

MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements	ii
List of Tables	iv
Chapter I--Introduction	1
Chapter II--Review of Literature	11
Chapter III--Procedure	32
Chapter IV--Results and Discussion	38
Chapter V--Summary and Implications	63
Appendix	72
Bibliography	81
Vita	88

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table I Maternal employment status by academic level in college and sex of respondent	39
Table II Sex of respondent by maternal employment status and academic level in college	41
Table III Academic level in college by sex of respondent and maternal employment status	43
Table IV Tests of significance for main effects and interaction effects of the variables of sex, academic level in college and maternal employment	46
Table V Means and standard deviation of the means for the sub-scales based on sex, academic level in college and maternal employment	47
Table VI Means and standard deviation of the means for the sub-scales based on the eight possible types of students involved in the study	49
Table VII Differences and simultaneous confidence intervals for the sub-scales for the factor of sex	52

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The history of marriage and the family may be characterized by a general progression from non-equalitarian sex roles toward equalitarian roles. However, within this historical span of time the movement has fluctuated back and forth in given periods so that at particular times it has been in the opposite direction, from equalitarian toward non-equalitarian. Environmental, social, and cultural forces in any given age exert directional influences upon the formulation of sex roles. In order to understand the contemporary definition of sex roles, it would be helpful to have an assessment of the present perspective of youth.

Seward (1970) has documented this ebb and flow phenomenon over time, which may be seen in the following examples. In classical Athens, the woman was the property of her husband, confined to special quarters at the back of the house. Throughout the rise of the Roman Empire, the status of women in marriage also rose. Before the end of the empire, women were in all the professions, and traditional family structure was altered as a result of this new social role. During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance women were accorded high prestige in marriage. Later, the Puritans emphasized the strict traditional roles for

men and women in a family.

An autocratic family system existed in the early stages of United States history. Survival required strong, unquestioned leadership within each independent family group. Responsibility for family behavior and well-being were conferred upon the husband and father, and his authority was without equivocation. Sex roles were clearly, and often widely, separated, with the man being involved in maintaining subsistence and the woman being involved in managing the home. Social and cultural forces succeeded in transmitting this pattern from parent to children with little or no modification.

During the early part of the twentieth century the rigidity of male authority may have been relaxed, but the view remained that the husband made the living and the wife made the home. Domination was the father's prerogative, while the mother was subordinant. Differential treatment of children was expected, with domination being reinforced in boys, while girls were taught to be submissive (Seward, 1970).

A shift began to emerge with the Depression, urbanization, and World War II. A woman working outside marriage became more acceptable, and was often a necessity. Shared responsibilities in the home were an outgrowth of this influx

of women into the working world. After World War II in some families the wife left work and returned to the home, as many still felt this was a woman's real place. However, it is from the late 1940's onward that a slow shift from traditional to equalitarian marriage roles may be seen.

Now, in the 1970's, traditional views of sex roles for men and women are increasingly under scrutiny and extensive alteration. Sex roles, including marriage roles, have particularly come into focus with the advent of the women's rights movement and experimental family forms. Contemporary forces such as ecological and population problems, educational advances, increased human longevity, and continuing industrialization and urbanization have contributed to a change in attitudes of both men and women toward marriage. Pressures of a modern ecosystem necessitate a family system that is highly adaptable to these changing external demands (Schwab, 1972; Vincent, 1966). Changes in the relative position of individuals within a society must be accompanied by change in their relative roles within each subsystem of that society.

Change in sex roles is inevitable, and the relating of partners to each other in new ways is basic to the popular movements such as women's liberation, open marriage, and group marriage. If there is a change in one role, there must

be a change in the other, since masculine and feminine roles are complementary. The new movements express a desire for more depth, more understanding, and more equality in a marriage relationship, necessitating changes in the role of husband and wife as partners relating to one another (Ramey, 1972; Bardwick, 1973; O'Neill and O'Neill, 1973; Mednick and Tangri, 1972).

Perspectives on the roles couples will play in marriage are mainly derived from one's family of orientation. Therefore, marriage role expectations are not formed in marriage, but are brought to the marriage by each person as a result of his home life. A child learns future marriage roles through observation of his parents (Kirkpatrick, 1955).

With the woman's widening role outside the family, traditional family functioning procedures have been altered. Many studies suggest the movement to more equalitarian marriage relationships, which would also necessitate more equalitarian marriage role expectations (Foote, 1961; Dyer and Urban, 1958; Leopold, 1958). In addition, with growing recognition and acceptance of non-traditional family forms, the marriage role expectations of young adults should also be influenced.

This study examined the marriage role expectations of male and female college freshmen and senior undergraduates.

At a time when there continues to be rapid change and continual introduction of new social ideas, it is important to document the contemporary placement of marriage role expectations on the equalitarian - non-equalitarian continuum.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the marriage role expectations of male and female freshmen and senior undergraduates.

### Definition of Terms

In this study, the following definitions were pertinent:

1. Sex role behavior: Behavior seen by an individual as appropriate for a certain sex, as culturally prescribed.
2. Marriage role expectations: Roles one expects himself to play in marriage and the roles he expects his spouse to play as defined by scores on the Marriage Role Expectation Questionnaire.

### Methodological Assumptions

The assumptions of this study were the following:

1. Students are representative of the freshman and senior student population living on campus at VPI&SU.

2. All students will have been exposed to essentially the same cultural definitions of sex roles.

3. Students answered the questionnaire with reference to personal expectations, and not in an attempt to conform to views of cultural expectations.

### Theoretical Framework

This study was based on the symbolic interactional framework as it applies to role theory. A brief review of this framework as it relates to this study follows.

The symbolic interactional framework is based on two major areas. One area is how a person acquires ways of behaving, or is socialized. The other is the organization of persistent behavior patterns, or personality (Stryker, 1959). The concept of role is used to deal with these problems. "Role is an organized set of behaviors that belongs to an identifiable position, and these behaviors are activated when the position is occupied" (Sabrin and Allen, 1966; 545). Therefore, basic to this concept is that role behavior and role expectations are learned through social interaction.

For children, this role learning is shaped by many different factors. One major factor is reinforcement from parents. A child learns what behaviors are appropriate for

him through reinforcement of some behaviors and lack of reinforcement for others. Another major factor is that a child learns his roles through imitation of others, which is a very efficient method of social learning. In addition, children's play activities facilitate role learning through peers. Also, there is a pervasiveness of expected appropriate sex role behavior throughout our culture which may be learned by a child through such things as television, movies, radio, newspapers, and magazines.

As a child learns his roles, he also learns complementary roles. He learns what he can expect from others. Therefore, what is learned are expectations for a role and it's complementary role. Also, "observation of complementary roles ... aids in the learning of one's own" (Sabrin and Allen, 1966; 546). Therefore, a child learns to act appropriately for his sex and age. In doing this the child begins to develop his own attitudes about sex role behaviors.

Man lives in a social environment, and therefore every behavior occurs in a social context. A child is socialized in order for him to acquire elements of his ascribed roles (Sabrin and Allen, 1966). Through interaction with and reaction of others, a child learns his own roles and the roles of others.

While role learning for children centers around "how," as one grows learning comes to be centered around "that." An adolescent or adult learns "that" he is supposed to perform in a certain way for a certain role (Sabrin and Allen, 1966). An individual may learn a role expectation before occupying the position and enacting the role.

Role expectations, then, are collections of cognitions -- beliefs, subjective probabilities, and elements of knowledge -- which specify in relation to complementary roles the rights and duties, the appropriate conduct, for persons occupying a particular position (Sabrin and Allen, 1966; 498).

Meaningful behavioral units, such as father, mother, husband, or wife, are formed. An occupant of a certain position is not only expected to exhibit certain acts, but is also expected to perform the acts in certain ways. Role expectations help induce conformity.

Role expectations help define the boundaries for acceptable behavior. They create a framework, and in this way help others to predict behavior and facilitate smoother social interaction (Sabrin and Allen, 1966). In fact, degree of consensus is a major factor in determining if the interaction will be smooth.

Role expectations are influenced by the occurrences in the society. Changes or developments within a society

may cause certain role expectations to change.

The social environment plays a major part in role behavior and role expectations. As a child grows, he forms concepts of appropriate male and female role behavior. The child incorporates the appropriate sex role behavior into his behavioral repertoire. In addition, as one grows he develops expectations of appropriate behavior for different roles he will occupy in his life. One of these is that of one's expected marriage roles. Therefore, the marriage role expectations of the college students in this study were also a result of the socialization process.

#### Rationale and Hypotheses

There is a liberal trend in marriage role expectations. It has been shown that the "offspring" generation tends to hold more equalitarian marriage role expectations than does the "elder" generation (Sell, 1969; Brigante, 1972). There is some research that indicates males tend to expect more equal roles than females in marriage (Hollander and Vollmer, 1974). On the other hand, there are a number of research investigations that have shown it is females who have more equal marriage role expectations (Geiken, 1964; Hodson and Sisk, 1965; Kalish, Maloney and Arkoff, 1966; Sharma, 1971). Since the trend is for females to have more

equalitarian expectations of marriage, it seems logical to hypothesize ( $H_1$ ) there will be a significant difference in sub-scores on the Marriage Role Expectation Questionnaire (MREQ) between males and females, with the females having more equalitarian views.

In addition, college students who had mothers who were employed outside the home tended to express more liberal attitudes toward sex roles (Vogel et al., 1970; Meier, 1972). Therefore, another hypothesis ( $H_2$ ) is that there will be a significant difference in sub-scores on the MREQ between students with mothers who were employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up and students whose mothers were not employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up. The students with employed mothers are expected to be less traditional in their views.

In relation to sex roles, it was found that senior college students tended to be less traditional and more homogeneous in their views than were freshmen college students (Kalka, 1968; Henderson, 1956; Whatley and Appel, 1973). The third hypothesis ( $H_3$ ) is that there will be a significant difference in sub-scores on the MREQ between freshmen and seniors, with the seniors being less traditional in their views.

CHAPTER II  
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research relevant to this study is divided into six sections. Marriage role expectations can be viewed as a part of sex role expectations, and so the first three sections will deal with aspects of sex roles. These will include development of sex role expectations, continued belief in sex role expectations, and the importance maternal employment plays in sex role expectations. The next section will deal with sex role attitudes, or how people's concepts of male and female roles differ. Since this study is concerned with a college population, the fifth section will look at the convergence of attitudes that occurs in college. The final section will deal specifically with attitudes toward marriage roles.

Development of Sex Role Expectations

A child is exposed to certain expectations in relation to his sex. Josselyn (1967) has suggested that the clearly defined roles of mother and father in a child's life is the single most important factor in sexual identity. Some research has suggested that sex role identity in children is derived not just from mother-daughter and father-son interactions, but from a complex interaction between both parents and the child (Lynn, 1966; Rosenberg and Sutton-

Smith, 1968; Ward, 1973). In addition, it has been suggested that sibling-sibling, as well as parent-child relations may, with birth interval, account for sex role identification (Strodbeck and Creelan, 1968). Since the family is the locus of interpersonal interaction for the child, it plays a major role in a child's sex role identity. Knowing one's sex role assignment, and familial definitions of sex-appropriate behavior, a child will start to formulate his own sex role definitions and attitudes.

The schools also contribute to a child's definition of appropriate sex role behavior. In studies of children's reading texts in kindergarten and elementary school, it has repeatedly been found that they present sexual stereotypes of the dominant man and the passive woman in relation to roles, relationships, activities, occupation, and relative importance assigned to the male and female characters (Frasher and Walker, 1972; Bernstein, 1972; Saario, Jacklin, and Tittle, 1973; Oliver, 1974).

The expectations of the teachers also contribute to sex role stereotypes. Levitin and Chananie (1972) studied the responses of 40 white, middle-class first- and second-grade teachers to descriptions of aggressive or dependent behaviors attributed to hypothetical male or female students. Children showing a sex-typed behavior were judged as being typical. Mulawka (1972) studied 28 kindergarten through third-grade teachers. The teachers' display of pictorial or written

materials showed significantly more references to males than females as wage earners and in leadership positions. Chasen (1974) found that sex role stereotypes appear in almost all areas of programs in the pre-kindergarten classroom.

There is a multitude of evidence to suggest that children do incorporate the sex role attitudes consistent with what is presented to them at home and at school. Brown (1958) has found that as early as two years old, children can make distinctions between masculine and feminine behavior. Schell and Silber (1968) found this true in their study of 64 three- and four-year olds. Heller (1956), in a study of 25 boys and girls, pointed out that by four and five years old children are aware of their respective sex roles. Brown (1956) and Hartley (1964) found that five- and six-year olds identify with and exhibit their respective sex role patterns.

These sex roles almost exclusively follow the traditional patterns. Emmerich (1961) found that 225 middle-class children ages six to ten reported that the father's sex role is seen as more powerful than the mother's sex role. In studying 60 boys and girls equally divided into three groups of three- and four-year olds, five- and six-year olds, and seven- and eight-year olds, Silver (1972) found that both sexes consider aggressiveness as more characteristic of masculinity. Nurturance was seen as more characteristic of

femininity. In fact, with increased age, aggressiveness and nurturance become increasingly important as criteria of maleness and femaleness. Looft (1971) and Ginzberg (1951), in studying young children and adolescents, respectively, found that there are definitely sex differences in vocational aspirations which reflect traditional sex role expectations. Looft asked 33 boys and girls in first and second grade 1) what they would like to be when they grew up, and 2) what they thought they would really do when they grew up. While most boys and girls said traditional male or female occupations in response to the first question, one girl answered "doctor." However, in response to the second question, she changed her answer to "sales clerk." Beuf (1974) studied 63 three- to six-year olds, and found that they see the world divided into male and female tasks, although they were more equalitarian in their view of the familial sphere than of the occupational sphere. Paulsen (1967) has found that the family is the most important socializing agent in the development of career commitment in adolescents.

Children differ in sex role preferences. From kindergarten through fourth grade, boys tend to have a stronger preference for the masculine role than girls have for the feminine role (Brown, 1958; Ward, 1973). Hartley (1964) found that elementary school-age girls expressed traditional

concepts of sex-related roles which were often in conflict with their own self-definitions.

Bettelheim (1973) has suggested that with fathers gone from the time a child gets up in the morning until he is ready for bed at night, many male children are identifying more with the role of their mother. Fathers are in ho-hum jobs which are not thought of as "essential." Instead, a child sees his mother getting involved in voluntary services which she approaches with enthusiasm, or she only works at a job she finds is interesting. In any respect, the son sees his mother involved in exciting endeavors, while he only sees his father lounging on the couch or doing insignificant jobs, such as taking the garbage out. Therefore, he emulates characteristics of the female role.

The evidence is strong that sex role expectations are first presented to the child in his home. The schools, through the programs, teachers, and texts reinforce the various sex role stereotypes learned at home. The expectations are then incorporated by the children into their repertoire of sex-appropriate behaviors. Young boys have a stronger preference for the masculine role than young girls have for the feminine role. However, it has been suggested that boys may now be more inclined to identify with some aspects of female roles. Often what a girl sees as appropriate female

behavior is in conflict with her own self-definition. This suggests that young girls may experience role conflict, or an inconsistency between role concept and behavior.

### Continuance of Sex Role Expectations

Sex role attitudes exist, and they determine what is labeled as appropriate or inappropriate for males and females. Incorporated in these stereotypes is the idea that masculine characteristics are more highly valued than feminine characteristics (Rosenkrantz et al., 1968; Bem and Bem, 1970). Deaix and Emswiller (1974) conducted a study with 55 male and 75 female undergraduates. They were told to evaluate the performance of a hypothetical male or female who had performed in an above average manner on either a male or female related task. It was found that a performance by the hypothetical male was more often attributed to skill. However, an equivalent performance by the hypothetical female on the same task was attributed to luck. It is not surprising that Rosenkrantz et al. (1968) found that male valued items reflect a "competency" cluster and there was a relative absence of this cluster for valued female characteristics. Instead, female characteristics centered around a "warmth and expressiveness" cluster. In addition, there was a strong agreement between men and women college students on the differences between male and female roles, and that the existing sex role stereotypes are desirable.

Some concern has been expressed that since World War II there has been a depolarization of sex roles in America (Winick, 1969). Preferred colors for children have shifted to yellow or green, names are more unisex, hair styles are similar, toys are similar, and even with the sexier dolls girls can play act dating patterns and be ready to take the traditional male role in courtship patterns. For adults, clothing and shoes have become unisexed, and men wear scented colognes. Women are participating more in sports and working outside the home, thus necessitating less traditional role division in the home. However, it is suggested that the search for equality does not necessitate equivalence, and completely depolarized roles can lead to uncertainty.

#### Maternal Employment and Sex Roles

An important consideration in relation to all that has been written on sex role attitudes is the effect of maternal employment on the child's concept of, and the adult's beliefs about, acceptable sex-appropriate behavior.

Since a child first learns about appropriate sex roles from his parents, maternal employment should influence the child's concept of the feminine role. Maternal employment makes it necessary for change to occur in the traditional division of labor in a home. Even though working mothers

probably still engage in more domestic tasks than their husbands, there is still a more equalitarian division of tasks when the mother works (Hoffman, 1974).

This change in traditional role definition brought about by maternal employment may affect children's perceptions. Hoffman (1974) has reported that Hartley (1961), in studying elementary-school-age daughters of working mothers, found that they tended to view more similarity in the activities of men and women. Women were seen as taking a more active role outside the home. King, McIntyre, and Axelson (1968) showed that ninth-grade students with working mothers saw maternal employment as less threatening to a marriage. Miller (1975) studied kindergarten girls with working and non-working mothers. She found that the daughters of working mothers saw the roles of their parents as less traditional and also saw sex roles in general as less traditional.

A few studies reported different results. Hartley (1959) discovered that elementary-school-age daughters of mothers who were not working tended to sex-type more items than girls with mothers who worked. However, in interviewing the mothers, many of them said they expressed guilt to their children about working. In studying 47 boys and 110 girls age five, eight, and eleven, where 50 percent of the sample had mothers who worked outside the home, Hartley (1960)

found that the traditional roles persisted. The working mother was seen as helping father, while domestic tasks by the father were seen as help for the mother.

Maternal employment can be a major influence on college student's attitudes toward sex roles. Vogel et al. (1970), in studying the sex role perceptions held by college students with reference to their mother's employment, found that both men and women with employed mothers perceived significantly smaller differences between masculine and feminine roles than did men and women with mothers who were homemakers. Females' perceptions of sex roles were more strongly influenced by their mother's employment than were the males' perceptions. Meier (1972) studied the relationship of sex role attitudes of college students to parental characteristics. More liberal attitudes toward social equality for women, as expressed by the students, were positively related to maternal employment. Perhaps the educated, working mother conveyed the idea of social competence of women to her children.

#### Sex Role Attitudes

The existing confusion about learned and practiced sex roles has helped to create confusion in sex role attitudes. Fand (1955) and Steinmann, Levi, and Fox (1964) have studied the self-concept of college women compared with

their concept of the ideal woman and men's ideal woman. They differentiated between other-orientation (emphasizing family and husband) and self-orientation (focuses on self-development). It was found that women saw themselves as equally balanced between other- and self-orientations. Their ideal self was similar to their self-concept, while men's ideal woman was seen as highly other-oriented. Steinmann, Levi, and Fox used a 34-statement inventory which contained value judgements related to women's activities and satisfactions. The inventory was given to 75 college women. They also found that women perceive themselves and their ideal as essentially similar in desired activities and beliefs. Both their ideal and self-perception were relatively balanced with components of intra-family and extra-family orientations. However, these women perceived man's ideal woman as strongly intra-family oriented, and significantly more accepting of a subordinate role in the family structure and in personal development.

McKee and Sherriffs(1959), in studying male and female college students' attitudes of the same-sex ideal, the opposite-sex ideal, and the real self, found that college women emphasized a modern role as their ideal, but they saw themselves in a traditional female role in their own lives. The men did not see their real selves to be as sex-typed as the women saw their real selves. The women said that they

thought a man wanted a woman to behave in a traditional female role. However, the men described the ideal woman as less traditional than this. In studying emerging sex role attitudes, Parelius (1975) also found that college women were more likely to express feminist perspectives for themselves, but felt that men wanted more traditionally oriented wives.

Male and female perceptions of the female role were studied by Steinmann and Fox (1966). They also support the previous studies on women's perceptions of themselves, their ideal woman and men's ideal woman. In addition, it was found that men's actual ideal woman is not significantly different from women's own ideal or self-perception, and so is significantly more active and self-assertive than the ideal women attribute to them. This also parallels the work done previously by McKee and Sherriff (1959). Comparing single to married college women, Rappaport, Payne and Steinmann (1970) found that both marrieds and singles said that a man's ideal woman would have a strong intra-familial orientation, which again shows a discrepancy between self perception and perception of how men would like women to be.

It is interesting to note that Steinmann and Fox (1970) studied the difference between black and white women college undergraduates and found that although the black and white

women had the same perceptions of self and ideal woman, the black womens' perceptions of man's ideal woman were far less family-oriented and far more self- and action-oriented.

In summary, most of the literature indicates that women tend to see themselves and their ideals as equally balanced between intra- and extra-family orientations. However, one study found that college women saw their ideal as modern, but their self as traditional. Each study found that women perceive men's ideal woman to be highly traditional. One study qualified this finding, suggesting that black college women see men's ideal woman as more modern and less traditional than do white college women. In addition, two studies found that men see their ideal woman as less traditional and more modern.

#### Sex Role Patterns of College Students

College provides a unique atmosphere and unique experiences for the student, and this must be included when discussing college students' sex role attitudes.

Kammeyer (1964) explored the idea that college women have either "traditional" or "modern" attitudes about feminine personality traits and feminine role behavior. He found that communication feedback is highly related to consistency of attitudes about the feminine role. Women who reported more friends, and who dated more had more

communication about the feminine role. "...The interaction with others in the college milieu ... will help the college girl to develop an internally consistent set of attitudes about the feminine role rather than throw her into a state of confusion and uncertainty" (Kammeyer, 1964; 305). Kalka (1967) studied 200 college freshmen and senior women in relation to feminine role concepts by using the other- to self-oriented scale on the Fand Role Inventory. She found that the girls' concepts of feminine roles converged in the senior year group, moving from the less homogeneous freshmen to the more homogeneous seniors. Henderson (1956), in studying the effect of one year's attendance at college upon attitudes toward family living for students of different social classes, found that the attitudes of all the subjects were more alike at the end of the year than they were at the beginning. This indicates that perhaps students leave college with more homogeneous values than when they entered. Whatley and Appel (1973) found that there was attitudinal intersex convergence toward a more liberal attitude about marriage and the family between students at a university in 1966 and students at the same university in 1970.

This is perhaps because only the more achievement oriented women have stayed in school, while the students with strong traditional and less achievement oriented roles

drop out before reaching their senior year. Christensen (1961), in studying high school students, found that although more females than males expected to start college, fewer expected to finish. Perhaps these are the more traditionally oriented women who drop out.

In a study related to this topic, Parelius (1975) found that the 1973 entering class to a womens' college was substantially more feminist than was the entering class of 1969. In addition, the seniors in 1973 had become substantially more feminist between their first and fourth year in college.

These research findings suggest that college seniors may have more well-defined ideas about their marital role expectations than do freshmen. In addition, seniors may be more equalitarian and more alike in their attitudes than freshmen.

#### Attitudes Toward Marriage Roles

Our society strongly supports the institutions of marriage and parenthood. This support is so strong that the majority of people do not actively plan whether they will marry or not, they just presume that they will. Along with marriage comes expected roles based on sex, and each of the roles within the framework of husband or wife assumes certain functions or actions. These are also supported by the society within which we live.

Division between the sexes in relation to certain roles,

including marriage roles, is deeply embedded in the early socialization process in the United States. It is the function of this section to present what has been discovered about changing role attitudes toward marriage.

Burgess and Locke (1945) have suggested that there is a change in marriage in the U.S. from an "institutional" (or traditional) form to a more "companionship" form. Seward (1945), in studying the feminine role in marriage, found that there was a liberal trend in marriage attitudes with respect to women's employment and opportunities outside the home. However, in a study of the attitudes toward marriage of 118 college males and females, Staudt (1952) found that over half of each group were definitely opposed to a woman's employment after marriage.

In the late 1950's and early 1960's came many studies related to attitudes toward marriage roles. One study concerned with role expectations for marriage and a career (Empey, 1958) examined the attitudes and aspirations of high school senior women and college women and found that these young women still tended to favor traditional feminine roles. Both high school and college women were found to prefer marriage to a career, and if they did see themselves working, it was usually in a job that has traditionally been held by women. When both the females and males were asked, "What, in your opinion, is the most important duty

of a woman to society?" over two-thirds of both sexes said it was to marry and have a family. Also, the college women seemed to feel a greater responsibility than the males toward maintaining family harmony in their future marriages. However, the study seemed to suggest a growing tendency for young women to see their role as one where they can have a marriage and also an outside job.

Dyer and Urban (1958) studied single and married college students to ascertain if there was an institutionalization of equalitarian family norms. It was shown that in three areas, those of child rearing, decision making, and recreation, the subjects expected an equal sharing of the tasks. In one area, that of household tasks, the concept of equality breaks down, and the subjects expected the more traditional division of labor. In comparing only the single men and the single women, it was found that the men expected to share more in traditionally woman's household tasks than the women expected, and the women expected to help the men with traditionally male household work more than the men expected them to help. The overall conclusion of this study was supported by McGinnis (1958), who suggested that the importance of the companionship marriage is increasing.

Dunn (1960) conducted her study on the marriage role expectations of 238 girls and 198 boys, who were white high

school students. She developed an instrument which yields data concerning the nature of marriage role expectations of adolescents, and through analysis of responses, the extent to which adolescent expectations reflect companionship-equalitarian or traditional concepts of marriage roles. It was suggested that the trend for the future family is toward the companionship-equalitarian type. However, "equality" is multidimensional. The least move toward equalitarian expectations is expressed in the two role areas most clearly defined in the traditional concept: that of wife as homemaker and husband as breadwinner. Also, more women than men tended to hold traditional ideas in relation to homemaking responsibilities. The greatest number of responses in equalitarian expectations were expressed in the areas of child care, social participation, and personal characteristics. Moser (1961) followed Dunn in studying marriage role expectations of 354 white, twelfth-grade students, and his results echo those of Dunn's.

Geiken (1964) studied expectations of high school students and young marrieds concerning husband-wife responsibilities in the home using Dunn's inventory. In relation to the unmarried high school students, she found that they expected to share authority tasks most often; second was child care tasks; and third was household tasks. Unlike Dunn's investigation, in this study boys put less emphasis

on sharing and more on division of family responsibilities than did girls. The sexes agreed on the kinds of tasks most and least shared, but the differences were in views of extent of sharing, with the girls expecting more sharing than the boys. Hodson and Sisk (1965) studied the marriage role expectations of tenth graders in a rural county in Alabama. They found that more younger (age 16) than older (age 22), more white than black, and more girls than boys held equalitarian rather than traditional marital role expectations. Both these studies may suggest some role conflict. Women expect men to want homemaking wives, but the women themselves desire more task sharing. Rooks and King (1973) studied the marriage role expectations of 112 twelfth-grade black adolescents and found that despite social class, black adolescents expect equalitarian marriage roles in the areas of authority, housekeeping, and child care.

In studying household sex roles over two generations, perceived and expected, Sell (1968) found that 1,305 unmarried college juniors and seniors expected more sharing tasks in marriage than their parents. As Dyer and Urban (1958) found, the males expected to share more in traditional female tasks, and the females expected to share more in traditional male tasks. However, there was little reversal of roles from the majority practices. Brigante (1972)

conducted a study on trans-generational sex roles in marriage in middle-class America. She compared five groups: 1) high school students, 2) college students, 3) people in their twenties and thirties, 4) middle-age, and 5) senior citizens, and had them answer for themselves, and as they thought their parents would answer. It was found that there is a trend toward greater role sharing preferences with decreasing age, except that the high school students remained closer to their parent's generation's preferences. College students exhibited the highest role sharing preferences, and the senior citizens the lowest. In every two-generation comparison, the "offspring" generation showed significantly higher role sharing scores.

Parelius (1975) studied changes in sex role expectations of female college students between the entering class in 1969 and the entering class in 1973, and between the freshman and senior years. It was found that the greatest amount of change was in more equalitarian attitudes toward work, financial responsibilities, and division of labor in the home.

Hollander and Vollmer (1974) suggested that the move may be beyond the companionship marriage to the open marriage (which encourages non-possessiveness and independence). It was found that a college student's place of residence was related to his views on marriage. Those students cohabi-

tating or living in a communal group were more likely to hold equalitarian views in relation to marital sex roles than those living in a dorm or at home. More of the males in the study than females expressed an equalitarian concept in relation to marriage roles. Therefore, in spite of woman's liberation, there is a greater degree of liberality and openness toward a new equalitarian concept of marriage by males than by females.

In relation to cross cultural marriage role expectations, Kalish, Maloney and Arkoff (1966) found that female Japanese, Japanese-Americans in Hawaii, Japanese-Americans in Los Angeles, and Caucasian-Americans in Los Angeles preferred equalitarian roles significantly more than their male counterparts. Sharma (1971) also found in comparing Japanese, U.S., and Thai students that the females were significantly more equalitarian in their marriage role expectations.

In summary, the literature indicates that there is a slow progression in expected equalitarian marriages. Generally, each generation appears less traditional in expected marriage roles than the previous generation. However, in two important areas, that of employment and house-keeping, it appears that the traditional roles are still expected. Most of the studies find that the women more than the men expect equalitarian marriage roles. However, a few studies have found that it is the men who expect

more equalitarian marriage roles.

Research related to the general area of sex role learning and expectations provides a tentative estimate of important features in the process from birth to marriage. Sex roles are learned at home, built upon in school, and incorporated into one's beliefs about appropriate sex role behavior. Maternal employment may affect this view, and one's view develops as he grows. It can often create confusion about what a person sees as appropriate for himself, and his perceptions of what others see as appropriate for him. However, within the college experience beliefs toward sex and marriage roles have converged by the senior year. Finally, it appears that expectations for equalitarian marriages are continually on the rise.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

#### Subjects

In order to identify the appropriate sub-scales used in the actual test of hypotheses, a pre-test was run. Questionnaires were answered in six undergraduate classes. Three classes were in the College of Home Economics, and three classes were in the College of Business at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI&SU). A total of one hundred-seventy five questionnaires were used. The questionnaires that revealed a student was married were not used.

For the test of hypotheses, questionnaires were sent through campus mail to a total of two hundred freshmen and senior undergraduates living on campus at VPI&SU. Fifty questionnaires were sent to female freshmen, 50 were sent to male freshmen, 50 were sent to female seniors, and 50 were sent to male seniors. This sample resulted from a stratified random sampling of students living on campus at VPI&SU. Students who did not respond to the first mailing were contacted further twelve days after the original mailing. The final research sample consisted of 31 female freshmen, 26 female seniors, 28 male freshmen, and 32 male seniors.

Method

An Introduction Letter to Students explaining the nature of the questionnaire, Biographical Information List requesting information concerning the student's sex, age, marital status, academic level in college, and mother's employment, Marriage Role Expectation Questionnaire (MREQ), and a return self-addressed envelope were sent to each of the two hundred students. The second mailing included a new introduction letter, biographical information list, the questionnaire, and a return envelope. If a returned questionnaire showed the student to be married or not a freshman or senior, the questionnaire was not used in the analysis.

The MREQ was a modification of the Marriage Role Expectation Inventory (MREI) developed by Dunn (1960). The modification was done for several reasons. First, Dunn used her inventory with high school students. Since this study dealt with a college population, there were wording changes which had to be made to make the questionnaire applicable to college students. Secondly, since the inventory was sixteen years old, it was felt that some modification of wording to comply with present usage was necessary. Finally, it was not felt that all 71 items on the original inventory were necessary for this study. Therefore, the inventory was shortened to 39 representative items.

It was hoped this would increase the likelihood of a greater return rate.

The questionnaire consisted of separate forms for each sex, and each contained 39 "identical items" expressing expectations concerning the student's own marriage. It consisted of sub-scales concerning expectations in the areas of authoritarian roles, reciprocative social behavior, attitudes toward the work world, authority sharing, and self-image expectations. Each item could be answered by "strongly agree," "agree," "undecided," "disagree," or "strongly disagree." For each question, the most traditional response received a score of one, while the most equalitarian response received a score of five.

#### Analysis of Data

For the pre-test, a factor analysis was used in order to identify the sub-scales used to test the hypotheses. Loadings based on twelve, seven, six, and five factors were studied. An item was considered loaded on a factor if the factor loading was greater than or equal to .4000.

For the test of hypotheses, multivariate analysis was employed. This was done to determine whether there were differences between the students on the variables of sex, academic level in college, or maternal employment.

The level of significance was set at the .05 level for all statistical tests. In addition, three three-way breakdowns of the data based on sex, academic level in college and maternal employment were computed. In order to determine the sub-scales which contributed to any significant differences found, simultaneous confidence intervals were computed when necessary.

### Instrument

The questionnaire used in this study was developed from the Marriage Role Expectation Inventory (MREI) (Dunn, 1960). It consisted of separate forms for each sex, each of which contained 71 "identical items" expressing expectations concerning the adolescent's own marriage. Reliability of the MREI, using split-half correlation, was .975.

The MREI was developed with the aim of being able to collect data which would reflect sex role expectations in relation to views on marriage, and at the same time lend itself to statistical treatment. Statements of 232 high school students who were asked to "name five things that a good husband does" and "name five things that a good wife does" were studied. Pools of items were identified and named as sub-scales. These were: authority patterns, home-making, care of children, personal characteristics, social

participation, education, and financial support and employment. Based on the consensus of appraisal of thirteen judges in the area of family life, 111 items were picked as a preliminary inventory. From an item analysis of the inventory the 71 final items were chosen.

For this study, based on the loading of the factor analysis, the sub-scales identified and used were reduced from the six used by Dunn to five. Dunn's sub-scales appeared to be solely based on a topical grouping. In the present study it was found that besides using topics as a basis for sub-scales, items also loaded on the basis of the type of role implied, either traditional or equalitarian. Sub-scale three, attitudes toward the work world, and sub-scale five, self-image expectations, appear to be defined topically. Sub-scale one, authoritarian roles, could be defined topically as well as by the traditional roles implied in the items. That is, the items included in sub-scale one were predominantly worded to imply traditional roles. Sub-scale two, reciprocative social behavior and sub-scale four, authority sharing, could be defined topically as well as by the equalitarian roles implied in the items.

The difference found in the sub-scales used in the two studies may be a result of the populations involved. Dunn dealt with high school students, while this study was

concerned with college students. In addition, perhaps in the sixteen years between these two studies students' views of the different areas which constitute marriage role expectations have changed.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Description of Subjects

The sample consisted of one hundred and seventeen college students who were divided into groups based on sex, academic level in college, or maternal employment. The subjects were all single, aged 17-23, living on campus at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI&SU).

The proportion of males in the study was 51.3 percent, with females comprising the remaining 48.7 percent. In relation to academic level in college, 50.4 percent of the subjects were freshmen, and 49.6 percent were seniors. The final breakdown is that of maternal employment outside the home for the majority of the time the subject was growing up. Those who had mothers employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up comprised 36.75 percent of the sample, while those who did not comprised 63.25 percent of the sample.

A breakdown of the total one hundred and seventeen subjects by sex, academic level in college, and maternal employment may be seen in Table I. For the male subjects, 46.7 percent were freshmen, and 53.3 percent were seniors.

Table I.--Maternal employment status by academic level  
in college and sex of respondent

	Sex			
	Male (n=60)		Female (n=57)	
	n	percent	n	percent
Freshman	28	46.67	31	54.39
Mother employed	5	8.33 (17.86)	18	31.57 (58.06)
Mother non-employed	23	38.33 (82.14)	13	22.81 (41.94)
Senior	32	53.33	26	45.61
Mother employed	7	11.67 (21.88)	13	22.81 (50)
Mother non-employed	25	41.67 (78.12)	13	22.81 (50)

percentatge in brackets constitute the percent that item holds for the second scale heading.

This may be compared with the female subjects, 54.4 percent of whom were freshmen, and 45.6 percent were seniors. Of the freshmen male subjects, only 17.9 percent had mothers who were employed while they were growing up, and 82.1 percent did not. This is similar to the senior male subjects, 21.9 percent of whom had mothers who were employed outside the home while they were growing up, and 78.1 percent of whom had mothers that did not work outside the home. This trend did not follow for the female subjects. Of the freshmen females, 58.1 percent had mothers employed outside the home while they were growing up, and 41.9 percent did not. For the senior females, half had mothers employed outside the home, and half did not.

Table II presents data on subjects broken down by academic level in college, maternal employment, and sex. For all the freshmen, 39 percent had mothers employed while they were growing up, and 61 percent did not. This is similar to the seniors, 34.5 percent of whom had employed mothers, while 65.5 percent did not. For the freshmen who had employed mothers, only 21.7 percent were male, and 78.3 percent were females. Conversely, of the freshmen who had mothers who were not employed, 63.9 percent were males, and 36.1 percent were females. This trend was similar for the seniors. Of the seniors who had employed mothers, 35.0 percent were males and 65.0 percent were females.

Table II.--Sex of respondent by maternal employment status and academic level in college

	Academic Level			
	Freshman (n=59)		Senior (n=58)	
	n	percent	n	percent
Mother employed	23	38.98	20	34.48
Male	5	8.47 (21.74)	7	12.07 (35.0)
Female	18	30.51 (78.26)	13	22.41 (65.0)
Mother non-employed	36	61.02	38	65.52
Male	23	38.98 (63.89)	25	43.11 (65.79)
Female	13	22.04 (36.11)	13	22.41 (34.21)

percentage in brackets constitute the percent that item holds for the second scale heading.

From the seniors who had non-employed mothers, 65.8 percent were males and 34.2 percent were females.

A third breakdown of the data by maternal employment, sex, and academic level in college may be seen in Table III. Of the subjects who had employed mothers, 27.9 percent were males and 72.1 percent were females. Conversely, of the subjects who had non-employed mothers, 64.9 percent were males, and 35.1 percent were females. For the males who had employed mothers, 41.7 percent were freshmen, and 58.3 percent were seniors. Of the females who had employed mothers, 58 percent were freshmen and 42 percent were seniors. Of the males who had mothers not employed outside the home, 47.9 percent were freshmen and 52.1 percent were seniors. Of the females who had non-employed mothers, 50.0 percent were freshmen and 50.0 percent were seniors.

#### Factor Analysis

In order to determine the correct sub-scales to be used in the actual analysis of the hypotheses, the questionnaire was factor analyzed. The questionnaire was administered to one hundred and seventy five students in business and home economics courses at VPI&SU. A principal component factor analysis with orthogonal varimax rotation and oblique rotation was performed on the questionnaires to determine the appropriate sub-scales.

Table III.--Academic level in college by sex of  
respondent and maternal employment status

	Maternal employment			
	Employed (n=43)		Non-employed (n=74)	
	n	percent	n	percent
Male	12	27.91	48	64.86
Freshman	5	11.63 (41.67)	23	31.08 (47.92)
Senior	7	16.28 (58.33)	25	33.78 (52.08)
Female	31	72.09	26	35.13
Freshman	18	41.86 (58.07)	13	17.565 (50.0)
Senior	13	30.23 (41.93)	13	17.565 (50.0)

percentage in brackets constitute the percent that item holds for the second scale heading.

The rotated loadings for twelve, seven, six, and five factors were studied. From Dunn's study, it was originally established that six sub-scales possibly best described the 39 items on the questionnaire. These six scales were identified as: authority patterns, homemaking, care of children, personal characteristics, social participation, and financial support and employment. After studying the orthogonally and obliquely rotated loadings, it was evident that the 39 items were not loading as anticipated from Dunn's study. It was concluded that five sub-scales best described the 39 items under scrutiny. Dunn's sub-scales appear to follow strict differentiation by topic. However, the sub-scales used in the present study appeared to be based not only upon the topic involved, but also upon the manner in which the items were expressed, favoring either traditional or equalitarian roles.

The five sub-scales were given the following names: sub-scale one was called Authoritarian Roles, involving homemaking and support; sub-scale two was called Reciprocative Social Behavior; sub-scale three was called Attitudes Toward the Work World; sub-scale four centered around Authority Sharing, in the home and with the children; and sub-scale five was called Self-Image Expectations.

Tests of Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were postulated in order to determine any significant effects of the selected factors of sex, academic level in college, and maternal employment in relation to marriage role expectations. The null form of each hypothesis was tested. When the null form could be rejected, the hypothesis was shown to be tenable at the .05 level. Findings will be examined after each relevant hypothesis is stated.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant difference in sub-scale scores on the marriage role expectation questionnaire between males and females.

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was employed to ascertain whether or not there was any difference between male and female students on the linear combination of the sub-scales. The results of the MANOVA are found in Table IV. As may be seen, at the .05 level of significance, a significant difference was found to exist only between the factor of sex on the sub-scales. None of the other differences were statistically significant.

Each sub-scale broken down by each factor (either sex, maternal employment, or academic level in college) is represented in tabular form in Table V. It should be noted that the scoring of each item on the questionnaire was based on a scale from one to five; one being the most traditional response and five being the most equalitarian response. It

Table IV.--Tests of significance for main effects and interaction effects of the variables of sex, academic level in college and maternal employment

<u>Test of</u>	<u>df<sub>H</sub></u>	<u>df<sub>E</sub></u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p less than</u>
sex x academic level x maternal employment	5.0	105.0	1.576	0.173
sex x maternal employment	5.0	105.0	1.831	0.113
sex x academic level	5.0	105.0	1.191	0.319
academic level x maternal employment	5.0	105.0	1.159	0.334
academic level	5.0	105.0	1.367	0.247
maternal employment	5.0	105.0	1.909	0.099
sex	5.0	105.0	9.819	0.001

Table V.--Means and standard deviation of the means for the sub-scales based on sex,  
academic level in college and maternal employment

	SUB-SCALES				
	<u>One</u>	<u>Two</u>	<u>Three</u>	<u>Four</u>	<u>Five</u>
	Standard Devia- Mean/ tion	Standard Devia- Mean/ tion	Standard Devia- Mean/ tion	Standard Devia- Mean/ tion	Standard Devia- Mean/ tion
<u>SEX</u>					
male	43.633/6.079	28.550/3.181	10.917/2.546	42.117/4.709	15.600/1.888
female	49.000/6.858	30.421/2.591	13.175/2.817	44.877/4.175	15.825/1.638
<u>MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT</u>					
employed	48.837/6.233	30.070/2.640	12.326/2.982	44.488/4.559	15.349/1.963
non-employed	44.743/6.991	29.108/3.221	11.838/2.857	42.865/4.627	15.919/1.620
<u>ACADEMIC LEVEL IN COLLEGE</u>					
freshman	46.864/6.293	29.119/3.206	12.068/2.876	43.136/4.427	15.661/1.787
senior	45.621/7.625	29.810/2.856	11.966/2.950	43.793/4.880	15.759/1.760

can be seen that for sex, the females had consistently higher mean scores for each sub-scale than did the males, representing more equalitarian responses.

The means and standard deviation of the mean scores for the eight possible combinations of subjects in the study based on sex, maternal employment and academic level in college are found in Table VI. The eight possible combinations are as follows: a student could be either a male or female; a male or female could be either a freshman or a senior; and a male or female freshman or senior could either have an employed mother or a non-employed mother. From Table VI it is evident that almost always, the females had higher mean scores on each sub-scale than did the males. However, when looking at the scores in terms of maternal employment, this relationship did not hold for sub-scales one, two and five for senior males and females who had employed mothers, and for sub-scale four for freshmen males and females with employed mothers. In these cases the males with employed mothers expected more equalitarian roles in the areas of reciprocative social behavior, authority sharing, and self image expectations than did the females. This may be the result of some cross over of the maternal employment factor which helped raise the mean scores of the males above the females. However, from Table IV it can also be seen that for sub-scale five the mean score for the senior

Table VI.--Means and standard deviation of the means for the sub-scales based on the eight possible types of students involved in the study

Factor	Sub-scales					
	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	
<u>S AL ME</u>	Mean	48.20	29.80	10.400	44.800	14.200
<u>1 1 1</u>	Standard Deviation	5.718	5.07	1.517	5.541	2.950
	Mean	42.435	27.348	10.783	40.826	15.435
<u>1 1 2</u>	Standard Deviation	5.035	3.024	2.295	3.525	1.727
	Mean	48.286	30.000	11.286	42.571	15.143
<u>1 4 1</u>	Standard Deviation	8.321	2.582	3.402	6.051	2.340
	Mean	42.520	29.000	11.040	42.640	16.160
<u>1 4 2</u>	Standard Deviation	5.613	2.828	2.776	5.040	1.546
	Mean	50.167	30.611	13.333	44.222	16.000
<u>2 1 1</u>	Standard Deviation	5.113	1.944	3.087	4.609	1.609
	Mean	49.615	29.923	13.231	45.077	16.154
<u>2 1 2</u>	Standard Deviation	5.839	2.957	2.803	3.796	1.405
	Mean	47.538	29.462	12.231	45.769	15.000
<u>2 4 1</u>	Standard Deviation	6.972	2.504	2.713	3.166	1.683
	Mean	48.231	31.615	13.846	44.692	16.077
<u>2 4 2</u>	Standard Deviation	9.714	2.844	2.609	5.023	1.754
	TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE	65	35	20	55	20

KEY: Factor S=Sex  
1=male  
2=female

Factor AL=Academic Level  
1=freshman  
4=senior

Factor ME=Maternal Employment  
1=employed  
2=non-employed

males with non-employed mothers was higher than the mean score for the senior females with non-employed mothers. These females expected more traditional roles in this area than did the males. When the data were broken down into the eight possible combinations of types of subjects in the study, this was the only time the males exhibited a higher score on a sub-scale than the females.

Since this study was concerned not only with the differences within the factors of sex, academic level in college and maternal employment, but also with the sub-scales contributing to these differences, simultaneous confidence intervals were calculated to determine which sub-scales contributed to the significance observed on the MANOVA. When the simultaneous confidence intervals did not span the point zero, the difference between the respective factors was statistically significant at the .05 level. When the difference did span zero, the difference was not statistically significant.

The results of the MANOVA indicated a significant difference between males and females on the linear combination of sub-scales. Therefore, simultaneous confidence intervals were computed for the differences between the mean female score and the mean male score on the five sub-scales.

Looking at the differences between male and female respondents on sub-scale one, there was a difference of 5.367 between the mean female score and the mean male score (Table VII). Since the calculated simultaneous interval did not span zero, the difference between the mean scores of the males and females on sub-scale one was significant at the .05 level. Thus, sub-scale one did significantly differentiate between males and females, with the females expressing the more equalitarian expectations. For sub-scale two the confidence interval did not span zero, and therefore it differentiated significantly between males and females, again with the females being more equalitarian. The confidence interval for sub-scale three also failed to span zero, and therefore this sub-scale also differentiated between the less equalitarian males and the more equalitarian females. However, for sub-scales four and five, the confidence interval did span zero, and therefore did not contribute significantly to the differences between the males and females. Therefore, these two sub-scales did not contribute significantly to the finding that the females held more equalitarian marriage role expectations than did the males.

In summary, hypothesis 1 of this study stated that there would be a significant difference in sub-scale scores between males and females on the marriage role

Table VII.--Differences and simultaneous confidence intervals for the sub-scales for the factor of sex

	<u>Differences</u>	<u>Confidence Intervals</u>
Sub-scale one (Authoritarian roles)	5.367	(9.44, 1.294) *
Sub-scale two (Reciprocative social behavior)	1.871	(3.684, .058) *
Sub-scale three (Attitudes toward the work world)	2.258	(3.995, .521) *
Sub-scale four (Authority sharing)	2.760	(5.619, -.099)
Sub-scale five (Self-image expecatations)	0.225	(1.336, -.886)

expectation questionnaire. The results of this study indicated that, as was hypothesized, there was a large significant difference between the males and females, with the females being more equalitarian in their expected role in marriage than the males. Therefore, the null form of hypothesis 1 was rejected. Sub-scale one, authoritarian roles, sub-scale two, reciprocative social behavior, and sub-scale three, attitudes toward the work world, were the major contributing factors to this finding. This showed a progression to include the formerly more traditional areas of marriage role expectations to be moving in the direction of more equalitarian role expectations.

The large majority of the literature would support this finding that females have more equalitarian marriage role expectations than do males (Geiken, 1964; Hodson and Sisk, 1965; Kalish, Maloney and Arkoff, 1966; Sharma, 1971). One study which disputed this finding and supported males having more equalitarian marriage role expectations was by Hollander and Vollmer (1974). However, they found that place of residence was related to views on marriage, with those students cohabitating or living in communal groups being more likely to be more equalitarian than those living in a dormitory or at home. All of the students in this study resided in on-campus housing, and this might contribute to the different findings.

Cohabiting or communal living provides on the spot experiences from which to draw on when a student expresses his marriage role expectations. The expectations now become more of a conglomerate of actual experiences. In addition, more overall liberal attitudes may be expressed by those students who choose these living arrangements, as opposed to those students who live in the more conventional fashion (as dormitory living surely is) prior to marriage.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant difference in sub-scale scores on the marriage role expectation questionnaire between students with mothers who were employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up and students whose mothers were not employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up.

From Table IV it can be seen that a significant difference was not found between students with mothers who were employed for the majority of the time they were growing up and students with mothers who were not employed for the majority of the time they were growing up. However, as may be evidenced in Table V, the mean scores for all sub-scales for students with employed mothers are consistently higher than the mean scores for students with non-employed mothers. Therefore, although the difference between the two groups was not found to be statistically significant at the .05 level, there most definitely was the trend that students with employed mothers held more

equalitarian views in relation to marriage role expectations than did students with non-employed mothers.

Across the eight possible combinations of types of students in the study, it may be seen from Table VI that for female seniors on sub-scales one, two, three and five, and for female freshmen on sub-scales four and five, the students with non-employed mothers had higher mean scores than those with employed mothers. Perhaps in these cases the sex factor over-rode the maternal employment factor, or perhaps maternal employment was not a distinguishing factor in these cases. The cases where the males with non-employed mothers had a higher mean score than those who had employed mothers were sub-scales four and five for the male seniors, and sub-scales three and five for the male freshmen.

Since a significant difference was not found at the .05 level between students with employed mothers and students with non-employed mothers, simultaneous confidence intervals were not computed for the sub-scales on this factor.

In summary, the second hypothesis stated that there would be a significant difference in sub-scale scores on the marriage role expectation questionnaire between students with mothers who were employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up and those whose

mothers were not employed outside the home while they were growing up. The null form of this hypothesis could not be rejected, which meant that this hypothesis was not supported at the .05 level of significance. However, the overwhelming trend was for those students with employed mothers to have higher mean scores on each sub-scale than students with non-employed mothers.

The literature concerning college students and maternal employment has indicated that those students with employed mothers, especially the females, tend to express more equalitarian attitudes in relation to women's roles (Vogel et al., 1970) and social equality for women (Meier, 1972). Although the finding of this study would further develop this idea to suggest that it is also the college students with mothers who were employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up who tend to have more equalitarian marriage role expectations than do those college students who had non-employed mothers for the majority of the time they were growing up, this was not found at the .05 level of significance.

Although marriage roles certainly belong in the general area of women's roles and social equality, perhaps the

finding of this study that there was no significant difference at the .05 level suggests that these areas are seen by the students in a somewhat different arena than that in which they see marriage role expectations. Therefore, it is possible that the marriage role expectation questionnaire measured an area slightly different from the previous studies. Also, with each year since the Vogel study in 1970 and the Meier study in 1972, there has been a continuing pervasiveness and acceptance of the concept of equalitarian marriage roles. This would tend to decrease differences in expectations between students with employed mothers and students with non-employed mothers. Therefore, the liberalizing trend of the 1970's might make a significant difference in relation to maternal employment more difficult to find.

Specifically, Vogel et al. (1970), in studying women's roles, compared females with employed mothers to females with non-employed mothers, and males with employed mothers to males with non-employed mothers. The females with employed mothers expressed significantly smaller differences between males and females on the female cluster of warmth-expressiveness and the male cluster of competence than did females with non-employed mothers. However, although the males with employed mothers did express significantly smaller differences between males and females

on the warmth-expressiveness cluster than did males with non-employed mothers, this did not hold for the competency cluster. The males with employed mothers were still less equalitarian than the females with employed mothers. Therefore, since the present study combined both males and females with employed mothers and compared them to males and females with non-employed mothers, perhaps a significant difference was blurred by the still less equalitarian males.

Meier (1972) reported that the most equalitarian views were held by the daughters of mothers with high status occupations. Since this study did not examine specific maternal occupations, it is not known what types of status occupations the mothers held. In addition, Meier (1972) found that an important factor was whether the mother had successfully integrated the home role and the working role. Since this study had no way of examining this variable, it is not known if successful integration was involved here.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant difference in sub-scale scores on the marriage role expectation questionnaire between freshmen and seniors.

Table IV shows that, as a result of the MANOVA, no significant difference was found for the factor of academic level in college. As may be seen from Table V,

for sub-scales two, four, and five the seniors had higher mean scores than did the freshmen. However, for sub-scales one and three it was the freshmen who had the higher mean scores.

Since a significant difference was not found at the .05 level of significance between freshmen and seniors, simultaneous confidence intervals were not computed for the sub-scales on this factor.

In summary, hypothesis 3 of this study stated that there would be a significant difference in sub-scale scores on the marriage role expectation questionnaire between freshmen and seniors. The results of this study indicated that no significant difference between freshmen and seniors existed. Therefore, the null form of this hypothesis could not be rejected, which meant that this hypothesis was not supported at the .05 level of significance.

Kalka (1967), in studying the feminine role concepts of two hundred freshmen and senior women from home economics and arts and sciences, found the women emerged from college with more homogeneous values. Perhaps the feminine role concept inventory and the marriage role expectations inventory measure two areas of sex roles that should not be considered as overlapping in relation to predicting results from one kind of inventory to the other.

Since the Kalka study dealt only with females and the present study undertook a comparison of freshmen and senior males and females, this was an influencing factor which was not present in the Kalka study. Finally, the subjects used in the present study encompassed students from all the major colleges in the university: home economics, arts and sciences, business, engineering, and architecture. With a wider variety of disciplines covered, perhaps the differences uncovered in a study which employed only a few disciplines become obscured in a study employing students from many colleges within the university.

Henderson (1956) found that one year's attendance at college had dissimilar effects on students of different social classes, with the students from the lower-low and upper-low classes changing most, and ending more in line with the lesser changed subjects from the lower-middle and upper-middle classes. Since the present study did not recognize differences in socio-economic class, it can only be assumed that the sample consisted of the different variations that exist with regard to social class and students living on campus at VPI&SU. Therefore, the change detected by Henderson would have no way of being accounted for in the present study.

Whatley (1973) and Parelius (1975) in studying two separate college classes four years apart (Whatley studied the classes of 1966 and 1970 and Parelius studied the classes of 1969 and 1973) found in each case the latter class to be more liberal in attitude toward marriage (Whatley's study) and more feminist (Parelius' study). From the findings of this study, it appears that the generalization that seniors will be more equalitarian than freshmen in the same year cannot be drawn. Perhaps more is involved than the movement through the four classes in college. The social times and the difference between them in four years must also be influential. However, Parelius (1975) also found that the senior women in 1973 had become substantially more feminist between their first and fourth year in college. This would indicate that changes may be detected between the same students from their freshman year to their senior year, but not between a class of freshmen and a class of seniors in the same year.

One cannot overlook the social forces that are at play in a study such as the present one. With greater visibility and acceptance of feminism today, indirectly through all forms of the media as well as directly through expanded high school curriculas, it could be expected

that the freshman in 1976 would arrive at college with more awareness than did his counterpart in 1970. In addition, since the entire issue of equality has been defined largely in terms of female role patterns and has been expressed in terms of feminine consciousness raising, it could be expected that females in 1976 would be more responsive and willing to identify with the movement and therefore respond with more equalitarian marital role desires than males, and do so at an earlier age.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the marriage role expectations of male and female freshmen and senior undergraduates living on campus at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI&SU). The study was designed to integrate research findings in order to test hypotheses focusing on the variables of sex, academic level in college, and maternal employment in relationship to marriage role expectations. This enabled the identification and isolation of those variables which affected the students' marriage role expectations.

Role theory was the theoretical framework upon which this study was based. Role expectations have been used in explaining sex role differences among males and females. Marriage roles may be seen as a part of sex roles, and so they too may be looked at in terms of role theory and role expectations.

The research sample for the factor analysis, carried out in order to determine the appropriate sub-scales to be used in the test of hypotheses, consisted of one hundred and seventy five students enrolled in classes in the College of Business and the College of Home Economics at VPI&SU. The research sample for the multivariate analysis of the

hypotheses consisted of one hundred and seventeen students living on campus at VPI&SU. This sample resulted from a stratified random sampling of students living on campus at VPI&SU. Questionnaires were mailed to 50 female freshmen, 50 female seniors, 50 male freshmen, and 50 male seniors. Those who did not respond to the first mailing were contacted further twelve days after the original mailing. The final research sample consisted of 31 female freshmen, 26 female seniors, 28 male freshmen, and 32 male seniors.

Marriage role expectations were determined from the responses to a mailed questionnaire. The questionnaire was a shortened and modified form of the Marriage Role Expectation Inventory developed by Dunn (1960). In addition, questions concerning sex, age of respondent, academic level in college, marital status, and whether the respondent's mother had been employed outside the home for the majority of the time the respondent was growing up were asked. Also, an introduction letter and a return, self-addressed envelope were sent to each student. The second mailing contained a new introduction letter, the questionnaire, the biographical information list, and a return, self-addressed envelope. The computer facilities of VPI&SU were used in the factor analysis, and in the multivariate analysis which looked at the sample in terms of sex, academic level in college, or maternal employment.

Based on the factor analysis, which may be seen as a significant methodological contribution, five sub-scales were identified and used. These sub-scales were named: sub-scale one, authoritarian roles; sub-scale two, reciprocative social behavior; sub-scale three, attitudes toward the work world; sub-scale four, authority sharing; and sub-scale five, self-image expectations. Dunn's sub-scales appear to follow strict differentiation by topic. However, the sub-scales used in the present study appeared to be based not only upon topic involved, but also upon the manner in which the items were expressed, stating either traditional or equalitarian roles.

The research hypotheses in this study examined the following relationships:

1. The differences in marriage role expectations between males and females.
2. The differences in marriage role expectations between students whose mothers were employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up and those whose mothers were not employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up.
3. The differences in marriage role expectations between freshmen and seniors.

It was found that there was a significant difference between males and females on the sub-scales of the marriage role expectation questionnaire, with the females holding more equalitarian marriage role expectations than the males.

From the results of the computed simultaneous confidence intervals for the sub-scales, sub-scale one, authoritarian roles, sub-scale two, reciprocative social behavior, and sub-scale three, attitudes toward the work world, were found to be the sub-scales which contributed significantly to this finding.

For the factor of maternal employment, a significant difference could not be reported between students whose mothers were employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up and students who had mothers who were not employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up. However, the mean scores for all sub-scales for students with employed mothers were consistently higher than the mean scores for students with non-employed mothers. Therefore, the trend was that students with employed mothers held more equalitarian marriage role expectations than did students with non-employed mothers.

Finally, there was no significant difference found between freshmen and seniors on the marriage role expectation questionnaire. Seniors were no more equalitarian in their expectations than were freshmen, and freshmen were no more equalitarian than were the seniors.

## IMPLICATIONS

The final two sections deal with the implications which may be drawn as a result of the findings of this study.

### Research Implications

Little research has dealt specifically with the marriage role expectations of college students. The design of this study holds several implications for further research in the area of marriage role expectations. This study relied on self reports as to whether a student's mother was employed outside the home for the majority of the time the student was growing up. It is possible this method did not clearly distinguish between students with employed mothers and students with non-employed mothers. Perhaps a clearer definition of "majority of the time" on the questionnaire itself, or, if at all possible, a search of school records, would produce a better discrimination between students with employed mothers and students with non-employed mothers.

An exploration of the types of jobs held by the

employed mothers could be undertaken. This would be a study of students' marriage role expectations and the status of their mothers' occupations. In addition, a question asking the student if he thought his mother felt "good" or "bad" about employment could further explain differences in responses, and perhaps reveal the successful role integration factor suggested by Meier (1972).

In view of the findings concerning academic level in college, different approaches could be taken in future studies. A researcher could test a class of freshmen, and then test the same class four years later when it is then the senior class. Or, if the researcher chooses, he could look at one class, such as the senior class of 1976, and then look at another senior class four years later, in 1980. This, however, would not be an examination of the difference between freshmen and seniors, but instead would be an examination of the changes between the senior class of 1976 and the senior class of 1980. These two approaches would be more in line with the existing literature, but which have not yet been applied to the specific area of marriage role expectations.

Further studies may wish to control for social class characteristics when looking at the variables of academic level in college and maternal employment. This may be

hard to do with a college population because of the economic demands a college education places on an individual or a family. However, this would be more easily accomplished at a state university such as VPI&SU where tuition is more reasonable, especially for students living in the state.

### Theoretical Implications

The social environment plays a major role in behavior and role expectations. By the time a person finishes high school and college, he has developed expectations of appropriate behavior for the different roles he will occupy in his life, including marriage roles.

The literature has indicated that the social environment in relation to sex role expectations is very different for males and females. Based on the theoretical framework used in this study it could be expected that females and males would respond differently to the marriage role expectation questionnaire. The finding of this study that the females do hold more equalitarian marriage role expectations than do the males would support the theoretical framework of role expectations. The females perceived their role, and therefore the complimentary role held by their future husband, very differently from their male counterparts. Therefore, these findings reinforced the role theory used as a theoretical base for this study.

Since the home environment is a very important social environment which influences a child and young adult, maternal employment should influence one's concept of expected roles in marriage. Maternal employment makes it necessary for changes to occur in the traditional division of labor in the home. Hoffman (1974) suggested that even though wives probably still engage in more domestic tasks than their husbands, there is still a more equalitarian division of tasks when the wife is employed outside the home. Based on role expectation theory, one would expect students with employed mothers to expect more equalitarian roles for a husband and wife in marriage than do students with non-employed mothers. Although the finding of this study could not support the theory at the .05 level of significance, it definitely did support the trend that students with mothers employed for the majority of the time they were growing up tended to hold more equalitarian marriage role expectations than students with mothers who were not employed outside the home for the majority of the time they were growing up. Although this finding did not contradict the theoretical basis of this study, neither did it reinforce it at a significant level.

Development of role expectations for one's possible different roles in life is a continuing process. As one

is exposed to more varied possible future roles, one begins to perceive the role as he expects it to be in reality for him. From the literature dealing with differences in academic level in college in relation to sex roles, it was anticipated that perhaps seniors would be more equalitarian in their marriage role expectations than the freshmen. However, the finding of this study that there was no significant difference in the responses of freshmen and seniors would have to amend the role distinction of academic level in college in relation to marriage role expectations. Therefore, no distinction between the difference in the role of freshmen and the role of seniors in the same academic year in relation to marriage role expectations can be made.

It appears that in 1976 there is a growing trend of greater consciousness of equality on the part of women, and at earlier ages. Partly as a result of the media and the fact that the whole issue of equality has sprung from the feminist consciousness movement, it appears that females are more receptive to the concept of more equalitarian marriages, and this receptivity occurs before entrance to college.

APPENDIX

MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATIONS

Form for males

This is a questionnaire designed to see what students expect from marriage. Please answer these statements as you foresee your role in your marriage to be. Please do not answer the questions in terms of what you think constitutes an ideal marriage. Please answer the questions in terms of what you realistically expect your marriage to be. There are no right or wrong answers, and your responses are completely confidential. PLEASE ANSWER EACH QUESTION.

1. Sex: \_\_\_ male \_\_\_ female
2. Class: \_\_\_ freshman \_\_\_ sophomore \_\_\_ junior \_\_\_ senior
3. Marital status: \_\_\_ single \_\_\_ married \_\_\_ married before, single now
4. Your age: \_\_\_ Under 17 \_\_\_ 17-23 \_\_\_ 24-30 \_\_\_ Over 30
5. For the majority of the time you were growing up, was your mother employed outside the home? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no
  - (a) If your answer is yes, what was your mother's occupation during this time?

Please encircle the symbol which most closely corresponds to how you feel about each statement concerning your expected role in marriage.

KEY

- SA - Strongly agree  
 A - Agree  
 U - Undecided  
 D - Disagree  
 SD - Strongly disagree

## IN MY MARRIAGE I EXPECT:

- SA A U D SD 1. that if there is a difference of opinion, I will be the one who will have to finally decide where to live.
- SA A U D SD 2. that my wife's opinion will carry equal weight with mine in decisions involving money.
- SA A U D SD 3. that my wife and I will be equally informed concerning the family's financial status and business affairs.
- SA A U D SD 4. to leave the care of the children mainly up to my wife when they are babies.
- SA A U D SD 5. that if my wife prefers a career to having children, then that will be our choice.

- SA A U D SD 6. that the "family schedule," such as when meals will be served, will be determined by my wishes and working hours.
- SA A U D SD 7. that my wife and I will share responsibility for housework if both of us work outside the home.
- SA A U D SD 8. that keeping the yard, making repairs, and doing outside chores will be the responsibility of whoever has the time and wishes to do them.
- SA A U D SD 9. if as a husband I am a good worker, respectable and faithful to my family, other personal characteristics are of considerably less importance.
- SA A U D SD 10. that I will decide on most large purchases.
- SA A U D SD 11. that a major responsibility for me to our children will be to make a good living, provide a home, and discipline them.
- SA A U D SD 12. that I will feel no responsibility or duty for doing things like laundry, cleaning, and child care.
- SA A U D SD 13. that I will not be expected to assist with cooking and housekeeping on the weekends.
- SA A U D SD 14. that if I help with the housework, my wife will help with outside chores such as keeping the yard, painting or repairing the house.
- SA A U D SD 15. that my wife will love and respect me regardless of the kind of work I do.
- SA A U D SD 16. my wife to work outside the home if she enjoys working more than staying at home.
- SA A U D SD 17. it will be only natural that I will be concerned about politics and what is going on in the world.
- SA A U D SD 18. that I will devote much of my time to getting ahead and becoming a success.
- SA A U D SD 19. that both my wife and I will concern ourselves with the social and emotional development of our children.
- SA A U D SD 20. that being married should cause little or no change in my social or recreational activities.
- SA A U D SD 21. it will be just as important that I am congenial, love and enjoy my family as that I earn a good living.
- SA A U D SD 22. that my wife will keep herself informed and active in the work of the community.
- SA A U D SD 23. that since I must earn the living, I won't be able to take alot of time to "play" with the children.

- SA A U D SD 24. that it will be equally important that my wife is affectionate and understanding as that she is thrifty and skillful in housekeeping.
- SA A U D SD 25. that is is my wife's job rather than mine to set a good expample in front of the children, relatives, and friends.
- SA A U D SD 26. to manage my time so I can show a genuine interest in what our children do.
- SA A U D SD 27. that my wife and I will take an active interest together in what's going on in our community.
- SA A U D SD 28. my wife to fit her life to mine (i.e. live where I find a job, etc.).
- SA A U D SD 29. to manage my time so that I will share in the care of the children.
- SA A U D SD 30. that having guests in our home will not prevent me from helping equally with serving meals or keeping the house orderly.
- SA A U D SD 31. that we will permit the children to share, according to their abilities, with the parents in making family decisions.
- SA A U D SD 32. entire responsibility for earning the family living.
- SA A U D SD 33. that staying at home with the children will be my wife's job rather than mine.
- SA A U D SD 34. to make most of the final disciplinary decisions concerning the children.
- SA A U D SD 35. that it will mainly be my wife's job to do the cooking and keeping the house in order.
- SA A U D SD 36. to earn a good living if I expect the love and respect from my family.
- SA A U D SD 37. whether or not my wife works will depend upon what we as a couple think is best for our own happiness.
- SA A U D SD 38. that my wife and I will feel equally responsible for looking after the welfare of our children.
- SA A U D SD 39. that my wife will take responsibility for care and training of the children.

MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATIONS Form for females

This is a questionnaire designed to see what students expect from marriage. Please answer these statements as you foresee your role in your marriage to be. Please do not answer the questions in terms of what you think constitutes an ideal marriage. Please answer the questions in terms of what you realistically expect your marriage to be. There are no right or wrong answers, and your responses are completely confidential. PLEASE ANSWER EACH QUESTION.

1. Sex:  male  female
  2. Class:  freshman  sophomore  junior  senior
  3. Marital status:  single  married  married before, single now
  4. Your age:  Under 17  17-23  24-30  Over 30
  5. For the majority of the time you were growing up, was your mother employed outside the home?  yes  no
    - (a) If your answer is yes, what was your mother's occupation during this time?
- 

Please encircle the symbol which most closely corresponds to how you feel about each statement concerning your expected role in marriage.

KEY

- SA - Strongly agree  
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- SA A U D SD 4. my husband to leave the care of the children mainly up to me when they are babies.
- SA A U D SD 5. that if I prefer a career to having children, then that will be our choice.

- SA A U D SD 6. that the family "schedule," such as when meals are served will be determined by my husband's wishes and working hours.
- SA A U D SD 7. that my husband and I will share responsibility for housework if both of us work outside the home.
- SA A U D SD 8. that keeping the yard, making repairs, and doing outside chores will be the responsibility of whoever has the time and wishes to do them.
- SA A U D SD 9. if my husband is a good worker, respectable and faithful to his family, other personal characteristics are of considerably less importance.
- SA A U D SD 10. that most large purchases will be decided by my husband.
- SA A U D SD 11. that a major responsibility for my husband to our children will be to make a good living, provide a home and discipline them.
- SA A U D SD 12. that my husband will feel no responsibility or duty for doing things like laundry, cleaning, and child care.
- SA A U D SD 13. that my husband will not be expected to assist with cooking and housekeeping on the weekends.
- SA A U D SD 14. that if my husband helps with the housework, I will help with outside chores such as keeping the yard, painting or repairing the house.
- SA A U D SD 15. that I will love and respect my husband regardless of the kind of work he does.
- SA A U D SD 16. to work outside the home if I enjoy working more than staying at home.
- SA A U D SD 17. it will be only natural that my husband will be concerned about politics and what is going on in the world.
- SA A U D SD 18. that my husband will devote much of his time to getting ahead and becoming a success.
- SA A U D SD 19. that both my husband and I will concern ourselves with the social and emotional development of our children.
- SA A U D SD 20. that being married should cause little or no change in my husband's social or recreational activities.
- SA A U D SD 21. it will be just as important for my husband to be congenial, love and enjoy his family as to earn a good living.
- SA A U D SD 22. that I will keep myself informed and active in the work of the community.
- SA A U D SD 23. that since my husband must earn a living, he won't be able to take alot of time to "play" with the children.

- SA A U D SD 24. that it will be equally as important that as a wife I am affectionate and understanding as that I am thrifty and skillful in housekeeping.
- SA A U D SD 25. that it is my job rather than my husband's to set a good example in front of the children, relatives, and friends.
- SA A U D SD 26. to manage my time so that I can show a genuine interest in what our children do.
- SA A U D SD 27. that my husband and I will take an active interest together in what's going on in our community.
- SA A U D SD 28. to fit my life to my husband's (i.e. live where he finds a job, etc.).
- SA A U D SD 29. my husband to manage his time so that he will share in the care of the children.
- SA A U D SD 30. that having guests in our home will not prevent my husband from helping equally with serving meals or keeping the house orderly.
- SA A U D SD 31. that we will permit the children to share, according to their abilities, with the parents in making family decisions.
- SA A U D SD 32. my husband to be entirely responsible for earning the living for our family.
- SA A U D SD 33. that staying at home with the children will be my job rather than my husband's.
- SA A U D SD 34. my husband to make most of the final disciplinary decisions concerning the children.
- SA A U D SD 35. that it will mainly be my job to do the cooking and keeping the house in order.
- SA A U D SD 36. my husband to earn a good living if he expects love and respect from his family.
- SA A U D SD 37. whether or not I work will depend on what we as a couple think is best for our own happiness.
- SA A U D SD 38. that my husband and I will feel equally responsible for looking after the welfare of our children.
- SA A U D SD 39. that I will take responsibility for care and training of the children.

## FIRST LETTER TO STUDENTS

April 1, 1976

Dear Student:

No doubt you have been in a position before where you needed the assistance of others to get something done. I am in such a position now and am asking for your help. By completing the enclosed questionnaire, you will provide me with data for my master's thesis. Please complete the form and return it as soon as possible by campus mail. This may be done by either giving it to any secretary to put in the office's campus mailbox, or by depositing it yourself in any campus mailbox located in each dining hall.

The questionnaires are coded so that I may send a second questionnaire only to those who do not return the first one. Your responses are completely confidential, and no names will appear in my thesis.

Thank you so much for your help; I really appreciate it.

Sincerely yours,

Janice P. Ritzert  
Graduate Teaching Assistant  
MHFD  
Wallace Annex  
VPI&SU  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

## SECOND LETTER TO STUDENTS

April 12, 1976

Dear Student:

This is a copy of the questionnaire sent to you about ten days ago. I still need your assistance -- by completing this questionnaire you will provide me with data for my master's thesis.

If you have already returned the questionnaire, I apologize for sending a second one to you; I have not yet received it. However, if you have not returned the questionnaire previously, please take a few minutes now and complete it. Then you can return it by campus mail -- either by giving it to any secretary to put in the office's campus mailbox, or by depositing it yourself in any campus mailbox located in each dining hall.

The questionnaire is coded only so I may further contact those who have not responded. Your responses are completely confidential, and no names will appear in my thesis.

Thank you so much for your help; I really do appreciate it alot.

Sincerely yours,

Janice P. Ritzert  
Graduate Teaching Assistant  
MHFD  
Wallace Annex  
VPI&SU  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

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# MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

by

Janice Parker Ritzert

## ABSTRACT

One hundred-seventy five students attending Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI&SU) were sampled by means of the Marriage Role Expectation Questionnaire (MREQ) in an effort to determine the appropriate sub-scales to be used in the actual test of hypotheses. A total of two hundred students attending VPI&SU were then sampled by means of the MREQ in an effort to study their marital role expectations.

The MREQ was a modified form of Dunn's Marriage Role Expectation Inventory.

It was found at the .05 level that females hold more equalitarian marital role expectations than do males. The sub-scales contributing to this finding were: Authority Roles; Reciprocatative Social Behavior; and Attitudes Toward the Work World. Although the hypothesis that students with employed mothers hold more equalitarian marital role expectations than do students with non-employed mothers was not supported at the .05 level, there was the trend that students with employed mothers do hold more equalitarian expectations for marriage. No significant difference was found to exist between freshmen and seniors.