would exist between a wife's feminism score, her perception of her husband's feminism score, and their relative feminism score and the pattern of economic decision-making reported for Function III, the savings and investment function of the decision-making scale. This sub-hypothesis was also rejected at the .001 level of statistical significance. The source of variation was again the pairs of groups one and two and groups two and four. Generally, again, spouses who reported high feminism scores were likely to practice either syncratic or autonomic patterns of decision-making on the third function of the decision-making scale. Again, those respondents whose decision-making patterns reported were autocratic in nature also reported lower scores on the attitudes toward feminism scale. However, again there was no significant relationship between the relative feminism scores of the spouses and the pattern of economic decision-making reported.*

*The patterns of decision-making reported for the savings and investment function are interesting to note. Over 57% of the sample reported a syncratic or joint pattern of decision-making while another 37% reported a husband dominant decision-making pattern. While the majority of subjects practiced joint decision-making of these tactical decisions concerning whether to save and/or invest their resources, the 37% who reported husband dominant decision-making in these matters may have relied upon the traditional view of the husband as chief banker, risk taker, and investment manipulator because*

TABLE 14

VARIATION OF FEMINISM SCORES ACCORDING TO  
PATTERNS OF DECISION-MAKING REPORTED  
ON THE SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT FUNCTION

Pattern of Decision-Making	Mean Wife's Feminism <sup>1</sup>	Mean Husband's Feminism <sup>1</sup>	Mean Relative Feminism
Group I <i>Syncratic (N=89)</i>	3.70	3.56	0.34
Group II <i>Wife dominant &amp; (N=4)</i> <i>Husband dominant (N=57)</i>	2.61	2.40	0.22
Group III <i>Autonomic (N=6)</i>	4.25	3.64	0.61
	3.29	2.99	0.29
F VALUES	27.413***	24.647***	0.959

<sup>1</sup>The source of variation according to the SCHEFFE test at the .01 level were: groups I and II, and groups II and III.

\*\*\*Significant at .001 level

*of his assumed superiority in handling such decisions. The low instance of autonomic decision-making patterns reported for this function indicated that few families divide the responsibility for savings and investment decisions. It is either a joint venture or a decision area controlled predominantly by the husband.*

#### Function IV--The Investment in Human Capital Function

*Sub-hypothesis D stated that there would exist no statistically significant relationship between the feminism score of the wife, the feminism score of the husband as perceived by the wife, and the relative feminism score of the spouses and the pattern of economic decision-making reported for Function IV, the human capital investment function. This sub-hypothesis was rejected at the .001 level, as illustrated in Table 15. Groups one and two and groups two and four again accounted for the majority of variation among the groups, according to the Scheffe test at the .001 level.*

*Almost 65% of the respondents indicated that decisions made concerning the investment of resources for the development of human capital were made autonomically. A possible explanation of this result is that when deciding about the education, job training, cultural enrichments, etc., that an individual whose life is to be most likely affected by the decision outcome will be the one to exert the most influence over the making of the decision itself. Therefore, when making decisions which are of utmost importance to the wife, it is logical that the wife, who will be most interested and affected by the decision*

TABLE 15

VARIATION OF FEMINISM SCORES ACCORDING TO  
PATTERNS OF DECISION-MAKING REPORTED  
ON THE HUMAN CAPITAL INVESTMENT FUNCTION

<i>Pattern of Decision-Making</i>	<i>Mean Wife's Feminism<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Mean Husband's Feminism<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Mean Relative Feminism</i>
<i>Group I</i>	3.57	3.18	0.35
<i>    Syncratic (N=38)</i>			
<i>Group II</i>	2.11	2.03	0.08
<i>    Wife dominant &amp; (N=3)</i>			
<i>    Husband dominant (N=14)</i>			
<i>Group III</i>	3.37	3.09	0.30
<i>    Autonomic (N=101)</i>			
	—	—	—
	3.29	2.99	0.29
<i>F VALUES</i>	13.724***	13.709***	0.912

<sup>1</sup>The source of variation according to the SCHEFFE test at the .01 level were: groups I and II, and groups II and III.

\*\*\*Significant at .001 level

*outcome, will make the final decision. Decisions made by the husband which concern mostly his future will be balanced by decisions made by the wife concerning her future and each will be balanced by decisions made jointly.*

### The Entire Scale

*Hypothesis 1 stated that there would be no statistically significant relationship between a subject's score, her perception of her husband's score, and their relative score, on the feminist attitude scale and the pattern of decision-making reported. This hypothesis was also rejected at the .001 level of statistical significance. For this analysis of variance procedure, as with the previous four, the relative feminism scores of the spouses did not produce statistically significant results. As illustrated in Tables 12 through 16, the F value for the third column of relative feminism of the spouses was very low in each case, indicating that the dependent variable of relative feminism and the independent variable of the pattern of economic decision-making reported for each of the four functions and for the entire scale were not related at any statistically significant level.*

*Generally, there was found to be a statistically significant level of relationship between attitudes toward feminism of both the husband and wife and the pattern of economic decision-making reported for each of the four functions and for the entire decision-making scale. Logic and induction may be used to explain the relationship shown in this analysis. Generally, the higher a respondent's scores on the feminism scale, the more likely it is that the family has either a syncretic pattern or an autonomic pattern of economic decision-*

TABLE 16

VARIATION OF FEMINISM SCORES ACCORDING TO  
PATTERNS OF DECISION-MAKING REPORTED  
ON THE ENTIRE SCALE

<i>Pattern of Decision-Making</i>	<i>Mean Wife's Feminism<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Mean Husband's Feminism<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Mean Relative Feminism</i>
<i>Group I</i>	3.67	3.35	0.32
<i>    Syncratic (N=59)</i>			
<i>Group II</i>	1.87	1.74	0.13
<i>    Wife dominant &amp; (N=1)</i>			
<i>    Husband dominant (N=19)</i>			
<i>Group III</i>	3.37	3.04	0.33
<i>    Autonomic (N=77)</i>			
	—	—	—
	3.29	2.99	0.29
<i>F VALUES</i>	27.565***	27.773***	1.383

<sup>1</sup>The source of variation according to the SCHEFFE test at the .01 level were: groups I and II, and groups II and III.

\*\*\*Significant at .001 level

*making. Each of these patterns of decision-making show a relatively equal amount and intensity of influence on a particular set of decision outcomes by each spouse. Given that a respondent believes in the goals and ideals of the Women's Liberation Movement, (i.e., that women should have comparable rights, status, and privileges as men), then that family is more likely to participate in shared or at least equal decision-making if, indeed, attitudes are predispositions to act.*

*If an individual tends to reject the ideas of the Women's Liberation Movement, those attitudes probably carry over into the decision-making situation. If one or both spouses believe that a woman's traditional role of expressive-oriented homemaker, wife, and mother is perfectly natural and desirable, then it is less likely that the female will exert as much influence over the decision process and outcome. The results produced by this analysis may be interpreted as an indication of a promising trend for those who favor the attainment of equal rights and status for women. Not only may attitudes toward the proper role of women in society be changing, but the status of a woman in her marital relationship may be becoming more equalitarian in nature.*

#### **COMPARISON OF FEMINISM SCORES AND SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES**

*The REGRESSION subprogram was employed to test the relationship between the dependent variables of feminism scores and the independent variables or demographic characteristics. This technique computes the*

regression coefficients for a set of independent variables which will best explain the variation of the dependent variable. Two multiple regression models were used to test the significance of each independent variable while controlling for the relationships of the other independent variable with the dependent variable. Model I tested the relationship between individual characteristics of the wife, the individual characteristics of the husband, and the relative characteristics of the spouses with the feminism scores of the wife, the husband, and the relative feminism score. Model II tested the relationship between the relative characteristics of the spouses and the feminism scores of the wife and husband and the relative feminism score.

Since dummy variable techniques were used for the variables of wife's employment, wife's occupational status and husband's occupational status, the regression coefficients for these three variables measure only the significance of the tested variable when compared to that of the omitted categories. For the other variables, which were treated as continuous data, the regression coefficient shows the direction (positive or negative) and the intensity of the relationship between each tested independent variable and a unit of increase or decrease of the dependent variable. Since the first model predicted the greatest percentage of the variation of feminism scores when regressed by the dependent variables, only Model I results will be reported.

#### Wife's Feminism Score

In the first regression analysis (Table 17), the wife's selected social and demographic characteristics were entered as independent variables and

TABLE 17

ESTIMATED REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS AND F VALUES  
FOR SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF WIFE  
AND WIFE'S FEMINISM SCORE

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Regression Coefficient</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>Wife's Age</i>	-0.00028	0.003
<i>Wife's Education</i>	0.16828***	25.350
<i>Wife's Income</i>	-0.00001	0.078
<i>Number of Children</i>	-0.09691	2.359
<i>Wife's Employment:</i>		
0-15 hours/week	omitted	-
15-30 hours/week	0.55267	1.584
30 or more hours/week	0.17617	0.232
<i>Wife's Occupational status:</i>		
<i>Professionals</i>	0.43726	0.343
<i>Managers</i>	-0.40733	0.492
<i>Administrators, teachers</i>	0.22389	0.350
<i>Clerical, sales</i>	-0.17082	0.207
<i>Skilled</i>	-0.58351	0.683
<i>Semi-skilled</i>	0.54737	1.290
<i>Unskilled</i>	-0.47349	0.244
<i>Homemakers</i>	omitted	-

$R^2 = 0.29176$

\*\*\* Significant at .001 level

$F = 4.49977$

*the wife's feminism score was entered as the dependent variable. In examining the relationship of the independent and dependent variables, the multiple regression analysis produced only one statistically significant relationship-- that of the wife's feminism score and the wife's education. Holding constant all of the effects of the independent variables, an increase of one year of wife's education was found to be associated with an increase of 0.16828 on the feminism score of the wife at the .001 level of significance.*

*The expected negative relationship between the wife's feminism score and age and number of children and the expected positive relationship between the wife's feminism score and income did not appear at a statistically significant level. The expected positive relationship between the wife's employment and the wife's feminism appeared but was not statistically significant. Relationships between the wife's feminism score and categories within the variable of the wife's occupational status were inconsistent and none were statistically significant. In summary, none of the independent variables showed a statistically significant effect on the feminism scores of wives except education.*

#### Husband's Feminism Score

*In the second regression equation, the independent variables entered were the husband's characteristics plus the wife's employment status, and the dependent variable was the husband's feminism score (Table 18). The most statistically significant variable which was found to be related to the husband's feminism score, as reported by the wife, was the husband's age. The age of*

TABLE 18

ESTIMATED REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS AND F VALUES  
FOR SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF WIFE AND HUSBAND  
AND HUSBAND'S FEMINISM SCORE AS PERCEIVED  
BY WIFE

Variable	Regression Coefficient	F
Husband's Age	-0.01685**	9.311
Husband's Education	0.08694*	6.467
Husband's Income	0.00002	2.861
Wife's Employment:		
0-15 hours/week	omitted	-
15-30 hours/week	0.47755*	4.591
30 or more hours/week	0.11258	0.683
Husband's Occupational Status:		
Professionals	0.35356	2.146
Managers	0.55364*	5.645
Administrators, teachers	0.33988	2.827
Clerical, sales	omitted	-
Skilled	0.16832	0.551
Semi-skilled	-0.11194	0.144
Unskilled	0.02070	0.002
Retired	0.72884*	5.999
Unemployed, student	0.37941	1.149

$R^2 = 0.30145***$

\* Significant at .05 level

\*\* Significant at .01 level

F = 4.71369

husbands was negatively related to the feminism scores of husbands at the .01 level of statistical significance. The husband's education was positively related to husband's feminism scores at the .05 level. Categories within the wife's employment status and within husband's occupational status which were significantly related to husband's feminism scores were (a) part-time employment for wives, (b) occupations as managers, and (c) retired occupational status. The remaining category of wife's employment status, 30 hours per week and over, was positively related to the feminism score when compared to the omitted category but not at a statistically significant level. All of the other categories within occupational status of the husband, except semi-skilled, were positively related to feminism scores but again a statistically significant relationship was not found. The remaining variable of husband's income was not related at a significant level to the husband's feminism score.

#### Relative Feminism Score

In the third regression analysis (Table 19) the relative characteristics of the husband and wife were entered as independent variables and the relative feminism score, the difference between the wife's feminism score and the husband's feminism score was entered as the dependent variable. The relative age, relative education and relative income were calculated by subtracting each wife's level of age, education and income from her husband's level of each variable, respectively. Relative age was statistically significant at the .05 level in predicting relative feminism. As the difference between a hus-

TABLE 19

ESTIMATED REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS AND F VALUES  
FOR RELATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF HUSBAND  
AND WIFE AND RELATIVE FEMINISM SCORES

Variable	Regression Coefficient	F
Relative Age	-0.01715*	5.077
Relative Education	-0.02464	2.016
Relative Income	-0.00000	0.000
Wife's Employment:		
0-15 hours/week	omitted	-
15-30 hours/week	0.15373	1.839
30 or more hours/week	0.14554*	3.902

$$R^2 = 0.08754*$$

\* Significant at .05 level

$$F = 2.87827$$

band's and wife's age decreased, the discrepancy between their feminism score also decreased. Relative education and relative income also showed a negative relationship with the relative feminism scores but not at a statistically significant level. Within this regression equation the category of full-time employed women showed a positive relationship at the .05 level with the relative feminism scores, indicating that the difference between the wife's and husband's feminism scores was greater among families with an employed wife than that difference was between families with a non-employed wife.

#### Summary of Regression Analysis

Hypothesis II maintained that respondents' attitudes toward feminism would be statistically independent of the variables of age, education, occupation, and employment status of the spouses, and the number of years married, the number and age of children, and the socio-economic status of the family. Various sub-hypotheses within this general hypothesis were rejected at different levels of statistical significance, as has been discussed previously. The variables which were found to be related to feminism scores of the wife and husband were wife's education, wife's employment status, husband's age, husband's education, certain categories within the husband's occupational status, and the relative age of the spouses.

When comparing the  $R^2$  values produced by the two Regression models, one finds that Model I comparing primarily wife's characteristics with wife's feminism scores, husband's characteristics with husband's feminism scores,

*and relative characteristics with relative feminism scores, explains significantly more of the variation in the relationships than does Model II. For example, the  $R^2$  value of 0.03145 for the second set of regressions in Model I means that this combination of independent variables explains approximately 30% of the variation of the dependent variable. This is significantly higher than the approximately 20% of the variation explained by the second set of regressions in Model II. For this reason, Model I was employed to explain the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. In addition, the third regression equation in Model I, comparing the variance in relative feminism scores with the relative characteristics of husband and wife, adds little to the explanation of the variations of the feminism scores (Table 20).*

#### COMPARISON OF PATTERNS OF ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING AND SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

*In order to compare the respondents according to the pattern of economic decision-making they reported and selected demographic and social characteristics, the subprogram CROSSTABS and the chi-square statistic were used. The crosstabulation procedure produced the observed frequency distributions of respondents according to which pattern of decision-making they reported and according to nine sets of demographic and social variables. Previous literature indicated that the relative characteristics of the husband and wife were more significantly related to power in decision-making; therefore, variables were created employing the relative age, education, and income of the spouses for*

TABLE 20

COMPARISON OF COEFFICIENTS OF DETERMINATION FOR  
TWO MODELS

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>Dependent Variables</i>	$R^2$
<i>MODEL I:</i>		
<i>Characteristics of Wife</i>	<i>Wife's Feminism</i>	0.29176
<i>Characteristics of Husband</i>	<i>Husband's Feminism</i>	0.30145
<i>Relative Characteristics</i>	<i>Relative Feminism</i>	0.08754
<i>MODEL II:</i>		
<i>Relative Characteristics</i>	<i>Wife's Feminism</i>	0.24957
<i>Relative Characteristics</i>	<i>Husband's Feminism</i>	0.20817
<i>Relative Characteristics</i>	<i>Relative Feminism</i>	0.08754

use in this analysis. Other independent variables entered included the number of years married, the number of children under six, the wife's employment status, the wife's occupational status, the husband's occupational status, and the socio-economic status of the family as measured by the Hollingshead index.

These nine sets of data were dichotomized by dividing the sample into two groups according to whether they fell above or below the mean for the particular independent variable measured. This technique was employed to produce a table in which the cell frequencies were of suitable size for analysis. Many previous attempts at researching family power in decision-making used dichotomous or trichotomous data to study the relationships of power and various social and demographic variables.

The chi-square statistic was used to determine whether a statistical dependence occurred between the overall pattern of decision-making and the selected characteristics under analysis. Chi-square makes only one-way comparisons; that is, unlike multiple regression, it does not control for the effects of the other independent variables when assessing the relationship of an independent variable and a dependent variable. It offers no analysis of or explanation for multivariate relationships between various combinations of independent variables.

The results of the crosstabulation procedure among the dependent variable categories within economic decision-making and the nine sets of dichotomized independent variables is shown in Table 21. The chi-square procedure tests the occurrence of the frequencies observed in each cell to determine if statistical

TABLE 21

COMPARISON OF PATTERNS OF ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING  
BY SELECTED SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Variable	Chi-square	Syncratic	Autocratic	Autonomic
		N=59	N=20	N=77
<i>RELATIVE EDUCATION:</i>				
< 3 years	1.141	30	8	33
≥ 3 years		29	12	44
<i>RELATIVE EDUCATION:</i>				
< .8 years	0.839	36	11	41
≥ .8 years		23	9	36
<i>RELATIVE INCOME:</i>				
< \$10,750	1.586	31	12	44
≥ \$10,750		37	12	37
<i>WIFE'S EMPLOYMENT:</i>				
0-15 hours/week	2.618	29	14	42
15+ hours/week		30	6	35
<i>WIFE'S OCCUPATION:</i>				
White collar	4.808	15	1	12
Blue collar		44	19	65

TABLE 21 (continued)

Variable	Chi-square	Syncratic	Autocratic	Autonomic
		N=59	N=20	N=77
<b>HUSBAND'S OCCUPATION:</b>				
White collar	4.612	31	5	34
Blue collar		28	15	43
<b>NUMBER OF YEARS MARRIED:</b>				
≤ 15 years	3.122	22	8	40
≥ 15 years		37	12	37
<b>NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER 6:</b>				
None	3.570	50	13	60
One or more		9	7	17
<b>SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS:</b>				
Highest three levels	7.592*	22	1	22
Lowest three levels		37	19	55

\*Significant at .05 level

dependence exists. For example, when one examines the frequencies within the four patterns of economic decision-making according to age, one can make the following observations: (1) There were 30 couples whose difference in age was less than three years and 29 couples whose age difference was greater than or equal to three years who reported a syncratic pattern of decision-making, and (2) because the raw chi-square for this crosstabulation was low, 2.669, this cell pattern could not be termed statistically dependent. In other words, small values of  $X^2$  indicate that there is no relationship between two variables which occurred systematically, a situation which is termed statistical independence.

Similar observations can be made about the relationship between the pattern of economic decision-making and each of the next seven independent variables. There exists no statistical dependence of patterns of decision-making and relative education, relative income, number of years married, wife's employment status, wife's occupation, husband's occupation, and number of children under six. This means, for example, that couples with large differences in income (i.e., husband earns \$25,000 and wife earns nothing) have not generally reported differences in economic decision-making patterns at a statistically significant level, while couples with a small relative income (i.e., husband earns \$12,000 and wife earns \$10,000) have reported these differences.

It should be realized that in spite of the fact that no statistically significant level of relationships were documented, there were some practical results found that can be applied to this sample of respondents. When a result is deter-

*mined to be statistically significant at the .001 level, for example, there is only one chance that disparate results would occur if the population were sampled 1,000 times. The practical significance relies on the determination of the importance and magnitude of the results according to previous knowledge and logic. On the other hand, some data which is shown to produce statistically significant results may be of little practical importance because the actual magnitude of the difference in respondents according to one variable is very small.*

*The one statistically significant relationship produced by the cross-tabulation procedure was between the patterns of economic decision-making and socio-economic status as measured by Hollingshead's index. As shown in Table 21, the chi-square for these frequency distributions is 7.605, which is statistically significant at the .05 level. This means that respondents in the first three groups of socio-economic status reported different patterns of economic decision-making than did respondents in the last three socio-economic groupings. The decision-making in which this result can be most obviously observed is in the husband dominant decision-making category. Of 19 families which reported their economic decision-making to be dominated by the husband, 18 of them were in the lower three socio-economic status categories. Only one family who reported a husband dominant decision-making pattern fell within the top three socio-economic status categories. In general, then families with in the three lower three categories of Hollingshead's index were more likely to report autocratic decision-making patterns than were higher socio-economic*

*status families. Only socio-economic status, out of the nine sets of demographic and social characteristics, showed any statistically significant relationship with the pattern of economic decision-making reported.*

*Hypothesis III maintained that respondent's pattern of decision-making would be statistically independent of the variables of age of husband and wife, the number of years married, the employment status of the wife, the occupational status of the husband and of the wife, if employed, the income of the husband and wife, the number and age of children, and the socio-economic status of the family. No relationships were found at a statistically significant level except between the pattern of decision-making and the socio-economic status reported by the family.*

## CHAPTER VI

## SUMMARY

*The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between attitudes toward feminism and patterns of economic decision-making. The subjects were 156 randomly selected married women from Greensboro, North Carolina. Data on attitudes toward feminism were collected using a scale developed by Richey (1972) which was adapted in order to solicit, in addition to women's attitudes toward feminism, the women's perceptions of their husband's feminism attitudes. A decision-making scale was developed by the researcher after the conceptualization of a framework for viewing the family economic decision-making process. The scale provided information concerning who makes decisions concerning four economic functions of the family: (1) the production function, (2) the expenditure function, (3) the savings and investment function, and (4) the investment in human capital function. The mailed survey forms, including these two scales and a respondent data sheet were completed by the respondents during April, 1976.*

*In addition to the investigation of the two phenomena, attitudes toward feminism and patterns of family economic decision-making, three other related topics were researched: (1) the difference between the wife's attitudes toward feminism and the husband's attitudes toward feminism as perceived by the wife, (2) the relationship between attitudes toward feminism and selected demographic*

variables, and (3) the relationship of patterns of economic decision-making and selected demographic variables.

*The findings of this study can be summarized as follows:*

*(1) Statistically significant relationships at the .001 level were found between both wife's and husband's attitudes toward feminism and the pattern of economic decision-making reported for the entire decision-making scale and for each of the four functions within the scale. Generally, the higher a respondent's score on the feminism scale, the more likely it was for that family to report either syncretic patterns or autonomic patterns of economic decision-making. Respondents who scored relatively low on the feminism scale were more likely to report either wife dominant or husband dominant patterns of decision-making.*

*(2) Small differences were found between wife's attitudes toward feminism and the husband's feminist attitudes as perceived by the wife, with wives generally scoring .3 units higher than husbands on the feminism scale. However, these differences added little to the explanation of the variation of feminism scores within the different patterns of decision-making reported. Nor did the relative attitudes score developed relate in any statistically significant way to the social and demographic variables reported by the respondents.*

*(3) The demographic and social variables which were statistically related to attitudes toward feminism at different significance levels were the wife's education, the husband's education, the wife's employment status, the husband's age, the relative age of the spouses, and certain categories within*

*the husband's occupational status. Significance levels at which these variables related to the different sets of feminism scores are reported in Tables 17 through 19.*

*(4) The only one of nine different sets of dichotomized social and demographic variables which was significantly related to the pattern of economic decision-making reported was the socio-economic status of the family. Generally, respondents who reported falling within one of the three highest categories of socio-economic level tended to report having either syncretic or autonomic patterns of decision-making, while respondents who fell within the lowest three categories of socio-economic status reported higher instances of a husband dominant decision-making pattern.*

*The major conclusion of this study was that the two phenomena, attitudes toward feminism and patterns of economic decision-making, can have an interacting effect on each other. Whether spousal attitudes toward the roles of women in society have a causal effect on the way in which the families make their decisions, or whether the reverse is true, is not determined. However, it is valid to conclude that families in which both the husband and wife have attitudes which support equality for women in society in general have a tendency to experience a type of decision-making in which both spouses play an equal part.*

*The analysis of the decision-making patterns of families by studying the various decisions families made according to the economic functions performed produced differences in the pattern of decision-making among families which*

should be investigated further. Future study, including in-depth interviewing, or perhaps, case studies, which use the same conceptual framework but perhaps, sharpened instruments, and including both larger and more heterogeneous samples, is recommended to explore the complex economic behavior of families. It is hoped that the preliminary conceptual framework developed in this study may be used for further systematic analysis of how, as well as why, and toward the accomplishments of what goals, families make decisions as they do. This framework suggests the existence of a system of decision-making which can be used for a comprehensive study of family economic behavior.

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APPENDIX A  
QUESTIONNAIRE

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
AT GREENSBORO

GREENSBORO RESEARCH SURVEY

School of Home Economics

April, 1976

Respondent Number \_ \_ \_ \_

Card Number

Dear Greensboro Resident:

Thank you for being willing to participate in this survey which is a part of my graduate study at the University. You are one of only 300 residents of Greensboro who were randomly selected from the telephone directory; therefore, your response is very important.

On the following pages you will find some questions which only need to be circled (O), while a few ask for your own response. Please read each part carefully and complete each question. All responses will be kept completely confidential, so you do not need to give your name at all. The numbers on the right side of the pages are for research use, so do not be concerned about them.

Included in this package is a stamped, addressed envelope that you may use to return the completed survey form to me. I would very much like to receive all survey forms by April 30.

Once again, you have my sincere thanks for taking the time to help me. If you should wish to know about the results of this study, please indicate this on the final page of the survey form so I may send you a summary of the project as soon as I have completed the research.

Sincerely,

*Debbie Godwin*

Debbie Godwin

PART I. The following statements give you an opportunity to express your personal way of thinking and feeling toward the role and the rights of women. Opinions differ and your view is important, so please answer according to the way you think things should be.

1. To the left of each statement is a set of five possible choices. Please circle the letter which corresponds to your frank and honest opinion about the statement.

Code: SA -- Strongly Agree  
 A -- Agree  
 U -- Undecided  
 D -- Disagree  
 SD -- Strongly Disagree

2. To the right of each statement is a second set of the same five choices. Please circle the letter which you feel closely corresponds to your husband's opinion about the statement.

Please do not skip or leave out any.

Your attitude	Your view of your husband's attitude
1. SA A U D SD Women are too nervous and high-strung to make good surgeons.	SA A U D SD
2. SA A U D SD The working wife should still have the right to and protection of alimony.	SA A U D SD
3. SA A U D SD Women should be allowed entire freedom in their choice of occupation.	SA A U D SD
4. SA A U D SD There should be a strict merit system of public appointment and promotion without regard to sex.	SA A U D SD
5. SA A U D SD The tradition which prevents women from taking the initiative in courtship should be continued.	SA A U D SD
6. SA A U D SD Women should take the passive role in courtship.	SA A U D SD
7. SA A U D SD Women should accept the intellectual limitations of their sex and should strive to improve their position.	SA A U D SD

8. SA A U D SD *Women should not have as much right to sow wild oats as do men.* SA A U D SD
9. SA A U D SD *It is unreasonable to expect women to be subject to military service on the same basis as men are.* SA A U D SD
10. SA A U D SD *The general belief that women are by nature too high-strung to hold certain jobs is no more true than many of our superstitions.* SA A U D SD
11. SA A U D SD *A man should be expected to offer his seat to a woman standing in a crowded bus.* SA A U D SD
12. SA A U D SD *Many women are suitable for and should be given leadership roles in political affairs.* SA A U D SD
13. SA A U D SD *The morals of women need special protections which are not necessary for men.* SA A U D SD
14. SA A U D SD *Women really do not need to be given equal opportunities with men for vocational training.* SA A U D SD
15. SA A U D SD *It is appropriate to consider alimony as a protection for women as members of the weaker sex.* SA A U D SD
16. SA A U D SD *On the average women should not be regarded as capable as men in contributing to economic production.* SA A U D SD
17. SA A U D SD *It is degrading for a professionally trained career woman in the business world to have to do her own secretarial work.* SA A U D SD
18. SA A U D SD *Because every woman has the basic right to control her reproductive life, all laws against abortion should be repealed.* SA A U D SD

19. SA A U D SD *No man has the right to insist that his wife accept his view as to what can or cannot be afforded in the family budget.* SA A U D SD
20. SA A U D SD *Male workers should not receive more pay than female workers when they are doing the same job.* SA A U D SD
21. SA A U D SD *Scrubbing floors should be regarded as women's work rather than mowing the lawn.* SA A U D SD
22. SA A U D SD *Women should be guided by men's views in deciding what is proper in feminine dress.* SA A U D SD
23. SA A U D SD *A woman should not expect to go to the same places or have the same freedom of action as a man.* SA A U D SD
24. SA A U D SD *The husband should be regarded as the legal representative of the family in all matters of law.* SA A U D SD
25. SA A U D SD *Women should not hold political offices of great responsibility.* SA A U D SD
26. SA A U D SD *When deciding who should be the legal guardian of a child, preference should be given to the parent most fit and capable.* SA A U D SD
27. SA A U D SD *The use of profane or obscene language by a woman is no more objectionable than the same language by a man.* SA A U D SD
28. SA A U D SD *Women should have the right to compete with men in all areas of employment.* SA A U D SD
29. SA A U D SD *Women are often hired to jobs which are really below their educational status and do not use their abilities.* SA A U D SD

30. SA A U D SD *A woman is naturally better suited to assume the responsibility for housework.* SA A U D SD
31. SA A U D SD *It is not degrading for a woman to be thought of in terms of physical beauty or charm only.* SA A U D SD
32. SA A U D SD *A woman who pursues a career after marriage is shirking her fundamental duty to home and family.* SA A U D SD
33. SA A U D SD *Colleges or departments within a college should be allowed to have a quota system so they may control the ratio of women to men.* SA A U D SD
34. SA A U D SD *Men are better suited to serve on juries than are women.* SA A U D SD
35. SA A U D SD *If they are smart, women will let men out-perform them in school.* SA A U D SD
36. SA A U D SD *Parents should keep a daughter, on the average, under closer control than a son.* SA A U D SD
37. SA A U D SD *After marriage, a wife should forget her educational endeavors and make a home for her husband.* SA A U D SD
38. SA A U D SD *It is too limiting to demand that a mother must stay home and care for her family.* SA A U D SD
39. SA A U D SD *Money spent on professional training for women is not wasted.* SA A U D SD
40. SA A U D SD *A woman is less feminine if she competes with men for a high academic standing.* SA A U D SD
41. SA A U D SD *Because they are weaker, women should be covered by protective work laws.* SA A U D SD

42. SA A U D SD *It is more important for young men to continue their education than it is for women.* SA A U D SD
43. SA A U D SD *Regardless of sex, there should be equal pay for equal work.* SA A U D SD
44. SA A U D SD *State laws regarding the number of hours women may work and the weight they may be required to lift are used to discriminate against women in industrial work and should be changed.* SA A U D SD
45. SA A U D SD *There is nothing disgraceful about a woman accepting an inferior economic status.* SA A U D SD
46. SA A U D SD *A daughter in a family should have the same privileges and opportunities as a son.* SA A U D SD
47. SA A U D SD *The relative amounts of time and energy to be devoted to household duties on the one hand and to a career on the other should be determined by personal desires and interests rather than by sex.* SA A U D SD
48. SA A U D SD *An amendment giving equal rights to women should be added to our Constitution.* SA A U D SD
49. SA A U D SD *Women should not enter into the business world in direct competition with men.* SA A U D SD
50. SA A U D SD *In a dating situation the expenses should be shared equally.* SA A U D SD
51. SA A U D SD *It is inaccurate to say that women think in more personal terms than do men.* SA A U D SD
52. SA A U D SD *Married women should have full control of their persons and give or withhold sexual intimacy as they choose.* SA A U D SD

53. SA A U D SD Parental authority and responsibility for discipline for the children should be mainly assumed by the wife. SA A U D SD
54. SA A U D SD A woman does not have to accept chivalrous attentions from men to be truly womanly. SA A U D SD
55. SA A U D SD If she has the educational training and ability for a job, a woman should be given equal consideration with men. SA A U D SD

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE IF BOTH RESPONSES ARE GIVEN FOR EACH OF THE 55 STATEMENTS.

---

PART II. In every family someone has to decide such things as where the family will live. Many couples talk things over first, but the final decision often has to be made by the husband or wife. Please answer the following questions as accurately as possible by circling one of the five choices.

- Code: EH -- It's entirely up to husband  
 MH -- It's mostly up to husband  
 B -- It's up to both husband and wife  
 MW -- It's mostly up to wife  
 EW -- It's entirely up to wife

If someone in your family does not actually make a decision concerning one of the questions (for example, if you don't use credit, carry life insurance, or take vacations, etc.) please indicate who would decide if the situation did exist. Please do not skip or leave out any.

---

WHO DECIDES:

- |                                                                                               |               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. What job the husband will take?                                                            | EH MH B MW EW |
| 2. Whether or not the wife will work?                                                         | EH MH B MW EW |
| 3. Whether to acquire credit, i. e. borrow money from a bank, savings and loan, credit union? | EH MH B MW EW |
| 4. Whether to acquire life insurance for family member(s)?                                    | EH MH B MW EW |

- |                                                                                                       |               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 5. <i>Whether to insure your family with fire, theft, accident and/or other insurance?</i>            | EH MH B MW EW |
| 6. <i>What doctor to have when someone is sick?</i>                                                   | EH MH B MW EW |
| 7. <i>What general location, the city, town, or community in which the family will live?</i>          | EH MH B MW EW |
| 8. <i>What particular house, apartment or other type of dwelling in which the family will live?</i>   | EH MH B MW EW |
| 9. <i>How much money to spend on food?</i>                                                            | EH MH B MW EW |
| 10. <i>How much money to spend on clothing?</i>                                                       | EH MH B MW EW |
| 11. <i>How much money to spend on furnishing and decorating your home?</i>                            | EH MH B MW EW |
| 12. <i>How much money to spend on appliances for your home?</i>                                       | EH MH B MW EW |
| 13. <i>How to budget the money, i. e. balance the checkbook, pay the bills, etc.?</i>                 | EH MH B MW EW |
| 14. <i>Whether to save money at all?</i>                                                              | EH MH B MW EW |
| 15. <i>Whether to make provisions for future financial needs, such as children's education?</i>       | EH MH B MW EW |
| 16. <i>Where to put any money saved, i. e. in a bank, savings and loan, etc.?</i>                     | EH MH B MW EW |
| 17. <i>Whether to invest in any speculative interests, i. e. the stock market, real estate, etc.?</i> | EH MH B MW EW |
| 18. <i>Whether the husband will continue his schooling?</i>                                           | EH MH B MW EW |
| 19. <i>Whether the wife will continue her schooling?</i>                                              | EH MH B MW EW |
| 20. <i>Whether the husband will acquire additional job training or skills?</i>                        | EH MH B MW EW |
| 21. <i>Whether the wife will acquire additional job training or skills?</i>                           | EH MH B MW EW |

22. Whether to acquire such things as newspapers, journals, books, magazines, and/or encyclopedias? EH MH B MW EW
23. What to do during vacation time? EH MH B MW EW
24. Whether to participate in community efforts, charities, volunteer work, etc.? EH MH B MW EW

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE THAT A RESPONSE IS GIVEN FOR EACH OF THE 24 STATEMENTS.

PART III. Data about your personal and family characteristics is requested merely for research use. No information about you or your family will be used to attempt to identify you and your answers will be kept completely confidential.

1. Your age \_\_\_\_ 2. Your husband's age \_\_\_\_ 3. Number of years married \_\_\_\_
4. Education -- number of years of schooling completed to date:

<u>WIFE</u>		<u>HUSBAND</u>
_____	Grades 1-6	_____
_____	Grades 7-9	_____
_____	Grades 10-12	_____
_____	High school graduate	_____
_____	Some college	_____
_____	College graduate	_____
_____	Post graduate	_____

5. Total annual income:

<u>WIFE</u>	<u>HUSBAND</u>
_____ less than \$100	_____ less than \$5,000
_____ \$100 - \$2,999	_____ \$5,000 - \$8,999
_____ \$3,000 - \$4,999	_____ \$9,000 - \$12,999
_____ \$5,000 - \$9,999	_____ \$13,000 - \$14,999
_____ \$10,000 - \$14,999	_____ \$15,000 - \$19,999
_____ \$15,000 - \$19,999	_____ \$20,000 - \$24,999
_____ \$20,000 - \$24,999	_____ \$25,000 - \$29,999
_____ \$25,000 and over	_____ \$30,000 and over

6. *Wife's employment -- how many hours do you work per week?*

       0-14 hours             15-30 hours             30 or more hours

*If you do work, please describe your job in detail:*

7. *Husband's occupation -- please describe your husband's job in detail:*

8. *Please list the birth dates of any children you have (month and year):*

\_\_\_\_\_

*If you have not started or completed your family, how many children do you plan to have?*

\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK TO SEE THAT A RESPONSE IS GIVEN FOR EACH OF THE QUESTIONS.**

*I would like a copy of the findings of this study: Yes        No*

## APPENDIX B

## TWO FACTOR INDEX OF SOCIAL POSITION

*"The Two Factor Index of Social Position was developed to meet the need for an objective, easily applicable procedure to estimate the positions individuals occupy in the status structure of our society" (Hollingshead, 1958, Appendix 2). Assumptions on which the author based the development of this index were: (1) that there exists in society a status structure, (2) that a few commonly accepted characteristics of individuals determine an individual's position in this structure, and (3) that the characteristics which symbolize status may be scaled and through the integration of statistical procedures may be combined to produce a reliable and meaningful way of stratifying the population which is under study.*

*Occupation and education are the two factors employed in this index to estimate an individual's position in the social structure. Education is assumed to reflect not only the knowledge one possesses, but also his cultural tastes and experiences, while occupation is presumed to reflect the skill and power possessed by the individual as he or she works and performs in society. These two items of information, the precise education of the individual and the amount of formal education received, are necessary in Hollingshead's estimation to statistically calculate one's position in society. The two factors are then converted to numerical values between one and seven. The following are the classifications which Hollingshead listed and two which*

were added by the present researcher:

A. *The Occupational Scale*

1. *Higher executives of large businesses, proprietors of large businesses, and major professionals, such as doctors, dentists, lawyers, and pharmacists;*
2. *Business managers, proprietors of medium-sized businesses and lesser professionals, such as nurses, accountants, real estate brokers;*
3. *Administrative personnel, small independent businessmen, and teachers;*
4. *Sales and clerical workers, technicians, and owners of small businesses, such as an independent grocery, etc.;*
5. *Skilled manual employees, such as repairmen;*
6. *Semi-skilled employees and machine operators;*
7. *Unskilled employees;*
8. *The retired individuals;*
9. *Those individuals who are unemployed or in school full time.*

B. *The Educational Scale*

1. *Graduate or professional training;*
2. *Standard college or university graduate;*
3. *Partial college training (1-3 years);*
4. *High school graduate;*
5. *Partial high school (1-3 years);*
6. *Junior high school (7-9 years);*
7. *Less than seven years of schooling.*

To calculate the score of social position in this index for an individual, his scale values for these two factors, occupation and education, are weighted as follows:

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Factor Weight</u>
Occupation	7
Education	4

Each scale value is then multiplied by the appropriate weight and summed to yield an index score. Scores range from a low of eleven, indicating the highest possible social position, to a high of seventy-seven, indicating the lowest possible social position. Scores of social position obtained through the application of the two factor index can then be arranged on a continuum and then divided into groups. Hollingshead suggested the following breakdown to create a hierarchy of social class:

<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Range of Computed Scores</u>
I	11-17
II	18-27
III	28-43
IV	44-60
V	61-77

In addition to these five social classes, this researcher added a sixth classification, Class VI, which included the unemployed, the retired, and the full-time student. Because these individuals are possibly experiencing a temporary loss or fluctuation in occupation, the five category classification

would not be applicable to them. Thus, the present study classified respondents into five categories according to Hollingshead's classification system, and added another classification for those not covered in his system.