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## *Charting Women's Careers: Current Issues and Research*

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### **PREVIEW**

A vast amount of information on women and work is available today. In writing this chapter, we decided to focus on only a few of the most relevant issues confronting professional women. Our emphasis was on women who have made a clear commitment to their career. Issues related to working women in general were brought in only where they affected the status of the woman professional. What we present here represents a very selective look at the contemporary career woman—her opportunities, goals, personality, relationships, and family life.

The importance of careers in the plans and lives of women continues to grow as people become aware that the working woman now has replaced the housewife as the norm in the United States. The absolute number of women in the workforce currently exceeds that of men (U.S. Department of Labor Statistics 1986). By 1990, 70-75 percent of all women aged 18-64 are expected to be in the labor force, compared to 63 percent for 1984. "Having it all" is the goal of a majority of young women who plan to work all or most of their lives and have a family, too (Betz and Fitzgerald 1987).

Striking changes in how women's careers are viewed have accompanied their increased occupational involvement. Early models of career development aimed at men failed to account for the many factors that uniquely affect women's careers, including cultural and organizational barriers to women's advancement, sex role training, and competing work and family roles. Interest in women's careers has burgeoned in the past decade, however, producing a flood of research about women and work

and culminating in the "career psychology of women" as a field of its own (Betz and Fitzgerald 1987).

In this chapter, a selective review of research since 1980 will be presented to illustrate the present status of women's careers. A profile of five major issues concerning women's careers will be drawn, including the nature of sex discrimination, leadership strategies for women, the interface between the professional and personal at work, the impact of race, and balancing career and family roles.

### UNDERSTANDING SEX DISCRIMINATION

Women's career progress has not been commensurate with our increased participation in the workforce and work commitment. About 45 percent of women are full-time, year-round workers, compared to 65 percent of men, yet we earn from 24 percent to 45 percent less than men, depending on the type of job we hold (Blau and Ferber 1985). Professional level jobs offer no exception to the wage inequity rule. Women MBAs average less in earnings than men within a few years of graduation (Olson and Frieze 1987), women civil servants are concentrated in the lower paying grades, and only 10 percent of full professorships in academe are held by women (Blau and Ferber 1985).

Why do women earn less than men? Three approaches have been used to answer this question. The first has been to identify patterns and changes in occupational sex segregation to determine if they can explain wage differences. A substantial degree of occupational sex segregation continues to be the norm, with women comprising about 81 percent and 73 percent, respectively, of employees in low paying clerical and service jobs, while men predominate in better paying managerial and blue collar supervisory, labor, and farm jobs (Blau and Ferber 1985). Recent figures indicate that three out of five workers of one sex would have to change jobs to duplicate the distribution of workers of the opposite sex. However, some slight changes have been documented that might have an impact on occupational sex segregation. The number of black women employed in domestic service has decreased rapidly since 1970 and there has been a large increase in the number of women earning degrees in predominantly male fields (Blau and Ferber 1985; Jacobs 1985). Whether the change in occupational distribution will result in a concomitant change in the wage gap is of great future interest.

A second approach focuses on teasing out the factors that might account for salary inequities or hierarchical segregation, such as work experience or prejudice. This research has conclusively demonstrated that sex differences in productivity cannot explain the major part of the wage differential between women and men. Variables such as number of hours worked, amount of past work experience, type of occupation or

industry, and race, account for only about half of the observed sex-wage differential (Madden 1985)—and even these beg further explanation. Treiman and Roos (1983), in a wide scale study of salary structures in the United States and eight other nations, demonstrated that the sex-wage differential could not be explained by differential investments by women and men in their careers, by women's family responsibilities, or by differences in jobs. Olson, Good, and Frieze (1985) reported that job area, job level, type of job, and type of prior work experience could explain only \$700 of the \$2900 gender difference in starting salaries for MBA (Masters of Business Administration) alumni of one university. Thus, economists' "human capital" argument that men's higher wages reflect greater levels of worth—education, training, and time in the market—is not supported.

Mounting evidence indicates that continued discrimination against women in terms of unequal pay for equal work is responsible for much of the wage gap (Blau and Ferber 1985). Crosby (1982), in an investigation of high and low status employed women and men in the Boston suburbs, found that even women who were equal to men in terms of job relevant characteristics (e.g., occupational prestige, education, years of training) and job-related attitudes (e.g., job commitment) still earned \$8000 less than men, on average. Similarly, women engineers with educational backgrounds and work experience equivalent to men's earn less (Jagacinski 1987). Discrimination might even be underestimated in some cases. For instance, Olson and Frieze (1987) found that women MBAs came from higher socioeconomic backgrounds than men MBAs, a factor predictive of higher earnings, yet they earned less than men.

As evidence for sex discrimination accumulates, what causes it and how it might be changed have made up a third significant research area. Two factors that have been explored recently are organizational climate (affirmative action programs) and cognitive factors (attitudes). For instance, Rosenbaum (1985) documented the positive effect of affirmative action on pay inequalities in a large corporation from 1962 to 1975. In 1969, women's earnings were 46 percent lower than men's. After 1975, with an affirmative action program in place, the wage gap dropped to 23 percent. Women also had promotion rates as high or higher than men, compared to lower promotion rates prior to 1969. However, other research indicates that affirmative action has had little effect on sex segregation of jobs, one major source of wage inequity. Even after two decades of affirmative action, occupational sex segregation in the United States does not differ from that of Canada, which has had no similar programs (Cullen, Nakamura, and Nakamura 1988). This research suggests that gains some women have made have not yet translated into improvements for women overall.

Cognitive biases are also germane to understanding sex discrimination. Most people today have favorable attitudes toward women as

workers. In 1970, only 45 percent of men and 55 percent of women in a public opinion poll agreed that "women could run a business as well as men." By 1982, 91 percent of men and 92 percent of women agreed (Kahn and Crosby 1985). Similarly, most adults profess to believe in equal pay for equal work. Yet these beliefs have not resulted in economic equity for women. Why? Two of the many answers to this question emphasize the role of context in people's decisions to discriminate or not.

Rational bias theory argues that "rational," self-interested managers make decisions in the context of the organization and take into account the attitudes and preferences of powerful others (Larwood, Gutek, and Gattiker 1984). The rational manager prefers to hire and keep the best subordinates, including women and minorities, but might engage in discrimination if it were thought to be expected or preferred by superiors or major clients. Research on the attitudes of management consulting clients and management students has supported the theory. Larwood and Gattiker (1985) reported that client attitudes supported discrimination against women management consultants by management. Likewise, management students who perceived that business norms favored discrimination were more likely to discriminate against white women, black men, and black women when asked to select one of two subordinates for a hypothetical job (Larwood, Sz wajkowski, and Rose 1987).

Alternatively, Kahn and Crosby (1985) contend that discrimination is the result of cumulative discrete individual decisions favoring men, which are not identified singly as discriminatory acts. In a laboratory test of this hypothesis, Crosby, Clayton, Alksnis, and Hamker (1986) found that men were more likely to view discrimination as having occurred if presented with complete descriptions of ten hirings and promotions involving women than if presented with the same ten cases one at a time. These results might also explain why women do not always perceive they are being discriminated against. Job experiences of token women are more comparable to the single case than to the total picture format.

In summary, women are far from having achieved economic equality, but the gap is very slowly closing. Research on sex discrimination has contributed to a clear understanding of the depth of the problem and possible causes and solutions. Other clues concerning how and when women achieve leadership roles can provide additional insight into women's current economic status.

### LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN

Do women have the leadership skills necessary to obtain top positions? A wealth of research, trade books, and popular articles have addressed this question. Many people tend to equate leadership skills with masculine traits. For instance, "successful managers" are described

as competitive, self-confident, objective, aggressive, forceful, and desiring of responsibility—traits that are more often used to describe men than women (Arkkelin and Simmons 1985; Powell and Butterfield 1984; Schein 1973). Consequently, for women to be seen as successful, they must either redefine notions of what a good leader is or conform to these traits.

The assumption that masculine traits and values are superior has been challenged in recent years, as efforts to redefine leadership in less sex-typed terms have become more common. For example, the six abilities of change masters (business people who know how to lead change productively and positively) identified by Kanter (1986) include the ability to create new patterns from old information, communicate visions, be persistent, build coalitions, work through teams to carry out ideas, and share credit. These skills and labels avoid the use of terms that are inherently masculine. Other redefinitions have emphasized the importance of feminine traits such as compassion and cooperation in effective management or the utility of women's and men's "separate strengths" (Case 1988; Kasten 1986). These new views of leadership may reflect changes in workplace values resulting from women's increasing economic role. Perhaps eventually they will compete successfully with current views of leadership. At present, however, masculine norms define the work world and shape the template against which women's fit or lack of fit is judged.

If women must conform to masculine stereotypes in order to be recognized as leaders, it becomes important to determine, first, what specific sex differences exist in work-related attitudes and behaviors and second, what are the professional, interpersonal, and personal consequences of conformity with the masculine stereotype? There is a great deal of speculation and much less evidence concerning whether women and men have different leadership styles. Women's socialization into more expressive family roles and their lack of experience at boys' games are the most often cited explanations for assumed sex differences (see, e.g., Harragan 1977; Kessler-Harris 1985; Landau and Amoss 1986).

Dexter (1985) and Greenhalgh and Gilkey (1986) provide recent examples of this approach. Dexter has attributed women's difficulty in achieving managerial positions in large organizations to the long re-socialization necessary for women to make the transition from ascribed to achieved status. Men learn, primarily from other men, that they must achieve their status. However, women's status is ascribed, that is, determined at birth, based on the unchanging characteristic of sex. Based on ascribed status, women are socialized into family roles that subordinate them to men. Consequently, once on the job, women must learn what male managerial candidates already know, including how to acquire and exercise organizational power, treat people with the same status equally, and share the cultural (male) values of the organization.

According to Greenhalgh and Gilkey (1986), women are at a disadvantage in the business world because their pattern of negotiation is not based on the values of competitive games. Like the games boys learn, in business the objective is to beat one's opponent. Each victory or loss is viewed as a single episode. In contrast, girls learn that relationships should not be sacrificed in order to win. As a result, women are more cooperative and compromising than competitive, which gives men the edge in strategic negotiations.

Sex differences in a wide range of work-related attitudes have been explored and some evidence for arguments like the ones presented above have been found (e.g., Gomez-Mejia 1983; Greenhalgh and Gilkey 1986; Stratham 1987). However, it is difficult to determine whether these perceived sex differences reflect actual ones because little research using objective measures has been done. In a 1981 review, Nieva and Gutek reported that no sex difference in *behavior* had yet been uncovered. In addition, situational factors have not usually been assessed in studies showing women to be perceived as less competent than men (Riger and Galligan 1980). When these factors, including age, organizational level, experience, and status, are evaluated, they often are related to reported sex differences. For instance, Liden (1985) found that women subordinates in the banking business preferred men managers, but that the men managers had significantly more managerial experience than the women. Thus, experience could as easily account for subordinates' preferences as managers' gender.

If sex differences in organizational behavior are proven eventually, they might effectively explain why the stereotypic feminine woman will not become a leader after the male model. However, they will *not* be able to explain why women pioneers, indistinguishable in many ways from men, nonetheless find a ceiling on their careers beyond which top positions of power are not obtainable. Women pathbreakers into primarily men's fields differ significantly from conventional women. Lemkau (1983) reported that women in atypical professions (at least 75 percent male) were more likely to be tough-minded realists, assertive, happy-go-lucky, and masculine than women in sex typical professions. Williams and McCullers (1983) also found higher masculinity scores and preference for sports among highly successful women in atypical fields than among women in lower status, sex-typed jobs. The personalities of 25 black and 25 white women identified as extraordinary achievers were characterized by high achievement motivation, an internal locus of control, a reward orientation (an emphasis on benefits to be gained in risk taking rather than costs to be accrued), and constructive defenses against stress (Boardman, Harrington, and Horowitz 1987).

Profiles of high achieving women typically more strongly resemble those of men in the same profession than of average women. More Type A

personalities—aggressive, competitive, hostile—have been found among groups of executive women than in the general population of women (Lipton 1986). Women managers have higher needs for achievement and power and similar needs for affiliation compared to men managers (Chusmir 1985). Masculine features in women might be preferred even in terms of body type and coloring. According to Wolff and Tarrand (in Lipton 1986), women in traditionally male jobs tend to be taller and thinner than average and to have short, dark hair. Furthermore, many successful women in male-dominated fields—like men—do not bear children. Professional women are much more likely than other women to be single or, if married, to have no children (Betz and Fitzgerald 1987).

Arguments that women do not have the personality traits necessary to achieve in male-defined arenas are refuted by these data. Expected rewards for fitting the male template are not realized, however. The rungs at the tops of women's career ladders are missing, whereas men's are evenly spaced and sturdy. Larwood and Gattiker (1987) found that successful men in 17 major corporations had followed a clearly identified career path, starting with high-level positions in a department, moving to line positions, and then becoming a professional. No similar consistently successful route was found for women. Nor does the ladder reach as high. The numbers of women in corporate America remain constant because top-level women often leave to develop their own businesses once they realize women can go no higher in the organization (Kasten 1986). It took women MBAs studied by Landau and Amoss (1986) only eight to ten years to reach the invisible ceiling on their careers. Within five years of graduation, with equivalent work experience, type of degree, and type of employment, 60 percent of women earned less than \$30,000 compared to 40 percent of the men. Fourteen percent of the men earned over \$50,000; only 5 percent of women were in that income bracket.

Women experience additional interpersonal and personal costs associated with their short career ladders. High performing women in male-dominated fields report stress associated with having to confront prejudice, discrimination, and isolation (Lipton 1986). Black women even more than white women are likely to lose friends and community (Boardman et al. 1987). Not surprisingly, women often are less satisfied with their advancement opportunities than men and more pessimistic about their future (Jagacinski 1987; Zanna, Crosby, and Loewenstein 1987).

There is some cause for optimism, however, that women will burst through the ceiling artificially limiting them as the rate of women entering the ranks of middle management and male fields accelerates. Attitudinal and behavioral change might accompany the change in sex ratios. For example, young men's attitudes toward women in the U.S. Coast Guard have been shown to improve over time as a result of working with women cadets (Stevens and Gardner 1987). A recent study of

undergraduates in leadership roles indicated that authoritarian women leaders were as accepted as men authoritarians (Linimon, Barron, and Falbo 1984). Furthermore, husbands' support of women's rights have been found to increase as a function of wives' labor force involvement; husbands with wives working full-time are the most liberal (Smith 1985). The impact of these and other changes on the workplace might not be felt for another generation.

Certain organizational characteristics favorable to women have also been identified. For instance, Dexter (1985), in a review of research, reported that industrial firms had more sex-equitable occupational distributions than nonindustrial firms and that women were more likely to reach middle management in large companies. High growth rate communities also were seen as offering better career opportunities for women. Organizational climates which are explicitly egalitarian reduce discrimination (Katz 1987; Larwood et al. 1987). Conversely, more discrimination was observed in firms with plants in suburbs or small towns, those having government contracts with nondefense agencies, and those with little or no civil rights or labor litigation.

In conclusion, many women have the leadership skills as defined by the male template to obtain top positions. External barriers to their advancement prevent them from fulfilling their potential. Equal opportunity has not been achieved, but the ranks of women at the middle levels are swelling and the wage gap is closing. The forecast for the future? Steady change due to a pressure system caused by a rising mass of competent women.

### THE PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL INTERFACE

An exciting new body of research has been developing that explores the relationship between work and intimacy. These two areas frequently are treated as separate domains. The extensive overlap between personal and professional life is typically denied, ignored, or viewed as inappropriate. Yet people consistently self-disclose at work about their personal lives, including children, sexual adventures, and relationships. Professionals often must maintain social connections with colleagues. Working together also increases opportunities for friendship and attraction between coworkers to grow. The importance of the personal-professional interface is just beginning to be recognized. Mentoring, networking, and sexual harassment have received the most attention to date. A few other promising new research directions have emerged lately, including workplace romance, women's relationships with women, and the consequences of public disclosure of a lesbian identity at work.

Mentoring and networking were among the first workplace relationships to capture the public eye. For a time, having a mentor was believed

to be a necessary and sufficient condition for career growth; networking was considered an alternate route to success (Rose 1986). Both strategies recognized the crucial impact of the informal context of work on careers. Current views of mentors and networks are more tempered, but both still are regarded as having a significant effect on advancement.

The positive benefits of same-sex mentors as role models is the most clearly established finding. Having women role models is associated with greater achievement for women. Subjectively, Gilbert (1985) found two aspects of same-sex models to be more salient for women graduate students than men. First, the women with women faculty models rated the relationship as significantly more important to their development than men with men models did. Second, women viewed the model's life-style and values as more important than men did. Both results could be due to women students' need for affirmation of their competence and role conflict in a male-dominated environment.

Women mentors might be preferable for professional women, then, but few women have enough status and power to fill this role at the top levels of organizations. Consequently, women seeking a mentor most often must depend on men. However, Dexter (1985) has warned against the female protégée-male mentor model, because it affirms women's ascriptive status. Promotion is based only on the male superior's endorsement; like women's family roles, this places her under male authority. This type of mentorship also acts as a form of social control, promoting only the careers of approved candidates.

The usefulness and necessity of a continuous one-to-one relationship with a mentor has been challenged by recent research. Keele (1986) argued that dependency on a mentor may lead to social isolation if it weakens other network ties. Other helpers often are overlooked as significant sources of support. An overwhelming majority of professionals described relationships with other helpers (colleagues, friends, and bosses) as being just as (or more) important to their careers as mentors (Keele 1986; Shapiro and Farrow 1988).

The studies reported above point to the need to differentiate the relative merits of strong and weak ties (Keele 1986). Protégée-mentor relationships involve strong ties, networks, weak ties. They anchor two endpoints of a continuum of work relationships. Weak ties, like networks, can provide sources of information and support that are very helpful professionally, if they are not pursued to the exclusion of other relationships on the continuum. Keeping a balance of both types of relationships is probably the best career strategy. Women faculty reported by Rose (1985) had networks that fit this pattern. They were comprised of a combination of "important colleagues" that included at least one higher-status woman, one or more higher-status man, and several other women and men peers. More will be learned if future

research examines social networks at work instead of only one end of the continuum.

Sexual harassment has probably been focused on more than other forms of work relationships or sexual behavior because of its legal consequences (Gutek and Dunwoody 1987) and its implications for the efficiency and well-being of women workers. About 53 percent of working women will experience sexual harassment sometime in their working lives (Gutek 1985). Young, single, and educated women are more likely to be victims, particularly if they work in nontraditional jobs or have a male supervisor. Some evidence indicates that women over 30 might also be targets (Coles 1986). The effects of sexual harassment on women ranges from being forced to quit, to lower productivity, to self-blame (Gutek and Dunwoody 1987). Often the victim is fired (Coles 1986). Laws have granted some protection to women and Coles (1986) asserts that it pays to complain. In a study of 88 cases of sexual harassment submitted during 1979-1983 in a California county, she found that 42 suits were settled within three months. Complaints for which there were witnesses were more successful.

Sexual harassment recently has been examined within the broader context of sexual behavior at work (Gutek 1985). Estimates of nonharassing sexual behavior at work are quite high. Anywhere from 55 to 76 percent of women and 47 to 55 percent of men report being the recipient of at least one sexual overture that was meant to be complimentary (Gutek and Dunwoody 1987). Combined with estimates of sexual harassment, sex appears to permeate work.

Explorations of the consequences of workplace sexuality and intimacy are only beginning. Issues that have been raised include how to manage workplace romances (Spelman, Crary, Kram, and Clawson 1986), the organizational and personal factors associated with the incidence of romance (Haavio-Mannila 1988), and the consequences of nonharassing sexual behavior for women (Gutek and Dunwoody 1987). Research on sex at work reveals an interesting paradox. "At work, women are perceived as using sex to their advantage, yet in practice, they are hurt by sex at work. On the other hand, men who are perceived as concerned with business display more sexual behavior than women at work and may benefit from it" (Gutek and Dunwoody 1987, p. 250). Even when sexual behavior is mutual, an office affair will have more negative effect on a woman's career than a man's. Given the unequal impact of the personal-professional interface on women's careers, further research in this area is urgently needed.

Interest in women's relationships with other women as a research area has been heightened by the increase in the number of working women and the developments in feminist theory. The emphasis has been on predicting whether woman boss-woman employee relationships will be

productive or unproductive and identifying what factors (age, personality) are likely to affect the relationships (see, e.g., Henderson and Marple 1986; O'Leary 1988). Will women bosses be more willing to facilitate a woman subordinate's career than a man boss would, or will women bosses be fearful of losing their authority if they are more responsive to women employees? One empirical study by Statham (1987) indicated the former was true. Statham interviewed 22 women and 18 men managers from a financial institution, a manufacturing firm, and a technical institute, and their women secretaries. The secretaries rated the women managers as being both task- and person-oriented (men were rated as neither), as more willing to give the secretaries responsibility and to help advance their careers, and as providing more structure for the job than men. The men managers and the two women managers who behaved more like the men were not liked by the secretaries as well as the other women managers. Additional research could be aimed at determining if the experience of working with a woman could change previously documented preferences among women for men bosses.

A final personal-professional interface issue that has been addressed is the consequences of public disclosure of a sexual identity at work. Schneider (1986) surveyed a national sample of 228 lesbians between the ages of 21 and 58, most of whom were professionally employed. Sixteen percent reported they were totally open about their sexuality at work, 55 percent were open with some coworkers, and 29 percent were not open at all. Open lesbians were more likely to have lower incomes, work with adults, and to be employed in small, female-dominated, human service settings. The lesbians least likely to "come out" were those in professional as opposed to working-class jobs, those with higher income, and those in male-dominated fields. Disclosure also was inhibited if the lesbian worked with children or in a large workplace, or if she had previously lost a job because of her sexuality.

Schneider's research indicates that lesbians may be burdened by stress due to isolation and prejudice even more than is generally true for professional women. The fear of harassment for disclosure is likely to affect the type of interpersonal contacts lesbians seek and their opportunities for promotion. Given the current public concern over AIDS and its effect on coworker relationships, the risks associated with being open might become greater. The labeling of AIDS as a "homosexual disease" by the media has obscured the fact that lesbians are less likely than even heterosexuals are to get AIDS. Lesbians who do come out will have to contend with both homophobia and fear of AIDS. Additional research on the linkage between work and intimacy as it affects lesbians would help to identify other problems and solutions.

In summary, the interface between the personal and professional is a newly emerging area within the field of women and work. A broad range

of issues is being investigated that should begin to delineate the impact of work relationships on careers and of careers on relationships.

### THE IMPACT OF RACE

Black women are in a unique situation in the 1980s. Black women now earn 84 percent of what white women earn, on the average. The job status of younger black women has improved almost to the level of white women. However, women of both races lag behind white and black men in terms of pay and status. Not only are black women concentrated within sex-typical professions, but they are further racially segregated within very few jobs. Black women comprised 5 percent of the labor force in 1985, but made up 25 percent of nursing aides and orderlies, 24 percent of maids, 19 percent of licensed practical nurses, and 17 percent of typists. The primary professional level jobs available for black women include teaching, social work, and nursing. Many of these jobs are vulnerable to cuts in government spending for education, health and social services, increased competition for human service and teaching jobs, and the professionalization of technical jobs like increased education requirements for practical nurses. Therefore, while the occupational position of black women has improved, their unemployment rate has increased and new job areas have not opened to them. Indeed, black women are now "between a rock and a hard place," according to Malveaux (1988).

These special employment problems confronting black women often are overlooked in favor of an emphasis on commonalities with either white women or black men. When speaking of women and minorities, black women as a separate group are rendered invisible. Yet a growing body of evidence is beginning to clarify the additional barriers to success black women face due to a confluence of race and sex discrimination. Young black women begin with high career aspirations—higher, in fact, than either white women or black men—but during college their aspirations decline until they are below those of black men (Betz and Fitzgerald, 1987). The causes and consequences of this decline have not been explored, but perhaps it reflects an awareness of diminished job opportunities and unequal treatment for black women.

Research on black women in management provides a closer look at what happens to those few who aspire to nontraditional professional level jobs. About 6 percent of black women hold executive, managerial, and administrative jobs, compared to 7 percent of black men, 10 percent of white women, and 14 percent of white men (U.S. Department of Labor 1986). Recent figures on salaries for these groups is not available, but earlier work by Brown and Ford (1977) indicated that the starting and current salaries of black women MBAs were substantially below those of their black male counterparts, which in turn, were much lower than

those of white men. Business students in a laboratory study who had to choose a subordinate to work with a client most often preferred a white man, followed by a black man, white woman, and black woman in order of descending preference (Larwood, Swajkowski, and Rose 1988). These data dispel a harmful myth that black women "have it made" because they fulfill two affirmative action criteria by being black and female. Quite the contrary, black women encounter limits on their mobility due to both race and sex (Nkomo 1988).

Professional black women who do manage to pole vault or circumvent obstacles provide an exceptional opportunity to understand how success is achieved in the face of negative expectations. Several background factors have been identified which seem to propel pioneering black women. Black women who chose nontraditional college majors like engineering, physical sciences, and economics had mothers who were better educated and more frequently employed in nontraditional work than were the mothers of black women with traditional majors (Burlaw 1982). The nontraditional black women also were less sex-typed, more confident about reaching their goals, had more work experience, and expected to have fewer female friends because of their ambition than the traditional women. Thus, as for white women, maternal success and a less feminine sex role identity are related to atypical career choices.

Other research by Boardman et al. (1987) examined the backgrounds and personalities of a group of white and black women who were "negative prediction defiers" (NPDs). Negative prediction defiers were women from low socioeconomic families whose parents had not finished high school, yet who had achieved extraordinary success. Both black and white NPDs had a high need for achievement and a very high internal locus of control, that is, they assumed personal responsibility for how their lives turned out. However, the black women NPDs were less reward-oriented than the white women, perceiving there to be more potential costs associated with taking risks than potential rewards. In addition, black NPDs reported twice as many costs as accompanying their success, including loss of friends and community and stress on family. However, their experience had made them more altruistic than bitter—the black women were significantly more willing to help others than the white NPDs. These results suggest that black women who achieve success must not only be prepared to face economic discrimination, but must have the internal resources to withstand personal isolation and loss.

Three new directions concerning black women's careers have been stimulated by the issues raised above. One has been a heightened interest in pinpointing survival strategies black women can use. Advice-oriented articles like those by Banks (1986) and Barnes (1986) detail the problems black women Ph.Ds are likely to confront, including lack of

credibility, intense visibility, discrimination, and isolation, and present suggestions on how to cope. A second direction is aimed at future research: What questions should be asked next? Nkomo (1988) raises several topics that warrant further exploration, including how black women professionals perceive their experience, how mentoring is affected by race, and how white managers view black women. Lastly, our knowledge of the effect of race largely has been limited to research on black women. A third avenue for research would be to investigate the careers of other ethnic minority women. Clearly, we have been able to see only the tip of the iceberg concerning the impact of race and sex on women's careers. Much more awaits discovery.

### BALANCING CAREER AND FAMILY ROLES

As the phenomenon of the dual career couple has become more commonplace, women have sought new ways of balancing work and family roles. The responsibilities of marriage and family generally have been regarded as detracting from women's professional commitment, even as they are viewed as enhancing men's. Many career women avoid the double duty of an eight-hour or more workday followed by housework and childcare by eliminating the roles of wife and mother. Women in high status jobs, especially those of manager, are more likely to be widowed, divorced, or separated or, if married, to be childless or have fewer children than women in lower status jobs (Valdez and Gutek 1987). Others struggle to do the housework that continues to fall disproportionately on their shoulders. Working women spend twice as much time as husbands and almost as much time as full-time housewives on maintaining the household (Nieva 1985).

Both positive and negative effects of juggling both roles have been found. On the positive side, married working women have higher self-esteem and marital satisfaction than unemployed wives. Husbands of working women also benefit in terms of better physical and mental health and happier marriages (Nieva 1985). Negative effects are more numerous, however. One drawback for women in terms of career development is their decreased job mobility. Markham (1987) concluded that migration does enhance careers and that men are more likely than women to move for their own advancement. Furthermore, not only do women move less for their own benefit, but when they do move for husbands' jobs, their own careers are often set back or interrupted. The underemployment of women in dual-career marriages is a familiar event. Research on husband-wife members of the same professions (psychology and sociology) indicated that wives often are unemployed, employed part-time and have the lowest incomes compared to husbands, single men, and single women in the same fields. Their husbands fared much

better—they were fully employed, were more likely to have full professor rank, and were more productive than the other groups (reviewed in Betz and Fitzgerald 1987).

The extensive pattern of career subordination among middle-class women to marital and family roles briefly described above has led some couples to create novel arrangements to maintain the delicate balance of career and family. The commuter marriage is one such form. In a study of 50 commuter couples, the precipitating causes of this life-style were poor job opportunities available for the wife and a strong commitment from both spouses to the wife's career aspirations (Gerstel and Gross 1984).

Individual strategies used to respond to the demands placed on married women or mothers include trying to change the objective situation by managing one's time better. However, this solution does not change the basic nature of the problem. Women are still held (and perhaps hold themselves) responsible for a majority of household work and childcare. Short of convincing husbands of the intrinsic satisfactions associated with such tasks, women's balancing act will not be ended until organizations step in to help the dual career family. Beutell and Greenhaus (1986) propose some suggestions organizations could utilize to ease the strain, including giving employees realistic information concerning the amount of commitment and stress involved in different career paths, flex-time arrangements, the establishment of support systems through company seminars on stress management, and help with meeting childcare needs. In the meantime, "having it all" is likely to continue to mean "doing it all," as career women and researchers search for other solutions.

### CONCLUSIONS

The intent in the present chapter was to demonstrate where career women stand in the 1980s with regard to five crucial issues—sex discrimination, leadership, personal-professional interfaces, race, and dual career and family roles. The overall picture shows that women have made significant gains in most areas, but substantial barriers to our career development still exist. Research on women and work has made substantial inroads into identifying sources of problems in each area and specific solutions. Full details on the chart of women's careers are not yet available, but our visibility of what lies ahead is improving.

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# Women's Careers

## PATHWAYS AND PITFALLS

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## Preface

A growing interest in women's careers has spread to personal, academic, and organizational life. The proliferation and quality of research on women and work that we saw as program chairs of the 1986 International Conference on Women and Organizations inspired us to edit this book. That highly successful conference was the source of several chapters included here.

Our goal was to select timely topics that had immediate relevance to career women, students, and scholars of women and work. Part I of the book begins with an introduction by the editors which highlights five major issues that affect working women and what has been learned about those issues in the 1980s. Other chapters are ordered thematically. In Part II, "Personal Career Planning," the themes touch on pathways and pitfalls confronting women as they plan their career strategies. In Chapters 2, 3, and 4, Shapiro and Farrow discuss the merits of mentors, Case analyzes women's speech, and Ely explores women's leadership styles, respectively; with an eye to how women can apply the information to their own work situation. Family relationships also have been shown to affect women's careers. In Chapter 5, "Husbands' Job Satisfaction and Wives' Income," and Chapter 6, "Have Women's Career and Family Values Changed?" questions are raised concerning the relationship between marriage, family, and careers. In Chapter 7, Chao and Malik present a career planning model which ties together individual, organizational, and societal constraints and facilitators of professional development.

Part III, "The Challenge of the Workplace," deals with broader issues related to the context of work. Stella Nkomo, in Chapter 8, presents the unique problems black women face that have not been addressed ade-