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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT IN BLACK,
PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

City University of New York

PH.D. 1985

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY
OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT
IN BLACK, PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

by
JANICE E. RUFFIN

A dissertation submitted to
The Graduate Faculty in Psychology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
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1985

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1985

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Janice E. Ruffin

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....	ix
Chapter	
I. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	1
Research approaches to the Study of Adult Lives.....	4
The Life Structure Paradigm.....	12
Central Questions for Research on Adult Development.....	23
Black Women's Adult Development.....	30
Socio-cultural Perspectives.....	30
Socio-historical Perspectives.....	35
Psychological Perspectives.....	39
Summary.....	45
II. METHODOLOGY.....	47
Methods.....	49
The Sample.....	49
Recruitment Procedures.....	53
Research Materials.....	55
Procedures for Analyzing Data.....	58

III. EIGHT BIOGRAPHIES.....	62
Annie.....	64
Barbara.....	83
Carol.....	108
Dora.....	133
Eva.....	153
Fran.....	177
Grace.....	208
Helen.....	234
IV. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS: LIFE STRUCTURES.....	261
The Components of the Life Structure.....	261
The Central Components.....	264
The Process of Life Structure Evolution.....	268
The Novice Phase.....	268
The Early Adult Transition.....	283
Entering the Adult World.....	287
The Age-Thirty Transition.....	294
Settling Down.....	305
The Mid-Life Transition.....	317
Entering Middle Adulthood.....	335
Summary of Findings.....	341
V. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS: RACIAL IDENTITY.....	349
The Dream.....	351
Coping Styles.....	356
A New Developmental Task.....	360
Summary.....	369

VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	373
Methodological Considerations and Limitations.....	373
The Interviewing.....	373
The Procedures.....	376
The Subjects.....	378
Utilizing a Theory in Progress.....	379
Interpreting the Findings.....	380
Women's Lives and The Novice Phase.....	381
Women's Lives and the Settling Down Period.....	383
Women's Lives and the Mid-Life Transition.....	385
Women's Lives and Entering Middle Adulthood.....	389
Racial Identity.....	395
Alternative Conceptions of Adult Development.....	408
Clinical Implications.....	417
Conclusions.....	424
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	428

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Characteristics of the Sample Studied.....	52
2. Age Ranges for Four Developmental Periods.....	343

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
1. The Early Adult Transition.....	285
2A. Entering the Adult World.....	289
2B. Entering the Adult World (Continued).....	290
3A. The Age-Thirty Transition.....	296
3B. The Age-Thirty Transition (Continued).....	297
4A. Settling Down.....	308
4B. Settling Down (Continued).....	309
5A. The Mid-Life Transition.....	322
5B. The Mid-Life Transition (Continued).....	323
6. Entering Middle Adulthood.....	337
7. Developmental Patterns and Motivational Stances.....	410

Chapter One

Literature Review

Until recently there have been distinct quantitative and qualitative differences in research approaches to the study of pre-adulthood, as compared to the study of adulthood. Historically, interest in the study of adulthood has always lagged behind that of infancy, childhood, and adolescence. The bulk of the theory available within psychology has been derived from an early and intense focus on changes occurring within the formative years.

The extensive and sophisticated body of research on the pre-adult years has rested on three basic assumptions about normal psychological growth. These have been that: 1) Each stage of life has critical developmental issues specific to the particular stage.; 2) The stages may vary in terms of degrees of equilibrium and disequilibrium, and in the requirements for major personality consolidation or restructuring.; 3) Each stage builds upon the preceding one i.e. is sequential. Research has been directed toward finding the underlying order in pre-adult development.

Although these assumptions have been accepted for the pre-adult years, studies of adulthood have not generally been in the same direction of determining the underlying

developmental principles. In contrast, research on adulthood has focused, primarily, on changes within a given stage. Thus, for example, there are numerous studies on early, middle, and late-adulthood. What has been lacking in this narrow approach to research is a concern for the commonalities among the various adult groups. The developmental patterns of adulthood remain insufficiently explored and poorly understood.

There is general agreement that life span developmental psychology is currently in its early infancy as a field of research. The field is likely to undergo a long process of further growth and diversification. Indeed, the majority of contemporary adult development research represents efforts to bring greater conceptual clarity to the field (Gould, 1972; Levinson et. al., 1978; Loewenthal et. al., 1975; Vaillant, 1977). Further, the available studies have devoted greater attention to males than females, and to persons in the middle and upper social classes. Currently, there is a paucity of research that explicitly attempts to understand the adult development of racial minorities. There is an obvious need, therefore, for studies which can promote insight into the complex patterns of psychological change throughout the life cycle for both women and racial minority groups.

This study on adult development provides information on a subgroup that has been traditionally underrepresented in

psychological research, the black female.

This exploratory study utilized Levinson's (1978) theory of adult development as the primary framework for examining the lives of a select sample of black women in the middle years. Levinson conceives of adult development as the evolution of the "life structure". His notion of the life structure represents a conceptual departure from those researchers whose study of adult lives is based primarily, or solely, on the study of personality. The life structure is conceived of as the pattern or design of an individual's life at a given point in time. Both personality and the social environment are represented within the life structure. The relationship between the personality structure and the environment is mediated by the life structure.

Two broad research objectives were of central importance to this study. First, the aim was that of determining whether subjects' life structures evidenced orderly and sequential changes related to age. A second objective was that of exploring the relationship between these age-related, developmental changes and subjects' evolving racial identity. Taken together, these objectives reflected an interest in conceptualizing how black women's adult development is influenced both by age-related developmental change and racial identity.

This chapter proceeds with a review of selected studies on

adult development. In the absence of available research on the adult development of black women, a final section outlines issues relevant to the present study.

Research Approaches to the Study of Adult Lives

As we have already noted, the field of adult development is a very young one. The paucity of systematic data derived from empirical research contributes significantly to the absence of a unified theory of adulthood. Currently, the field shows the signs of groping, inchoation, and experimentation that characterizes a new field of inquiry (Smelser and Erikson, 1980). The student of adult development is faced with a massive array of published materials on the subject. Much of this material represents conceptual work that has not been grounded in empirical research. In light of the diversity in this field, we provide an outline of the many intellectual approaches that have been utilized. In doing so, the significance of the particular research approach which we have chosen may emerge more sharply.

The study of adulthood is, necessarily, an endeavor that requires multi-disciplinary perspectives. Dewald (1980) summarizes the complexity of adult behavior as follows:

...the total intrapsychic and interpersonal behavior of the adult is the result of the simultaneous interaction of

multiple factors. Some of these are constitutionally determined; some are psychologically and experientially determined. Some exert their effects at conscious levels of awareness, while others operate at deeply unconscious levels of experience. Some arise primarily from internal intrapsychic forces; and some are a result of various forms of complex interplay between external and intrapsychic factors. (p. 52)

Yet, a comprehensive theory of adulthood that is based in an integration of biological, psychological, and sociological perspectives does not appear to be on the horizon. Historically, the interplay between biological factors and social-psychological factors has been neglected by adult development researchers. As Rossi (1980) has observed, most researchers in sociology and psychology have excluded physiological factors from their attention. As a consequence of their neglect of such factors, the biologically based phenomena of adulthood are impartially explained.

At this point in the evolution of the field of adult development, there are several quite distinct approaches that generate data of relevance. In social psychology, an active group of sociological social psychologists and personality psychologists have carved out an area called social gerontology, or the social psychology of aging. Blank (1982), a social psychologist interested in a social

psychology of developing adults, has criticized this approach for its emphasis on the aged's adjustment to an increasingly uncontrollable external world. Within the gerontology framework, aging is treated as a separate period of life with unique biological and sociocultural dimensions. As Neugarten (1973) has observed, a psychology of aging depends upon a psychology of the life cycle; the latter has been slow to appear.

The study of the life span can be likened to the exploration of uncharted territory: we begin the journey with a vast knowledge about the origins of adulthood, and we have some partial knowledges of later life. In the middle, however, there are stretches of vast, unexplored territories. There are a few studies available that report on the development of individuals from adolescence into adulthood; still fewer studies have been conducted on individuals followed from young adulthood into middle age, or from middle age into old age. Related to the paucity of available data is the lack of a conceptual framework that might organize and systematize research on the life cycle as a whole.

Rossi (1980) has analyzed the models used by social scientists over the past decade in studies of the life cycle. She suggests that there has been a change in the conceptual labels used to describe the life cycle. According to Rossi, the approaches of scientists who

investigate the "life course" differ from those who study the "life span". Life course researchers focus on, and search for, social patterns in the timing, duration, spacing, and order of life events. Such work done by sociologists, historical demographers, and historians relies on a definition of the life course as: "the pathways through the age-differentiated structure in the major role domains of life" (Rossi, 1980, p. 7).

By contrast, life span psychologists are more specifically concerned with individual psychological development. It is the life span developmental psychology tradition that has culminated in much of the research on the stability of personality in the middle and late adulthood years. Life span developmental psychology has been defined by Neugarten (1973) as: "...an area of inquiry in which investigators are concerned with questions of orderly and sequential changes occurring with the passage of time, with issues of consistency and change in personality over relatively long intervals, and with issues of antecedent-consequent relationships." (p. 312)

This life-span perspective has emerged rather slowly over the past few decades. Initial efforts in this direction derived from research on the middle years. Soon it became obvious that the mid-life period was "merely one arbitrary demarcation, a temporary conceptual stepping stone on the way to a more comprehensive and continuous theory" of the

life cycle (Giele, 1982, p. 3).

As Rossi (1980) has clarified, at this period in history, there appears to be two major types of theory within the life-span perspective: "stage theories" and "timing of events" models. In the latter model, there is skepticism that any clear and orderly patterns of adulthood exist. Instead of sharply defined stages of development, some argue that change occurs on one or several dimensions of the life course, triggered by specific personal or environmental events. Timing-of-events theorists deemphasize the influence of chronological age in adult development. The assumption is that the phasing, and the shifts in self-definition, are structured by age norms rooted in culture and society. Stress along the lifeline is viewed as a manifestation of asynchrony in the timing of life events. Events are traumatic when they are unanticipated. Thus, not to have married by forty, or to become a widow at thirty, may trigger anxiety because one's cultural expectations of timing have been violated.

Perun and Bielby (1980) have provided a conceptual model of value for visualizing development in terms of a timing-of-events model. They picture changes throughout the life course as analogous to the operation of a disk pack in a computer. Adult development is conceptualized in terms of many dimensions, each internally regulated by a multiplicity of timetables. Each of the constituent dimensions is in

simultaneous operation and moves in time at a rate specific to itself. Further, each of the dimensions has its own developmental progression with its own antecedents, transitions, and sequelae (Giele, 1982, p. 7).

Other proponents of the timing-of-events model are: Kohn and Schooler (1978), who show that an individual's work complexity may appreciably influence his intellectual growth in adulthood; Pearlin (1980), who concludes that one's status and role in the larger social and economic structure heavily influences the means by which individuals cope with stressful life events; and Fiske (1980), whose research demonstrates the impact of income, education, and occupation on individuals' adaptation at successive life stages.

The second type of perspective in work on adult development has been labeled the "normative crisis" model or stage theory (Rossi, 1980). These theories tend to follow in the tradition of Erikson's (1950) epigenetic model in which the individual's personality gradually unfolds, from the psychologically undifferentiated infant, to progressively higher and more complex levels of development. Erikson's model is premised on the notion of a patterned sequence of stages; each stage has particular tasks to be accomplished in the physical, emotional, and cognitive spheres.

Stage theories portray adults as continuously tending toward a more individuated and complex self. The assumption

inherent in these theories is that each phase of adult life has specific tasks to resolve; unresolved tasks impair development in all subsequent phases of life. Further, the idea of crisis as a normal part of adult development is incorporated in these stage theories. Crises provide the opportunity for intense self reevaluation, with resultant changes in the self.

Whitbourne and Weinstock (1979) have observed that there is a surprising consistency in the findings of studies conducted within a "stage theory" perspective. Despite differences in the composition of samples, and the methods used by the researchers, there are many similarities across these studies. A focus on these similarities yields a pattern of the "average" adult life. According to Whitbourne and Weinstock (1979), the average adult life is characterized by: "A tentativeness and vigor in early adulthood, greater assumption of adult roles and responsibility in the early portion of middle adulthood, followed by a questioning of commitments and reintegration in the latter portion of middle adulthood." (p. 124)

Yet, there are often major differences among stage theorists in interpretations of adulthood. Theories of how and why individuals change throughout their adult lives differ considerably. Erikson's (1959, 1963) conception of the life cycle delineates eight stages which represent a crisis for the developing ego. Other psychoanalysts focus

on particular psychosexual events as precipitants of personality change in adulthood (Bibring, 1959; Benedek, 1970). More recently, Gould (1978) has discussed stages in terms of transformation from childhood consciousness to more reality based adult consciousness.

In contrast with these more psychoanalytically based frameworks, other researchers have focused on the relationship between personality and adaptation. Loewenthal, Thurnher, and Chiriboga (1975) have described the different adaptations of men and women at normative, pre-transitional life stages (i.e. high-school seniors, young newlyweds, middle-age parents, and pre-retirees). Their objectives included the identification of socio-psychological characteristics conducive to successful coping in a given life stage. Vaillant's (1977) longitudinal study of Harvard undergraduates also represented an inquiry into aspects of personality and adaptation. A hierarchy of "ego mechanisms" or defenses was found to be predictive of growth throughout the adult years.

Currently, it appears that there is no paradigm for dealing with changes over the life span that commands consensus. Given this lack of consensus, existing research must be evaluated on its own merits, particularly with respect to its comprehensiveness. A review of the literature reveals that, while there are many divergent

intellectual traditions within the field, few studies have moved significantly beyond Erikson's (1963) conception of the life cycle. Levinson's (1978) study represents, in this investigator's view, the most comprehensive theory of adult development available. While Erikson proposed only three stages for the entirety of adult life, Levinson's work provides a more elaborated view of developmental periods in adulthood. Further, Levinson's concept of the life structure avoids a too narrow focus on personality alone, and locates the individual within an external world which also requires examination.

The next section provides a detailed consideration of the key concepts and propositions which constitute Levinson's model.

The Life Structure Paradigm

Levinson's sample consisted of forty men, distributed in age from 35-45 years. The men came from varied social class backgrounds. Racially, a majority were white. Four occupational groups were represented: business executives, novelists, hourly workers in industry, and university biologists. Although the study began with an aim of studying the mid-life decade, the final product was a theory of adult development from the entry into adulthood until the late forties. Since Levinson's theory served as the central

conceptual framework for the present study, it is presented in some detail. This will include the evolution of the individual life structure, the sequence of life structure evolution, and developmental periods and tasks.

One task of Levinson's research was that of determining how various aspects of the "self" and "world" influenced the formation of each individual's life structure. Biographies were completed on every subject. The biographies attempted to show "how the person is both a reflection of his society and a creative agent making his unique contribution...to the continuity and change of his world" (p. 43).

According to Levinson, analysis of the life structure begins with a consideration of its primary components i.e. the choices made by a person. These choices were then interpreted in terms of their meanings and functions within a life structure. While it was assumed that lives would vary widely in the nature and patterning of components, it was found that one or two components (rarely as many as three) had a central place in the structure. For Levinson's male subjects, the central components were occupation and marriage-family. Other components thought to be central to a man's life were friendship and peer relationships, ethnicity, religion, and leisure.

Sequence of Life Structure Evolution

Levinson and his co-workers concluded that "the life structure evolves through a relatively orderly sequence

during the adult years" (p. 49). The character of the sequence was the same for all the subjects studied: "It consists of a series of alternating stable (structure-building) periods and transitional (structure-changing) periods" (p. 49). Stable periods were thought to last six or seven years, ten at most; transitional periods were thought to last four to five years.

In Levinson's model, separation-individuation processes are of primary importance. Individuation is a continuous process, but is a major aspect of the key transition periods. Since developmental transitions involve the termination of an existing life structure and the initiation of a new one, the person must form a clear boundary between self and world: "He forms a stronger sense of who he is and what he wants, and a more realistic, sophisticated view of the world; what it is like, what it offers him and demands from him" (p. 195).

Developmental Periods and Tasks

The sequence of periods in adult development, as proposed by Levinson and his co-workers, is as follows: The sequence begins with the Early Adult Transition (E.A.T.) and is followed by a structure-building period, Entering the Adult World (E.A.W.). This structure is modified in the Age Thirty Transition (A.T.T.). In the Settling Down (S.D.) period, a second adult life structure is built; it is followed by a

Mid-Life Transition (M.L.T.) which links early and middle adulthood.

One of the most controversial propositions of Levinson's work is that the life cycle evolves through a sequence of eras that begin at specific chronological ages. That is, the assumption is that there is an average or most frequent age for the onset and completion of every era. This is an aspect of the theory which is controversial at a time when the meanings of age in our society are so fluid. In this regard, Neugarten (1968) once suggested that we all have built in "social clocks" so that there are orderly and sequential changes that occur in adult lives with the passage of time. Neugarten believed that there was agreement within social classes as to the appropriate age for significant life events, such as marriage, childbearing, and career switch. More recently, Neugarten (1980) has indicated that the internal clock she used to write about is no longer as powerful or as compelling as it used to be; age is becoming a poor predictor of the way people live.

In addition to the more general tasks for transitional and stable periods, Levinson proposed tasks for each of the developmental periods. The tasks relate to the evolving life structure, rather than to a developing personality or ego. These developmental tasks were seen to be essential in order for individuals to evolve a "satisfactory" life structure. Levinson's approach to evaluating the life

structure is rather loosely defined: "A life structure is satisfactory to the extent that it is viable in society and suitable for the self" (p. 53). A structure is viewed as satisfactory if it permits the person to live out some important wishes and values.

Levinson's developmental tasks for each period reflect both the characteristic concerns of a given age group and the demands of the social order. Thus, men were seen to evolve life structures reflecting individual motives as well as societal expectations.

The periods beginning with the Early Adult Transition and ending with the Age Thirty Transition constitute a period labeled the Novice phase. Tasks common to each period of this phase are: 1) Forming a Dream and giving it a place in the life structure; 2) Forming mentor relationships; 3) Forming an occupation; 4) Forming love relationships, marriage and family. These Novice phase tasks are elaborated upon since they illuminate some of the areas in which women's lives may vary considerably from men's.

The notion of the Dream was strongly influenced by Winnicott's (1965) views regarding transitional phenomena in early childhood. The Dream arises as a transitional phenomenon in the E.A.T. and E.A.W. periods. Just as the child's play occurs on the boundary between reality and illusion, between the clearly "me" and the "not me", or between what "is" and "might be", so the young man entering

adulthood imagines possibilities for his adult life. He struggles to attain the "I am" feeling in his dreamed of self in the world. The Dream is an image of oneself-in-the-world which "has the quality of a vision, an imagined possibility that generates excitement and vitality" (p. 91).

The task of forming a mentor relationship involves entering a relationship with a person who will support and facilitate the realization of the Dream. Emphasis is placed on the character of the relationship and the functions it serves. These functions include: acting as a teacher; serving as a sponsor, host, or guide; providing counsel and moral support; and, serving as an exemplar that can be admired and emulated.

The developmental task relating to occupation refers to a complex social-psychological process that extends over the entire Novice phase and often beyond. Levinson notes that while an initial serious choice is usually made during the E.A.T. or E.A.W., the transformation of interests into occupation, like that of marriage, requires a balancing of exploration and commitment. Too early a strong occupational commitment, or too prolonged a period without a commitment, may have negative consequences in later stages of development: "One of the greatest paradoxes of human development is that we are required to make crucial choices before we have the knowledge, judgment, and

self-understanding to choose wisely. Yet, if we put off these choices until we feel truly ready, the delay may produce other and greater costs." (p. 102)

As with a man's occupation, his marriage and family life is also seen to go through a highly formative process throughout the Novice phase and beyond. His pre-adult development prepares him, but never sufficiently, to undertake the first developmental task: "to form the capability of having adult peer relationships with women" (p. 106).

As of this writing, there have been only a few studies completed using Levinson's theory of adult development. Three of these studies are summarized here.

Stewart (1976) investigated the lives of eleven white women, focusing on the formation of their early adult life structures. Stewart concluded that, while some of Levinson's contentions were supported by her findings, some modifications in his theory were suggested. Women, like men, were found to form a life structure that evolved through a series of four age-related developmental periods. Further, Stewart found that the accomplishment of certain developmental tasks, such as separating from the family of origin and forming a Dream, was a pre-requisite to forming an initial adult life structure in the twenties. However, it was apparent that women's development showed greater variability as compared with men.

In analyzing her findings, Stewart found it necessary to divide her subjects into two groups. One group consisted of those women who followed the traditional female pattern of marriage and motherhood in their twenties. In the second group were women who deviated from the traditional pattern, either by postponing or repudiating marriage and motherhood, or by forming a serious, sustained career commitment in their twenties.

The "traditional" women formed a relational Dream centered around marriage and motherhood, established a life structure to actualize their Dream during the E.A.W. period, and formed a relationship with a "Special Man" who facilitated the realization of their Dream. They were viewed as postponing developmental work on a more individualistic (masculine) life structure. Their E.A.W. lasted longer than that of men, or of women in the second ("Career") group. Their A.T.T. was conceived of as building a second adult life structure, rather than as continued work on stabilizing and integrating the initial life structure. These women did not have Mentor relationships, but continued their identifications with their mothers as role models. The developmental task of forming an occupation was addressed for the first time during the thirties by this group of "traditional" women.

Stewart's "Career" women tended to postpone marriage until around Age 30. Often, their careers were subsequently

drastically limited or abandoned. Apparently, their own difficulties in sustaining a career commitment, in combination with time pressure to have a child, resulted in their heightened anxiety at the A.T.T. Their second adult life structure reflected their needs for affirmation of their ability to succeed as mothers. One of these women sustained a career but continued her attachment with her family of origin, without forming a marriage and family.

Stewart argues that the alternative of career without marriage and motherhood is not a viable option for the majority of American women:

A more viable option is to combine both family and career. While this would appear to be an increasingly viable option for women, the integration of two top priorities into a viable life structure is not without problems and clearly is not possible for every woman. In order to integrate a family and a career, a woman requires a highly supportive interpersonal environment, greater than average personal ambition, the ability to thrive on or at least withstand competition, and the ability to thrive on the complexity and challenge of sequentially ordering two major priorities as becomes necessary without sacrificing either. (p. 119)

Taylor's (1981) study of the evolution of life structures for seven white women represented another critical review of Levinson's theory. Generally, she found that Levinson's

descriptions of the first four developmental periods (E.A.T., E.A.W., A.T.T., and S.D.) were applicable to her subjects' lives. However, the fundamental premise that adult lives evolve through a series of alternating stable (structure-building) and transitional (structure-changing) periods was not fully supported by Taylor's research. Taylor's findings suggested that life structure changes were strongly influenced by individuals' "character styles". Thus, character styles resulted in different patterns of building life structures and of undergoing transitions.

Taylor also found that the "Dream" was not a guiding principle in the evolution of her subjects' life structures. With the exception of her career-oriented subjects, dreams were found to be time-limited and reflective of multiple aims and aspirations. Moreover, Taylor offered a revised conception of the S.D. period. Instead of settling down, subjects were described as "restructuring" their lives at, approximately, age 35. That is, in the second stable period of early adulthood, women tended to experiment with new paths. This pattern of restructuring was most pronounced for women who had been family-centered in the first half of early adulthood.

On the basis of both Stewart's and Taylor's findings, it appears that Levinson's theory requires revision to account for the variability in women's lives. Both of these studies underscore the fact that women's lives evidence substantial

work at integrating family life with career investment. Levinson's theory is challenged, primarily, in terms of its limited explanatory power for women whose lives vary from the almost exclusive career orientation evidenced by Levinson's subjects.

By contrast, Gooden's (1980) study of adult development in black men illuminates the influences of race, social class, and culture on the evolution of these men's life structures. While Gooden's findings were also supportive of Levinson's descriptions of the developmental periods, he suggested that the theory was limited in its applicability to men who were unable to achieve economically viable life structures. Gooden's sample of fifteen men included three groups, i.e. high school teachers, university faculty members, and "street men". The latter group was most economically deprived; their lives evidenced the chaotic and stressful course of their lives.

Gooden found the "street men" were hardest to understand within Levinson's theory, but a majority of the total sample had difficulties in achieving the developmental tasks which Levinson proposed for the latter half of S.D. These tasks of advancement and societal affirmation, or "Becoming one's own man", were not achieved by most of Gooden's sample. Three major issues were identified as crucial for these men's development. First, institutional racism impacted on their adult lives in denying them opportunities to enhance their

lives. Second, the paucity of mentoring for these men was viewed as a significant limitation in their efforts to achieve occupationally. The lack of cross-racial mentoring for black men in predominantly white institutions represented a lack of institutional support for their development. Finally, the majority of Gooden's sample did not have well-formed dreams, or if they did, gave them up early. The absence of a coherent, well formed dream was viewed as having negative consequences for development, particularly for the thirties and beyond.

Based on the foregoing review of studies of adult development, we have identified three major research questions which reflect the current state of controversy and unsettledness within this new field of study. Each of these broad questions will be addressed before the questions specific to this study are outlined.

Central Questions for Research on Adult Development

Research Question 1: Is there development in adulthood, or is adulthood a relatively static process within an already developed organism?

This question strikes at the heart of the controversy between proponents of "timing-of-events" models and the stage theorists. If one conceives of adulthood as an ongoing, dynamic process, then research is, necessarily, an

effort to discover the developmental principles which underlie adult lives. Conversely, a conception of the adult as a finished product directs one's attention to the ways in which social structures facilitate or hinder the individual's adaptation as adults.

Until recently psychoanalytic theory has contributed minimally to a conception of adulthood as an ongoing, dynamic process. In fact, psychoanalytic theory directs our attention to the continued influence of infantile experiences on adult behavior. A comprehensive theory of development that places importance on adult experiences, as well as those of childhood, continues to be the desired goal. Though Levinson's (1978) theory provides a unique conception of changes occurring in adult life, it does not systematically address how adult lives reflect a childhood past, as well as an adult past.

Levinson's theory conceives of developmental processes in adulthood as a patterned interaction between biological organism and environment, with opportunities for change throughout the life cycle. However, at this point, it does not appear that Levinson's theory addresses the universals of developmental change in adulthood. To date, studies have provided support for Levinson's descriptions of developmental periods, but other aspects of his theory are challenged. Generally, populations which vary from the career-centered, achievement-oriented lives of Levinson's

white male subjects pose problems for the theory. This leads us to the next major research question.

Research Question 2: Do all people experience distinct stages of adult development, or are there varieties of adult development?

Levinson's conception of adult development is exemplary of the view common to stage theorists. Levinson holds that the sequential, age-linked periods, with their specific developmental tasks are:

...grounded in the nature of man as a biological, psychological and social organism, and in the nature of society as a complex enterprise extending over many generations. They represent the life cycle of the species. Individuals go through the periods in infinitely varied ways, but the periods themselves are universal. These eras and periods have governed human development for the past five or ten thousand years--since the beginning of more complex, stable societies. (p. 322)

Giele (1982) has offered an alternative view based on her review of stage theories. Giele argues that some people experience distinct stages of adult development while others do not. Noting that stage theories emphasize growth (as an adaptive process) and unification (as the pattern-maintaining capacity of the self), Giele suggests that:

Thus, a theory of positive developmental stages will probably apply better to people who both symbolically and materially are able to experience aging as a process of learning and self-integration. These stages will seem less applicable to those who, because of lack of education and material resources, will experience aging as specific decrements and disengagements. (pp. 161-162)

These criticisms of the lack of universality of stage theories alert us to the probable limitations of Levinson's theory. We are advised to consider that race, social class, and culture, not age, may exert a dominant influence on the life course. The challenge for adult development researchers is one of conceptualizing the nature of the cultural milieu within which development occurs, and the nature of the cohort being studied. Because cohorts are differentiated by social change, size, and composition, they establish different contexts of socialization and life opportunity.

According to Elder (1981), one of the critical research tasks is that of specifying how historical conditions interact with the human biography to alter the course and psychology of lives. This task is made difficult by the lack of conceptual linkages between social structure and personality. Elder proposes four types of linkages that might serve the research process (p. 82). These were: 1) Situational imperatives and options may structure

experiences and developmental outcomes. For example, occupational advancement may enhance intellectual functioning through exposure to more complex and autonomous work (Kohn and Schooler, 1978); 2) Social status and group membership communicate identities. For example, power, independence, and prestige are commonly attributed to persons of high socioeconomic status.; 3) Social psychological mechanisms such as social evaluation and causal attribution clarify the means by which individuals come to view themselves as they are viewed by others through the life course.; and, 4) Variations in life circumstances may give rise to distinctive personality or developmental patterns.

Elder's considerations of how biographies may reflect the interplay of historical events and one's specific social circumstances lend support to the view of varieties of adult development. This leads us to the third and final broad research question applicable to this study.

Research Question 3: Given the variability of black women's life courses, how do we conceptualize the unique features of their adult development?

We suggest that there are two logical reasons to expect that women's adult development will differ from that of men. First, women's social roles with respect to family and employment responsibilities lend themselves to an immense variety of timing patterns. The timing of life events such

as marriage, childbirth, and entry into the labor force strongly influence the character of the life course. (Bernard, 1974, 1975; Giele, 1982) Second, following Chodorow (1978), we suggest that women's socialization for adulthood results in a feminine personality that is based on relational abilities and preoccupations. Thus, women's lives show they are more embedded in social interactions and personal relationships with their families than are men.

We anticipated that the present study would demonstrate the merits of Notman's (1980) conception of women's adult development: "Developmental stages for women are...produced by an interweaving of those experiences related to childbirth, parenting and family development, with those experiences relating to the establishment of separations and autonomy, personal identity, intellectual growth and relationship to work." (p. 93)

While this task of the integration of autonomy and caring is relevant to both men and women, there are constraints in the timing of this integration for women because of their biological timetables. Women's traditional assumption and valuing of caring, nurturing roles results in their entering mid-life with a particular history and patterns of integrating autonomy and caring.

A related issue central to this research was whether women's development proceeds as an orderly stepwise progression of the kind that Levinson pictures for men.

Given that women's lives reflect variability in the timing and sequence of work and family commitments, McGuigan (1980) envisions women's development as a braid of threads in which colors appear, disappear, and reappear. Specifically, it was expected that women's lives would evidence variability in the "seasons" in which certain developmental tasks are pursued. In this regard, numerous typologies have been developed to address women's patterns of integrating work and family. For example, Sheehy (1976) proposes a six category typology: Caregiver; Nurturer with delayed achievement; Achiever who delays nurturance; Never-Married; Integrator; and Transient.

Finally, we were vitally concerned with the influence of ethnicity and race on the adult lives of the black women studied. In Levinson's framework, ethnicity is one of five central components in men's life structures. The research task entailed a search for the meanings and functions of ethnicity within the life structure. Theoretically, it is one's relationship to race that is the focus of inquiry. One's relationship to race reveals the interaction of an individual's personality with the particular social systems in which he/she is involved. A wide range of personality dispositions may be expressed in relationships to race. This aspect of Levinson's theory appears to be a valuable approach in that it allows for considerable variation among individuals, and directs our attention to the dynamic

interaction between self and world.

However, we would assert that racial identity, like gender identity, has a dominant influence on the life course of a quality that exceeds that of any particular life structure component. We anticipated that the patterning of black women's lives would contain indicators of the relatively unpredictable and uncontrollable influence of societal racism. In the following section, selected aspects of the group behavior of black women are summarized. The discussion highlights some unique aspects of the socio-cultural context within which black women's adult development occurs.

Black Women's Adult Development

Socio-Cultural Perspectives

Black women are embedded in social systems that they both shape, and are shaped by, throughout their adult lives. Parsons (1951) defines a social system as an aggregation of persons or social roles bound together in a pattern of mutual interaction and interdependence. For black women these social systems include the black family, the larger black subsociety, and the wider society. As will be apparent in the data to follow, very often the lives of black women embody the conflicts between black families and communities and the wider society.

We may also describe black women in terms of their existence within an ethnic subsociety that is a subsystem of the wider society. Gordon (1964) has defined an ethnic group as a relatively large configuration of people with a shared feeling of peoplehood. Common to ethnic groups is "...the social-psychological element of a special sense of both ancestral and future oriented identification with the group. These are the 'people' of my ancestors, therefore, they are my people, and will be the people of my children and their children". (Gordon, 1964, p. 29)

Three broad issues are seen to be particularly relevant to this discussion of socio-cultural perspectives. These concern: the low sex-ratio in the black population; marital patterns within the black subsociety; and, occupational patterns among black women.

Census data reveal that females have been excessive in the black population since 1850. Jackson (1971) has summarized data relevant to this problem of a low sex-ratio, i.e. the number of males per every one hundred females. Using data derived from census reports, Jackson has concluded that black men have been becoming more and more scarce in the black population. According to the 1970 census report, approximately one and one half million black women (or over 10%) were without available, black monogamous mates.

Though there is uncertainty surrounding the accuracy of census data, there is an apparent shortage of black males in

the population. (Rodgers-Rose, 1980, p. 30) In view of this shortage, Jackson (1971) has suggested that blacks have had a headstart on whites in developing alternative familial patterns. Three trends have been most notable relative to these alternative patterns. First, the number of husband-wife black families has decreased steadily (from approximately 78 percent in 1950, to a low of 55 percent in 1978). (Rodgers-Rose, 1980, p. 37)

Second, the number of black women heading households doubled between 1950 and 1975. (Rodgers-Rose, 1980, p. 37) Third, both categories of unpaired women (single, never-married and divorced/separated) have shown dramatic increases, although the greatest change has occurred in the numbers of singles. (Rodgers-Rose, 1980, p. 37)

When we examine marital patterns in terms of age groups, we note that, between the ages of 35 to 44 almost one-third (27 percent) of all black women were without spouses in 1978. (The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population, 1978, pp. 26-27) The comparable figure for white women was 13 percent.

A commonly used barometer of the quality of black male-female relationships is the divorce rate. In 1973, the divorce rate among blacks was, approximately, double that of the white rate. (Staples, 1973, pp. 115-117) It seems apparent that black marriages absorb a great deal of the conflict between the black subsociety and the wider

society. Staples (1973) summarizes this situation as follows:

The dissatisfaction of black women, across class lines, with their marriages reflects the unique situation that they face in American society. Their racial oppression leads to economic deprivation, and the two elements interact to make marriage an untenable institution for them. The level of dissatisfaction seems to be greater for black women than for black men. Since for many women their marriage and family life form the center of their lives, the wife's dissatisfaction may be attributed to the severity of the problems she encounters. (p. 111)

Various authors have addressed black women's unique difficulties in attaining or sustaining marital relations. Nobles (1978), among others, has suggested that black women must consider the alternatives in view of the unattainability of monogamy for many black women. Noble's alternatives include: polygamy; the removal of taboos against relationships between younger men and older women, and between college-educated women and non-college educated men; and lesbianism. (Nobles, 1978, pp. 340-342)

Black women have also been found to effect unique patterns of relating to the world of work. One study of black, professional women found that they were highly motivated to seek and be successful in a professional career. (Epstein, 1973) The women in Epstein's sample of lawyers, dentists,

physicians, journalists and business women generally married late, or not at all (over 30 percent). Epstein summarizes the interrelationships between their professional status and their marriage options:

As this society is presently constituted, it is a serious matter when a young woman cannot depend on marriage as her "primary profession". Yet this is the situation facing the educated black woman. Lacking the usual guarantee that Prince Charming... will arrive at all, the educated black girl prepared herself both subtly and directly to adapt if the American dream should fail. (Epstein, 1973, p. 78)

Ladner (1971), based on a sociological study of black adolescent females, has characterized the black woman as the "carrier of culture". According to Ladner, black women have epitomized what it means to be black, oppressed, and yet given some small opportunity to achieve. Black women have always participated in the labor force in higher percentages than white women. (Frieze, et al., 1979, p. 141) Their participation has been determined by economic necessity, as well as by their own aspirations and expectations. Apparently, many black women are socialized to expect that they will have to be economic providers. (Epstein, 1973; Turner, 1972) Economic and social forces may be reflected in black families' socialization of black women toward a strong achievement and work orientation. (Hill, 1971) The concept of sex-role socialization, that has been used to explain the

absence of achievement motives among white women, helps to explain the high career aspirations held by black women.

This discussion of socio-cultural perspectives highlights the necessity of joining these insights with those from psychological perspectives. We are advised to scrutinize Levinson's (1978) theory carefully in terms of its assumptions regarding the "society" within which development occurs.

Further, based on this review, it appears that black women in the middle years are significantly influenced by dynamics within the black subsociety. Upon entering the mid-life period, larger numbers of black women, than white women, are unpaired through singleness, divorce/separation, or widowhood. Research on this subgroup provides insights into the unique features of their development during the middle years.

Socio-historical Perspectives

Black women in the middle years represent an age cohort which has witnessed and experienced a dramatic, profound socio-historical change. The cohort of women, age 40-50, born between 1932 and 1942, has evidenced marked deviation from the "traditional" woman's life pattern. Commenting on the relationship between these social changes and women's life courses, Giele (1982) has noted that, despite feminism and related changes, each age cohort of women since 1900 has at first modeled its life in terms of the traditional

ideal. This ideal has, heretofore, consisted of a brief period of work outside of the home, then marriage and settling down.

In many respects, the cohort of women studied constitute a transitional group. They have grown up with the (traditional) ideals of their mothers' generation and, yet, they have lived a different reality. The most salient issue for adult development research concerns this matter of the "ideal life cycle". In a social context of changing values in which women want both career success and family life, there is a need for a new model of women's life courses.

Giele (1982) has proposed that such a model is emerging:

It's structure, rather than holding out a single, optimum sequence of life events, is characterized by several possible options, all viable and all potentially capable of giving satisfaction. It recognizes a number of individual variations. It accounts for flexibility, redirection, and multiple possible combinations of timing and sequence. It implies that versatility and freedom of choice are to be valued. (p. 122)

This new model for women's life courses acknowledges that social and economic factors have exerted a dominant influence on all women's life choices. Rossi (1980) has observed that the present cohort of middle-aged adults has been subject to a good deal of economic and social stress from large families, overextended budgets, and the need to

depart from expected life styles as women joined the labor force. Since black families have continued to be severely impacted by the economy, we would expect that these families have experienced a high degree of stress in accommodating to economic pressures.

Recent reports indicate that: blacks continue to receive a disproportionately low share of the total income in the United States; blacks have had modest economic gains; and, the economic gains have been greater for women than men. (The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population, 1978, pp. 26-28) Currently, there are at least three profiles of black women's economic status. The largest subgroup of these women exist at a poverty level. The next largest subgroup are wage earners of lower and middle-class status. A majority of these women are in families that require their earnings for economic survival. Finally, there is a small, but growing, number of black, professional women of middle and upper-class status whose incomes are substantial. These women may be married and located within families, or they may be unpaired through singleness, divorce, or widowhood.

It is this latter group of black, professional women who were the subject of this exploratory research. It was anticipated that research conducted on the adult development of the lower socio-economic groups would be particularly difficult. Levinson's theory has already been challenged in

terms of its applicability for men without economically viable careers. (Gooden, 1980) It was expected that women who were relatively free of economic survival concerns would be the most appropriate population for testing the limits of Levinson's theory.

What is of further importance to this review, with its ultimate concern for individual life histories, relates to the changing socio-historical context of blacks' existence. Erikson (1975) has written about the ways in which individual lives are influenced by the historical moment. Erikson suggests that some historical periods provide unique opportunities for a "collective renewal" which opens up unlimited identities for some individuals. (Erikson, 1975, p. 21) Although Erikson's primary interest was in the life histories of great leaders, and their relationship to the historical moment, his portrayal of the "collective renewal" might also describe aspects of the social and psychic "black revolution" of the 1960's.

Pugh (1972) defined the black revolution as the "assertedly momentous change in the American black people's assertion of themselves as persons and as a people" (p. 345). Black people of all ages were deeply affected during the 1960's. Vast segments of the black subsociety sought to rid themselves of feelings of self-devaluation and inferiority and, instead, acquired a more integrated, positive self and group concept. (Pugh, 1972, p. 345)

This exploratory study of adult development in black women investigated the life courses of a select population of women who were entering young adulthood at the time of a "historical moment" for blacks. It was assumed that, at least for some young women during this period, the black revolution had a palpable influence on emerging, still developing identities.

Psychological Perspectives

Our review of the literature on the development of blacks reveals that, while the sociological terrain has been extensively studied, psychological studies have been scarce. Until recently, as Thomas and Sillan (1972) have noted, white racist attitudes have had a pervasive, negative influence on psychological research. Continuing through the 1950's, the vast majority of studies supported theories of white superiority, and focused almost exclusively on the abnormal aspects of black lives.

Three basic questions are addressed here in order to develop a framework from which to view blacks' psychological development. These are: 1) Given the history of slavery, segregation, and racism in America, are there essential differences in the personalities of blacks and whites?; 2) If personality differences exist between blacks and whites, how are these differences manifested?; and, 3) What concepts or theoretical models can be used to describe changes in racial identity throughout the life cycle?

Williams (1970) has argued that blacks' experience of racism culminates in a significantly different psyche:

It is my contention...that there is a white psyche and a black psyche, or a white life style and a black life style. By definition, the orientation to reality of the oppressor is different from that of the oppressed. The psyche of the slave is rather different from the psyche of the master. The same is true for the victims and the victimizers. (p. 19)

Similarly, Grossack (1963) takes the position that "Negroes have a psychology, a religion, and a philosophy of life which are peculiarly their own" (p. 123). By contrast, other theorists hold that, despite slavery and oppression, black personalities are basically the same as whites. Most probably, the prevailing view among contemporary theories is that principles of psychological functioning are universal, although adaptations may vary among racial groups.

Our second question concerned the adaptational differences between blacks and whites. Three divergent views of these differences are described here. Kardiner and Ovesey (1951) presented the view that: "The Negro has no possible basis for a healthy self-esteem and every incentive for self-hatred (cited in Thomas and Sillen, 1972, p. 49). These authors contend that "the basic Negro personality is a caricature of the corresponding white personality, because the Negro must adapt to the same culture, must accept the

same social goals, but without the ability to achieve them" (cited in Thomas and Sillen, 1972, p. 49). Kardiner and Ovesey's research has been criticized by Thomas and Sillen (1972), among others, for its lopsided emphasis on pathology, and an overgeneralization of the crippling impact of oppression.

While Kardiner and Ovesey focused on self-esteem, Grier and Cobbs (1968) argued that blacks adapted by developing a "healthy" cultural paranoia:

He must maintain a high degree of suspicion toward the motives of every white man and at the same time never allow this suspicion to impair his grasp of reality. It is a demanding requirement and not everyone can manage it with grace. (p. 161) every white man is a potential enemy unless proved otherwise and every social system is set against him unless he personally finds out differently. (p. 178)

Unfortunately, Grier and Cobbs do not make an adequate distinction between paranoia, as a mental disorder, and the suspicion of blacks rooted in discriminatory practices.

More recently, Jenkins (1982) has offered a humanistic approach to The Psychology of the Afro-American. Jenkins notes that much of the theorizing about the psychology of the black experience tends to see blacks as passive victims, not as active shapers of their world. Jenkins' view:

emphasizes the active role of the individual coming to

terms with the environment...As we look at the history of blacks, we find that they have responded to the situations they confronted with underlying premises of self-worth and competence even though external circumstances did not seem to warrant positive self-appraisals. (p. 19)

Jenkins' discussion of racial and personal self-esteem further clarifies adaptations found among blacks. He defines personal self-esteem as "a set of affective evaluations about oneself" which people try to keep at a relatively positive level (p. 30). At any point in time, personal self-esteem might vary from racial self-evaluation. Studies on self-esteem tend to indicate that when blacks have low self-esteem about race, they do not necessarily have a correspondingly poor concept about other aspects of themselves. (Jenkins, 1982, p. 30) Thus, Pugh's (1972) discussion of blacks' acquisition of a more positive "self-concept" refers to the liberating effects of a social movement on racial self-esteem.

The social movement of the sixties entailed significant changes in the ways black people defined themselves in relation to whites. The process of change involved developing a positive racial self-concept which took its reference from an Afro-American perspective, rather than primarily from a white perspective. Various researchers took interest in this social phenomenon and developed approaches to studying its expression among blacks. Cross

(1978) constructed a model which described the specific stages that blacks undergo in the conversion from Negro to "black". The model describes changes in racial identity and in ideological values. It does not postulate that the conversion involves corresponding changes in basic personality structure.

Harrell (1979) rejects the idea that there is a single psychological process through which blacks move in adjusting to the racial situation. Arguing that blacks have chosen many ways of adapting to racism, Harrell proposed six "coping styles", each of which have both positive and negative aspects of adjustment. The six styles are: continued apathy; seeking a piece of the action; obsession with counter-culture alternatives; the black-nationalist alternative; identification with an authoritarian solution; and, historically aware cognitive flexibility.

Unfortunately, at this time in the development of theory regarding racial identity, there is no single model which can be used to describe changes throughout the life cycle. Importantly, however, available research over the past decades has clarified how questions might be formulated to address relevant concerns. We begin with the assumption that, while principles of psychological functioning are universal, there are significant adaptational differences among racial groups. Further, the distinction between racial self-esteem and personal self-esteem appears to be a

valuable approach to describing these differences.

Currently, the models available for examining racial self-esteem have limited applicability to a life course perspective. Neither Cross's or Harrell's models provide a means by which we can correlate changes in racial self-esteem with broader developmental processes in adulthood.

For purposes of this exploratory research, we identified several areas to guide our inquiry into the influence of racial identity on adult development. First, we were concerned with the "Dream" as a sensitive indicator of black women's experience of their possibilities for a successful, satisfying life. Levinson designates the Novice phase as the crucial time for establishing the Dream in one's life. Upon beginning their adult lives, black women will have had interactions with social systems which confront her with obstacles to her success as a black person. Analysis of the Dream should help in clarifying how subjects cope with the racial situation.

Second, we anticipated that black women's adult development would reflect varying "coping styles" with respect to racial identity. These styles might express differences in perceptions of racial oppression, socio-political stances, and in establishing relationships with white or black institutions, among others. We were interested in conceptualizing how these various coping

styles interfaced with developmental issues and, for a given individual, influenced work on developmental tasks.

Finally, as was noted earlier, we hypothesized that racial identity would have a dominant influence on the life course of a quality exceeding that of any other life structure component. In order to address this issue, we formulated a developmental task which would allow a more thorough examination of adult lives. The term of developmental task was chosen based on the hypothesis that such work is a universal task for black people. The newly formulated task is: "To develop a relationship to race which facilitates a recognition of racism as a social fact; and to develop positive racial self-esteem".

Summary

In summary, we have reviewed a variety of studies within the broad category of "adult development" research. Based on this review, we identified three research questions relevant to the present study which reflect the confusion, controversy, and unsettledness within this new field of study. These questions were: Is there development in adulthood, or is adulthood a relatively static process within an already developed organism?; Do all people experience distinct stages of adult development, or are there varieties of adult development?; and, Given the

variability of black women's life courses, how do we conceptualize the unique features of their adult development?

Following a detailed review of Levinson's (1978) theory of adult development, we have suggested that while it is one of the most comprehensive theories available, its applicability to women's lives is undetermined. Further, we have asserted that the adult lives of black people are likely to give evidence of developmental work specifically related to their racial identity.

This exploratory research represented a hypothesis-generating endeavor to clarify in what ways, if any, these black women's lives require revised conceptions of adult development. In the chapter to follow, the research design, and the specific questions which guided the research process, are outlined.

Chapter Two

Methodology

As we have observed earlier, the field of life span developmental psychology is in its early stages of growth and expansion. Baltes and Goulet (1970) have noted that three central objectives can be identified which reflect the purposes of this developing field. These are the description, explanation, and modification of developmental processes. Explanation of these processes involves specification of the causal relationships between three sets of variables: the antecedents of developmental change, the processes of developmental change, and the outcome of both of these on the individual. The objective of modification of developmental processes focuses on the prevention or alleviation of developmental changes that are harmful; particularly by analysis of the environments contributing to negative developmental outcomes. Description of these processes entails obtaining accurate knowledge about individuals at varying stages of development.

This exploratory study of adult development in black women had as its major objective the description of developmental change. The analysis was at two levels: changes within an individual over time (intraindividual change), and

differences among people in how they changed (interindividual differences). Neither explanation nor modification of developmental change was considered an appropriate objective of this exploratory research.

Generally, the research designs that have been utilized to study adult developmental processes involve manipulations of three critical variables: a) Age--the number of years from birth to the time of testing; b) Time of testing; and c) Time of birth. Schaie (1965) has proposed a developmental research model, actually a matrix, that combines these three variables. This model provides a method of disentangling the effects of the three critical variables. The three specific designs that can be generated from the matrix are: longitudinal, cross-sectional, or time-lag studies.

Each of the research designs proposed by Schaie posed practical problems for the present study. The length of time entailed in the longitudinal and the time-lag designs made it necessary to eliminate these methods from consideration. The cross-sectional design was also problematic as it requires relatively large samples to permit comparisons between cohorts. The time constraints upon this research dictated the use of a small sample. The extensive time required to review each subject's life course made a small sample a more feasible choice.

Both the time constraints on this research, as well as the

necessity for obtaining extensive life histories, determined the choice of retrospective life-history interviewing as a method, with one cohort and one time of testing. In the retrospective method, people are asked to recall and reconstruct their life histories at the time they are being tested. The method has been widely used for many years since Buhler (1935) and Frenkel-Brunswick (1936) conducted the earliest studies of adult life phases. It was assumed that, while an individual's recall of her life events may not be totally objective, the person's perceived memories and projections for the future were of major importance (Woodruff and Birren, 1972).

Methods

The Sample

A sample size of eight was used. It was anticipated that each subject would require a substantial number of hours of the investigator's time. Practically, it was impossible to devote the necessary time for a thorough review of each subject's life with a larger sample. Yet, a sample of eight subjects, though too small to permit statistical operations and interpretatons regarding any population, was sufficiently large to allow for interindividual comparisons.

Five major criteria were used to select research subjects:

Age, Race, Professional status, Marital status, and Childrearing experience. Subjects were between 40 and 50 years of age. An effort was made to select women whose ages varied across this range. Since the sample was selected in 1982, each subject was born between 1932 and 1942.

Subjects within this age range had experienced certain socio-historical events such as the "black liberation movement" of the 1960's and 1970's, and the influences of the women's liberation movement during, approximately, the same period. Though they were at different ages when these social changes were occurring, they were members of a single generational cohort. Further, these women were assumed to have completed four periods of adult life that corresponded to Levinson's model, i.e. The Early Adult Transition, Entering the Adult World, The Age Thirty Transition, and Settling Down. Some were in The Mid-Life Transition, while others were in the Entering Middle Adulthood period when interviewed.

Racially, the sample was restricted to those women who were born in the United States. The intent was to include only those black women whose entire life course took place in the United States. Other women who may also be considered Black-American were excluded. These exclusions were believed necessary to keep constant the cultural factors influencing the life courses of the women studied.

Regarding professional status, the sample was selected, as

near as possible, to correspond to the larger population of black professional women. The goal was one of selecting a sample in which both female and male-dominated professions were represented. At least four subjects were from the teaching or nursing professions as these professions have, historically, been female-dominated. The remaining four subjects represented professions that have traditionally included low percentages of women i.e. business and law. The investigator's selection of subjects was, necessarily, influenced by subjects' rate and timing in volunteering for the study. Nevertheless, the attempt was one of selecting a reasonably diverse sample which included at least two subjects in a given professional group.

Concerning the other characteristics of marital and childrearing status, an effort was made to select a sample in which 4 to 5 subjects were married. Also, an attempt was made to include a majority who were mothers. Table 1 summarizes the sample which was studied, indicating year of birth, age when interviewed, profession, marital status, and number of children.

Table 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE STUDIED

Subject	Year of Birth	Age When Interviewed	Profession	Marital Status	No. of Children
Annie	1941	41	Nursing	Divorced	1
Eva	1940	42	Education	Never Married	1
Grace	1939	43	Law	Married	2
Helen	1938	44	Law	Married	3
Dora	1938	44	Education	Married	1
Barbara	1936	46	Nursing	Divorced	None
Carol	1935	47	Business	Never Married	None
Fran	1934	49	Business	Married	None

Note. All names given are pseudonyms.

In Table 1 it can be seen that the sample consisted of a majority (i.e. five) who had raised children. One half of the subjects were, at the time of the interviews, in a marital relationship. Of the unmarried subjects, two were Single, Never-Married, and two were Divorced. In terms of ages the subjects ranged from 41 to 49 years. They were almost evenly distributed along the desired 40 to 50 year age range. This rather even age distribution of the sample was not specifically orchestrated, but was easily achieved given the subjects' timing in volunteering for the study.

Recruitment Procedures

Volunteer subjects were recruited through the professional and personal contacts of the investigator. Letters and phone contacts solicited the interest of volunteers. Prospective subjects were informed that the investigator was a doctoral candidate, in the Clinical Psychology program, City University of New York, who was conducting a research project. It was explained that the research was designed to "explore the adult lives of black women from the teenage years through the middle years". It was further clarified that the objective was one of "gaining better understandings of developmental patterns in adulthood".

Subjects were requested to provide 8 to 10 hours of their time for the study. This allowed for, approximately, 9 hours of life history interviewing and 1 hour of testing. The investigator suggested three sites at which the

interviews could be conducted: her own home, the subject's home, or the subject's place of business. Three subjects chose to be interviewed at their own homes (Annie, Carol, and Fran). Two subjects chose to be interviewed at their place of business (Dora and Eva). Two subjects were interviewed at both their homes and their place of business (Grace and Helen). Only one subject chose to be interviewed at the investigator's own home (Barbara).

The investigator met with each subject for interviews of one and one-half to two hours duration, for a total of 4 to 6 meetings. Interviews were scheduled at intervals of one or two weeks. In the week(s) intervening, the investigator reviewed the material and gave consideration to how the data collection process could be improved for each subject.

All interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed for the investigator's analysis. Subjects were requested to sign release forms consenting to the use of tape-recording and to the use of interview material in a written report of the research. Further, the consent form specified that all information shared would be confidential and, therefore, any material included in a written report would be altered to preserve confidentiality.

No offer of a fee was made to subjects for their participation in this study. It was believed that the use of money would negatively influence the natural selection of subjects. Instead, subjects were offered "the opportunity

to review your life history with a psychologist". Implicit in this approach was the acknowledgement that such a process is inherently valuable and, in fact, is equivalent to a professional service.

Research Materials

The central research tool used in the study was retrospective life-history interviewing. In addition, the Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.) was administered.

The retrospective life-history interview is in some respects like the psychological/psychiatric or clinical interview used in clinical practice. As in clinical interviews, there is an emphasis on the establishment and maintenance of rapport between subject and interviewer. Yet, while the primary task of clinical interviews is the assessment of pathology, the task of life-history interviewing is, more broadly, "telling lives". More specifically, since comparatively less attention was given to the childhood years, with an emphasis on the span from the late teens to the present, the task was telling about adult lives.

The interviewer's task was two-fold: to generate, maintain, and terminate a relationship of significance to both parties, and to elicit specific information. The relationship to be developed was viewed as a vehicle by which a picture of the subject's life could be produced. The interviewer maintained some professional detachment,

while also becoming engaged in a highly personal process. No predetermined interview schedule of required questions, to be asked in a standard order, was used. Rather, a guideline for interviewing was used to emphasize the importance of covering certain areas.

The guideline for interviewing was adapted for this study from material suggested by Levinson (1980), as follows:

- 1) Various "areas of living" were covered. These included the family of origin, education, occupation, marriage and family of procreation, love relationships, friendships, religion, places of residence, and so on.

- 2) The sequence of adult life was traced in each area. Major events, key life choices, and the stability or instability of these areas over time were attended to.

- 3) The interviewer remained alert to the interpenetration of the areas of living e.g. of occupation and family life.

- 4) As the subject discussed the different "chapters" or periods within her life, the interviewer explored the over-all character and quality of life within each of the periods.

- 5) The interviewer's interest in the subject's life as a whole, and in the interrelationships among various parts and times within it, was made explicit. Each subject was invited to collaborate with this interest in the pattern and design of her adult life.

- 6) Throughout the interviewing, the investigator was alert

to themes which clarified the subject's relationship to race. Particular attention was given to: matters of racial identity; the racial character of the social systems within which adult life occurred; the subject's experience of racism in any given setting; and the subject's perceptions of historical events of relevance to her adult life.

Toward the end of the interviewing, each subject was shown a series of nine pictures selected from the Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.). The T.A.T. stories were used, in the final phase of data analysis, as an aid to personality diagnosis. The T.A.T. was developed in 1935 by H.A. Murray as a projective instrument for the study of normal personalities. The test materials consist of thirty-one cards, one of which is blank, while the others depict interpersonal events. In the recommended administration, twenty cards are used. For purposes of this study, nine cards were selected which might pull for themes concerning women in the middle years. Subjects were told to make up a story for each picture. The administration of the test occurred toward the end of the interviewing to allow time for the establishment of a relationship prior to the T.A.T.

Each subject was shown the following cards: #1, #2, #3GF, #4, #5, #6GF, #7GF, #9GF, and the blank card (#16). However, the series differed for the first two subjects interviewed in that four cards (#1, #4, #5, and #7) presented interpersonal events with black people. These four T.A.T.

cards were exactly the same as those in the standardized series, except that the skin coloring of one or two characters was black. Previous research with these blackened T.A.T. cards had suggested their value in eliciting stories with racial content. (Cann, 1978)

The first two subjects were regarded as a pilot study to test the hypothesis that black T.A.T. characters would be more readily identified with and, therefore, that stories produced would be richer in content than for those with white characters. A preliminary analysis of the T.A.T. stories for the first two subjects did not confirm this hypothesis. Further, the lack of a conceptual framework for interpreting the two subjects' heightened alertness to the race of characters precluded the continued use of these modified T.A.T. cards. The remaining subjects were given the standard (white) T.A.T. cards.

Procedures for Analyzing Data

Transcriptions of interviews were used to construct biographical accounts of each subject's life. Each life was carefully analyzed as to the content and process of life structures. The primary aim was one of determining the applicability of Levinson's model to their adult lives. Individually, and as a group. the focus was on clarifying the limitations of this theoretical model for the women

studied.

The following questions guided the analysis of individuals' lives.

A) The Components of the Life Structure

Does the individual's life evidence:

- 1) The centrality of one, two, three or more components?
- 2) That occupation, childrearing, marriage-family, religion, and/or friendships are central components?

B) The Process of Life Structure Evolution

Does the individual's life evidence:

- 1) An alternation between stable and transitional periods?
- 2) An evolution through six developmental periods i.e. Early Adult Transition, Entering the Adult World, Age Thirty Transition, Settling Down, Mid-Life Transition, and Entering Middle Adulthood?
- 3) The same age ranges for the six developmental periods as outlined by Levinson?
- 4) Work on the specific developmental tasks outlined by Levinson for each developmental period?
- 5) Work on those developmental tasks common to the Novice phase:
 - a) Forming a Dream and giving it a place in the life structure?
 - b) Forming mentor relationships?
 - c) Forming an occupation?

d) Forming love relationships, marriage and family?

C) An Evolving Racial Identity

Does the individual's life evidence:

- 1) Developing a relationship to race which facilitates a recognition of racism as a social fact; and developing positive racial self-esteem?

One further objective of this exploratory research was to give consideration to a model for evaluating the individual's adaptation. Levinson (1978) found that, at the end of the Settling Down period, all of their subjects had gone through one of the following sequences: A) Advancement within a stable life structure; B) Serious failure or decline within a stable life structure; C) Breaking out: trying for a new life structure; D) Advancement which itself produces a change in life structure ; E) Unstable life structure.

Subjects in the present study were also evaluated in terms of their outcomes with regard to sequences of life structure evolution. Further, this investigator had a particular interest in whether the sequences were correlated with other measures of adaptation. The sequences reflect the integration of internal resources and external adjustment. As such they do not correspond fully to either a measure of the adequacy of coping abilities, or to external adaptation itself.

Yet, as Vaillant (1977) has suggested, internal states and external adaptation should correlate highly in adult lives. In order to address this question without imposing additional tests upon subjects, this matter was treated as an area for generating hypotheses. Issues regarding adaptation are discussed in the final chapter.

Biographical accounts of each subject's life are provided in the next chapter. These accounts provide detailed descriptions which are later, in Chapters Four and Five, interpreted within Levinson's theoretical framework.

Chapter Three

EIGHT BIOGRAPHIES

In this chapter biographies are presented for each of the eight subjects. The biographies describe the subject from four particular perspectives. First, following an abbreviated description of the subject's pre-adult years, her adult life is outlined in terms of five or six age periods. The data includes the actual events and experiences in each subject's life which have been taken into account in analyzing these women's life structures. This organization allowed the investigator to make preliminary judgments as to whether the subject evidenced developmental periods, and if so, to specify those events and experiences which signaled the beginning and end of a given period. Subsequently, in chapter four, each subject's life will be scrutinized more critically to answer the research questions already posed.

Second, the content of these biographical sketches provides information on several "areas of living". These include her family of origin, as well as the basic components of her life structure i.e. occupation, marriage, family of procreation, love relationships, friendships, religion, places of residence, and any other components of

specific relevance to a given subject.

Third, these biographical accounts provide information on the subject's relationship to race. Attention is given to: the racial character of the social systems within which lives took place; the subject's experience of racism in any given setting; the subject's perception of historical events of relevance to black people, and other data of significance.

Finally, each biography strives to represent the subject's own descriptions of how and why certain life choices were made. Her subjective experience of change during the adult years is reflected in each biography. In principle, the investigator refrained from imposing clinical interpretations of the subject's adult life. Such analysis was reserved for the chapter on findings. However, the subject's own descriptions of her personality, and of her personal conflicts through adulthood, are included in each account.

No claim is made that the biographies are devoid of the investigator's own interpretations of psychological issues. Indeed, deliberate attention has been given to how each woman draws upon her own "self" in building a life structure. Aspects of the self such as conflicts, anxieties, defensive styles, values and ideals, character traits, and so on were considered in constructing the biographies. Nevertheless, the guiding principle was one of

providing a detailed description of lives, rather than an explanation of the lives. These descriptions will then be filtered through the lens of Levinson's theory of adult development, as well as other relevant theoretical perspectives.

ANNIE

Annie was born in 1941 in Harlem, New York to parents whose adult lives took place in New York. Annie's paternal grandparents had migrated from North Carolina at the turn of the century. Annie's maternal grandmother had also migrated from North Carolina to New York during the early 1900's. She had become pregnant by a white man and, subsequently, was rejected by her family. Annie's mother was the child born from that union. The maternal grandmother later returned to live in North Carolina.

Annie's parents were of working-class status. Her father, who'd earned a bachelor's degree in engineering, spent most of his adult years working in a plant which produced goods for the defense industry. Her mother, a high school graduate, held several jobs as a bookkeeper and office manager. Both parents were actively engaged in various efforts to improve the welfare of laborers, particularly with Socialist organizations. As a child, Annie was taught to be conscious of the disparities among people, especially

in terms of racial, economic, and class differences. On many occasions, as a teenager, she joined her parents in picket lines and other labor activities.

Annie was one of two children born of her parent's union. A sister, three years older, had been a childhood companion, but was not considered a close friend until both became adults. The household was described as pleasant and comfortable despite their modest economic resources. Annie's parents were described as "autonomy builders". Both she and her sister were given considerable latitude in the home. She emphasized that both parents were avid readers who strongly encouraged their children's interest in reading. Also, each parent communicated their concerns about how black people were oppressed. The parents instilled a sense of racial pride and stressed the need for social activism to improve the welfare of black people. However, apart from these general instances of parental guidance. Annie recalled very little direction in other areas: "I never really felt that I was raised....I just grew".

Annie's parents were separated when she was, approximately, 6 years old. Thereafter, her mother assumed primary responsibility for her caretaking. She maintained contact with her father through his frequent visits to their home, and otherwise, through his continued involvement with the family. Between age 6 and 12, Annie and her sister

spent their summers at their maternal grandmother's home in North Carolina. These summers were replete with experiences in which Annie learned about racial segregation and discrimination against black people.

Educationally, Annie's performance during the early years was satisfactory, though clearly not exceptional. By the time she reached the high school level, she was placed in a track with other students who'd demonstrated "fair to average" scholastic achievement. These adolescent years were most difficult ones for Annie. She was unhappy at being placed in this educational track because she viewed it as "understimulating". She believed herself capable of handling more intellectually rigorous coursework, but her request to take such courses was denied. She was enraged at being denied the opportunity to demonstrate her abilities. Subsequently, she went "on strike" against her teachers. She performed at a minimally satisfactory level in required courses and, alternatively, pursued a self-designed program of study which entailed reading every possible book in the library!

Annie's rebellion against her teachers was paralleled by similar conflicts with her peers. Although she enjoyed some popularity among her peers, she felt on the periphery of groups and painfully isolated from others. She felt "different" from others in most peer groups and was acutely sensitive to pressures to conform.

During these high school years, there were two central areas in which Annie experienced some comfort and a sense of mastery. These were her emerging identity as an aspiring professional dancer, and her growing involvement with social activist groups. Her interest in dancing had begun at Age 13 in the context of junior high school classes. As she continued to demonstrate skill and talent as a dancer, she received encouragement from her teachers as well as her parents. She practiced diligently during these years; cherishing a vision of her future as a ballet dancer. The other arena of satisfaction during adolescence was Annie's involvement with various social activist groups. Having read numerous library books on socio-political and socio-cultural affairs, Annie had become intensely curious about these issues. For several years she explored these interests through, for example, participating in the activities of Socialist organizations, working in a Presidential campaign, and contributing to projects aiding the disadvantaged in other countries.

Period I: Age 18-22

Upon graduating from high school at Age 18, Annie evidenced two interest areas around which her identity would later be consolidated: professional dancer and social activist. Not surprisingly, she graduated in the lower

quarter of her class. At this point in time she was quite uncertain about her occupational choices. She wanted very much to become a ballet dancer, but she lacked the requisite monies to pursue further training. She also felt that she was a sensitive, caring person who might do well in one of the human service professions. Upon discussing these matters with her teachers, she was advised against pursuing a college education. It was suggested that a technical education would be most compatible with her demonstrated ability. Although she believed herself to be more capable academically than her record showed, she had few alternatives to consider.

Annie enrolled in a school for licensed practical nursing preparation soon after completing high school. She planned to acquire skills that would enable her to earn monies for continued training as a dancer. As an L.P.N. she could provide health services to those in need, while also perfecting the dancing skills needed for her career in ballet. However, L.P.N. school proved to be a more rewarding and satisfying experience than she'd anticipated. She received strong encouragement from her instructors to seek a bachelor's degree in nursing. She was told that she was "very intelligent" and had the potential for even higher achievements within the nursing profession. Nevertheless, Annie remained excited about her future as a ballet dancer. For the next year she took an L.P.N. position at a local

hospital. Among the many specialty areas available to her, she chose the one which seemed most intellectually stimulating--psychiatry.

Annie's experience in psychiatry was much enhanced by her explorations of the field of dance therapy. She studied with one of the hospital's dance therapists and became increasingly intrigued with the therapeutic benefits of dance. During this period, she worked full-time as an L.P.N., part-time as a dance therapist, and additionally, took dance lessons, and gave dance performances. By this point in time, her goal had shifted from that of becoming a ballet dancer to the area of modern dance. She had observed the meager numbers of blacks in ballet, and felt uncertain of the limits to which she, as a young black woman, could aspire. However, Annie's commitment to the nursing profession had deepened. She was impressed with the competence and professionalism of the psychiatric nurses with whom she'd worked. Further, one of her nursing supervisors had shown a special interest in her career; this supervisor had inspired her to continue her professional education.

From Age 20 to 22 Annie pursued an Associate Arts degree in nursing at a local city college. Upon graduating she received an award for outstanding academic performance. This achievement strengthened her commitment to nursing and provided even greater impetus for her continued

advancement. Once again she worked as a nurse to earn needed monies for her college education, while concurrently working as a professional dancer.

Period II: Age 23-28

From Age 23 to 25 Annie was enrolled in a bachelor's degree nursing program at a local private university. Her academic performance remained at a superior level. By the time she earned the B.S. degree, she'd been steered toward graduate education. Professional dancing remained a vital, satisfying occupational pursuit, but it was gradually being replaced by the goal of becoming a "leadership figure" within nursing.

During the years following high school, Annie had continued her work with social activist causes as time permitted, and had enjoyed an active social life with friends who shared similar values and interests. She particularly enjoyed the sense of freedom in being economically responsible for herself. Since Age 18 she'd earned income as a dance instructor and as a department store salesgirl. She lived alone, rent-free, in a basement apartment provided by her family.

Annie's sense of freedom and excitement in exploring her adult world did not characterize her relations with men. Relationships with men were primarily as companions and

friends, not as romantic or sexual interests. Her romantic involvements were restricted to only one young man, a high school friend and fellow dancer. For almost seven years, she sustained an intimate relationship with this young man, but he was experienced more as a friend than as a lover.

Annie was completing her bachelor's degree when she met and fell in love with her future husband, Bill. Bill was six years older, a promising artist, and a black cultural nationalist. He had been married and divorced, with two children from his previous marriage. Annie and Bill decided to explore their relationship through living together. Two years later they were married; she was 27 and he was 33 years old. From the beginning, their partnership was cemented by a mutual desire to work as activists on the behalf of black people. Their wedding ceremony was conducted in the style and tradition of the Yorubas, an African religion. This choice was symbolic of their rejection of Judeo-Christian marriage traditions, as well as a commitment to building their family life on cultural nationalist values and ideals.

Annie went directly from her bachelor's program to a master's program in psychiatric nursing. Aided by a fellowship, she was able to do so on a full-time basis. Coincidentally, these years of graduate study were ones in which Annie explored her "black consciousness". Major social changes were taking place during these early years of

the "black liberation movement". Annie had begun to embrace the ideological tenets of black cultural nationalism. She was undergoing a transformation in her dress and lifestyle, and more centrally, in her relationships with white people. In her last year of graduate work, Annie's relationships with the faculty and students were fraught with conflict. The faculty, in particular, were perceived as grossly insensitive to her concerns as a black person. Following a dramatic incident in which one faculty member treated her in an insensitive manner, Annie withdrew through assuming a stubborn, silent, unengaged posture. Though she fared well academically during these years, she remained deliberately detached from the community of students and faculty.

Annie continued her interest in professional dancing for a few years after completing her master's degree. In fact, her master's thesis had represented an effort at integrating dance therapy with psychiatric nursing. However, by Age 27, she began to relinquish her goal of professional dancing. She was aware of some decline in her physical capacities for dance and she anticipated continued decline. Also, she had begun to view dancing as a highly narcissistic activity, while nursing was more highly esteemed for its altruistic possibilities. Her identity as a cultural nationalist was becoming an organizing framework for life choices. Dancing was viewed as a limited vehicle for expressing ideas about black liberation. Nursing would allow for a more creative

integration of professional and personal identity concerns. At Age 28 she gave her last professional dance performance.

In the period following completion of graduate school, Annie became deeply immersed in the black liberation movement. Many of her activities were determined by Bill, who served as a guide and teacher in her evolving cultural nationalist identity. However, most of these activities flowed from her identity as a black health care professional who wished to offer her skills to appropriate groups and organizations. Thus, she provided program planning and technical assistance to a local group developing a new mental health service for blacks. For several years, aided by a small group of health professionals, she published a low budget newsletter which offered health care advice and information. And, on two occasions of dramatic, prolonged "take-overs" by activist groups, she offered various leadership services, including running a modest first-aid station.

Annie's first post-master's job represented her first employment as a professional nurse. She approached it with considerable pride in her accomplishments, and with a determination to be an advocate for blacks. By the time she resigned some year and a half later, she had become the center of several controversies and, on three occasions, had narrowly escaped being fired. Employed as a psychiatric nurse specialist in a hospital serving a predominantly black

consumer group, Annie engaged the hospital's administration on many key issues. Some of these issues were: the need for community control of services delivered; the necessity of re-designing clinic services to reach a larger population; and, the need for new definitions of nurses' roles. Quite often she was successful in these attempts at institutional change, but all too frequently she encountered strong resistance. She felt impatient with the slowness of change and was angered by the resistance to her efforts.

Upon resigning from this job, Annie assumed a leadership role with a fledgling group of Harlemites who sought funding for a community mental health center. She found the creative process of building a new institution to be extremely exciting and rewarding. Nevertheless, once again, after less than two years with the group, she found herself in conflict with others in this new institution. The core conflicts in this instance reflected critical disagreements about the philosophical and ideological underpinnings of the enterprise. Annie had urged the group to design programs which would treat mental illness as a symptom of an oppressive society. She resigned when she witnessed the group's retreat from the radical stance she'd promulgated.

Period III: Age 30-33

Annie was 30 years old when she made a shift from

employment in mental health service systems to the teaching arena. Having earned a reputation as something of a "fighter" for just causes, she was offered a leadership position on the faculty of a predominantly black nursing school. As the director of the psychiatric nursing program in a school with meager finances, she spearheaded numerous fund-raising, public-relations activities to insure the school's survival. She also initiated various program and policy innovations that reflected her own values. Thus, she developed a new curriculum designed to promote student's "black-consciousness", and which encouraged their social activism on the behalf of black people. She found this work to be highly stimulating and satisfying in most respects.

Annie's major source of discontent was that the school's climate was "understimulating" intellectually. All too often when her admittedly radical ideas were met with opposition, she felt estranged from the faculty group. She was in the process of deciding about other, more intellectually satisfying, job settings when, financially, the school was forced to close.

This period in Annie's life evidenced several other changes which dramatically influenced her life course. During her years at the school of nursing, Annie's marriage had begun to fail. The central source of conflict was their disagreement about having a child. Annnie had used birth control pills until early in her thirties when she'd been

medically advised to substitute these for a diaphragm. She had never discussed raising a family with Bill, but she'd always assumed they would do so eventually. She had used the diaphragm until Age 32 when she became pregnant for the first time. Apparently, the device was ill-fitted and, thus, ineffective. The pregnancy precipitated a crisis in her marriage. Annie finally capitulated to her husband's insistence that she have an abortion.

Annie's marriage suffered severely after her abortion. She was guilt-ridden and depressed over this act of "taking a human life". She tried to persuade Bill to change his mind, but to no avail. Bill remained adamant that he would not father any children beyond the two already borne from his first marriage. Within a year after the abortion, the marriage ended and Bill moved out of their apartment. She was 33 and he was 39 years old when they separated. Annie felt "betrayed" by Bill. She could not reconcile his avowed belief in strong black families with his refusal to raise a family with her.

Annie resolved soon after Bill's departure to become pregnant as soon as possible. She determined that the most important issue would be finding a man who'd provide "good genes", i.e. who was biologically sound with desirable physical traits. Further, she believed it unnecessary either to be married in order to have a child, or to have a man willing to function as the child's father. Within a

year after her separation, she had effected a love relationship with a man who met her criteria for good genes. Upon learning of Annie's pregnancy, however, this man became physically abusive and demanded that she abort. Annie refused to do so, insisting that she'd raise the child on her own resources.

Period IV: Age 34-39

At Age 34 Annie delivered her child, a daughter. She had taken several steps to prepare for her new life as a single parent. While pregnant she had saved several thousands of dollars. Additionally, she had a legal name change. She decided to legally adopt the name given her in the Yoruba marriage ceremony i.e. Maya. In this act she reaffirmed her African identity, but avoided giving her ex-husband's surname to her daughter. Further, she gave her daughter an African name which symbolized "royalty and revolutionary struggle".

From Age 34 to 36, Annie's life was centered around her new mothering role, a relatively new network of friends who were also mothers, and a new role on the psychiatric nursing faculty of a local private university. She considered this to be a period of higher life satisfaction than ever before. Single parenthood entailed concerted efforts to secure needed help from her network of friends(e.g.

babysitting), but this was rather easily accomplished. Also, having anticipated the necessity of spending every possible moment with her child, she'd taken a job at a nearby university. This allowed her to be at home a majority of the time and, when necessary, to return home on short notice.

Maya's new faculty position represented her first experience as a member of a predominantly white work group. As one of only a handful of black faculty members, she was acutely sensitive to group pressures for her to disavow or minimize her racial concerns. Maya continued to incur and to risk the faculty group's rejection by raising her concerns about institutional racism. These interactions with the group as a whole were conflictual and disturbing to some degree, but her overall experience was one of tremendous growth as an educator and theoretician.

Maya used these years at the university to integrate her prior experiences as a nurse and social activist. Thus, she devoted herself to creating course materials and publications which clarified the historical roots of activism within nursing. And, she outlined a theoretical framework to conceptualize the practice of contemporary nurse activists. Further, for a while, she collaborated with another black faculty member on a book about black families. She was sorely disappointed when her collaborator withdrew from their project. She could find no acceptable

explanation for her withdrawal except that this woman had been too competitive with her.

By Age 36 Maya had become disenchanted with her faculty position. Her intense study of social activism had stimulated a desire to learn more about social and institutional change. She reasoned that doctoral study in one of the social sciences would enhance her future abilities as an activist and change agent. Moreover, the master's degree was no longer acceptable for teaching in university-based nursing programs. All nursing faculty would be expected to hold doctoral degrees in the near future. Maya decided that, in a sense, she'd always been a student of anthropology, given her longstanding interests in culture and cultural differences. At Age 36 she gained admission to a Ph.D program in anthropology at the same university where she'd recently taught. Her full-time student status made it possible to spend more time with her daughter and, infrequently, to participate in local community affairs.

From Age 38 to the time she was interviewed at Age 41, Maya's primary involvement with community groups was with a local hospital. She joined with a broad based alliance of groups which sought to prevent the hospital's closing. Maya saw this situation as an appalling example of how blacks were disenfranchised and deprived of their rights as citizens. An impressive resistance was launched to prevent

the loss of needed hospital services for Harlem residents, but the protest eventually failed. Maya believed that the group's failure was symbolic of other systemic forces operating in the Harlem community, i.e. gentrification. For the next several years. Maya was intensely engaged in studying gentrification as her dissertation topic.

Period V: Age 40-41

When interviewed at Age 41, Maya described herself as having just undergone a "transformation" in her life. The past year had been the occasion for intense reflection on her past life and for much contemplation of future life choices. Her reflection had been catalyzed by an experience (at Age 39) in which federal agents had invaded her home, erroneously believing her to be an accomplice to a well-known figure in the Black Liberation Army. Maya had become depressed after this incident and had sought a brief psychotherapeutic experience. The incident had seemed extremely unjust and oppressive. For a while she had been suffused with rageful, vengeful feelings for which she found no acceptable outlet. She'd reviewed her life in terms of previous experiences of others' destructiveness toward her, as well as her own destructive behaviors toward others. Happily, she reported, she was feeling at peace with herself and, once again, was able to feel loving toward humankind.

Maya summarized this change as one of "becoming more human" i.e. of becoming more accepting of her own and others human frailties.

Maya also described another dimension of her transformation: the re-working of her feminine sense of self. Her past difficulties in relationships with men and her experiences as a mother had focused her attention on some differences between men and women. In her view, women were more willing to accept their interdependence with others, while men tended to seek an illusory goal of independence. Further, Maya described a growing sense of comfort with her physical self, including now enjoying being found physically attractive by men. Previously, she'd been far more self-conscious; very often she'd felt offended when men gave her long, admiring glances.

As Maya neared the completion of her doctoral program, she also gave consideration to what future jobs would best suit her unique background, talents, and interests. Her strongest professional identification was as a black nurse committed to improved health care for black people. Nursing continued to represent the best vehicle for pursuing activist goals within the Harlem community. Anthropology was valued as a vital link with the academic and research communities. Each professional identity complemented the other, but neither was sufficient in itself. She envisioned that her future work would be based in a newly developing

black institution. This new institution's primary goal would be generating research for improving black's health care. In this work she could avoid the resistance to social change which she'd encountered in previous jobs. Most importantly, she would enjoy the excitement of creating a new dynamic institution with humanitarian aims.

BARBARA

Barbara was born in 1936 to parents who, at the time of her birth, lived in St. Louis, Missouri. She knew very little about her father's family of origin, but provided some information about her mother's family heritage. Apparently, Barbara's maternal grandfather had been born of a union between a white woman and a black slave. He had become a businessman by the time he met and married Barbara's grandmother, a school teacher. These grandparents had three daughters, including Barbara's mother, Harriet.

Harriet was only three years old when, for reasons unknown to her, her father committed suicide. The economic hardship that ensued upon his death made life extremely difficult for the surviving family. When Harriet was ten years old, her mother also died, leaving an older sister, a teenager, as the family head. From Age 10 to 17 Harriet lived in foster homes or was cared for by one of her sisters. At Age 17 she married and took flight from the poverty and family conflict that had marked her early adolescent years. Two years later she divorced her first husband who had failed to provide for her economically. Several years later, at Age 22, she married for the second time. Her first child, Barbara, was born when she was 25 years old. This second marriage was also unstable; the couple was separated many times before

their final breakup when Barbara was a year old.

Barbara's early childhood years were characterized by frequent moves and multiple caretakers. At three years old when her mother was jailed for several months for bootlegging, she was taken by her father to live with her paternal Aunt and Uncle in Wichita, Kansas. At four years old, she was re-united with her father who'd moved to Chicago, Illinois. For a brief period she lived with her father and his new (common-law) wife. From Age 4 1/2 to 6, she lived in two different residences i.e. a foster home and a boarding school. Finally at Age 6, after being separated from her mother for over three years, they were reunited. Barbara's father had failed in his attempts to keep his daughter's whereabouts a secret from Harriet.

Upon being reunited with her mother, they lived for several months in Wyoming where Harriet hoped to start a new career as a motel manager. However, when Barbara became anemic, and otherwise was poorly adjusted to the Wyoming climate, another move was deemed medically advisable.

From Age 6 to 8, Barbara lived with her mother in San Francisco, California. While Barbara was completing the second and third grades of her education, her mother was studying to become a mortician and funeral director. Even as a young child, Barbara was made aware that racism existed. She knew that her mother had chosen this field because few others were open to black people. Further,

since she'd been reunited with her mother, Barbara understood that their economic problems were severe. Harriet worked full-time in the shipyards on the night shift and went to mortuary school during the days. Yet another separation was necessary when Harriet completed an internship for her studies. Her scheduling demands were such that she placed Barbara in a boarding school during her fourth and fifth grades.

Upon completing mortuary school, Harriet again assumed the care of Barbara. However, when she searched for jobs within the funeral business, she was unsuccessful. Once again, Harriet chose to relocate, selecting Hawaii as a setting where, hopefully, her job prospects would be unhampered by racism. Barbara was placed in another boarding school in Hawaii from Age 10 to 11 while her mother worked and saved monies. From Age 11 to 13, Barbara lived with her mother and the mother's future husband, Wade. Much to Barbara's delight, Wade became her step-father when she was 13 years old. Shortly after their marriage, the newly established family found it necessary to relocate. Wade's difficulties finding employment in Hawaii had caused a crisis. From Age 13 to 17, Barbara lived with her mother and stepfather in their new home in St. Louis, Missouri. Wade had returned to his mother's home while he sought, and eventually found, work as a welder.

Period I: Age 17-20

By the time Barbara graduated from high school at Age 17, she had attended ten different schools, and had lived in over twelve different settings! Academically, she had done quite well; her lowest grades had been in "Conduct" and Gym. Barbara's emerging identity was that of an aggressive, out-spoken young woman who'd often been an advocate for younger, victimized kids. She was hyperactive and restless and found it difficult to conform to the conduct requirements imposed within the Catholic schools she attended. She ranked sixth from the top of her high school graduating class.

Barbara faced a most difficult set of decisions about her future. She was highly motivated to continue her education, but had no financial resources to do so. Indeed, she'd received a partial scholarship to a private college in Missouri, but had declined it for lack of matching funds. Barbara was energetic in exploring her career options. Initially, she dreamed of earning a medical degree and becoming a psychiatrist. Or, alternatively, she wanted to study philosophy and history and earn a liberal arts degree. Harriet encouraged Barbara to "dream big" i.e. to set her sights high in planning for a career. There were only two restrictions placed on Barbara's selection of a college: it had to be a non-segregated institution, and it

had to be Catholic. Barbara eventually decided to enter nurses' training because it was one of the few affordable programs open to her. Nursing represented a highly respected profession that would insure economic security, as well as a vehicle for serving poor, disadvantaged people. Yet, it was not easy for Barbara to relinquish her earlier dream of becoming a psychiatrist. Perhaps, she thought, she would be able to enter medical school at some point in the future when she'd acquired the monies to do so.

Barbara's separation from her family in the fall of 1953 was an occasion of intense ambivalence. She could not remain at home, given the family's economic problems, yet she was apprehensive about attending the nursing school in Springfield, Missouri. She imagined that she'd encounter more of the frustrations and obstacles that she'd experienced while seeking admission. On one occasion she'd been denied admission, despite an excellent academic record, because no private dormitory rooms were available. School administrators had refused to assign her a white roommate; they feared that her white roommate's parents would protest such an arrangement. Barbara had been advised that she could be admitted only if she passed as a Mexican-American! Barbara refused to do so. She was forced to seek admission at an integrated school that had private dormitory rooms.

Barbara left home with the feeling that she had no alternative but to succeed. In addition to their economic

problems, each of her parents was having emotional troubles. Harriet had just given birth to her second child, Nancy, in the year before Barbara's high school graduation. Harriet had been depressed throughout her pregnancy and for at least a year after Nancy's birth. Barbara recalled that her mother had made suicidal threats often during the summer of 1953. Harriet's depressive state had been paralleled by her husband's gradual deterioration. Apparently, Wade's problems with holding a job had continued. He had lost the job which he'd found after returning from Hawaii, and had been unable to locate another. In effect, neither her mother nor her stepfather was emotionally available to Barbara during her separation from the family.

Barbara's three years in nursing school were most frustrating and unsatisfying. She found herself in continual conflict with the nuns and teachers. She required frequent disciplining and gradually earned the label "uncooperative". Barbara perceived the school to be a rigid, oppressive, racist environment that she yearned to break away from. After two years in the Springfield school, she orchestrated a transfer to a sister school in St. Louis, Missouri where she lived nearer to her family. Her final year as a nursing student was characterized by the same conflict as she'd had in the first nursing school. When she graduated in 1956, Barbara vowed that she would never be a student in a Catholic institution again.

Despite her conflicts with the nuns in nursing school, Barbara completed that experience with a strong sense of pride. She had earned a high grade-point average, as well as the distinction of being the school's first black graduate. Within less than a year of her graduation, Barbara had devised a plan for her future life. St. Louis was still most unattractive to her as a residence. Apart from the pervasive racism in that city, Barbara's family's economic and emotional problems had persisted, and apparently, worsened. Her step-father had become severely depressed and family life seemed intolerable. Also, Barbara's desire to leave St. Louis was much enhanced by her new romantic relationship with a man who hailed from New Jersey. She had begun dating Bob while she was in nursing school, and while he was a serviceman stationed in St. Louis. During their courtship, Barbara had visited Bob in New Jersey. While visiting she had vacationed for a brief period in New York. She chose New York as a new home anticipating that it would be an exciting, adventurous arena within which to pursue her adult life.

Period II: Age 21-29

From Age 21 to 25 Barbara's life was centered around three major concerns. First, she continued in the relationship with Bob, the only link between her past and present lives.

The relationship enabled her to develop some capacities for intimacy, but evoked some guilt and anxiety over her sexual activity. When the relationship with Bob ended after a year, Barbara entered into relationships with other men with some diminished anxiety about sexual expression.

Initially, Barbara engaged in sexual activity without the use of birth control. At Age 22 she became pregnant. She considered having an abortion, but knew of no safe, legal means to do so. She had decided to carry the fetus to term, and to give the child up for adoption, when she had a spontaneous abortion. Alternatively, she had considered marrying her child's father. The father was a white physician who was employed at the same hospital as she. She had declined his marriage proposal believing it was motivated more by guilt and obligation than by love for her.

The second major theme during this first period of adult life was Barbara's development within the occupational sphere. Barbara took her first job at a city hospital; she remained there for six years. While working as a professional nurse, she was matriculated at a city college, working toward a bachelor's degree. Initially, she had enrolled in a liberal arts degree program, hoping to earn the degree that she'd wanted since high school. She abandoned this study when it became apparent that it would take almost four years of full-time study. She remained

ambivalent about a nursing degree, but realized it would be more easily acquired since she already held a diploma in nursing. She completed her bachelor's degree in nursing at Age 25 after four years of part-time study.

The third area of concern during this 21 to 25 year period was her involvement in psychotherapy. Barbara's life had been satisfying in most respects after leaving her family in St. Louis. However, she was not prepared for the news she received in her first year in New York: her step-father had committed suicide by shooting himself in the head! Barbara was grief-stricken and did not yet have a network of friends to support her during this crisis. Since she'd been working in psychiatry, however, she had become curious about the benefits of psychotherapy for herself. The process was enormously helpful to her as she grieved for her step-father and reviewed her family relations. She continued in therapy for almost four years because it was also helpful in exploring issues regarding her sexuality, and her low self-esteem in relationships with men.

The years between Age 25 and 29 entailed a fundamental change in Barbara's life. Just a month before her twenty-sixth birthday, she was married. By this point in time, she'd begun to yearn for the emotional support and stability that marriage would bring. Her self-image prior to marriage had been that of an impulsive, high-strung, "too aggressive" woman. Family life, she hoped, would "tame"

her. That is, by assuming the traditional roles of wife and homemaker, she would become a softer, more feminine woman. Her chosen partner for this life plan was a native Panamanian who'd migrated to New York as a college student. Importantly, her husband, George, was also a practicing Catholic. Barbara's retreat from Catholicism following nursing school was ending. By Age 25 she'd begun to view Catholicism as a form of "structure" that her life needed.

For a while Barbara found married life to be a satisfying, stabilizing experience. Throughout the marriage, she continued to work in the position she'd held since soon after arriving in New York. As a Head Nurse on a child psychiatry service, she had many opportunities to exercise her emerging leadership abilities. The experience in psychiatry, in conjunction with her personal psychotherapy, served to amplify her interests in becoming a psychiatrist. But, as she became better informed about the varied functions of mental health professionals, this interest changed. By the time she married, she was considering making a shift to clinical psychology. This dream had to be postponed, however, to accommodate her husband's career aims. The couple agreed that George would earn his master's degree in social work before Barbara could pursue her career advancement.

Barbara had revised these career aspirations by the time George graduated from social work school. Clinical

psychology, they concurred, would require too prolonged a course of study, and would exact a toll on their married life. Reluctantly, Barbara made plans to enroll in a master's program in psychiatric nursing. Nursing was still viewed as a "second-best" choice, but by this time, Barbara also believed it was an essential compromise to sustain her marriage.

By the time Barbara became a full-time student in her master's program, she was troubled about many aspects of her marriage. In retrospect, she identified two major sources of conflict which were less clearly articulated during those years. Barbara felt "suffocated" by George's possessive, rather domineering behavior. George seemed to want to control how she dressed, the kinds of friends she had, when she spent time away from home, and so on. At first she submitted to these controls, believing that George had accurately perceived her need for external controls. Eventually, she became resentful of the quasi-paternal role her husband assumed.

The other major source of marital conflict concerned her expanding commitment to her career. Barbara's two years of graduate study had been extremely rewarding and energizing. Upon earning the master's degree, she had taken a position as the second person in command of a newly established psychiatric program. This rather powerful position served to bolster her self-esteem, but unavoidably demanded many

hours away from her husband. Barbara began to feel divided between a marital role in which she felt suffocated, and a new leadership role in which she felt powerful and creative.

Period III: Age 30-33

Barbara resolved her conflict over the marriage within a year of earning her master's degree. The marriage had lasted five and one-half years. Some aspects of her decision to separate were unclear to her. She felt anxious that she was making a mistake in giving up the security that marriage promised. Yet, she felt suffocated and, therefore, felt compelled to extricate herself from George's control.

In the three year period following her marital separation, Barbara's life evidenced a sharp contrast between her personal and professional life. Professionally, she continued to assume positions of increasing responsibility and, on the whole, found it an exciting, adventurous experience. By contrast, her personal life, particularly with respect to love relationships, was fraught with distress and unhappiness. Many aspects of Barbara's work made it a rewarding venture. Not the least of these was her relationship with the black, female psychiatrist who headed the agency. For Barbara this psychiatrist served as a "mentor, friend, sister, and mother"! Together, they worked

to create a service that was responsive to emerging trends in psychiatry. These trends included: the expanded use of paraprofessionals; the use of innovative treatment approaches; and, the community mental health movement.

These were also the years of the "black liberation movement". The entire agency was influenced by emerging norms for blacks' behavior. During these years, Barbara explored her "black consciousness" and clarified what constructive roles she could take up on the behalf of blacks. She felt her primary responsibility would be to provide competent leadership for the poor, disadvantaged clients that her agency served. Additionally, she presented and published numerous articles on innovative psychiatric treatment for poor, black people. In her view, the movement fostered a lack of differentiation among blacks, such that undue emphasis was placed on one's style of dress, use of language, lifestyle variations, and so on. She avoided these group pressures toward "homogeneity and a lack of individuality".

During these years following her marital separation, Barbara also sought to restructure her personal life. From Age 30 to 33 she was involved in a second course of psychotherapy with the same psychiatrist that she'd seen in her twenties. For the first time in her life, she lived alone. Before her marriage, she had shared an apartment with another nurse, a white woman. Initially, therapy

concerned her problems with loneliness and the feelings of low self-esteem attendant to her separation. Barbara lived alone for a year before acquiring a roommate. The roommate was a white nurse, eight years her senior, who'd been one of her instructors in graduate school. The two had become friends over the past four years; a shared living arrangement was responsive to each of their financial problems.

Barbara was unable to enter into any new relationships with men for two years following the break up of her marriage. In retrospect, she believed she was too depressed to do so, and needed a period of withdrawal from men. In retrospect, she also realized that she was vulnerable to the sexual advances of her new roommate. For a few months, she sustained a sexual relationship with the woman who'd become her roommate.

Finally, with the aid of her therapist, Barbara ended the sexual aspect of this homosexual encounter. Eventually, other conflicts had emerged. Generally, Barbara found that her needs for separateness were incompatible with her roommate's desire for a closer pairing. Indeed, she believed that their friendship thrived only after each had separate living quarters, and when Barbara had resumed an active social life.

By Age 33 Barbara had begun to date men again, and had established a budding social circle of friends. Her

homosexual experience had been actively explored in therapy. She understood that her early childhood experiences had resulted in unmet needs for "mothering", including intense desires for being touched and held. Armed with this insight into herself, she renewed relationships with men. Thereafter, she did not enter into any further homosexual contacts.

Period IV: Age 34-40

By this period in Barbara's life she had evolved another set of plans for her professional life. She determined to study for a doctoral degree that would enable her to compete for senior administrative positions in community mental health. Though she'd been successful in the leadership roles she'd already assumed, she realized that she could not succeed her boss. Her agency, like most others, reserved the top administrative posts for psychiatrists. Yet, in her travels across the country, she'd been aware of some change underway: doctorally prepared professionals, as well as psychiatrists, were being appointed as heads of community mental health centers.

Barbara gained admission to a doctoral program in public administration at a local, private university. From Age 33 to 36 she combined full-time work with a part-time student role. She was not enthusiastic about the coursework, but

she remained convinced that the course offerings would enhance her development as an administrator. However, when the coursework had been completed, and departmental exams were required, she withdrew from the program. The exams were quite rigorous and she despaired of competing successfully.

Barbara revised her plans for doctoral study during the same period in which she planned to leave her job of six years. She decided to leave the Harlem based psychiatric service because of growing dissatisfaction with the paraprofessional movement. The collective experience had been one of a gradual de-idealization of the contributions to be made by paraprofessionals. Historical problems in psychiatric treatment programs would not be solved overnight. She believed that solutions to manpower problems would be found not by replacing professionals with paraprofessionals, but by the creative use of both groups.

Barbara was readying herself to leave the Harlem job when she received an invitation to interview for a nursing school directorship. She accepted the job offer, primarily, because she would have the opportunity to design a nursing program. Her own experience in climbing the nursing "ladder" had led her to be critical of the profession's problems in this area. She dreamed of designing a program which would allow easier passage from the diploma, or Associate's Arts degree level, to the bachelor's degree in

nursing. As well, she dreamed of designing a program for inner-city students which would better prepare them to meet the health care needs of poor, inner-city, black clients.

Parallel to this shift in career plans, Barbara revised her plans for doctoral study. Upon the urging of her nurse colleagues, she investigated the requirements for a doctorate in nursing. From Age 36 to 40 she completed the requirements for an Ed.D in nursing at another private university. These years of doctoral study were extremely stressful ones for Barbara. The demands of creating a new nursing education program, along with part-time doctoral study, left little time for an active social life. Her progress toward the doctorate was also retarded by her conflicts over this achievement. She feared that (black) men would be intimidated by her achievements and, therefore, would find her less desirable than other less-educated women.

Barbara's acute anxieties about her femininity had abated considerably since her marital separation at Age 30. Her relationships with men had, most frequently, fostered a healthy sense of self-esteem. Nevertheless, beginning around Age 34, she had begun to desire a stable, enduring love relationship. For a while, she had had multiple romantic, sexual partners. During this time she had enjoyed the freedom of sex without guilt, and had no desire for permanency in a relationship. By Age 34 she was not yet

prepared to re-marry, but she imagined she would so in the near future.

Barbara's uncertainty about marriage reflected her fears of replicating the conflicts she'd experienced in her first marriage. Further, having dated both black and white men, she was aware of the difficulties in meeting black men of her social status. She'd met few such black men within her age group who were unmarried. As she was nearing her thirty-fifth birthday, Barbara met and fell in love with James. James was a black man who was a doctorally prepared, human services professional. As their love relationship flourished, Barbara began to imagine their future life together.

Barbara's relationship with James had endured for less than a year when he terminated their contact and moved out of state. In retrospect, she recognized that James had always preferred greater emotional distance in their relationship than she'd wanted. However, at the time of this termination, she was shocked and unprepared for the ending. Barbara responded with a suicide gesture. Impulsively, after an evening of uncharacteristic, excessive alcohol intake, she ingested a small dose of sedatives and mailed a "goodbye" letter to James. Then she called a girlfriend who summoned others to her apartment. Apparently, she had not taken a lethal dose and did not require medical intervention. Upon recovering, Barbara took

immediate steps to re-enter psychotherapy. This third course of therapy lasted for less than a year.

Barbara soon resumed relationships with men. Once again she dated often and derived much satisfaction from her relationships. In retrospect, she noted that she "fell in love" several times during this phase of her life. Unquestionably, she was eager to be attached and intensely desirous of mutuality within a relationship. At Age 37 Barbara met a man who was to become her lover for the next five years. Thomas was a black man who, like Barbara, was crafting his career within academia. Thomas' career was thriving when the couple met; he'd recently assumed the presidency of a New Jersey college. Barbara found their shared identities as college administrators to be most enriching. She was especially pleased that Thomas encouraged her career ambitions, and found her to be quite feminine despite these ambitions.

Barbara had entered the relationship with Thomas fully aware that he was already married. She reasoned that the quality of their relationship outweighed other negative considerations. For the first three years, she was most satisfied with their arrangement. Importantly, Thomas was very supportive to her effort to complete the doctorate. For a time, Barbara felt more "integrated": the achieving, work aspects of her identity were not in conflict with her feminine sense of self.

Barbara earned her doctorate just months after her fortieth birthday. From various perspectives she was acutely aware of growing older. Having begun doctoral work at Age 33, she felt a sense of urgency to complete degree requirements by Age 40. The Ed.D represented a major achievement and, as well, was essential to her job security. She had continued to rise in the administrative hierarchy at her college, but further advancement was contingent upon the doctorate. Very soon after she earned this degree, Barbara assumed a deanship in the college where she'd been employed for the past five years.

Period V: Age 41-45

Barbara assumed her new deanship fully cognizant that it was the first "non-female" job she'd held in the college. That is, the previous positions had been traditionally held by women. For a while her anxieties about her femininity were revived. Once again she feared that holding this rather powerful position would make her less attractive in the eyes of many black men.

By this point in time, Barbara had grown discontent with her relationship with Thomas. She was unhappy with the restrictions on the time he could spend with her and had become more strongly desirous of marriage. For a while, Thomas seriously considered divorcing his wife and marrying

Barbara. However, eventually, Barbara realized that Thomas was unwilling and/or unable to leave his wife. The relationship terminated by mutual agreement when Barbara was 42 years old.

While Barbara was separating from Thomas, quite unexpectedly, her sister died. Nancy had died of a drug overdose and was not found for several days after her death. The circumstances of her death left many unanswered questions for Barbara and her mother. Apparently, Nancy had become drug-addicted during her adolescent years, resulting in some estrangement from the family. Barbara had felt close to her sister, but had had little contact with her since she left Missouri at Age 17. Nancy's death prompted Barbara's review and examination of her own weak connection to the family. During their grieving together, and for the years following, Barbara became closer to her mother.

This period also entailed a major change in Barbara's professional life. She decided to leave the college after a year in her new deanship. Her decision reflected concerns about climbing a career ladder, as well as a need to extricate herself from a problematic relationship with her boss. The boss had been very helpful to her professional development within the college. During her early years there, he had often served as a mentor. However, over time he had become seductive and had made sexual advances. Barbara had been ambivalent about responding to this married

man's overtures, but had eventually rejected his bids for a sexual relationship. When her boss persisted in his advances, the relationship deteriorated; Barbara saw no choice but to resign.

Barbara had already re-entered psychotherapy to work on her decision to leave the college when she learned of her sister's death. Her fourth course of therapy took place between Age 41 and 43. During this episode of therapy, she explored the multiple losses she'd incurred and clarified her conflicts regarding another career move. She felt her most logical career move would be to the next rung of the academic administration ladder, preferably outside of the nursing profession. By this point in time her professional identity was less that of a nurse, and was more that of an educational administrator. Yet, she was uncertain if she could compete favorably for non-nursing administrative positions.

By Age 43 Barbara was successful in obtaining a position that suited her interests. She had applied for deanships in nursing and allied health, and for vice-presidency positions. She had sought to avoid institutions similar to the two major settings in which she'd worked. Both had been located in poor, black, inner-city neighborhoods and, as newly created institutions, had been relatively unstable, stressful work environments. Barbara selected a job in a stable, old university setting. She was acutely aware of

moving to an interracial setting, and of separating from the predominantly black institutions with which she was familiar.

Barbara's success in obtaining an attractive position was offset by the necessity of moving out of state, to a small town in Michigan. New York had been her home since Age 21. Indeed, her residence had been one of the most stable elements of her adult life. She had lived in the same apartment for almost thirteen years; a longer period than she'd lived anywhere during her entire life. When interviewed at Age 46, she described the year following her move as the "most stressful transition" she'd ever undergone.

Barbara's transition involved a difficult adjustment to her new position as dean of a college. Although the university itself was over a hundred years old, the college Barbara headed was newly created. After a year in the position, Barbara felt hopeful that the college would survive and, therefore, that she could make plans to settle there. The first symbol of her commitment to the new job, and to life in her new hometown, was buying a home. Her anxiety over assuming a mortgage for the first time was much diminished by the excitement of having a new home. The next several years were spent on the absorbing task of renovating, designing, and furnishing this cherished possession.

Perhaps the most stressful aspect of Barbara's move away from New York was her separation from friends and loved ones. Developing new friendships was a slow, awkward process. Periodically, her New York friends traveled to visit her in Michigan. However, her primary means of coping with this transition was through her continuing love relationship with a man who'd remained in New York. Following her break-up with Thomas, Barbara had become romantically involved with Kenny. Kenny was a Phillipino man who'd been a friend for several years before they began living together. From the beginning, their relationship was founded on each partner's needs for separateness. Kenny had recently separated from a wife who had, in his view, been excessively dependent on him. After her painful termination with Thomas, Barbara was also wary about intense attachments.

Barbara and Kenny agreed that neither partner's career moves would be compromised by their relationship. Barbara accepted the Michigan position after the couple had made plans to visit each other as often as possible. When interviewed at Age 46, Barbara noted that, gradually, their trips had become less frequent. The relationship was still viable and satisfying in many respects, but their geographical distance from each other posed a significant threat to its continuance.

Period VI: Age 46-present

Barbara was 46 years old when she effected another major change in her life. Just months prior to being interviewed, she had begun living with her mother again. This decision had been several years in the making and was due in large measure to her mother's failing health. Given her health problems, at Age 71, her mother had many difficulties in living alone. Initially, their life together had been very stressful for Barbara, due primarily to her mother's over-involvement in her life. However, Barbara was optimistic that these problems would soon be worked out to their mutual satisfaction.

Barbara's future plans were not yet formulated when she was interviewed at Age 46. She could foresee, maximally, one or two further job changes in her future, but felt quite uncertain as to what positions she might seek. For the present, she took pride in her work as a dean, while readying herself emotionally for another move. She was considering a vice-presidency, a provost position, or a presidency in a small college as possibilities. Or, she thought, perhaps she would be content to remain in her current job, opting not to disrupt the sense of stability she was gradually acquiring.

CAROL

Carol was born in 1935 into a family consisting of her mother (age 38), father (age 47), seven brothers (ages 18 through 6), and two step-brothers (ages 21 and 19). Carol's father had been widowed by his first wife. Carol's parents had met and married when she was only 18 years old. The family owned their own land and made their living as farmers. Neither parent had been educated beyond the fourth grade level, but both had learned to read and write. Based in rural, racially segregated North Carolina, family life centered around farming tobacco, cotton, corn, and other goods. The parents emphasized the value of a good education; making certain that the children never missed school to do farming chores. Both parents were deeply religious (Methodist) and inculcated their religious values in the children.

Carol remained at home with her family until she reached school-age i.e. age 5. At that point she moved to live with a cousin in a nearby county where the local black kids went to school. This arrangement was necessary because her home was such a great distance from the black school. From the first through the eighth grade, Carol lived with the cousin and her family during the week, and spent her weekends with her parents. By the time she entered the ninth grade, her

parents had built a new home in the same county in which the black school was located.

Carol's early school experiences made her quite aware of racial segregation. In addition to the reality of segregated schools, she had been instructed about black-white relations in her hometown. She was advised to conform to certain social codes to prevent any racial conflict. Thus, for example, she knew that the movie theaters seated blacks upstairs on wooden benches, while whites were seated downstairs on comfortable, cushioned seats. Having accompanied her mother on trips to northern cities, she also knew that segregation did not exist in the same form outside of the southern states.

Perhaps the most dramatic experience with racial segregation occurred when she was 15 years old. It was in 1950 that Carol's parents, in concert with other blacks, organized to buy a school bus for their kids. Carol was aware of the financial hardship this imposed on her parents. Further, she understood that such a move was necessitated by whites' refusal to allow blacks to ride the official school bus.

Carol's descriptions of her childhood years contained two major themes. First, her parents were extremely strict in matters of discipline. Very early, she earned the label of "hardheaded", and incurred frequent whippings by her mother for disobedient behavior. Her father was remembered as a

man who always carried a shotgun, and who tolerated little insubordination from his children. On one occasion when she dawdled too long in responding to her father's demands, he threw a heavy piece of farm equipment at her, nearly breaking her legs. On another occasion, she witnessed him fire his shotgun at a disobedient cousin who also barely escaped injury.

Second, Carol described a familial environment in which hard work was required of every member. Both parents worked extremely long hours and demanded the same of their children. Family outings were infrequent, although Sundays were always spent at their local church. Family life, in the main, was centered around early arising and long hours toiling over the crops.

By the time Carol reached her teenage years, she was well adjusted to rural, farm life. Since Age 10 she had learned to drive heavy farm equipment, and otherwise, had followed in her brother's footsteps in doing farm chores. She thought of herself as a "tomboy" in many respects as she often preferred to spend time with her father or her brothers, instead of helping her mother with household chores. Academically, she had performed satisfactorily, but had not genuinely enjoyed her educational experience. Her major sources of enjoyment in school had actually been playing basketball and serving as a cheerleader. Also, in her senior year of high school, she had lots of fun with the

new car her father had bought. She enjoyed driving as an inherently pleasureable activity, but most importantly, it enabled her to expand her social life. Her high school years were happy ones in large measure because she could drive friends to dances, basketball games, and the like.

Carol's central conflicts during her teenage years concerned her parents many restrictions on her contact with boys. All prospective dates were carefully screened by her parents to determine their suitability. Few young men were judged to be suitable, thus, she had few dates. Carol's social life was centered around her many friendships with females, a substantial subgroup of whom were her cousins.

Carol was given virtually no information regarding sexual relations. Nevertheless, she was admonished that she'd better not become pregnant as no "illegitimate" babies would be tolerated by the family. Carol's mother supervised her style of dress very carefully during these years, taking care that she selected conservative clothing which deemphasized her sexual attractiveness. She was not allowed to wear pants as her parents thought it inappropriate for women to do so.

As Carol approached her high school graduation, she eagerly anticipated going to her senior prom with a young man who she'd dated on a few occasions. The prom represented one of the symbols of her emerging adulthood. However, to her great disappointment, just weeks before the

prom, her parents forbade her to go with a date. Apparently, rumors had circulated in this small, rural town that prom-goers engaged in sexual activity as an assertion of their adult rights. Local folklore implied that young girls were often forced to "lose their virginity" on their prom night. Upon hearing these rumors, Carol's parents told her that she would have to go to the prom with a group of girls, or not go at all. Carol went to the prom chaperoned by her girlfriends. She was unhappy at not having a date, but was also grateful to her parents for shielding her from the frightening possibility of being pressured into having sex.

Period I: Age 18-22

When Carol graduated from high school at Age 18, her parents had convinced her to go to college. Only one of her brothers had been given this opportunity by the family. Economically, there had been no means of supporting the other siblings who had also desired a college education. The older brothers had made rather smooth transitions from the family farming business to their own life as farmers. Carol was seen as an obvious choice for college, not because of her academic achievement, but because she was the only female child. Her parents anticipated that she would gain a degree, become more mature and, thereby, enhance her

marriageability. Few southern colleges were open to black students in 1953. Tuskegee, a predominantly black institution, was selected for Carol to attend. Since Carol's brother, John, had already spent two years at Tuskegee, the family charged him with overseeing Carol's life there.

Carol's first choice of a career had not been college-based. Her own estimation of her abilities and interests had been a two year trade school in Business. She'd selected a black school in South Carolina to pursue this vocational choice, but her mother objected to her living so far from home, unsupervised by any family member. Carol did not resist these parental directives. Having idolized one of her high school teachers, she imagined her own future as a home economics teacher. This image of her future did not stimulate much enthusiasm, but she felt an obligation to comply with her parents' wishes.

Following a freshman year of low academic achievement, Carol petitioned her parents to return home. Her petition met with their disapproval. Reluctantly, she re-committed herself to college, inspired by a desire to show her gratitude to her parents. Maintaining a C+ scholastic standing was most difficult for her. It was accomplished only by a rigorous schedule of study which sharply curtailed time for socializing.

During these college years, for the first time, Carol was

able to select her own clothes. She was ambivalent about this freedom, however, and tended to choose the same plain, conservative clothes that her mother had always preferred. Her newfound sense of freedom was expressed, primarily, by wearing pants. In this manner she could deemphasize her femininity and avoid attracting men's attention. She was aware that other young women were quite preoccupied with making themselves physically attractive to men; she was grateful to have a group of female friends who showed little interest in men.

It was not until Carol's junior year of college that she became more receptive to socializing with men. At Age 20 she began to go on dates, usually on a group basis, accompanied by her girlfriends. Generally, she enjoyed these experiences; although too often she had to "fight off" men who, unsuccessfully, tried to persuade her to have sexual relations. By Age 22, as she neared completion of her college experience, Carol became involved with a young man who'd gained her trust. Her first sexual experience occurred in the context of this relationship, without contraception, and with strong feelings of guilt.

Upon graduation from Tuskegee at Age 22, Carol's future plans were quite vague. She'd been hopeful that the relationship with her first sexual partner would lead to marriage, although she was not particularly enthusiastic about marriage itself. "Sooner or later", she thought,

she'd get married and have at least one child. With regard to her career, she planned to pursue licensure and certification as a home economics teacher at some point in the future. Probably her strongest interests at this point in time were to travel to areas beyond the southern states. Temporarily, she set aside planning for her future, and decided to vacation in upstate New York where one of her brothers had recently moved.

Upon arriving in upstate New York, Carol secured a summer job to avoid being a financial burden to her brother and his large family. Her previous job experiences had been limited to summer employment as a college student. She'd worked in a laundry and in a department store. For this first post-college job, she applied for a position in a department store. She had worked only a few months when she made plans to remain in New York and to postpone taking a teaching position in North Carolina.

At Age 22 Carol was approached by her brother, John, to join him in a business partnership in New York city. John had always been an enterprising young man in business matters. Carol had admired him during their shared years at Tuskegee for his profit-making ventures there. She'd fully anticipated that John would eventually acquire a business and be successful in his efforts. In the years since college, John had taken a teaching position to earn monies for an initial business investment. John implored Carol to

join him in New York, and to run a small candy store for them while he continued to work as a teacher. Carol had remained undecided about the request until her parents strongly encouraged her to help John start the business. Dutifully, she complied with her parents' wishes. She moved to New York a few months before her twenty-third birthday. She planned to devote one year to helping John in his business; thereafter, she planned to return to North Carolina and begin her career as a home economics teacher.

Period II: Age 23-29

Carol's first year in the business with John was almost overwhelming. She felt socially inept in dealing with customers; she made costly mistakes in overstocking the store; and she was painfully lonely. She had taken an apartment in the same building housing the candy store so as to devote herself to the business. She worked seven days each week, rarely taking time for a social life. At the end of the first business year, she agonized over whether to return to North Carolina as she'd planned. To a large extent, she felt her fate would be determined by her success, or the lack of it, in securing a teaching position. Carol returned to her hometown and spent a few months in search of a job at a black school. She knew of no white schools that hired black teachers, and moreover, had

no desire to work with whites. Apparently, jobs were scarce at the time of her applications. When she failed to find a job, Carol returned to New York. She was ambivalent about the business; but, she felt lucky to have at least one sure means of economic support.

Carol resumed her role in the business partnership with a renewed determination to succeed. By this time, her brother had quit his teaching job and was also devoted to building the business. Both of them established an exhausting schedule which entailed keeping the store open sixteen hours daily, seven days a week. For a few years, Carol was given more latitude in scheduling her business hours to allow time for socializing. From Age 23 to 26 most of Carol's limited time away from the business was spent in the company of Earl. Earl was a fellow southerner who hailed from Tennessee. He lived in the same neighborhood and had finally succeeded in capturing Carol's interest.

Carol found the relationship with Earl to be satisfying in many respects. She enjoyed having a companion with whom to spend her few hours of leisure time, and she liked being taken out occasionally to movies and dances. By this time she felt free to engage in sexual relations and had obtained a diaphragm for contraception. Though she tended to believe that pre-marital sex was morally unsound, she reconciled this conflict by reasoning that sex with a prospective marriage partner was permissible. Initially, Carol and Earl

planned to marry sometime in the near future. Gradually, Earl became eager to set a date while Carol became more ambivalent about marriage. She felt anxious about his emotional demands on her, his tendency to be domineering, and his possessiveness of her time. The relationship came to a dramatic end when, following a night when Carol dated another man, Earl angrily threatened to physically abuse her. Carol was rescued from this potentially violent situation by her brother, John.

From Age 26-29 Carol became even more deeply immersed in her family business. She did not become involved in any romantic relationships during this period and dated very infrequently. Her opportunities to meet men were restricted to the store since she spent so much time there. The store was located in an economically deprived section of the Bronx. Most of the customers were poor, unemployed, and often, from a criminal subculture. Carol found these men unacceptable. The ideal man that she imagined meeting someday would be like her father and brothers: hard-working, ambitious, family-oriented, and morally upstanding. Finding no man who measured up to her ideals, Carol began to despair that she would find a marriage partner.

Increasingly, Carol's commitment to the business during her twenties had become a family mission. Since her parents took such pride in the business, Carol felt responsible to make it succeed at all costs. "Self-sacrifice", for the

sake of the family, became her motto. Thus, when her parents asked her and John to provide summer employment for their nieces and nephews, Carol felt obligated to do so. Similarly, when a sister-in-law became ill and unable to care for her children, Carol opened her home to these children. The result was that she always had one to four nieces or nephews living with her, under her care. Emotionally and financially, she served as a mother surrogate until her late thirties. Among the many consequences of these arrangements was the influence on her relationships with men. Carol felt obligated to be a moral example to these children by forbidding any man to stay overnight with her. In this and other respects, Carol gave no evidence that she had a sexual life, or that she behaved "improperly" with men.

As Carol neared the end of her twenties, she was aware that her youth was fading. Since Age 25 she'd taken only one vacation annually; these were trips to visit her parents in North Carolina. On her 28th birthday she had a photograph taken of herself, for the first time since college graduation, to mark the passage of time. The years of hard work in the business had paid off in higher profits, but summer expenses for her neices and nephews had decreased the profit realized. Profit was further diminished by monthly gifts of money to her parents, as well as the costs of buying a new home for the parents. The business had

expanded from a candy and newspaper store to a variety store, but these various family obligations contributed to Carol's sense of little progress.

Period III: Age 30-32

Carol contemplated leaving the business during her thirtieth year. By then she had devoted over seven years to helping her brother make a success of his dream. The business was becoming slightly more profitable, but Carol felt impatient with the slow pace of growth. She was unhappy that the demands of the partnership left too few hours for a social life, and was desirous of a stable love relationship.

Carol was acutely conscious of being unmarried during these years of her early thirties. Friends and family members often queried her as to "why" she hadn't married. In reflecting on the question, her most frequent answer was that she didn't wish to give up her "freedom". Carol envisioned that marriage would simply add to her burdens. Managing a household and responding to her husband's emotional demands held no appeal for her. Similarly, the prospect of childrearing seemed burdensome. She had found that being a surrogate mother, in conjunction with a ten to twelve hour daily work schedule, was a taxing responsibility. Given her difficulties in finding a

marriage prospect, she adopted a "wait and see" attitude: if she found a man to love, then she would decide about marriage. In the meantime, she felt no pressure to marry and, moreover, found no convincing rationale to do so.

The idea of quitting the business preoccupied Carol for several months during her thirtieth year. Yet, the choice of becoming a home economics teacher seemed not to be a choice at all. Having never taught in this field, she anticipated that she'd fare poorly in competition with younger, newly educated job applicants. Further, she suspected that teaching would require some form of continued education. Since she'd always disliked being a student, she dismissed this as a realistic alternative. For a brief period, she considered returning to college to acquire training as a nursery school teacher. Working with young children as an educator sparked some interest, but unhappily, it would also entail the frustrations of becoming a student again. Eventually, having never fully explored either of these career options, Carol determined that she had no choice but to remain in the business.

Another source of unhappiness for Carol during these early thirties was that she'd gained excess weight. During college, at 5'7", she'd maintained a weight of 110 pounds. No longer the skinny young adult of her twenties, by Age 32 she weighed 145 pounds. Following some half-hearted efforts at dieting, she resigned herself to her new body image. In

part, as an accommodation to her larger size, Carol began to take greater interest in her wardrobe. Her new size 14's were more fashionable than the plain, almost drab, clothes she'd previously worn. Reluctantly, she set aside time for her shopping trips. Her earlier practice of buying clothes without first trying them on was abandoned. She was reasonably pleased with her new, more attractive look; and she hoped it would prompt men's interest in her.

Period IV: Age 33-39

This period in Carol's life was characterized by several notable indices of greater stability. As she'd predicted, the business attained a level of financial stability and profits began to increase to her and her brother's satisfaction. The addition of a luncheonette to the variety store had been a timely idea of hers. The increased income allowed her to take more costly vacations, and occasionally, to go to the Broadway theater shows that she so much enjoyed. By now she vacationed beyond her hometown and traveled abroad at least annually. These vacations usually lasted only a week or less because she felt guilty about leaving her brother to shoulder the business alone. It was not until she was 35 years old that she took a two week vacation. This long vacation was made possible because the business was being moved to a new location. Temporarily,

the store was closed and she could separate herself from it without a sense of urgency about returning home.

In the same year that the store was re-located, once again, Carol considered leaving the business. Reasoning that this would be an opportune time to leave, she re-considered her career options. By this point in time, she'd abandoned her earlier aspirations to work as a teacher. Her trips abroad had been highly energizing and had stirred some enthusiasm about traveling. She applied for a position as an airlines receptionist, though she was fearful that, at age 35, she would not be chosen. She had become deeply immersed in the business again when she realized that she'd gotten no response to her application. She made no further inquiries about alternate careers and resolved to make her peace with the business

Another measure of stability in Carol's life during this period was her involvement with a lover. From Age 33 to 37, Carol effected a relationship with a man who she'd met in the luncheonette. Lionel had sought Carol's attention for several months before she finally agreed to date him. Lionel met Carol's criteria for an acceptable lover in many respects. He was a fellow southerner (Georgian); a hard-working man who'd been employed by the U.S. Postal Service for most of his adult life. Carol found him to be a pleasant companion with whom she always had enjoyable times. She did not love him passionately, as she wished,

but she did experience a heretofore unknown sense of security in the relationship.

This relationship ended after almost five years when Carol discovered that Lionel was married. Apparently, he had separated from his wife before meeting Carol, but he'd continued to be much involved with his two children. In retrospect, Carol chided herself for being "too trusting" of Lionel. It had not occurred to her that he was married since they'd spent such long hours with each other. Routinely, he would come to her apartment at the end of her work day and remain there until he left for his job on the night shift. This arrangement had suited Carol until she accidentally discovered that he was still legally married. Lionel pleaded with her to stay with him until he finalized his divorce proceedings. Carol refused to do so. She felt deceived and humiliated; within months of her discovery she severed the relationship, denying Lionel any further contact with her.

Carol denied that this loss of her lover caused any psychic pain. Yet, it was significant that, just months later, she developed a severe scalp dermatitis. She sought medical help and was advised that the condition was probably caused by severe anxiety. She attributed the anxiety to her work in the business. Her problem was solved by discontinuing the use of hair relaxers and using various scalp medications. It was in this manner that she began

wearing her hair naturally, styled as an "afro".

Carol began a new love relationship in the summer following her separation from Lionel. She had taken her annual summer vacation to Detroit, Michigan that year. A college roommate, Diane, had invited her to vacation with she and her husband. While vacationing there, Carol met a quite handsome, charming man to whom she was strongly attracted. James was in his late thirties, had never been married, was a native Floridian, and held a secure job in Detroit's car industry. In a sense, James represented Carol's first "passionate love". Between Age 37 and 39, Carol spent her week of summer vacation with James in Detroit. When he visited her in New York, she allowed him to stay at her apartment. Though this violated her practice, heretofore, of never allowing a man to stay overnight, it seemed a "natural" response given their love for each other. After two years of this long-distance romance, James proposed marriage and pleaded with Carol to move to Detroit with him.

For a brief time Carol was ambivalent; marriage to James seemed an enticing idea, but uprooting herself from the business and New York had some frightening aspects. She could not envision what work would be available to her in Detroit. She imagined herself married to James, unemployed, and completely dependent on her husband. She said "no" to the relocation, but alternatively, invited James to move to

New York. James was also made anxious about his prospects for employment in a new state, but he was open to the idea of moving in with Carol and trying his luck with the job market. Pending his success at finding work, he suggested, they could move forward with marriage plans. Carol said "no" most emphatically to this arrangement. The very idea of living with a man without benefit of marriage was morally repugnant to her. Moreover, she was mistrustful that James might fail at finding a job and, ultimately, would become economically dependent on her. Finding no mutually acceptable means of resolving these dilemmas, Carol and James separated.

Period V: Age 39-43

Carol's recall for the events in her life during this period was limited to her descriptions of her new love relationship. By now her involvement in the business was sustained, primarily, out of loyalty to the family. The work itself was only moderately satisfying, but she continued to work ten to twelve hours daily, seven days a week. On the other hand, she found her new lover to be a most welcome addition to her life. Ben seemed to be a perfect companion. A policeman for most of his life, Ben had been interested in Carol since that first morning he'd stopped in the luncheonette for breakfast. Ben was 41 and

Carol 33 when they'd first met. For six years they had talked of their love for North Carolina, their birthplace. Ben had been married once; the marriage had ended in divorce after fourteen years, when he was 47 years old. Ben was a tall, strapping man who emitted an image of strength and virility. Yet, to Carol's immense liking, he was also a patient, soft-spoken, gentle man who took care to show his respect for her. Aware that he was married when they met, Carol made it quite clear that she would not date a married man.

Six years after they'd met, in the same year of Ben's divorce, Carol and Ben had their first date. Their friendship had deepened; by this time Carol had grown to trust him more than any other man she'd known romantically. Soon she was willing to allow him to stay overnight occasionally. Further, for the first time in her adult life, Carol permitted herself to have several alcoholic drinks while in Ben's company. Imbibing alcohol was no longer a "bad habit" which might interfere with her heavy work responsibilities. Secure in Ben's company, she found drinking in moderation to be most relaxing and devoid of any negative consequences. Also, happily, she and Ben had several interests in common and were compatible in temperament. The relationship thrived and Carol felt lucky to have, finally, found such a wonderful man.

Carol's 42nd year was marked by three major changes in her

life. First, she and her brother relocated the business to another site in the Bronx. City government had required this move; she and her brother had no success in resisting being uprooted. This externally imposed move, however, stimulated them to revise their relationship to the business. John suggested that they decrease their time spent at the store and Carol agreed with this change. Profits had continued to increase; economically the business was on sound footing. Absent the economic need to work such strenuous schedules, each partner was free to devote more time to their personal lives. Carol was relieved to reduce her work hours and shed the chronic feelings of fatigue which she'd known for many years. Now she worked only 8 hours daily, six days weekly. She was off on Sundays, free to enjoy her time with Ben and to pursue any pleasures she so chose.

The partners also considered other means of earning income that would not require great physical exertion. An apartment building was purchased just blocks away from the store. Carol agreed to devote herself solely to the variety store (now without the luncheonette), while her brother managed the apartment building. Upon being interviewed at Age 47, Carol reflected on the contrasts between the shy, naive, interpersonally inept young woman who'd taken on the business at Age 22, and the poised, confident, interpersonally adept woman who could independently manage the business at Age 42.

The second major change during this period was that Carol no longer had any nieces or nephews living with her. One nephew had lived with her from her 23rd through her 28th year; and, a niece had lived with her from her 27th through her 33rd year. Other nieces and nephews had spent their summers with her through these years, until shortly before her 42nd birthday. By Age 42 Carol had subsidized twelve of these children's college or vocational education. Summer employment, in addition to other supplementary monies, had enabled these children to launch their economic careers. Carol had taken this family responsibility quite seriously, but now she was pleased to, finally, have the privacy of living alone. Ben could stay overnight with her by this time, primarily, because she no longer had to serve as a moral example to her brother's children.

Finally, with respect to changes in this period, it is of note that, at Age 42, Carol planned a lavish birthday party for herself. Other than two surprise parties at Age 22 and 25, she'd never celebrated her birthday. At Age 42 she felt a sense of freedom from many perspectives. She was free of a harsh, demanding work schedule; she was free of the demands of caring for her brother's children; and, for the first time in her adult life, she could conduct her romantic life free from the watchful eyes of her nieces and nephews. Her 42nd birthday was a time for celebrating her accomplishments, and for ending an era in which self-

sacrifice and self-deprivation had been everpresent themes.

New concerns also arose during this period in Carol's life. Generally, the variety store remained a stable business enterprise with steadily rising profits. The new venture of apartment ownership, however, proved to be a more demanding responsibility than either partner had envisioned. Tenant's complaints were numerous; operating expenses exceeded expectations; and, non-payment of rent was a frequent occurrence in this building housing many welfare recipients. Both Carol and her brother became involved in court litigations to secure rent monies. Eventually, Carol found it necessary to help her brother in managing the apartment building, despite her preference for restricting her time to the variety store. Importantly, she remained committed to a reduced work-load for herself and preserved needed time for non-work related pursuits.

Period VI: Age 44-47

During this period Carol began to slowly gain weight again. By Age 47 she'd risen to 180 pounds. She was unhappy with the weight gain, but felt powerless to solve the problem. Once again, she adjusted to her new body image by buying clothes in a larger size. At least some of the weight gain was caused by the presence of benign uterine tumors. Carol was more troubled by this particular

gynecological problem than by her weight gain. These uterine fibroid tumors resulted in symptoms of abdominal distention, irregularity in her menstrual cycle, and more painful menses. The fibroids had been diagnosed during a routine gynecological examination at Age 23, but were not judged to require any intervention. By Age 44 Carol sought medical advice again. The only treatment available was surgical removal, perhaps necessitating a hysterectomy. The decision was hers entirely; unless she developed more troublesome symptoms, surgery could be postponed or avoided altogether.

Upon being interviewed at Age 47, Carol expressed her ambivalence about surgery. The persistence of symptoms, especially an increase in abdominal distention, suggested the advisability of surgery. On the other hand, she was extremely apprehensive about a hospitalization. Unable to articulate the nature of her fears of hospitalization, Carol remained indecisive. She tended to minimize her symptoms while denying that the loss of her uterus would be a psychically painful event.

Apart from these specific concerns, Carol's life during this period reflected the same themes contained in her 42nd year. She relished her newfound sense of freedom and continued to cherish her relationship with Ben. Neither of them had a desire to marry, although Carol suspected she was the more recalcitrant of the two. Ben had asked her to

marry him when she was 43, but she'd persuaded him that both could benefit from remaining unmarried "a little longer". Marriage continued to symbolize a burdensome, restrictive set of responsibilities. In a sense, she felt that she'd been deprived of a somewhat carefree young adulthood by virtue of her commitments to the family and the business. She viewed her forties as the first opportunity to concentrate on her own needs and wishes, not those of others.

At Age 47 Carol could foresee remaining in the family business until, probably, Age 60. This somewhat early retirement date would, she hoped, allow time for traveling and exploring the world more than she'd been able to thus far. Vacations had been impossible to schedule since her last one at Age 42. The only trips away from the business had been annual Christmas holidays to visit their parents. Since her father's death (at Age 90), she'd taken greater interest in her mother's welfare. The past three years had entailed continued grieving for her father and an intensified relationship with her mother. Future plans would, necessarily, include greater involvement with her 85 year old mother. At Age 47 she found it almost unbearable to contemplate the inevitability of her mother's death, or indeed, to imagine the deaths of any other family members.

DORA

Dora was born in 1938 into a family which consisted of her mother (age 30), father (age 30), and a sister (age 3). Both parents hailed from Virginia, having migrated to New York city in their twenties. The family was of working class origins. Each parent had worked as a domestic servant during their young adult years. Dora's father had later become a truck driver, hauling goods for one company for most of his adult life. Dora's mother had combined her household responsibilities with work outside the home as a saleswoman in a department store.

Dora had been aware since her early childhood years of the interracial composition of her family. Her mother was quite fair-skinned and, like other relatives in her family, was often mistaken for a white person. Dora became aware during her school-age years that her mother, and other relatives, had sometimes "passed" as whites. By contrast, her father's side of the family was of a darker complexion, with no known history of racial mixing. According to family historians, Dora's maternal great grandfather had been a white, wealthy Virginia judge who'd had an extra-marital affair with a black slave woman. There had been one child born from their union i.e. Dora's maternal grandfather. Subsequently, this grandfather's marriage to a black woman had produced six

children who were near white in physical appearance. One of the six children was Dora's mother. Most of Dora's maternal Aunts and Uncles had "passed" as whites at differing times in their lives. A maternal Uncle had migrated from Virginia to Canada in the 1920's, married a white woman, and had established a family line that lived entirely as whites.

For the first eight years of her life, Dora lived with her parents in Harlem, New York. She attended an elementary school in Harlem through the third grade. Apparently, the maternal grandfather had become a successful Virginian businessman, and had gradually amassed monies sufficient to purchase homes for each of his children. This grandfather persuaded Dora's parents to move to Brooklyn to escape the dangers of life in Harlem. The family moved to a section of Brooklyn in which blacks were in the minority, but within five years the area had become almost totally black.

Between Age 9 and 16, Dora and her sister spent every summer living with their maternal grandparents in Virginia. Dora's memories of these summers were of fun-filled, happy childhood ventures, except for those occasions when she encountered racial discrimination. Such experiences were made even more complicated and confusing because her blonde, blue-eyed cousins were treated as whites, while she, as a brown-skinned child, was expected to observe racial segregation codes. Though she was a well-adjusted child in most respects, during these summers in Virginia, Dora began

to dislike her Negroid features, particularly her brown skin and full lips.

Dora's performance in the Harlem school had been judged as good, though not exceptional. Upon moving to Brooklyn and beginning the fourth grade, her performance attracted the attention of her teachers. By the end of her fifth grade, she'd earned the label "intellectually gifted", and was enrolled in special programs for such students. Dora enjoyed school immensely. It was not until she reached the ninth grade that she experienced conflict over her status as a special and gifted student.

During these early adolescent years, Dora became aware that other students envied her academic achievements. For a while she was somewhat conflicted about entering the accelerated high school program which had been developed for intellectually advanced children. The program would allow her to complete high school in only two years. Her decision to enter the accelerated program was greatly influenced by her desire to attend a school within her own neighborhood. From the sixth through the ninth grades, she'd been required to travel to a (white) school outside of her neighborhood to participate in the programs for the intellectually gifted.

In retrospect, Dora emphasized that her teenage years reflected an intense desire to achieve a balance between her academic and social life. Academically, she continued to perform well, achieving a B+ grade point average upon

graduation from high school. But, lacking confidence that she was accepted by her peers, she poured her energies into developing an active social life. Her social contacts revolved around two major groups: church and school. The church affiliation entailed her and her sister's thorough involvement in youth groups, including singing in the youth chorus. This affiliation was primarily for purposes of establishing peer relations. She was not particularly interested in religious belief systems as such. Neither parent attended church regularly or espoused their own religious preferences. Her father was a professed Baptist and her mother had been raised as a Presbyterian. Dora attended the Congregationalist church to which a maternal Uncle belonged.

When Dora graduated from high school at Age 16, she was selected by her classmates as the "most popular" and the "best-looking" of all the students. She had succeeded in gaining the peer acceptance she'd so strongly desired. High school had served as a social arena within which she'd developed leadership skills, acquired many friends, and especially important, had participated in the performing arts. Dora had been in several theatrical productions and had thoroughly enjoyed her roles as a dancer. She found that she was as skilled at winning her audience's applause, as she was adept in gaining the confidence of students under her leadership. When graduation time arrived, she was

only 16 years old. She was deeply saddened at the loss of such a rich social group.

Dora's early graduation from high school was a most unwelcome accomplishment. The prospect of becoming a college student, as her parents wished, was a most unattractive alternative. Going to college would require intensive studying and a curtailment of her social life. Dora preferred to work for a few years, buy attractive clothes, go to dances, and otherwise, live like other sixteen year olds who she knew. College meant assuming a serious adult responsibility for which Dora felt unprepared. Aside from going to work, Dora's only other choice seemed fanciful and unrealistic to both her and her parents: she dreamed of becoming a "Rockette" and dancing in a chorus line. Her parents prevailed in their wishes. Following a summer job as a department store salesgirl, Dora began her first year as a student at one of the colleges in the city university system.

Dora began her college years with the goal of becoming an elementary school teacher. Retrospectively, she recalled that she'd wanted to be a teacher since the fourth grade when she'd been taught by her first black teacher. Aside from her later flirtation with becoming a Rockette, she'd not become interested in any other career endeavor. Teaching would offer her the opportunity to work with children, and it would lend itself well to an integration

with marriage and family life. Her parents were quite pleased with her choice, but some family members and friends suggested that she was not ambitious enough. Nevertheless, she saw teaching as a worthy profession and, for the moment, entertained no other ambitions.

Period I: Age 16-20

Throughout her college years, Dora lived at home with her family and commuted daily to college. Academically and socially her freshman year was quite difficult. For the first time, her grades were below a B level. In retrospect, she acknowledged that her low grades reflected her rebellious attitude toward her parents and her low motivation to succeed. Her freshman year also entailed problems in finding a group of friends. The college was predominantly white; there were only 50 black students out of a total enrollment of 3,000. Although Dora was receptive to friendships with white students, there were few such students who befriended her.

It was not until her sophomore year that Dora found an acceptable solution to her need for a social group. It was at this point that a black sorority chapter was initiated at her college. The sorority affiliation provided her with a network of friends and access to a wide range of social events. Bolstered by her sense of belongingness in this

sorority-fraternity network, Dora began to enjoy college life. By the end of her sophomore year, she had resumed her usual high level of academic achievement.

These college years also represented Dora's first experiences in romantic relationships. Her parents had prohibited her from dating until she reached Age 16. For the first few years of this freedom to date, she had been minimally involved with boys. Generally, she enjoyed her friendships with girls and devoted herself to her studies. She was 18 years old when she met and fell in love with Roger, the man who would later become her husband.

Roger was most appealing to Dora in every respect; his achievements were most impressive. A promising football player and a high academic achiever, Roger had been accepted at several prestigious universities. At the time of their meeting, he was on full scholarship at Columbia University. For the next three years, Dora dated Roger exclusively. They planned to marry, as soon as it was economically feasible to do so, after each had graduated from college. Meanwhile, both agreed that it would be advisable to refrain from sexual activity until they were married.

Period II: Age 20-29

When Dora graduated from college at Age 20, she followed through on her long-awaited plan to take a position with the

New York city school system. Student-teaching in her senior year had been a very satisfying experience. She remained convinced that her choice of teaching had been a sound one. Dora was aware that minorities were underrepresented in the school system, but she was optimistic that she would succeed in gaining a position. Indeed, she felt reassured that the school system operated on a merit system in matters of hiring, promotion, and so on. She fully anticipated that, if judged on merit alone, she would fare well in the school system. Her career plans at this point were rather modest. She was interested in teaching children only, and had no desires to climb the administrator's ladder.

The early years of this period were the occasion for several key events in Dora's life. After two years of teaching at an elementary school in Brooklyn, Dora and Roger were married. Since Roger was a practicing Catholic, Dora consented to his wishes to be married in a Catholic church. The newly married couple took an apartment in the same neighborhood in which Dora had grown up, only a few blocks away from her family. These early years of marriage were extremely happy ones for her, despite their initial economic problems. Roger held a full-time job while completing college on a part-time basis. A physical injury had prevented him from playing college football and had resulted in the loss of his athletic scholarship. The necessity of working to finance his college tuition had prolonged the

years of earning his bachelor's degree in engineering.

Two years after their marriage, in the same year of Roger's graduation, Dora gave birth to a daughter, Jean. The couple had not planned this child, but neither had they used contraception to prevent a pregnancy. Dora had assumed that she would become pregnant at some early point in their marriage. Her pregnancy and Jean's birth had seemed perfectly natural in the evolving scheme of their lives.

Dora went on maternity leave in the spring of her fourth year of teaching. Her daughter was born that summer. She remained at home with Jean for about four months, thoroughly enjoying her new role as a new mother. Since she was totally inexperienced in caring for an infant, she was grateful for the ample assistance which her husband provided. Soon, however, Dora became eager to return to teaching. Fortunately, she found that her mother-in-law was willing to care for Jean in the daytime while she did substitute teaching.

Dora took a very practical approach to planning her career in these first two years of Jean's life. She realized that she would need a master's degree in order to become licensed in the school system. Thus, she arranged her time so that she could combine substitute teaching with graduate coursework. With her mother-in-law's help, she was able to work and augment the family income, to make progress toward her master's degree, and to manage home and family life as

well. At no time did she consider remaining home and restricting her life to childrearing. From the beginning, she opted to integrate her career and family life.

Two and one-half years after Jean's birth, Dora elected to resume her full-time teaching position. By this point in time, she had been resourceful in finding a surrogate mother for her child. A part-time housekeeper, who had been especially skillful in ministering to Jean, was offered a full-time position as a housekeeper and nanny. The couple's combined salaries made such an arrangement possible. Dora could then plan her time around a full-time teaching role during the day; taking great care to devote late afternoon and evening time to her household and family responsibilities.

Dora assumed these combined work and family roles with a conscious effort to maintain her priorities. She ranked these priorities, from highest to lowest, as mother, wife, and teacher. During this period of time, teaching seemed more like a "job" than an actual career. She felt prepared to stop work at whatever point her husband's income might allow. Careerwise, she made no long term plans for advancing beyond classroom teaching. Emotionally, she was more deeply invested in being a "good mother" and a "good wife" than in climbing a career ladder.

Dora's second teaching position was characterized by her increasing assumption of leadership within the school.

Assigned to an intellectually gifted group of students, Dora demonstrated a creative, energetic, innovative approach to teaching this group. Her teaching and leadership ability earned her the high regard of her fellow teachers. Within months of working at this school, she accepted the offer of an Acting-Principal role. She continued work with the intellectually gifted while also serving as the Acting-Principal. After two years in these roles, she felt more confident in her professional abilities, but she was also eager for a change. Both teaching and administration within that particular school were frustrating, demanding kinds of work. When a colleague in her school alerted her to an attractive position in the curriculum development field, she followed up post-haste on this new job opportunity.

Period III: Age 29-31

Dora's new position in the field of curriculum development significantly enhanced her emerging sense of professionalism. Teaching was becoming more of a "career", rather than just a "job". Curriculum development work removed her from the classroom and direct involvement with children. Now she served as a leadership figure for teachers themselves. She developed curricular materials, wrote proposals for innovative teaching projects, and

conducted training programs for teachers. She felt identified with the "experts" in the field and was inspired by the idealistic fervor which was influencing the educational system during those years.

These were the years in which radical social changes were occurring within the New York city school system. Various subgroups, including teachers and community groups, found the schools to be deficient in many respects. Black teachers, in particular, organized themselves to effect changes in the school system. The Afro-American Teachers' Association (A.A.T.A.) was founded during this period to serve as a catalyst for change. Dora became a member of the A.A.T.A. but did not become active in that group, or any of the other numerous organizations that proliferated during this era. Family responsibilities left little time for assuming additional roles which might interfere with these commitments. Nevertheless, she found this to be an exciting period in which to function as a curriculum specialist. She viewed her curricular work as a key contribution to the broader movement to improve education in the New York city school system.

In other respects Dora's life remained stable and unchanged during these years. Family life remained satisfying and posed no particularly difficult problems.

Period IV: Age 31-40

During this period of her life, Dora held four positions in the curriculum development field. Each position signified her steady progression on the ladder of success within this field. From Age 31-33 she served as an executive assistant to the District Superintendent; from Age 33-35 she assisted the director of a specially funded educational project; and, from Age 35-38 she served as assistant to the Executive Director in a division for educational planning. Finally, from Age 38-40 she held a Deputy Executive directorship in a curriculum instruction division.

Throughout this period Dora worked as "second in command" to a woman who she considered to be her mentor. The mentor was a doctorally prepared, black woman who Dora regarded as an exceptionally bright, unusually gifted woman. The mentoring relationship enhanced her own creativity in curricular projects and fostered a heretofore unknown excitement for the teaching profession. In retrospect, she noted that she was profoundly affected by her mentor, particularly in terms of elaborating and refining her own philosophies of education.

During these years Dora was keenly aware of making career decisions that avoided a top administrative post. Although she became licensed as a school Principal, and certified for

administrator roles, she never envisioned herself in these positions. Rather, these credentials were used to insure her progression up the ladder in the curriculum field. Increasingly, it became clear to her that she performed exceptionally well in administrative roles, and that she preferred the "second in command" post. Dora reasoned that "first in command" positions would cause irreconcilable conflict with her family responsibilities. Specifically, she anticipated that her pattern of assiduously avoiding the use of evening time for job responsibilities would be upset. Moreover, she saw no economic necessity to take a first-line position since her husband's salary was steadily growing. Lacking any strong desires to hold a more powerful position, she found no essential reason to do so.

Dora's family life continued to be a major source of satisfaction during this period. Her social life was most often centered around family events. Especially on holidays, Dora's home became the center of family gatherings. Both she and her husband's family were invited to enjoy the elaborate meals which Dora always prepared. She thoroughly enjoyed her roles as cook, hostess, and entertainer for these family events. She was most happy that she and her husband were economically able to serve as the center for most of the major family events.

Dora described her marriage during these years as stable. Whenever marital conflict occurred, she made every effort to

be conciliatory. Basically, she considered her husband to be the head of the household and avoided competition with him for this role. Dora reasoned that, given black men's historic difficulties in being deprived of positions of power, it was important to preserve his position as "king" of their family. Viewing herself as a "traditional" woman, Dora felt comfortable with their roles within the family. Happily, she reported, there had been no significant threats to the viability of her marriage. Over the years, their friendship had deepened, and the marriage continued as the most secure, stable feature of her life.

Period V: Age 40-44

This period entailed a significant change in Dora's occupational commitments. Momentarily, she had been tempted to make a change at Age 38 when her mentor took a job out of state. The mentor had invited Dora along as her "second in command". The offer had been enticing because of the opportunity to continue her affiliation with the mentor. However, she declined this job offer because it would have required either a long commute, or relocating her family. Soon thereafter she accepted the invitation of another colleague, who was then her boss, to join him at another institution.

Dora was almost 40 years old when she made a major change

in the career direction she had been pursuing since Age 29. It was at this point that her boss accepted a deanship at a local university and invited her to join him as assistant dean. Eager for a change, Dora readily accepted the offer. University life held a promise of greater variety and intellectual stimulation than did the Board of Education. And, importantly, her other options within the Board were likely to be top administrative posts. Since she remained unwilling to assume such responsibilities, the university position was most appealing.

After almost two years of satisfying work within the university, Dora made another key life choice. At Age 41 she gained admission to a doctoral program and began coursework toward the Ed.D. degree. She had become interested in securing a doctorate during her years of mentoring, but had always believed it would make excessive demands on her time. But, by Age 40, family responsibilities were changing. By now her daughter was 16 years old and required much less caretaking. Dora felt it was now more realistic than ever before to obtain a doctorate. The degree would enable her to plan her career within the university with greater assurance of job security.

Dora was completing her first semester of (part-time) coursework when her husband suffered a massive heart attack. She was shocked and mortified to learn that her

husband had barely escaped death. The event was entirely unanticipated since Roger had never before been seriously ill. Apparently, he'd been recuperating from a virulent respiratory infection when the heart attack occurred. His first hospitalization lasted several months; during that time Dora continued working, but spent every possible hour visiting Roger at the hospital. Further, she withdrew from the doctoral program and mobilized herself to deal with this crisis. The decision to withdraw was easily made since she had not enjoyed the coursework and was not strongly motivated to undergo the rigors of doctoral work.

Dora's response to her crisis was, in her view, exemplary of her characteristic style of coping with stress. Essentially, she became well informed about the nature of Roger's illness, and carefully examined their existing insurance plans. She reasoned that her husband's possible death would be most traumatic if her and her daughter's financial security was left unplanned. A major concern was that her daughter's college education would require large sums of money that her salary could not accommodate. Dora investigated her job possibilities with the view of securing a higher salary. Within four months of her husband's return home from the hospital, she had taken a new, higher paying position within the same university where she'd functioned as an assistant dean.

Dora assumed her new position as the director of a student

services office just two months before her 42nd birthday. The position represented her first experience as a first-line administrator. In retrospect, she noted that, while she felt well prepared to competently handle the position, she would not have made such a move had not her husband become ill. When Roger suffered a second heart attack a year after the first one, Dora again feared for his life, but no longer felt troubled about her and her daughter's financial future. She felt extremely fortunate that, within a year of the second attack, he had recovered sufficiently to return to his job.

When Dora was interviewed at Age 44, she described the past two years as ones of considerable professional growth. Her new position had been an enriching work experience in many respects. In a sense, the position allowed her to utilize skills and knowledges which she'd been acquiring throughout her years as a teacher, curriculum specialist, and administrator. She believed that her competence as a director was based in her interpersonal skills as well as her efficiency in organizing the work of her office. Characteristically, she continued to draw a boundary between work and family life, taking care to prevent the job's intrusion into time planned for her family.

At Age 44 Dora expressed an interest in becoming free of the career in which she'd been invested since Age 21. During her husband's illness, she'd conducted a thorough

investigation of her financial status and had inquired about her retirement options. Happily, she'd discovered that she could retire from the educational system with thirty years of service, at Age 51. The prospect of an early retirement appealed to her; for the past few years she'd been considering how her life might be planned if she opted to retire at Age 51. The most exciting, pleasureable possibilities were of extensive travel around the world, exploring geographies and cultures unknown to her. However, since she suspected that her husband would not be able to retire so early, or would not even desire such, she imagined traveling alone. Never having traveled without her husband, she was not eager to do so.

The second life plan that Dora entertained was that of a second career, perhaps in a business-oriented field. No specific career interest had attracted her, but she planned to use the coming years to explore her options. Laughingly, she suggested that if she could still become a Rockette, this would be her first choice for a second career! Generally, as she reflected on her choices, she tried to imagine a more carefree, adventurous life style than she'd experienced heretofore.

Further, at Age 44, Dora was quite reflective on her relationship with her daughter. Aware of her daughter's growing independence, she felt philosophical about childrearing, and the inevitability of children growing up

and away from parents. She noted that she was becoming increasingly comfortable with the longer periods of separation from her daughter. She was determined to handle this as a "natural phase" of her life which, like every other phase, should be handled in as mature, rational a manner as possible.

EVA

Eva was born in 1940 into a family consisting of her mother (Age 42), father (Age 44), and five siblings. Her parents had migrated to New York from the West Indies (Barbados) in the early 1900's. They had met in New York, were married in 1924, and began raising their family soon thereafter. At the time of Eva's birth, her siblings included, from oldest to youngest: a brother, Age 16; three sisters, Ages 14, 12, and 10; and, a brother, Age 3. The family was of working class origins. Eva's mother had combined her household responsibilities with work as a domestic servant. Eva's father had been employed as a maintenance man in a factory for most of his adult life. In addition, he was a self-employed businessman who made hand-crafted furniture for a modest supplemental income.

Eva's parents had bought a brownstone house in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn a few years before her birth. The house was an enormous source of pride for her parents; it was then located in a middle income, racially integrated neighborhood. By the time Eva became a teenager, the neighborhood's racial composition was predominantly black. The family's social life was restricted to other black people; either with Black Americans, or others of West-Indian origin. Both the

elementary and junior high schools which Eva and her sibs attended were predominantly black schools.

Eva recalled that each of her parents and her sibs were acutely conscious of the racial segregation codes which existed during her childhood years in Brooklyn. Most family members had lent their support to existing civil rights groups, but one sister (ten years Eva's senior) had taken a more active role in local struggles. This sister, Clara, had joined with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.) and other groups to protest the exclusion of blacks from a newly built high school in Brooklyn. The coalition had been effective in negotiating an "appeasement" which allowed a small subgroup of blacks to be admitted to the new school. Thus, it was in this manner that Eva became one of a few black students who gained access to Wingate High School in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn.

By the time Eva reached her high school years, she had had many years of active involvement in social groups. Since her mother was an active churchgoer, her early years had entailed a thorough engagement in the Nazarene church her mother attended. She'd been a member of the young adults gospel singing group and the church's drum and bugle corp. The family home had been the center of her social life; numerous social events, organized by her mother, her sibs, or herself, were held there. Her mother was described as a

highly sociable woman who was esteemed by many in the neighborhood. Eva felt that she was simply following in her mother's footsteps when she also emerged as a highly social young woman.

Eva was only a few inches below her adult height of 5'11" when she entered high school at Age 15. Nicknamed "Broomstick" because she was both tall and skinny, she saw herself as a natural leader within social groups. Academically, she had performed at an above average level through elementary and junior high school. In fact, her solid academic abilities had been a primary reason for her selection as one of the black students to attend the (white) high school. These high school years were a positive experience in most respects. Integrating with white students posed no particular problems academically or socially. The adjustment was very much aided by her experience as a leader within the rather tightly knit group of black students.

Period I: Age 18-23

Eva had no specific plans for her adult life when she graduated from high school at Age 18. Since she had enjoyed the typing courses she'd taken in high school, she decided to seek a job in this area. Family contacts were helpful in locating a job as a clerk-typist for her first post-high

school year. During this year, she was approached by her sister, Clara, who offered to provide financial support for her college education. Economic limitations had prevented all of her siblings from attending college. Eva had assumed that she would, eventually, follow the path her sibs had taken. Each sib had found a "secure job" as a service worker e.g. in the telephone company. She was elated at the prospect of college and readily accepted Clara's offer. Following the advice of a family friend, a predominantly black college in West Virginia was selected by her sister.

Eva looked forward to college, primarily, as an opportunity for an active social life. She did not make career plans until she was required to choose a major during her freshman year. It was then that she elected to major in Home Economics. This field was chosen because it coincided with her interests in fashion and dressmaking. She had been making all of her clothes since Age 10.

Initially, Eva found the southern, rural culture to be alien and unfriendly. She resisted many of the traditional customs for initiating freshmen and, very early, gained a reputation as an uncooperative, "smart-aleck New Yorker". She recalled that she began to relax only after the traditional freshman show in which she was made the butt of upperclassmen's jokes. Labeled as "that strange New Yorker", her behavior was uproariously dramatized for all. The show helped her to recognize how alienating her behavior

had been, fostered a sense of belonging, and launched her college years with a strong identification as "the New Yorker".

Eva's college years were characterized by her high level of sociability and her assumption of active leadership for several formal and informal groups. She had many friends and kept a busy social calendar. A primary leadership role was assumed with the Home Economics Club. In part, she became involved with the club as a means of winning the favorable regard of the departmental chairperson. This chairperson had threatened to give her a failing grade in a course because of her negativistic, rebellious attitude toward authority. Eva was determined to prove that she had constructive, effective leadership abilities, and that she could perform at an exceptional level academically. She was successful in both her aspirations. Upon graduating from college, she was the highest achieving student in Home Economics, and had become the first female President of her senior class.

By contrast, Eva's experience with the college sorority was far less satisfying. She wanted to become a member of the sorority, but she also felt strong resentment about requirements for conformity. In this arena she used her leadership abilities to organize sorority pledges against the established authority figures. Eventually, she was advised that she was much too recalcitrant to ever be

accepted and was asked to withdraw. She did so without further resistance; convinced that she could never comply with the sorority's demands for conformity.

Eva's college years were also the occasion for her first "serious" love relationship. During her sophomore and junior years, she was romantically involved with a fellow college student. Unhappily, this relationship ended when her lover withdrew from her. Thereafter, she continued to date, but did not consider the relationships to be comparably "serious" in terms of a mutual commitment.

Upon graduation in May 1963, Eva spent a month traveling through the southern states, in the company of college friends. During her college years, she had become involved in local civil rights activities which had peaked her curiosity about the broader civil rights movement. She traveled through Alabama, Tennessee, and West Virginia before returning to New York. These travels stimulated her reflection about potential leadership roles which she might assume, but she had no particular plans for such.

Period II: Age 23-28

Eva returned to New York without a clear sense about what direction her life might take. Late in her senior year, she had become interested in graduate study as a means of continuing student life. She had so enjoyed the rich social

life which college provided that she imagined graduate school would be more of the same. However, she had not been able to decide upon any specific area for study and had not sought admission to any school. Temporarily, she planned to work as a clerk-typist for the remaining summer months while deciding about her future. Once again, her sister, Clara, assumed an active role in her life by advising her on a direction to pursue. Clara advised her to apply for a teaching position with the New York city Board of Education. She did so and, to her surprise, was immediately hired and placed in a junior high school near her parents' home.

Eva spent her first year at the school as a teacher of mathematics. She was not satisfied with this assignment, but felt that she performed adequately. Luckily, by her second year of teaching, an assignment became available in Home Economics. For the next four years, Eva poured her energies into becoming a creative teacher, while also serving in leadership roles for student groups. She found that she thoroughly enjoyed helping students to put on talent shows, organize student projects, establish social clubs, and so on. She rated her job satisfaction during these years as higher than at any other point in her employment history.

Eva's high job satisfaction at the junior high school was strongly influenced by her social involvement with other teachers. Since a majority of the teachers were young

black men, most of her socializing was with these men. She admired several of them for their dynamic, progressive thinking about education for black people. Discussions about education and "black power" were common during these years. Eva sensed that she was on the forefront of some potentially dramatic changes in education. She was excited to be a member of such a dynamic group of teachers. In many respects, she felt that her social and professional lives were intertwined in a manner that fostered her growth in both spheres.

From Age 23 to 28, Eva had continued to live in her parents' home, anticipating that she would soon marry and establish her own family. During these years, she was committed to her relationship with a young man who had expressed his love for her and his desire for marriage. The couple had set a wedding date when her intended husband "decided that he couldn't handle getting married". Apparently, he was frightened about the responsibilities of marriage and felt unprepared to begin raising a family. Eva was dismayed at his late decision against marriage. Initially, she could not believe she was being rejected. When he persisted in refusing to marry her, she became acutely depressed. For several months she was unable to consider any alternate plans for her life.

Period III: Age 28-31

When the summer of 1968 ended without the marriage Eva had hoped for, she had decided to make two major life changes. First, she planned to move out of her parents' home into an apartment of her own. She accomplished this within two months of her planned wedding date. Her apartment was located in Brooklyn, quite near her parents' home. Second, Eva decided to take another teaching position at a school further away from her neighborhood. She was ambivalent about leaving the school that had been so enriching for her development, but she also thought a change was necessary. However, when she announced her decision to some of her colleagues at the school, she was implored to remain there. Her resolve to leave the school was easily reversed when her fellow teachers invited her to join with them in an effort at social change. A special demonstration project was being planned in the Ocean-Hill Brownsville section of Brooklyn which, it was hoped, would lead to improved education for black children.

Eva decided to relinquish her plans to teach elsewhere. For the coming year she was intensely involved in the Ocean-Hill Brownsville project. She became one of the founders of the newly developed Afro-American Teacher's Association (A.A.T.A.) and, in numerous other ways, offered her leadership to the overall effort to gain community

control of education. In retrospect, she was quite prideful about her role in a project that effected positive, systemic changes in education on a national level. But, during the tumultuous, chaotic year of her involvement, she often felt it was an unduly stressful environment within which to work. At the end of the school year, Eva decided to follow through on her plan to teach in another school.

Eva was successful in securing a desirable assignment at yet another junior high school in Brooklyn. Although she was generally satisfied with her new job, she began to contemplate making a career change. She was uncertain as to what alternative work she'd prefer, but she definitely wanted a change to a more exciting kind of work. Teaching itself was becoming "boring" to her.

Eva recalled that the period from, approximately, December 1969 through the next two years was the most crisis-ridden time of her entire life. The sequence of events during this time were: a decision during the Thanksgiving recess to leave her teaching position for a new career as a travel agent; her mother's death soon after Christmas day; her discovery in February 1970 that she'd become pregnant (in December 1969); her very difficult decision to keep her baby and raise it on her own; and, the subsequent period of adjustment following the delivery of a baby boy in August 1970.

Eva had begun her career change when her mother died. Her

70 year old mother had been ill for some time before she died, but Eva felt quite unprepared for her death. Prior to her mother's death, she had been aware of being depressed about her life. She still grieved over the loss of her ex-fiancee and despaired of ever replacing him with another lover. Just weeks before her mother's death, she had sought solace in the company of a man who she'd dated on previous occasions. She had not used birth control measures during their sexual contact. Her attitude had been one of total abandonment, without regard for the future consequences of her actions. When her mother died, she had become deeply depressed. She'd begun her new career as a travel agent, as previously planned, but was finding it minimally helpful in alleviating her grief.

Eva consulted the family physician after her second month of missing her menstrual period. She'd been unable to stop crying at the thought of losing her mother; she suspected that her emotional turmoil had contributed to the absence of her menses. Her physician informed her that she was pregnant and strongly encouraged her to deliver the baby. For the next two months, Eva was in the throes of decision-making. On the one hand, she wanted the child and took comfort in the encouragement she'd received from her physician. On the other hand, she was fearful that several family members would disapprove if she had a child out of wedlock. She briefly considered having an abortion, but was

suffused with guilt at the idea of taking the baby's life. Finally, she decided to risk her family's disapproval and to act on her growing desire to have the child.

In preparation for her new mothering responsibilities, Eva decided to return to her teaching position. The travel agency job had paid much less money than she'd earned as a teacher. Also, with some trepidation, she decided to return to live in her father's home. The move would allow her to save monies, but she felt wary that her father would accept having an unwed, pregnant daughter. In fact, as her delivery date approached, it seemed that her father became more vocal about his disapproval. During the final months of her pregnancy, Eva was painfully aware that her father thought she'd brought "disgrace" to their family.

In addition to these emotional tensions, Eva developed toxemia during her fifth month of pregnancy. Thus, she required more frequent medical supervision and was aware of the greater risk of delivering a healthy baby. Finally, she delivered a healthy, though premature, baby boy. She'd undergone a major medical crisis just prior to his birth which necessitated delivery by caesarian section. Several days after his birth, Eva learned that she'd almost died during the delivery.

The knowledge of her "close call" with death prompted Eva to contact her son's father, Joe. Previously, she'd decided against informing him of her pregnancy, or of her intention

to deliver the child. She'd reasoned that their relationship had not been one of a mutual commitment, and that it was entirely her responsibility to raise the child. Following her "close call", Eva decided that her son should know his father, and that Joe should be free to make his own decisions with regard to his child. She was surprised and elated to discover that Joe was "thrilled" at having a son.

For a few months following her son's birth, Eva lived with her sister, Clara. Her plans for the future were somewhat vague. She expected to return to teaching to provide for their economic needs, but she had been unable to arrange for the baby's caretaking during her absence. Meanwhile, she was pleased to note that Joe was becoming very attached to his son, Tom. When Joe suggested that Eva bring Tom to live with him in the Bronx, Eva was receptive to this arrangement. Neither felt confident that the relationship would lead to marriage, but both were willing to try "being a family" for the sake of their child. Three months later they separated. Eva and Joe felt convinced of their incompatibility as marital partners. They parted in a spirit of amicability; with the explicit understanding that Joe would continue to be invested in his child's welfare.

For a brief period, Eva attempted to make a life for her and her son in the Bronx. Since she had taken a teaching position at a Bronx school for the spring semester (1971), she decided to remain in the area. She took a separate

apartment in the same building where she'd lived with Joe. Having lived in Brooklyn for most of her life, however, she found it extremely difficult adjusting to life in this borough. Local mores and cultural patterns seemed alien and unfriendly. She tended to see Bronxites as barely civilized, unenlightened people whose lifestyles were inferior to Brooklynites. She felt herself to be very different from, and perhaps superior to, her fellow teachers and neighbors. Eva felt compelled to emphasize her difference in a dramatic, provocative fashion. It was in this context that she shaved off all her scalp hair and, defiantly, sported a bald look. In a spirit of anger and defiance, Eva conveyed in no uncertain terms that she neither needed, nor wanted, to be accepted into this new culture.

Upon completing one semester of teaching in the Bronx, Eva made plans to return to Brooklyn. By the fall season, when her child was fourteen months old, she had secured an attractive, comfortable apartment. She remained there for almost seven years before making another move. In many respects, the new apartment symbolized a return of stability in her life. The sense of "crisis" which had begun at the time of her mother's death was now abating. The only key element to be solidified after returning to Brooklyn was that of a job. By December of 1971 she was successful in acquiring an attractive position at an agency which was near

her new apartment.

Period IV: Age 31-38

By this point in time, Eva had been a classroom teacher for almost seven years. The sense of stagnation and boredom which had begun years earlier was now intensified. Moreover, her continued career in teaching would have necessitated earning a master's degree; this credential was prerequisite to licensure as a teacher in New York. Yet, the prospects of greater job security in the school system held no appeal for her. She remained uncertain as to what line of work would be appealing, but she was convinced that she should leave the teaching field. Generally, she hoped to find a more creative line of work in some sector of community service.

Eva relied on her wide circle of friends and colleagues for help in locating a job. Within a month of her return to Brooklyn, she had been advised of a job possibility. Upon interviewing for the position of "Special Assistant" to the Director of an educational research firm, she accepted this job offer without hesitation. The work entailed managing an office staff, proposal writing, and conducting training programs. The opportunity to travel across the country as a representative of the firm was especially appealing to her. Further, Eva was particularly interested in learning from,

and working with, the firm's Director. The Director was a black man who she'd known during her junior high school days when he'd served as an advisor to a youth group to which she belonged. Eva had been impressed by this man's intellect and ability in those earlier contacts. Subsequently, she had followed his career with interest. As she'd predicted, her years of employment in the firm were highly energizing and enjoyable. Working with the Director was most helpful in learning about innovative educational approaches, research, and methods of evaluating teaching effectiveness.

While Eva was adjusting to her new line of professional work, she was also learning about her new role as a single parent. In many respects, she found that her choice of a residence was an excellent one. The building housed many children who became her son's playmates and, importantly, provided a network of mothers who cooperated in babysitting for each other. Also, gradually, Eva effected improved relationships with those family members who'd disapproved of her out-of-wedlock pregnancy. As family members spent increasingly longer periods of time with her son, they had come to fully accept him. Eva was immensely relieved to restore good family relations and to be embraced lovingly by every family member.

After four years of work with the research firm, Eva faced another career decision. The firm had received the bulk of its monies from a federal grant program which was being

phased out. Once again she contemplated her career choices. For the first time she had the option of working on a part-time basis only. Since Age 34 Eva had been involved in a love relationship with Bill, a man who offered to support her and her son. In the absence of any alternative career plans, Eva opted to do substitute teaching on a part-time basis, and to accept her lover's offer of support.

This decision to work on a part-time basis also reflected Eva's desire to spend more time with her son. During her last two years with the research firm, she had been aware that Tom was adjusting poorly to the frequent travel required of her. Quite frequently, Tom had accompanied her on trips and their separations could be avoided, but very often separations were unavoidable. Eva believed that Tom's sensitivity to separations from her reflected his grieving over other losses as well. Tragically, when he was three years old, his father had died suddenly in an accident. Since Tom had sustained a loving relationship with his father since birth, he mourned his loss deeply. In addition, Tom's paternal grandfather died just a year after his father's death. The combined losses of these important men had had a visible, painful effect on her son. Eva felt it would be essential to avoid any further disruptions in his life.

Toward the end of her thirties, three major events

occurred which led Eva to reorganize her life. First, at Age 37, her love relationship with Bill came to an end. By mutual agreement, the couple decided that the relationship was no longer viable. A major consequence of their parting was that Eva could no longer afford to work on a part-time basis. Yet, jobs seemed impossible to find. By the end of a year of supporting herself and her son on her substitute teaching income, Eva was in severe financial trouble. Second, in the same year of separating from Bill, Eva's father died. Within six months of his death, Eva decided to, temporarily, move back into her parents' home. She had been unsuccessful in locating a job and was several months in arrears in rental payments. Moving back "home" seemed the only alternative to avoid being evicted from her apartment.

Period V: Age 38-42

Just weeks before her thirty-eighth birthday, Eva and her son moved into her parents' home. She regretted the move deeply. Apparently, her 41 year old brother and his family had declared themselves the rightful inheritors of the home, and felt no obligation to allow Eva to live there. In the absence of a will, her father's death had led to a legal battle among family members over the disposition of the home. Eva felt outraged at the way she and her son were

mistreated by her brother and sister-in-law. She was troubled that her son was being unfairly victimized by the open conflict between her and these family members. Verbal arguments were common and, often, she and her son were treated in a vindictive manner. As an emergency measure, she arranged for her son to spend the summer in North Carolina with his paternal grandmother. In the interim she actively searched for a job.

After three months of living with her brother, Eva was successful in securing a job. Once again, one of her many friends had assisted her in obtaining a job interview. The position was that of Director of a youth program in a local community center. The program was designed to provide remedial assistance and employment opportunities for junior high school students having academic difficulty. Eva was judged to be an excellent candidate for the directorship based on her previous teaching experience. The opportunity to create and administer the program from its inception was a particularly desirable feature from Eva's viewpoint.

Very soon after she secured the job, Eva moved out of her brother's home, was reunited with her son, and took another apartment in Brooklyn. Unfortunately, she had to move again after less than a year of living in the new apartment. She had expected her landlord to complete major repair work in the apartment. When he failed to do so, she elected to move again. The experience of such instability in her living

situation was extremely stressful for Eva. She vowed to buy her own home at the earliest time such became economically feasible. Meanwhile, for the third time in less than a year, she was forced to seek yet another apartment. After less than two years in this next apartment, Eva was able to buy a home for herself and her son.

A loan of several thousand dollars from one of her sisters, in combination with her own modest savings, had made it possible for Eva to purchase the home. She felt lucky to have discovered an old brownstone, located near her new job, in the same neighborhood in which she'd grown up. The brownstone needed extensive, costly repair work, but Eva felt it was a good long-term investment. Eventually, she planned to rent one or more of the seven rooms to a tenant, thereby augmenting her own income.

The task of repairing and redecorating the new home was far more costly than Eva had anticipated, but it was, nevertheless, an absorbing, exciting venture for her and her son. Initially, her major problem was that of a poor credit rating which made it impossible to buy needed furnishings. Soon, however, she was awarded credit and could purchase some of the more expensive items which she needed. In addition, many repairs were completed by friends who provided their services without cost.

When Eva was interviewed at Age 42, she expressed a strong sense of pride in achieving her goal of buying a home. She

was celebrating her one year anniversary of being a homeowner, and was pleased that her son was well adjusted to their new living quarters. She noted that, particularly in recent years, she'd felt a stronger responsibility to provide her son with the best possible upbringing. She was reflective about her own childhood years in the sense of feeling more gratitude toward her parents for having provided her with a stable, secure context within which to grow. In large measure, she judged her own effectiveness as a parent by comparing herself to her parents.

Now that her son was twelve years old, Eva was becoming more concerned about his continuing academic difficulties. Tom had consistently performed at a lower level than intelligence tests had suggested he was capable of achieving. Recently, he had been labeled an "underachiever" by school personnel. During his early school years, Eva had attributed his performance problems to his grief over his father's and grandfather's deaths. More recently, she'd become more troubled by his academic problems. She was considering the need for a different school environment, and deciding among several choices of schools. Despite these academic difficulties, Eva emphasized that Tom was an exceptionally competent child interpersonally. Overall, she took pride that he was, just as she had been during childhood, a highly sociable, popular child. She was confident that, given the best education possible, he would

soon overcome his academic problems.

Eva's future plans with respect to her professional life were also a significant issue at Age 42. Four and one-half years as the youth program director had culminated in strong desires for a job change. The job itself, the work environment, and her co-workers, were becoming "boring" to her. By now Eva was entertaining thoughts of starting an independent business. She felt increasingly eager to launch an entrepreneurial enterprise which would allow her to function more autonomously. She had not yet decided upon the exact nature of her business, but she was intrigued with the prospects of doing fund-raising. Her experiences in doing fund-raising as the program director had led her to believe that she would be successful with such work in her own business. She hoped that her business could eventually become national, or international, in scope. If so, she would be able to travel more widely. Her brief periods of travel in earlier years had been most stimulating and enjoyable. In the past years of childrearing, she had sorely missed these opportunities to travel.

Another central concern in Eva's life at Age 42 was that of her health. Just months before her forty-first birthday, she'd been diagnosed as hypertensive. Medical advice had been limited to recommendations that she lose weight and observe dietary precautions. Eva had followed this advice with minimal disruption to her life. Her loss of thirty

pounds of excess weight had been accomplished primarily through a daily exercise (jogging) program, and a lower calorie diet. She had received the news of her hypertension with little anxiety since many members of her family, including her mother, had been so afflicted.

Eva emphasized that, despite the popularity of the term "mid-life crisis", she had not undergone such a process. She believed that it was white women, not black women, who reacted so negatively to signs of aging. On the whole, Eva asserted that she was very much "the same person I've always been". Reflecting on her life since her high school days, Eva described her "twenties" as a more "idealistic" time of life, while her "thirties" were more "realistic". She noted that during her twenties she had expected to attain a "traditional" life pattern of marriage with children. She viewed her thirties as a period of accepting the unattainability of this life goal, and alternatively, adjusting to single parenthood. Since her break-up with Bill at Age 37, she had entered into another love relationship, but now she no longer yearned to be married as she had in her thirties. Realistically, though she imagined that marriage would be most satisfying, she had considered that she might never find a marriage partner.

Philosophically, at mid-life, Eva was reflective about the limits of her dreams as a young adult. She looked forward to her forties as a time for continued growth and

achievement. She felt confident that her goal of starting an independent business could be realized within the near future. She could not conceive of any possible reason why her goal might not be achieved.

FRAN

Fran was born in 1934 into a family which consisted of her mother (Age 25), father (Age 35), and a sister (Age 2). A brother was born one and one half years after her birth. Fran's parents were temporarily separated at the time she was delivered. For the first year of her life, she lived with her mother and sister in the maternal grandmother's home in Roanoke, Virginia. When her parents were reunited, the family moved into a house several blocks away from the maternal grandmother's home. At Age 3 Fran's family moved into another house in her father's hometown in Elliston, Virginia.

During her childhood, Fran heard many stories about members of her family who had been in slavery. Her grandparents were the first generation on her mother's side of the family who had not been slaves. Her maternal great grandparents had been the last generation to live as slaves. On her father's side of the family, her grandparents had lived as slaves until their early teenage years. Fran was told countless stories about how her family members had suffered brutal, inhuman treatment at the hands of white slavemasters.

As she grew up in the racially segregated town of Elliston, Fran was acutely aware of the many differences

between her family and the white families who also lived there. Her father's wages as a hotel bellman were meager and, often, barely adequate to support the family. Yet, as owners of their own home and several acres of land, the family's socioeconomic status was superior to that of most blacks in their town. Her family's social standing was further enhanced because Fran's mother had completed two years of a college education. No other black person in the town had been college educated. Indeed, only a handful of blacks had completed a high school education.

Fran remembered her childhood years as ones of considerable social isolation. The home was located in a sparsely populated, rural section of town where few childhood playmates were easily accessible. Fran had little contact with others outside her family until she began elementary school at Age 5. Unhappily, family life was extremely chaotic because of almost constant fighting between her parents. This parental fighting continued throughout her childhood, until she moved away from home at Age 14. In addition, Fran was usually preoccupied with her mother's mood swings during these early years. Retrospectively, she wondered if her mother had had a post-partum depression which severely limited her capacity for mothering. Quite frequently, her mother was so absorbed in listening to her radio stories that Fran resorted to extreme means of capturing her attention.

By the time Fran began attending the two room schoolhouse for blacks, she was labeled as a "totally undisciplined" child. Her father blamed his wife for creating such behavior by giving Fran and her sibs too much freedom in the home. But, despite these behavior problems, Fran's teachers recognized that she was an exceptionally bright and gifted child. By Age 11 she had completed the curriculum in the two room schoolhouse, and was judged capable of mastering a high school level of education. By Age 14 she had graduated from the local high school for black students. Her high school years had been ones of active involvement in many spheres of student life, particularly in theatrical groups. Her early years of reading poetry with her maternal uncle had fostered a lively interest in poetry. During high school she had become a local celebrity as she recited and performed poetry for audiences throughout the southern states.

Fran graduated from high school with the highest scholastic standing in her class. Not yet five feet tall, her hair in braids, she was the youngest graduate ever to become the valedictorian. Most black students graduated between the ages of 16 and 18; usually a year earlier than white students. Black schools, unlike white schools, were legally permitted to subtract a year of schooling from elementary education. As a result of this legally sanctioned difference between white and black schools,

blacks were always at a disadvantage in meeting admission requirements for white colleges.

Fran made plans to attend college fully aware that her chances for admission were limited. Several factors influenced her choice of a college. Since she had converted to Catholicism at Age 13, she thought it essential to attend a Catholic school. She had been a Baptist throughout her childhood, but when a maternal uncle converted to Catholicism, most family members had followed his lead. In addition, Fran determined that her primary criteria for selecting a college would be "getting away from home". She wanted to escape from her parents' constant fighting and a life of unrelenting poverty. She had read and heard stories of how blacks who lived in the northern states had a better quality of life.

Fran's first attempt at gaining admission to a college failed. She had selected Boston, Massachusetts as an interesting setting and had applied to a prominent college there. Although she had met their admissions' requirements, she was rejected on the basis of a policy which forbade "colored girls" to live in the women's dormitory. Alternatively, she applied to a Catholic women's college in Chicago, Illinois. This school had already accepted two other black students who had integrated the dormitories. She was accepted at this Chicago college and given the scholarship which she sorely needed to attend.

Fran spent two years at the Chicago college before she decided to transfer to a predominantly black school. During these years she was painfully aware of being a poor, black person in a student body who, in the majority, were middle or upper class whites. Further, as the youngest of the students, she felt far more naive and immature than her classmates. Physically, Fran had been slow to mature. Wearing her hair in braids, still in bobby socks, and not yet wearing a brassiere, she often felt like a child among young adults. One of the most significant differences was that her classmates were vitally interested in their sexuality. Though sexual matters still seemed unfamiliar to her, she became an active observer of other students' discussions about such matters.

Fran had begun college with aspirations of becoming an actress. Unhappily, during her first year at the college she became stage frightened. Sometimes her white audiences had laughed at her for not wearing a brassiere; others were overtly hostile to her and made insulting remarks about her as a black person. Very early during this college experience, Fran abandoned her aspirations of becoming an actress. Gradually, her interests shifted to the area of social activism. Under the tutoring of two particular professor-nuns, Fran began to study the problems of blacks, the slums, and other sociological subjects. When she left the Chicago college, she was "fiercely idealistic".

Inspired by her experiences with racism within the college, she imagined a future career in sociology as a vehicle to combat poverty and racism.

Fran left the Chicago college feeling confused about the intense attachments she'd developed toward two of the nun-professors. Classmates had chided her for her innocence in these relationships; she had been warned that many nuns were lesbians. Retrospectively, she acknowledged that she'd left the college also because of fears of being labeled homosexual and/or being viewed as unduly influenced by these nuns. Thus, in terminating this college experience, she was taking flight from many conflicts. She hoped that a black college setting would offer fewer frustrations and would be more supportive to her growth as a black woman.

Period I: Age 16-21

Howard University, a black college in Washington, D.C., had been Fran's choice for many reasons. First, it had been recommended by one of her sociology professors who'd advised her to study with Franklin Frazier, a noted black sociologist on Howard's faculty. Second, Fran imagined that student life at Howard would allow for a fuller social life than she'd had in Chicago. Also, her mother had been pleased with her choice because Fran's sister had graduated from this school. Fran's mother viewed Howard U. as an excellent

setting in which to find a husband of a higher social standing and, thereby, to secure her status within middle-class social circles. Fran was contemptuous of her mother's obsession with upward mobility, but she was eager to discover for herself what a black college might offer.

Retrospectively, Fran described her two years at Howard as ones of "culture shock". The Chicago college campus had been immaculately clean and composed of physically sound, esthetically pleasing buildings. By contrast, Howard was a collection of dilapidated buildings in a deteriorating environment. Moreover, for the first time, Fran's professors were all male, posing interpersonal issues for which she felt unprepared. To her great distress, she was unable to capture the interest and attention of any faculty members. She had idealized Franklin Frazier, but he rejected her bids to study under him. Fran felt somewhat bewildered by the intricate informal codes for social conduct at the school as well. As a light-complexioned person, she was made most uneasy by the intensity of color consciousness on the campus.

Gradually, Fran acquired a friendship circle composed of fellow transfer students and others involved in the University's theatrical company. The acute depression she'd experienced during her first year abated very slowly. Retrospectively, she acknowledged that her sense of isolation and aloneness was strongly influenced by her

awkwardness and insecurity in social groups. However, during these years, she had little understanding of why she remained so isolated. Recurrently, she'd attempted to gain entry into groups only to meet with rejection.

Fran's experience in pledging to a sorority had been traumatic, in part, because of her "painful sense of superiority". She perceived her future sorors as pretentious, insufficiently intellectual, and frivolous in their concerns. She objected to the sorority's emphasis on parties and dances and proposed that such events be substituted with educational forums on race relations and social activism. When her proposals were rejected, she decided against pledging. This experience, along with others similar to it, contributed to a continuing sense of alienation from others.

Fran felt very dependent on her small circle of friends because of her insecurities in relating to the broader student community. She felt fortunate to have the advice and guidance of Anna during her years at Howard. Anna, a "surrogate mother", was a thirty year old woman who had been a friend to Fran's sister during her years at Howard. Anna assisted Fran in paying greater attention to her physical appearance and encouraged her to recognize herself as a physically attractive young woman. Generally, these were quite difficult issues for Fran. She was reluctant to dress in more feminine ways which might attract men's attention.

Relationships with men seemed complex and confusing. She found that her male classmates thought her too young to date, while older (age 24-30) men seemed to enjoy her company. These "older men" were more protective in terms of not pressing their sexual demands on her. For a while she used these relationships to become more comfortable with men; she could be "tutored" about heterosexual relations, while avoiding sexual contact.

Fran graduated from Howard at Age 18 cum laude. She had majored in sociology and minored in psychology. She had graduated a semester earlier than required because she'd taken extra courses each semester. Her unhappiness at the college had led her to accelerate her studies so as to exit as soon as possible. Yet, upon graduating, she felt emotionally unprepared to begin her adult life. She was rebellious against her mother's dream for her to marry into the "right social circle", but she was confused about her life choices. During her college years she'd become increasingly embittered toward her mother. Frequently, she'd written letters to her mother telling her how much she hated her. Although she had no specific plans for her future, she felt certain that returning home to her parents would be "suffocating and suicidal".

For a brief while Fran debated over whether to continue her education or to take her first job. Only one professor had offered career advice; he'd recommended that she apply

to law school and use her considerable intellectual ability in that field. This recommendation was promptly rejected since she had no confidence in her ability to succeed in such a rigorous program of study. Her only genuine interest at this point was that of entering Howard's School for Social Work. She applied for admission and was advised that she was "too immature" for this professional work. Enraged by this rejection, Fran abandoned the idea of graduate education and decided to seek a job.

Fran took a job as a clerk-typist at one of D.C.'s many governmental agencies after making a limited survey of the job market. She had little interest in the work itself; the job was primarily a source of income which allowed her to be self-supporting. She recalled that her major learning in the job was how to handle work in a more responsible manner. Initially, she was inclined to engage in "petty squabbles" with her supervisors and to avoid completing undesirable assignments. In a sense, the job was merely a backdrop for the central drama of her life during this first year post-college. For the first time Fran was actively and enthusiastically involved in dating men.

For a few months, Fran lived in a rooming house where she shared a small apartment with a college friend. Later, she moved into a women's residential hall, again sharing a room with yet another college friend. She was pleased at being found so attractive and enjoyed her numerous dates with

eligible bachelors, most of whom were Howard students. Not long after her graduation she had fallen in love with one of her most handsome, charming suitors. Fred was a second year medical student whose family was solidly middle-class. For a while the relationship seemed to flourish despite their conflicts over sexual expression. Both partners had determined that sexual relations would be permissible only if sanctioned by marriage. Fred had asserted his intention to marry a virgin. Fran believed it essential to remain a virgin lest she would spoil her chances for marriage and, perhaps worse, gain a reputation as a "whore".

Fran was very much aware of the explicit codes for women's sexual behavior during these years. She had been advised to leave the women's residential hall where she'd lived for a few months because her reputation might be tarnished by associating with those women. Labeling the residence a "whorehouse", her girlfriend's parents had rescued her by inviting her to live with them. She lived with this family for almost a year before she made a decision to return home to Virginia.

Fran had developed a severe case of dermatitis when she elected to leave D.C. The skin condition had resulted in extensive scars on her face, hands, and legs. She was convinced that she looked "repulsive" and had withdrawn from most of her social contacts. So distraught was she that she considered suicide; though she never actually attempted

such. At the advice of a friend, she consulted with a psychiatrist to consider means of coping with this crisis. The consultation helped her to gain some perspective and quelled the intense self-hatred which she'd felt. The psychiatrist encouraged her to remain in D.C. and to continue wrestling with her desire to become more autonomous from her family, but Fran felt unable to do so. She hoped that returning home would allow her skin condition to heal while she gained some clarity about her life choices.

Fran lived with her parents for only four months before she arrived at a decision to go to graduate school. She was miserable and full of rage, particularly at her mother, for most of this time. Often, when her parents began arguing, she would join in their fights and create even more of an uproar. She was disgusted with her parents, as well as herself, but she could conceive of no plan to extricate herself from the home. Finally, it was her maternal grandmother who intervened and mobilized her to reclaim her goals for a professional career. The grandmother encouraged her to go to graduate school and helped her to secure a scholarship to a Jesuit college in Boston. The grandmother's intervention had made her realize that she was draining her parent's meager financial resources, and had impressed upon her the necessity of becoming self-supportive.

One of a handful of black students at the Boston college, Fran was grateful for the kind attention shown her by the

priest-professors. The near two years spent at the college rekindled her intellectual curiosities and restored some self-esteem. However, she had little money available for socializing; the years were spent absorbed in her studies as a sociology student. While there she harbored fantasies of returning to D.C. and being reunited with Fred. Upon completing her coursework, her master's thesis still unfinished, Fran returned to D.C.

Fran was 21 years old when she effected her first living arrangement in an unsupervised setting. She had decided to live independent of parental figures and to share an apartment with a roommate. She had met the roommate during a brief period of involvement with social action groups on Howard's campus. A thirty year old, white woman committed to pacifism, the roommate espoused many liberal values, including that of freedom in sexual expression. For a while, Fran worked as a clerk-typist for a pacifist organization, and then as a typist in the registrar's office at Howard. On the whole, she was bored with her work and was most intensely concerned with developing her relationship with Fred.

Fran had been sexually intimate with Fred for several months before the relationship became severely conflicted. She had hoped they would marry and somehow reconcile their actual sexual behavior with their avowed beliefs about virginity. She felt betrayed and confused when Fred

reasserted his intent to marry a virgin. Angrily, she determined that she would not be bound by such an unfair double standard. In retaliation, she decided to engage in sexual relations at her own choosing. For a while she had several sexual partners, sometimes not using birth control. During one such sexual liaison she became pregnant.

At 22 years old Fran was confronted with the decision of whether to abort the pregnancy or to give the baby up for adoption. In a near panic state, she consulted with several people about her choice. Both Fred and her family advised her to have an abortion. The physician who she consulted offered to refer her to a non-legal setting where an abortion could be performed. Not unexpectedly, her catholic priest advised her to give the baby up for adoption. In the third month of her pregnancy, Fran decided against the abortion. She was convinced that she had made a serious mistake for which she "should suffer". Following the advice of her priest, she elected to go to a catholic agency in Boston for unwed mothers.

Period II: Age 22-28

Throughout her pregnancy Fran lived in a home sponsored by a Catholic charity and worked as a dishwasher in a nursing home. Arrangements had been made for her child to be adopted soon after its birth. In the interim she availed

herself of the counsel and guidance provided by priests. She felt a tremendous sense of guilt and shame over her plight. As well she had been mortified at her mother's response to her decision. Her mother had told her that she was "lower than dirt" to give a child away, and had treated her with contempt. Fran was pained at losing her mother's emotional support, but she was convinced that she was behaving in a responsible manner by giving her child an opportunity to live. She felt fortunate that her child was born healthy and could be adopted within two months of her birth.

Fran felt deeply indebted to the Catholics who had taken care of her during such an emotionally wrenching experience. At the time, she was struck with the fact that it was whites who had offered her help while her own black family had shunned her. In the years immediately following her delivery, she found that she felt more comfortable in the company of whites than with blacks. Her social contacts during this period were much influenced by her friendship with a young white woman who had befriended her while she was pregnant. This friend had offered to share her apartment and had introduced her to a circle of other whites. Fran chose to date both black and white men but, after these experiences, decided to restrict her romantic relationships to black men. Retrospectively, she described this as one of the most exciting eras of her life because of

the diversity of people she came to know, and because she was able to clarify some of her own views about race relations in a more personal, less intellectualized way.

Within two months of her delivery, Fran had secured her first professional job as a social services case aide at a major Boston hospital. She was determined to make a contribution to the welfare of others. Eventually, she thought, she'd become such an accomplished, successful professional that her family would forgive her for her mistake. She was promoted to a full-fledged social worker after only a year as a case aide. Her success in the job reinforced her interest in a career in the human services, but she was not yet committed to casework with individuals.

By the time Fran met the man who was to become her first husband, she had revised her perspective on relationships with men. She had decided that sexual activity outside of marriage was permissible with the use of contraception. Further, she had begun to view herself as a "self-actualizing" woman i.e. one who was committed to her own personal development. She envisioned her future in a marriage relationship, but she was more vitally concerned with her career success than with finding a husband. She was 24 years old when she met Charles; their "whirlwind" romance forced her to reevaluate her life choices.

Charles was 22 years and an officer in the Navy when Fran met him. He was engaged to another woman at the time. Five

months later, he had broken his previous engagement and married Fran. The couple never actually set up a household because, soon after their marriage, Charles' naval ship sailed to another port. They planned to move to his New Jersey hometown after his discharge from the Navy. In the meantime, their time together was restricted to the brief furloughs he could manage to get from naval duty. Fran was satisfied with this arrangement, but was most unhappy with the plan to move to New Jersey. When she became pregnant two months after their marriage, it prompted an intense reevaluation of her commitment to Charles and of her desire to raise a child.

Fran had had a brief experience in psychotherapy in the year following her departure from the home for unwed mothers. The therapy relationship had been quite valuable in helping her to clarify her career goals and her concerns about re-establishing relations with men. Upon learning of her second pregnancy, she returned to this previous therapist for help with her decision about having an abortion or raising the child. She soon decided that she did not feel emotionally ready to become a mother. She hoped her husband would support her decision, but felt prepared to end the marriage if he objected strongly to the abortion. When Charles attempted to persuade her to have the child, she saw no alternative but to withdraw from the marriage and act on her own wishes. It seemed to her that

she was becoming too emotionally dependent on Charles; that he was forcing his choices on her before she felt clear about her own choices. The couple separated less than five months after their marriage.

At 25 years old, Fran made a series of career decisions which led to her assumption of a different work role. She applied and was accepted for graduate study in social work at a leading Boston university. Thereafter, she declined the admission offer. The graduate program would have prepared her to provide intensive psychotherapeutic services to individuals. Her three years in social service roles had convinced her that she was not suited to such intense work with individuals. Instead, she had clarified that, given her emerging leadership abilities, she'd prefer to develop these skills and, eventually, assume a leadership role within a social service agency.

From Age 25 to 28, Fran held positions as a registrar for two different schools of nursing. She hoped that this administrative experience would lend itself to her future career goals. During this period, she wrestled with her tendency to feel "superior" to others and, aided by the counsel of friends, learned to be more tolerant of her own and others limitations. Her near two year love affair with a man ten years her senior was also helpful in this maturation. Although this man was already married, she valued the relationship highly. Importantly, he supported

her career goals and helped to foster an increasing sense of autonomy.

At Age 28 Fran completed the master's degree which she'd begun prior to her first pregnancy. By this point she had become eager for a career change. Earning the master's degree seemed to signify "the closing of a chapter" in her life. As she pondered her career moves, she felt lucky to be reunited with Charles. Unexpectedly, she had met Charles who, though then remarried, still remained emotionally attached to her. He advised her that her career interests might be best pursued in New York city. Having briefly explored leadership positions in Boston, Fran had begun to wonder if she'd need a doctoral degree to secure the positions she desired. Since she was not interested in doctoral study, she hoped that Charles was correct in viewing New York as a less credentials oriented city than Boston.

Fran moved to New York at Age 28. Retrospectively, she noted that it was not until this point that she finally gave up her fantasies of somehow becoming an actress. She had not been affiliated with a theatrical group since her days at Howard, but she'd had continuing fantasies of returning to this earlier ambition. By now she felt confident that she would succeed in the career direction which she had been slowly crafting since those early years at Howard.

Period III: Age 28-30

Within three months of her move to New York, Fran secured an assistant directorship of a community service agency. She was assisted in her job search by both Charles and her new roommate, Maria. A Boston friend had identified Maria as a possible roommate. Fran was pleased that she and Maria got along exceedingly well, despite their sharp differences. Maria was a white woman of Russian heritage who seemed "over-involved" with her family. Fran had remained distant from her family, and had savored her sense of independence, but she was beginning to wish for a reunion with them.

Tragically, Fran's loss of her 26 year old brother initiated her greater involvement with her family. The brother had died violently of a shotgun wound, leaving many questions unanswered as to whether it had been suicide or homicide. The event was a shocking and painful one for the entire family. Fran recalled that, although she performed competently in her assistant directorship, she was grief-stricken over her brother's death. Additionally, in becoming reunited with her sister, she had been alarmed to see that her sister was emotionally disturbed. She was not surprised when, a year after her brother's death, her sister had an acute psychotic break. Following the sister's hospitalization in Virginia, Fran invited her to share her

apartment in New York. After six months of this arrangement, the sister became psychotic again. Sadly, Fran conceded that, despite her good intentions, the arrangement had not been beneficial for either of them. She facilitated her sister's rehospitization in Virginia and returned to her life in New York.

Fran was promoted to the directorship of the community service agency after one year in the assistant directorship. A year later she accepted a job offer as a program planner for a youth services agency. During these years, her personal relationships included a wide circle of women friends and intermittent, short-term romantic affairs. She was quite satisfied with the continuity and quality of her friendships, but was unhappy at not having a more enduring love relationship. All too many of her lovers seemed limited educationally and economically, or in other respects, were judged to be unsuitable. She was 30 years old when she met and fell in love with James. James was already married, but he was a successful professional who she admired, and a person with whom she felt very compatible.

Upon entering into an active sexual relationship with James, Fran realized that it would be essential to prevent another pregnancy. It seemed highly unlikely that James would divorce his wife; yet, she wished to sustain their relationship. At Age 30, for the first time in her adult

life, Fran began to use birth control on a routine basis. By now she felt little guilt over her sexual desires. It seemed entirely natural and realistic for her to assume routine responsibility for preventing an unwanted pregnancy.

Period IV: Age 31-40

After a year in her program planner position, Fran was recruited to direct a research and planning unit of a larger youth services agency. From there she assumed a directorship of an office in New York city's office of Planning and Budget. By Age 34 Fran had been appointed to an assistant commissioner position in New York's poverty program. Retrospectively, she recalled that her career success was based in her competent performance in these positions, as well as the available opportunities for minorities. She viewed her success as the well-deserved outcome of her hard work, but she was not yet satisfied with the degree of success she'd obtained.

Between Age 30 and 34, Fran had sustained her love relationship with James. The relationship was a satisfying one in many respects, but it had become obvious that James would not divorce his wife. She was unhappy with this arrangement and had begun to desire marriage more strongly. She felt her career was thriving and, increasingly, was

serving as a valued channel for her considerable intellectual energies. Yet, her life felt imbalanced; she wanted both career success and a marriage partner. For a while, Fran became receptive to the continuing interest shown her by her ex-husband, Charles. Charles had been living in England for the past years; upon returning to New York, he had reasserted his desire to marry Fran. Soon after their reunion, Fran had terminated her relationship with James and resumed contact with Charles. The couple planned to marry as soon as possible. Charles had initiated divorce proceedings with his wife and had announced his intent to marry Fran.

Quite unexpectedly, following an acute medical illness, Charles died only months after he and Fran had made plans to marry. His death was a profoundly disturbing, disorganizing event. She mourned both the tragic loss of his life and the loss of their imagined future together. Retrospectively, she acknowledged that she became thoroughly immersed in work as a means of coping with his death. For almost two years, she avoided close relationships with men. Thereafter, when she regained interest in men, she was unable to find suitable partners.

Fran had been in her assistant commissioner role for two years when she made a career change. She was 36 years old when she accepted a position in a consulting firm in Connecticut. She had become enthusiastic about the field of

organizational development and management consultation. She was highly receptive to the job offer made to her by the consulting firm. Job incentives included an exceptionally high salary, the opportunity to travel widely, and the prospect of learning from experts. Although she would be the only black person and the only female professional in the firm, these did not seem to be insurmountable problems. Unhappily, however, Fran found that her three years at the firm entailed a "radical transition". Her self-esteem suffered tremendously as she adapted to her new role as management consultant. She sometimes felt overwhelmed at the new concepts to be assimilated; and was most impatient with her neophyte status. She felt isolated from black people and intolerant of the lifestyles of the "idle rich" with whom she had social contact.

Fran had begun to despair that she would find a husband when, at Age 38, she remained single and heavily involved in her work. Retrospectively, she recalled that, until her early thirties she had taken it for granted that marriage was attainable, if only she found a desirable mate. By Age 35 she'd begun to feel rather like an "old maid". Between Age 35 and 37 Fran had reconsidered her options for an acceptable mate. It seemed to her that there was a small pool of black men of comparable educational or economical achievement who were available to her. She decided to actively seek out men within this small subgroup of high

achievers. To a large extent, her search for a man required abandoning her hyper-criticism of the "black bourgeoisie" since potential mates would most probably be found in such social circles.

Fran was 37 years old when she met the man who was to become her second husband. Tom was a successful, wealthy, black businessman who she considered to be handsome and charming. She was willing to allow the relationship to evolve although he was married when they met. She vowed to end the relationship if there was no possibility of marriage within one year. Within months of their meeting, just as he'd promised, Tom separated from his wife and initiated divorce proceedings. Thereafter, for a year, Tom and Fran lived together in her New York apartment. Their compatibility in living together convinced Fran that a marital arrangement would be mutually satisfying. Moreover, she had taken Tom to meet her parents just months before their planned marriage. Her parents' approval of her choice in a mate strengthened her decision. At Age 38 Fran married the man who was to become the "primary mentor and guide" for her emerging career as a businesswoman.

Within a year of her marriage, Fran decided to establish herself as an independent consultant, providing services to a variety of human service organizations and businesses. Her success in this independent practice gave her encouragement to leave the firm at which she'd been employed

since Age 36. Her resignation (at Age 40) was also prompted by the illness, and subsequent absence, of the company's president. The president had been a mentor to her, and had been one of a very few people in the firm with whom she felt close. With the aid of her husband's financial and emotional support, Fran was able to create a viable independent practice.

It was during the latter years of this period that Fran suffered the loss of her parents. Her father died within a year of her marriage. His death evoked strong feelings of regret that she'd remained so distant from him over the years. A year after her father's death, her mother died. Her father had been 73 years old when he died of pneumonia. To some extent, it had been easier to accept his death since he'd lived a long life. However, her mother had been only 64 years old when she was diagnosed as terminally ill with cancer. Fran brought her mother to New York and sought several consultations before, finally, she could accept the inevitability of her mother's death.

Fran became acutely depressed when her mother died. Her grief was compounded by her and her sister's discovery of the mother's diary. The diary contained lengthy descriptions of her anger and bitterness about her life; with numerous references to her hatred of her husband and her daughters. Fran's memories of her childhood years with her depressed mother were rekindled. Painfully, she was

reminded that her mother's chronic depression had made it impossible to be genuinely loving. As the diary had recorded, Fran had been "the bane " of her mother's existence.

Period V: Age 40-43

Throughout the difficult years of grieving for her parents, Fran was grateful that her marriage was a solid, satisfying relationship. Each partner's involvement in an aspect of business seemed a positive influence. Nevertheless, between Age 40 and 43, a sequence of events unfolded in Fran's life which led to a sense of crisis. At Age 42 Fran became pregnant. Reluctantly, she'd discontinued the use of birth control at Age 39 upon the advice of her gynecologist. Alternate forms of contraception had been less desirable and, obviously, ineffective. The outcome had been a tubular pregnancy which had spontaneously aborted. Neither partner had wanted a child, but the experience was nonetheless stressful.

Second, much to her dismay, Fran lost all of her scalp hair within months of her abortion. Apparently, she had developed a scalp dermatitis which defied successful medical treatment. She consulted numerous dermatologists, but she could not prevent the progressive loss of hair. The loss prompted intense concern about her physical attractiveness

and, eventually, necessitated wearing a wig. In addition, gradually, Fran began to gain excess weight, contributing further to a sense of being unattractive. Yet another problem area during this period was her changed relationship to her husband. The couple had invited Tom's daughter, from his previous marriage, to live with them for a while. The step-daughter's presence had created tensions in the marital relationship which were little discussed.

Fran began to feel increasingly estranged from her husband and depressed about her life. At Age 43 she re-entered psychotherapy to gain better understandings of the origins of her depression. For a few months she explored her life situation and attempted to identify her central conflicts. She gained some insight into her predisposition for self-hatred by re-examining her unresolved conflicts with her mother. She terminated therapy after only a few months with strong feelings of humiliation about her need to seek professional help.

Aided by her therapy experience, Fran approached her life with a resolve to regain control. As had been her pattern in the past, her energies were poured into work. Her marriage still entailed some estrangement, but she felt determined to, somehow, make it work.

Period VI: Age 44-49

Fran's independent practice continued to grow and increase in profits over the years. After seven years of functioning independently, she decided to establish her own consulting company. She had been urged to do so by several colleagues who had participated in consultations with her. The notion of a company had practical merits since her designs for consultation projects often necessitated the use of additional consultants. Also, by this point in time, Fran had developed a specific focus for her consultative programs about which she wished to collaborate with others. This focus derived from her longstanding interest in race relations. Many of her consultations were focused on "managing cultural diversity in the work place".

Fran's consulting company was established when she was 46 years old. By Age 49 her staff group had increased to five professionals, along with secretarial staff. The first three years of operation had netted a modest, but steady, profit for the company. Given her husband's economic support, she had opted to forego a salary for herself and, instead, to use her salary for operating expenses. When she was interviewed at Age 49, she was optimistic that the company would continue to grow and expand its profits. She remained intellectually energized by the work itself, but had begun to desire a more creative channel for developing her ideas.

During the interviews, Fran expressed an intense desire to

become more creative in her professional work. She wondered if she was beginning a new transitional period in her life, given the intensity of her desire to make a "unique" contribution to her field. She had reviewed her professional work of the past twenty years and believed that she had amassed a wealth of ideas about cultural, racial issues in organizational life. She reasoned that, given her superior intellectual ability, it was incumbent on her to make an intellectual contribution to society. She was considering obtaining a Ph.D., writing a book, doing research, or in some yet undetermined manner, acting on these creative urges. She bemoaned the fact that her husband was minimally interested in this aspect of her professional life and, characteristically, restricted his advice to the more technical aspects of business management.

Fran's disappointment in her marriage had been building for, approximately, the past five years. She still considered her husband to be her best friend, but she often felt acutely lonely while in his company. In recent years, their sexual life had been "non-existent". She felt powerless in knowing how to revitalize the marriage, and felt uncertain if her expectations of the marriage were unrealistic. She recognized that she was often hyper-sensitive to even minor rejections and disappointments by her husband. She wondered if her criticisms of him were

sometimes elaborate maneuvers to protect her own self-esteem. Most often, she felt committed to her husband and to their marriage. She had decided to remain in the relationship, but periodically, she felt the impulse to separate and renew her life as a single woman.

Two additional areas were of major concern to Fran when she was interviewed at Age 49. Generally, she was dissatisfied with being overweight by twenty pounds. Also, to her great distress, her scalp hair had not returned. She felt unhappy with her physical appearance, but had been unable to sustain a diet program to lose weight. Sometimes her despair about the disappointing aspects of her life led to thoughts of suicide. She had never attempted such; primarily because she realized how much pain her husband would suffer upon losing her.

At Age 49 Fran's own metaphor for her self-image was that of "a delicate rose, fragile but exquisite". Thus, while she believed that she'd grown intellectually and matured in many respects, she was troubled that she still felt so emotionally fragile. In the coming years, she looked forward to becoming a stronger and more mature person through whatever creative projects she pursued.

GRACE

Grace was born in 1939 into a family consisting of her mother (Age 19) and father (Age 28). At the time of her birth the family lived in a small, rural town in Mississippi. Several generations of each parents' families had made their homes in Mississippi; most had been farmers. On her mother's side of the family, Grace represented the third generation to live out of slavery. Her maternal great grandmother had been a slave until her teenage years. Grace's maternal grandmother had been a teacher and, as such, had been one of the few blacks in her era to acquire this status. Grace's mother had completed two years of a college education before marrying, but had never resumed her college studies.

Grace knew little of the history of her father's family, except that her grandparents had been landowners and, therefore, had fared better economically than many black families during their time. Her father had, with considerable hardship, earned a degree from a black college by his mid-twenties. He had worked as a teacher until he became the principal of a (black) high school in Mississippi. Apparently, he was drafted into the armed services when Grace was 2 years old. Grace was taken care of by her maternal grandparents for a year while her mother

accompanied the father to his station in Georgia. After she was reunited with her parents, the family lived together in Savannah, Georgia for a while. The family moved again, to the father's new station in Staten Island, New York, when Grace was four years old.

Grace completed her elementary education in an integrated school in Staten Island. The family boarded with another black family during these years while her father sought work. He had been unable to secure a teaching job since his discharge from the service because his teaching credentials were not accepted. He had been advised that, in order to meet New York's requirements, he would have to earn another college degree. Discouraged by these obstacles, he had opted to seek employment outside of the teaching field. For a while he worked as an elevator operator; later, he secured a position with the U.S. Postal Service where he remained until his retirement.

Grace was six years old when the family's economic status had improved sufficiently to permit renting a separate apartment. The family moved to a cold-water flat in Brooklyn, New York. Two years later another move was made to become one of the first tenants occupying a new low-income housing project in Brooklyn. The housing project represented the first acceptable living arrangement since leaving Georgia. Grace's only sibling, a sister, was born within months of taking residence in the project. Grace had had no

knowledge of her mother's pregnancy, and no preparation for the sister's arrival. She learned of her sister's birth while spending the summer with her maternal grandparents.

Grace completed her elementary and junior high school education at integrated schools in the new Brooklyn neighborhood. She recalled that she did not have a black teacher until her last year of junior high. During these early years of school, Grace distinguished herself as an excellent student. Her parents had emphasized the value of education for all black people; Grace was strongly motivated to become one of the few blacks who made it out of "the ghetto". While they lived in the project, Grace's parents had exerted much control over her interaction with other neighborhood youngsters. Her parents sought to shelter her from the neighborhood gangs, as well as from other negative influences in the environment. Grace was taught to be cordial to neighbors, but to be wary of them. By the time she completed junior high, Grace had only a few friends and felt quite ill at ease in her neighborhood.

Neither of the two available high schools in Grace's neighborhood were appealing to her. The local girls' high school was rejected as a choice because she preferred a co-ed setting. The other choice was problematic because she had learned of the school's gang wars and, otherwise, feared that she would be victimized by the aggressive students who attended that school. Instead, she chose a

school, outside of her district, where she'd feel safer and would acquire a higher quality education. She selected a relatively new school which was predominantly white, and which had numerous academic and social programs. She was so eager to go to this school that she gave a phony address in order to qualify for admission.

For a year Grace commuted the long distance from her neighborhood to the white high school in another section of Brooklyn. By Age 15 her parents' economic circumstances had improved sufficiently to buy a home. The family of four moved to St. Albans, New York into a predominantly white, middle-class community of homeowners. Grace's last two years of high school required her to commute from St. Albans to Brooklyn. During these high school years, she found it most difficult to sustain a group of friends in her neighborhood. Her own lack of time to pursue friends, in concert with her parent's protectiveness, contributed to a sense of social isolation. Grace was pleased that several boys in her neighborhood, as well as at the high school, took interest in and befriended her. With the exception of a few girlfriends, it seemed to her that girls were less friendly and, perhaps, were envious of her physical attractiveness.

Grace continued to be a high achiever in high school and, generally, enjoyed her program of studies. Relationships with white students tended to be pleasant, though distant.

By contrast, she found the St. Albans community to be a hostile, rejecting environment. White residents were cold and unfriendly; the family was acutely aware that they were unwelcome. Their existence in this hostile environment prompted constant discussions of racism. Grace and her sister were "drilled" about the importance of achieving educationally in order to successfully compete in a racist world. When Grace graduated from high school at Age 17, there was no question that she was expected to go to college. She agreed with this parental advice and, in fact, was eager to become a college student.

Period I: Age 17-21

Given the family's economic limitations, Grace had no choice except to attend a city or state university in New York. She applied to and was accepted by three schools within the City University of New York. Her first choice was the prestigious, all women's Hunter College. Admission to this school represented a successful competition with high-achieving white students. At Age 17 Grace began her college years as one of a very small subgroup of black students. Most often, she was the only black student in her classes. Like other black students, she relied heavily on the tightly knit group of blacks for a circle of friends. Also, to her immense delight, she developed an intense

friendship with another black woman with whom she shared many college experiences.

Academically, Grace's college performance was good, though not exceptional. She especially enjoyed her courses in political science and history, but was not inspired by many of the required courses. She received grades of "B" or "A" in every course except the one taken with the only black faculty member on Hunter's instructional staff. This black woman gave Grace the only poor grade ("D") she received during her college experience. In talking with other black students, Grace learned that this instructor had earned a reputation for being unduly harsh and unfair in grading black students. In retrospect, Grace emphasized how demoralizing it had been to experience racism, for the first time, from another black person.

In other respects, Grace's college years entailed an increased social life and a growing ease in social arenas. Her extreme shyness and anxiety about social relations was diminished over the years. In large part, her involvement in one of the black sororities facilitated this change. She and her girlfriend had pledged early with an explicit aim of meeting young, black men. The sorority network made it possible to attend social events throughout New York city. Though she still felt awkward and somewhat frightened of men, she enjoyed their attraction to her and took pleasure at being in their company.

Upon graduating at Age 21, Grace had decided to become a teacher. This career choice had solidified during her college years. No other profession had captured her interest. Teaching appealed to her because she especially liked children, and because she believed that black children needed role models. She had been aware, during her entire educational experience, of the paucity of black teachers. She felt strongly committed to being a positive influence in the education of blacks. She felt no pressure from her parents to choose a teaching career, but she was pleased that they took pride in her accomplishments, and approved of her decision.

Period II: Age 21-30

Grace had been forewarned by her father that the required licensing exam for teaching was very rigorous. Her father told her that few blacks had been successful in passing the exam. Shortly before she was scheduled to take this examination, she learned that many of the whites with whom she'd be competing had taken special preparatory courses. She was angry at having been denied information about these preparatory courses and fearful that she would fail. She was elated when she passed the exam and received her first teaching assignment. After one year of teaching at a junior high school in Brooklyn, she was reassigned to a junior high

on the lower east side of Manhattan.

Grace worked with a class of "slow learners" during her three years at the Manhattan school. She enjoyed teaching and considered herself to be very competent, although she found the work to be quite demanding. She often extended herself beyond the job requirements by providing additional aid to her more difficult students. During the summers, she took courses toward earning a master's degree. These were years of intense commitment to her chosen field, while also having as active social life. With her college girlfriend, she kept a busy social calendar of going to parties and other social events. Every summer, after taking graduate courses, she and her girlfriend took trips to one of the Caribbean islands.

Though her social anxiety had lessened, Grace continued to be timid and fearful in relationships with men. Most men seemed untrustworthy. Happily, during her last year at Hunter, she met a man who she found to be unusually kind and caring toward her. From Age 21 to 25, she sustained a love relationship with Paul, despite her mother's strenuous objections. Paul was four years Grace's senior, and a youth worker at a boy's detention home. Grace's mother objected to him for being too old for her daughter, not good-looking, and not solidly middle-class. Grace defied her mother by continuing to date Paul. She found him to be one of the most generous and unselfish men she had met. She too was

disappointed that he was not college educated, or more economically successful, but these considerations were less important than her sense of security with him. She imagined that when she felt ready for marriage she would become more concerned about her criteria for a suitable partner. In the meantime, she felt no urgency for marriage, and was content with Paul.

Like several of her girlfriends, Grace had continued to live with her parents after finishing college. Economically, this arrangement had been advantageous for both her and her parents. She had assumed that she'd marry within a few years and move to separate living quarters with her husband. By Age 24 when no marriage prospect had materialized, and when her relationship with her mother had deteriorated, she made alternate plans. She decided to buy a cooperative apartment in Brooklyn rather than remain in the stressful environment with her parents. Retrospectively, Grace recalled that her relationship with her mother had begun to change during her teenage years, soon after their move to St. Albans. Gradually, her mother had become "vicious and mean" toward her for reasons that Grace could not understand.

Grace was aware that her mother was extremely unhappy in her marriage. Her parents had begun to argue almost incessantly. Most frequently, her mother seemed to initiate the arguments and was unusually "hateful" toward her

father. Gradually, her father had intensified his alliance with Grace; their closeness seemed to provoke her mother's envy even further. Grace was most unhappy at being in the middle of her parent's conflicts, but she felt the need to pair with her father to protect herself from the mother's tirades. Similarly, Grace believed that her mother promoted rivalry between she and her sister. Her sister was having academic and truancy problems in school, performing much below the level that Grace had achieved. Somehow, Grace felt blamed for the sister's difficulties. Thus, from many perspectives Grace felt victimized by her mother; living in her parents' home was becoming almost unbearable.

In the summer before her 25th birthday, Grace planned an "escape" trip to Europe. Over the past few years she had begun to spend every possible hour away from the home. Whenever contact with her mother was unavoidable, she defended herself against her mother's derogatory, humiliating remarks with a quiet, resolute defiance. She sensed that her mother wanted to provoke her into verbal battles, but she refused to comply. Her defensive tactics had been only modestly successful in alleviating her anxiety in the home. In the year before she went to Europe, she had lost some fifteen pounds and experienced an unrelenting state of anxiety.

The summer trip to Europe was more enjoyable than Grace imagined it could be. She and her girlfriend traveled

through England, France, and Spain, intent on having a true adventure, and hoping to meet black men. Grace felt a heretofore unknown sense of freedom and lack of inhibition. She felt lucky to encounter a handsome, mature, black man to share her experiences. For the first time she succumbed to her sexual desires, trusting that her 36 year old lover would not harm her in any way. Although her mother had accused her of having sexual relations with Paul, Grace had been too conflicted about, and fearful of, sexual activity. She'd remained a virgin until the summer in Europe when, in a spirit of adventure and lack of inhibition, she no longer felt the need to deny her desires for sex.

Returning home to New York was even more painful than Grace had anticipated. Her parents' conflict had escalated with the result that her mother had moved out of their bedroom, and had taken over Grace's room. In the coming months Grace lived with a girlfriend, and later, returned to her parents' home for a brief period. She was extremely relieved to move into her cooperative apartment in the fall season of her 25th year. Upon moving, she remained in contact with her father; she was not surprised to learn that her parents had separated within months of her leaving the home. Apparently, her mother had been especially cruel to Grace's father during their separation. Grace vowed that she would never speak to her mother again, and would never forgive her for having been so cruel to both her and her

father.

Grace's new cooperative apartment was satisfying in every way. Her neighbors were quite friendly and the sense of comraderie within the apartment complex was quite high. Yet, this move to live alone, for the first time ever, confronted Grace with her aloneness. By Age 24 she had begun to wonder if she'd be an "old maid". When she met a man who seemed strongly attracted to her, Grace began to think more seriously about marrying. Six months after they had met, Roy proposed marriage and Grace accepted. She did not love him passionately as she wished, but she believed their partnership would be a sound one. Roy was five years her senior and an ambitious, hard-working architect. Grace found him to be a sensitive, artistic man who, importantly, was much like her in personality and temperament.

From Age 25 to 28 Grace's life revolved around her marriage and her career. Retrospectively, she described these years as the happiest time in her life. She traveled widely with Roy and enjoyed their active social life together. Their relationship flourished during these years. Grace was eager to start a family right away, but agreed with Roy that it would be best to wait until they became more secure financially. Her husband joined an architectural firm and strove for success in his field, while Grace continued teaching. Her requested transfer from Manhattan to a Brooklyn school made it possible to walk to

work from their apartment. By this time her teaching experiences with difficult students had stimulated an interest in the field of guidance counseling. Encouraged by her best friend as well as other colleagues, Grace decided to earn a master's degree in Guidance. Upon completing these degree requirements, Grace felt it was an opportune time for a career break to have a child.

Three months after her twenty-eighth birthday, Grace delivered her first child, a girl. The entire experience of pregnancy, childbirth, and caring for her daughter was "the most wonderful thing that ever happened to me". Grace was free to devote herself fully to caring for her child since she was on maternity leave from her job. A year and a half after her first child, Grace delivered her second daughter. From Age 28 to 31 she enjoyed her mothering responsibilities thoroughly. Her social circle became the group of mothers who lived in the apartment and nearby. Occasionally, her own mother assisted her in caring for the kids. Her husband had called Grace's mother soon after their first child was born. Begrudgingly, after almost four years without contact, Grace allowed her mother to re-enter her life. The relationship resumed without any discussion of their past conflicts. Grace restrained herself from confronting her mother about her past cruelties because it seemed obvious that she was trying diligently to make amends for these.

With the addition of two children, Grace and Roy decided

that a larger apartment was necessary. Upon moving to their new home in Brooklyn, Grace became eager to contribute monies toward their increased expenses. She was interested in returning to work despite her husband's assertion that her income was not essential. Since she was ambivalent about returning to the school system, she felt lucky when her best girlfriend informed her of an attractive job possibility. She was 31 years old when she re-entered the labor force as a project supervisor for a consulting firm. The firm had secured a contract with the federal government to conduct evaluations of several schools in Brooklyn. Grace asked her housekeeper to assume a full-time position as a housekeeper and babysitter. This older woman had been very loving and effective with the kids. Grace felt quite secure in leaving the children in her care.

Period III: Age 31-34

Grace found her two years of work with the consulting firm to be most rewarding. The flexibility in scheduling work hours allowed her to balance these responsibilities with family life. Her salary was higher than ever before and she enjoyed being a member of such a dynamic group of colleagues. Happily, she discovered that she had good leadership skills and could provide competent leadership in her new supervisory position. She was most disappointed

when the firm lost its governmental contract and the project folded. Reluctantly, she returned to the school system; this time in her new role as a guidance counselor.

Grace opted to work on a part-time basis at each of two different schools. She found little satisfaction in her work in either school. She was appalled at the lack of professionalism of teachers; few teachers seemed genuinely committed to providing quality education to the students. It seemed to her that, in the five year period of her maternity leave, the school system had deteriorated tremendously. She was embarrassed to see how sloppily many teachers dressed and how little decorum they observed. She felt alienated from most teachers because of her steadfast efforts to handle herself in a professional manner. She was not surprised when she learned from several of the teachers that she was envied for being so well dressed and for her professionalism.

Grace soon evolved a style and manner of interacting within the schools to manage her unhappiness at being there. She was "disgusted" with the behavior of many teachers, but she tried to be as polite as possible. She remained emotionally distant from her co-workers by operating in a somewhat officious, impersonal manner. After a year of working as a guidance counselor, she began to have serious questions about remaining in the school system. While she was considering her career options, she learned

that some teachers had made a career change to the field of law. Also, she had met several female attorneys through her and her husband's friendship circles. She'd admired these women and had begun to view law as a challenging, intellectually stimulating field.

Given her husband's encouragement, Grace set about finding answers to her questions as to whether law school would be feasible and realistic for her. She consulted numerous lawyers and talked with law students to gain information about student life, particularly for a woman with children. She received sufficient encouragement that she enrolled in a course to prepare for the L.S.A.T.. By this point she was becoming decisive about her career choices. She felt some urgency to leave the educational field; she felt she'd best act quickly or there would be too little time remaining to begin a new profession. She felt strongly that she needed a professional identity that would foster her positive self-esteem. Being a wife and mother was gratifying in many ways, but these roles did not counter her unhappiness with teaching.

Grace was disappointed that her L.S.A.T. scores, though good, were not even higher. She anticipated that the competition for admission to law school would be fierce, but she was eager to see how she'd fare. She applied to five schools and received three acceptances. She chose a New Jersey university primarily because it was the least

expensive. Also, she had been advised by lawyers with whom she'd consulted that this school had an excellent reputation. In preparation for her new student status, she and her husband engaged in elaborate planning about the management of childcare and household responsibilities. Their former housekeeper-babysitter was re-employed, and several neighborhood friends were asked to help out with specific chores.

Period IV: Age 34-39

Grace's three years at the New Jersey law school contained some very positive experiences but, overall, she described these as "the most miserable, horrible, years of my life". The central problems she encountered were, on the one hand, being in a "hostile" white environment, and on the other hand, incurring severe financial problems at home. Her husband became unemployed mid-way through her years in school; the loss of his income constituted a crisis.

The law school environment evoked vivid memories of Grace's family's problems in integrating the St. Albans community. She was reminded of both the subtle and direct messages from whites that blacks were undesirable and unwelcome. The faculty group was entirely white and the student body was overwhelmingly white, with less than ten percent black students. Grace found it to be a cold and

unfriendly environment in which faculty members never even said "hello" to her, and never offered their assistance in any way. Moreover, she and her fellow black students noted that professors were often unusually harsh in examining black students in class. It seemed to Grace that the socratic method of teaching was too often used to embarrass black students in particular.

The network of black students at the school became a valuable resource to Grace very early during her years there. She was impressed that the black students had become a tightly knit, well organized support group for each other. Active discussions took place on the dynamics of racism within the school. A strong sense of comradeship was evident. Black students formed study groups together, shared class notes, and provided direct assistance to each other. Grace was grateful to have this resource and was pleasantly surprised that she was treated with reverence by these students. She was applauded for her ability to combine law school with her family responsibilities. In a sense, she was treated like a "queen"; she was an attractive, admired, older woman who inspired the younger students.

Grace responded to the racist environment at the school by redoubling her efforts to succeed. She was determined that she would not fail and become a casualty. Academically, she performed at a high level of achievement. Her academic

performance was much aided by studying with one student in particular. Joe, a 21 year old black student, became her best friend during her years at the school. Joe was a graduate of a prestigious college, a musician, a sports-enthusiast, and was quite knowledgeable about health matters as well. Grace admired him for being such a multi-talented, imminently likeable person. Given their age differences, she was surprised that she was also sexually attracted to him. However, it was only after she had graduated that she admitted to herself that she had been so attracted to him. During their years together in law school, they were "best friends"; neither could acknowledge their sexual attraction to the other.

At 38 years old Grace graduated from law school. During the summer she studied for the bar examination and actively interviewed for jobs. Her goal was to secure a high-salaried position to help in restabilizing family finances. Her husband had worked only intermittently after he'd become unemployed. On many occasions, she had been embarrassed at being hounded by creditors and had felt humiliated at being unable to pay debts. She was determined to secure a position within the corporate world since such jobs paid well. Other black graduates were too often intimidated by competing with whites for jobs in the corporate world, but Grace felt confident in her ability to compete favorably for such positions.

After many rejections from corporations, Grace finally succeeded in securing a position within an old, prestigious, insurance company. The company's legal staff was composed of only two blacks in a total of 85 lawyers. Grace was the only black woman on the staff. She began the job just months before taking the bar examination. She felt crushed and defeated when she failed the first examination. She had never before failed at such a major undertaking and her self-esteem suffered tremendously with this blow. With her husband's support, she recovered and took the bar examination again several months later. She was elated to pass on her second attempt.

Period V: Age 40-43

In the years following her graduation from law school, Grace remained at the insurance company and devoted herself to restabilizing her family life. Happily, her relationships with her daughters had remained on solid footing. Her daughters were 8 and 9 years old when she graduated. They had continued to do quite well in school and, in other respects, were well-adjusted children. Grace felt that, in a sense, her years in law school had been a positive influence in that they were extremely proud of her accomplishment.

By contrast, Grace's husband had fared poorly during her

years as a law student. His difficulties in finding suitable work had persisted. Within two years of her graduation, he had failed at launching three independent business enterprises. Gradually, he had become severely demoralized by his failures and had withdrawn from Grace. He was devastated at being unemployed, but could not discuss his feelings with Grace. She had been sympathetic with his plight initially; over the years she had become exasperated with his refusal to talk with her.

Grace's sense of alienation from her husband was paralleled by her difficulties in her first job as a lawyer. She was satisfied that her work was of a high quality, but the work environment was stressful in many ways. Most of her co-workers were pleasant to her, though distant. On many occasions she felt compelled to defend herself against their subtle racist remarks. Chief among these were the assumption that she'd been hired to meet racial quotas, not because of her competence. Further, there had been at least one incident of more flagrant discrimination about which she'd lodged a complaint with the department's director. Overall, she found it essential to be as competent and articulate as possible to offset existing stereotypes about blacks. Characteristically, she behaved in a guarded, somewhat aloof manner, always alert to the presence of racism within the work environment.

Initially, Grace had been interested in legal work which

would provide more in-depth learning about the field. She handled routine legal cases for several years until this began to feel limiting. Soon she became desirous of more diverse cases which would expand her areas of expertise. Her summers during law school had been spent working for a white lawyer from whom she'd learned a great deal. As the family's financial status improved, she began preparing for her eventual goal of private practice. Grace was aware that many lawyers were reluctant to negotiate more challenging assignments. She was pleased that she'd been able to negotiate for cases which would prepare her for the diversity of clients she'd encounter in a private practice.

Other involvements during these years included joining two professional associations for lawyers. She joined an organization of black women attorneys, as well as a Brooklyn based association of black lawyers. She was disappointed to find that neither organization had substantive programs to benefit the black population. Nevertheless, she assumed leadership for a scholarship program in one association and participated in some of their social events. She was annoyed with the level of apathy in these organizations. It troubled her that blacks were so apathetic in the face of the potential contributions that could be made to help other blacks improve their lot.

During these years post-law school, several significant events occurred in Grace's family of origin. Relationships

with each of her parents and her sister had been strained since she'd left home at Age 25. She had sustained contact with her mother since her first child was born, but described their relationship as "superficially close". She had not been able to forgive her mother for her cruelties during her last years at home. She had allowed her mother to babysit and provide other aid, but she had kept her at a distance. As for her sister, she had remained almost totally out of contact with her. Grace's memories of their conflict during her teenage years were still vivid. Even when her sister suffered a psychiatric illness and was hospitalized, Grace could find no way to extend herself to the sister. Their relationship continued to be a source of unresolved concern to Grace, but she also felt entrenched in her pattern of avoiding contact.

Similarly, Grace's relationship with her father had deteriorated over the years. Following his marital separation, the father had moved to Chicago and remarried. Grace had visited him once and met his new wife. She had been disappointed to learn that he had married, primarily, to acquire a home. She realized how great a loss he'd suffered when his first wife had taken all their property and material possessions, but she strongly disapproved of his chosen means of rebuilding his life. She felt contemptuous of her father for giving up his self-respect simply for the sake of gaining property.

Grace's father died when she was 42 years old. She had not spoken to him for many years prior to his death. Their geographical distance from each other had contributed to her reluctance to call or visit him. She had been intending to contact him, and attempt to mend their relationship, when she learned of his death. She was somewhat puzzled at her reaction to his death. She found that she could not grieve for him, though consciously she wished that she could. She simply had no access to feelings of sadness or emotional pain; she reacted to his death calmly and coolly, without distress.

When interviewed several months after her 43rd birthday, Grace indicated that she was in a "holding pattern" in her job. She was quite unsatisfied with the job, but was aware that jobs in the legal profession were scarce. She planned to continue negotiating for a diversity of case assignments which would prepare her for eventual private practice. She felt she had continued to develop her skills as a lawyer and, overall, was most pleased with her new lawyer identity. For the past year, she believed she had been in a very reflective period of her life. Memories of the pain and stress of law school were fading. Now she found herself contemplating the meanings of her past experiences.

Grace was most reflective about the significance of her success in becoming a lawyer. It seemed to her that all too many lawyers had an inflated self-image. She was prideful

in having joined such a prestigious professional community, but she felt it important to retain some perspective. Self-esteem, she thought, should not be derived solely from one's professional identity. Instead, she believed that her self-esteem emanated from a stronger, more valued inner self. Her trials and tribulations in law school had reinforced the importance of relying on her own internal resources. She felt more self-reliant than ever, and was convinced that she'd learned a vital lesson for black people. That is, because blacks often receive so little positive reinforcement from external sources, Grace believed it behooved them to develop an unshakeable, inner sense of positive self-worth.

Grace's reflections on self-esteem were joined with other efforts at self-appraisal. She felt more comfortable with her physical self than ever before. Gradually, her mother's hostile criticisms of her looks had given way to a strong sense of her own attractiveness. Now, when others remarked that she was a beautiful woman, she could accept these compliments. Further, the negative self-consciousness that she'd always known was giving way to a more enduring ease in social groups. This decrease in self-consciousness allowed her to be more discriminating in selecting friends and less inhibited in social interactions.

Grace's growing self-confidence included a wish to be more spontaneous in her relationships and more expressive of her

inner feelings. She felt it was most unfortunate that her husband had not changed in the same direction. Characteristically a rather timid man, he seemed to withdraw into himself even further after his business failures. Grace felt "incredibly unhappy" that their marriage entailed so little communication. Now, "finally", she felt ready for a more passionate relationship, but her husband was unreceptive to her bids for such.

After seventeen years of marriage, at Age 42, Grace took her first vacation without her husband. She remained committed to their marriage, but she was also convinced of her need to be separate, to have a life of her own beyond their marriage. She had never had an extra-marital affair, but recently she'd become aware of her fantasies about same. To her delight, she found that many men, particularly men in their thirties, were strongly attracted to her. She was often tantalized at the thought of a passionate affair, but she had contented herself with harmless flirtations. Her strongest wish was that her husband would regain control over his life, and that their marriage could be revitalized.

HELEN

Helen was born in 1938 into a family consisting of her mother (Age 31), father (Age 28), a brother (Age 5), and a sister (Age 4). Another brother was born when she was six years old. The family resided in Brooklyn, New York throughout Helen's childhood. Helen's mother had been born in North Carolina where her family had made its home for several generations. Helen's maternal great grandparents had been slaves. Helen's mother had been the first family member in her generation to obtain a college education. She had been a student at Howard University, a predominantly black college in Washington, D.C., when she met the man who became her husband. Helen's paternal great grandparents were also slaves. Helen's father had also been the first family member in his generation to go to college. Helen's parents had married during their senior year at Howard University when she had become pregnant.

Helen's mother had been a housewife and mother throughout her early adult years. At Age 40 she had begun work as a nursery school aide. At Age 43, when Helen was 12 years old, she had resumed her college education, and secured a bachelor's degree in nursery school education. Thereafter, she worked as a nursery school teacher until her retirement. Helen's father had been the primary wage earner

for the family until his wife began work as a nursery school aide. He had begun his adult working life during the depression as a non-skilled laborer. Apparently, he'd taken every possible job in an effort to support his growing family. He'd sold ice for "\$1.25 per day"; had been a delivery man for various stores; and had collected old newspapers, among other jobs. Helen recalled that, during her childhood, her father was most unhappy with his work. She had been six years old when, on one memorable occasion, she'd encountered her father collecting old newspapers on a street near her school. Out of shame and embarrassment, he'd run away from Helen, trying to avoid being seen doing this menial type of work.

Helen's father had attempted to resume his education during his thirties, but had learned that he'd receive minimal credit for his years of study at Howard University. This prospect of repeating most of his coursework so angered and depressed him that he'd abandoned his goal of becoming a physical education teacher. Through the years he'd fashioned a career in athletic and social programs for children. The family was very poor during Helen's childhood years, but Helen believed that her parent's love for their children served to offset her awareness of being poor.

Helen's elementary and junior-high school education took place in racially integrated schools in her neighborhood, just blocks away from home. The school population, as well

as that of the neighborhood, was composed of blacks and white ethnics. Since blacks were in the minority, it was often the case that Helen was the only black student in a given class. Relationships with white neighbors were always pleasant, but they never socialized with each other. Like her parents, Helen's friendships were restricted to the few black families in the area.

By the time Helen reached her high school years, she had established herself as an academic achiever. Always in one of the top two academic tracks, she enjoyed school tremendously. Beginning in junior high school, she'd taken full advantage of the school's social and recreational programs. She recalled that, despite being extremely skinny, she was an outgoing, popular child. Her considerable ease in social groups was only slightly diminished when she developed acne at eleven years old. The acne covered her face and all extremities, resulting in a heightened self-consciousness with boys in particular. Unsure of her physical attractiveness, Helen de-emphasized her emerging pubescent figure and attempted to be a good buddy to boys and girls alike.

Helen's relationships with boys were fraught with anxiety during her early adolescent years. She was self-conscious about her acne and, in addition, she was not allowed to date boys until her senior year of high school. Most social outings were carefully chaperoned, and she was rarely

allowed to spend a night with friends away from home. Helen was aware that she and her sister were being carefully supervised to prevent their sexual activity. Her parents provided virtually no education about sex or reproduction, but Helen was advised that pre-marital sex was absolutely forbidden.

Helen's parents strongly encouraged all of the children to attend college. Upon graduating from high school, Helen felt a special obligation to her parents to go to college because she was the first child to do so. Her older brother had been drafted into the armed services soon after high school. Her sister had also disappointed the parents' hopes by becoming pregnant after high school. The sister had married and begun her family when Helen was 14 years old. Given these family circumstances, and given her high grade point average, Helen made plans to attend college.

Economic limitations dictated that Helen's choices were restricted to New York colleges. She'd applied to and been accepted at Howard University, but could not afford to augment the small scholarship offered her. The low tuition costs for New York colleges, and the opportunity to live at home, made college within her reach. Helen applied to three schools, was accepted by all, and selected her first choice of Brooklyn College.

Period I: Age 17-21

With few exceptions, Helen's college years were filled with a sense of adventure and fun. She was exhilarated with her newfound freedom to attend social events without a chaperone and, generally, to make her own decisions about how, and with whom, she spent her time. Pledging to the local black sorority provided an active social life and the opportunity to meet black students throughout the city. Importantly, within her first year of college, her acne condition improved and, eventually, disappeared. In many respects, she felt greater interest in dating boys and was pleased at their attraction to her. She still felt quite awkward with boys, but she was eager to learn more about relationships with them. In a sense, she felt more skilled at being a friend to boys than in romantic involvements. All too often for her liking, boys tried to impose their sexual desires on her. For a while, she felt that she was becoming especially skillful in avoiding sexual contact, while also holding onto the relationships. It was a difficult feat to accomplish, but she felt strongly that sexual activity would lead to other more undesirable outcomes.

Helen's grades suffered during her first year of an active social life and too little study. Thereafter, she "buckled down" and sustained an above average level of achievement.

She had begun her studies with an emphasis on psychology courses, in pursuit of her dream of becoming a child psychologist. She'd performed poorly in these psychology courses and, thus, had revised her goal to that of teaching. Neither career choice was based in a careful exploration of the fields themselves, or of other career options. She had become interested in child psychology because she enjoyed children and had an intellectual curiosity about human behavior. Her alternative choice of teaching was made, in part, because the coursework seemed easier than other fields.

Upon graduating from college at Age 21, Helen was most uncertain about her future. She had completed most of the required coursework to become a teacher, but she had avoided one of the more intimidating requirements. Her anxiety and fearfulness about speaking before groups had led her to avoid the speech course which was a pre-requisite for student teaching. She was eligible to take the licensing examination for teaching, but she did not feel confident that she could pass it. Uncertain about her career choices, and yet desirous of earning money, Helen decided to take a job for a while and postpone any major career decisions.

Period II: Age 21-30

Interested in working with children, Helen made a brief

survey of job possibilities in social service agencies. Without difficulty, she soon located a position as an intake investigator for a child welfare agency. Her responsibilities included investigating families and providing reports on their capability for childcare. Her reports were often instrumental in determining whether children would be removed from the home and sent to state operated facilities. Helen found the work itself to be quite complex and exasperating. She felt insufficiently skilled in the job, and deplored the fact that her reports often resulted in breaking up family units. She had been at the job for only a few months when she decided to take the next licensing examination for teaching.

Helen's year at the child welfare agency represented an unhappy experience in an otherwise satisfying, enjoyable life. Since she had continued to live in her parents' home, her expenses were minimal. She recalled that one of her greatest pleasures was spending monies on clothing and other items that had been too expensive during her college years. Shopping trips at local department stores became a favorite pasttime. By the end of her first year post-college, she had accumulated a sizeable debt for these "spending sprees".

Helen maintained a rich social life during these years; she dated extensively and took pride in sporting attractive clothes. Romantic relationships continued to be

anxiety-ridden as she remained confused about her own sexual values and attitudes. Increasingly, she'd become more desirous of sex, and her dates had become more aggressive in urging her to have sexual relations. Unhappily, her first sexual experience was sorely disappointing. Afterwards, she decided that any further sexual activity would have to occur in a relationship in which both partners had made a commitment to each other.

Helen ended her year at the child welfare agency by taking the licensing exam for teaching. Her success on the exam led to her first teaching assignment at a Brooklyn junior high school. She found it to be a most rewarding experience, free of any major hurdles. Teaching children seemed easy, in contrast to her first job. The children were most responsive to her interest in them and she felt very effective in this new role.

Helen was completing her first year of teaching when she was re-united with a former boyfriend who would later become her husband. Harry had been a good friend during her first year in college. Subsequently, after a brief romance, they had parted as friends. Harry had graduated a year before her, and had married another woman. He'd reinitiated contact with Helen when his marriage seemed to be failing. Helen resumed her relationship with Harry soon after his first marriage was annulled. One and a half years later, the couple decided to marry. He was 26 years old and she

was 24.

Helen's decision to marry had been an agonizing one. Unhappily, following a period of frequent sexual intercourse without contraception, she had become pregnant. Her pregnancy evoked strong feelings of ambivalence. She felt unprepared to have a child and was unhappy at having to make such a hurried decision about marriage. Prior to her pregnancy, the couple had planned to marry "in a year or two". Both Harry and her parents advised her that marriage was the only possible choice. Briefly, she'd considered an abortion despite Harry's religious (Catholic) objections. However, her visit to an obstetrician had been a strong influence on her decision against the abortion. She'd been erroneously informed that she was not pregnant, and had been lectured on the immorality of pre-marital sex. She later confirmed her pregnancy, but the physician's lecture had evoked strong feelings of guilt. Ultimately, she felt that she had no choice but to marry.

Prior to their marriage, Harry had shared an apartment with a teenage boy, Fred. Fred was separated from his own family and, in effect, had been informally adopted by Harry. Fred continued to live with the couple in their small Brooklyn apartment after Harry's marriage. During these early years of her marriage, Helen was grateful for Fred's friendship and company. Harry's schedule of full-time study in law school, in addition to working a part-time job, meant

that he was infrequently at home. Helen also worked during this period as their financial problems were acute. Her shopping sprees in the year prior to their marriage had led to bills which would need to be paid before the baby arrived. She had almost completed her third year of teaching at the Brooklyn junior high when she delivered her daughter. The child was born just weeks after her 25th birthday.

Helen remained on maternity leave for five months before returning to teaching. After the baby was delivered, she began to use a diaphragm for contraception. The couple had decided that their next child would be planned. Helen found that her new responsibilities as a mother were most difficult to accommodate. Caring for her infant and managing the household were taxing, stressful experiences. Her feelings of fragmentation and overload were even further exaggerated when she resumed teaching. She was poorly organized in managing her multiple commitments and felt she had too little time to address her own needs.

Helen's new teaching assignment was at a new school in Manhattan. She continued to enjoy her teaching role, but found the combination of the job and family responsibilities was almost overwhelming at times. She felt grateful for the assistance offered her by Fred, and by her mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law was eager to help with babysitting and, generally, lent her support in many ways.

At Age 27, Helen delivered her second child, another daughter. The pregnancy had been planned to coincide with Harry's graduation from law school. For this second child, Helen chose to go on maternity leave for a minimum of a year. The loss of her income necessitated their plans to decrease expenses as sharply as possible. The couple moved into Harry's parents' home in Brooklyn, occupying the top floor of the house, soon after their second child was born. This living arrangement enabled them to pay a modest rent and allowed Helen to receive needed help from her mother-in-law.

Although she did not work for a year after her second child, Helen continued to feel disorganized and inefficient in handling her family responsibilities. She was aware that her husband was disappointed in how she managed the home, but she felt unable to do a better job. Gradually, their communication became increasingly problematic. They argued frequently and complained angrily about their mutual disappointments. Helen began to wonder if their "personality" differences would ever be reconciled. At times it seemed that they were polar opposites: she was too disorganized, while he was a "compulsively" organized person.

Helen and Harry lived with his parents for over a year before taking their own apartment in Manhattan. By this time, Harry had secured a lucrative position as a criminal

lawyer in Manhattan. When Helen returned to work after her maternity leave, her salary was viewed as supplementary income. Upon returning to work, Helen felt eager for a change from classroom teaching. At Age 27 she made a switch to the area of teacher training. This work was more satisfying and stimulating than she's anticipated. It rekindled her interest in earning the master's degree which she'd been intending to study for since Age 24.

Helen enrolled in a graduate program to earn her master's degree in education. Practically, she needed this degree to become a regular teacher in New York city's school system. In addition, she was eager to learn more about teaching effectiveness. For a year, she took evening courses at a city university, worked as a full-time teacher, and continued to manage her household responsibilities. The schedule was hectic and unwieldy at times, but she was determined to complete the degree. Importantly, she felt that her coursework was helpful in improving her skills as a trainer of teachers. She was especially interested in learning methods to improve children's reading skills.

Helen had become interested in children's reading problems during her first year at her newly assigned school. Far too many students at this school had reading levels much below that expected of their age and grade. Helen was troubled that teachers were so apathetic about this problem. Since she was the only black teacher for a predominantly black

student population, she felt a special obligation to provide leadership to address reading skills. Thus, in her second year at the school, she wrote a grant application for federal funds to launch a remedial reading program. Her grant writing decreased the time she could spend with her family, but she believed this project was valuable for her own professional development.

Helen was aware of the growing tension within her family during this period of graduate coursework. Communication between she and her husband seemed to be deteriorating. In addition, a third child, Rose, had been added to their already crowded living space. The couple had sought and obtained custody of this 15 year old girl who'd been their babysitter. Rose's family had been unable to care for her, and Helen's family had grown quite attached to her. Although each partner had agreed to adopt Rose, her integration into her new family had generated some tensions.

Helen was 30 years old when she became pregnant with her third child. The child had not been planned. Helen resented the pregnancy because it would mean delaying her graduate study, and would make demands on her at a time when she already felt overburdened. Her sense of crisis was deepened when, accidentally, she learned that her husband was having an extra-marital affair. Once again, Helen briefly considered an abortion, but felt unable to do so.

She decided to have the baby and, temporarily, postpone her graduate studies.

Period III: Age 31-34

Helen continued to hold her teaching position and to take evening courses until late in her pregnancy. She and her husband effected a superficial reconciliation, but she knew many issues had been left unaddressed. The marital problems which had led to her husband's affair would have to be discussed if the marriage was to remain viable. Yet, neither seemed to know how to approach these discussions. In the interim, she contemplated her life situation and planned for the arrival of her child. She was 31 years old when her third daughter was born. Within months of her birth, she realized that this child was severely retarded. For a while, the underlying depression which she'd experienced for the past year was intensified.

Once again, Helen decided to take a year's maternity leave. Since the family's economic circumstances permitted this time away from work, she could use the time to adjust to her new daughter. While she was home with her infant, she was preoccupied with her marital problems. For the first time, she considered that the marriage might end through a separation/divorce. The marital crisis seemed to promote an intense examination of her dependence on her

husband, and of the family's dependence on her. In many respects, she felt that she'd allowed herself to be depended on too heavily by her family. In so doing, her own needs and interests went unnoticed or were disregarded. Helen resolved to devote more attention to herself.

Helen's "self-improvement" activities included efforts to become physically fit, as well as developing interests outside her family. Her fitness program included taking up jogging for the first time. For the next several years she jogged every morning and spent some time doing other physical exercises. Also, having gained over thirty pounds in the past few years, she began a weight reduction diet. Within a year's time, she had lost this excess weight. Further, she treated herself to trips to the beauty shop more often, and went on shopping excursions to expand her wardrobe. Instead of cooking every family meal, she arranged for dinners out from time to time. In these and other ways, Helen attempted to bolster her self-confidence, while also effecting a revised attachment to her family.

During this year of maternity leave, Helen also participated with her husband in a marriage enrichment workshop. The experience was quite helpful to her in gaining perspective on their communication problems. She could acknowledge her own tendency to avoid direct expression of her anger, and her pattern of harboring resentment for past misdeeds. The workshop facilitated the

couple's continued work on their problems well beyond the weekend event. Helen resolved to make her marriage last. The workshop had provided her with a sampling of other couple's marital problems. Comparatively, she believed their marriage was on relatively sound footing, and could survive their recent crisis.

Helen returned to her teaching position at Age 32. She resumed her work in training teachers, though at this point she began to do so on a district level. She completed coursework for her master's degree within a year. Thereafter, she began to ponder her satisfactions with the teaching field. Increasingly, she was unhappy with the poor quality of teaching in schools and was less convinced that her efforts had a significant, positive influence. Lacking a sense of pride in the teaching profession, her work seemed more like a supplemental income for her family, than a viable career path.

Helen was preoccupied with her dissatisfactions with teaching for several years before she achieved any clarity about her choices. In the interim, she continued to balance her work and family responsibilities, sometimes feeling overwhelmed by her youngest daughter's problems. She made numerous visits to doctors in search of an accurate diagnosis of her condition. Finally, she realized that her child would never be cured and that, eventually, she would need special education for the disabled. She rejected the

recommendation of one physician who advised her to institutionalize her child. The entire family discussed these matters and agreed that this child would be cared for within their home.

Helen was 34 years old when she became pregnant for the fourth time. Once again it was an unplanned pregnancy. She decided to have an abortion soon after the pregnancy was medically confirmed. At the time she was frightened that the child would also be damaged in some way. She had some guilt over aborting this pregnancy, but she believed her decision to be the best choice possible. Several months after her abortion, the family moved to its new home in Queens, New York. Her husband's career as a lawyer was thriving; as a result their financial status permitted buying a home. The informally adopted teenager who'd lived with her family had moved out of their home in the previous year. The family which moved to Queens included the couple and their three children only.

Period IV: Age 35-41

Helen continued doing teacher training on a district-wide basis until she was 37 years old. However, in the last two years before she made a career change, she became extremely dissatisfied with her work. By Age 35 her youngest daughter was five years old and could be accepted into a special

educational program. In addition, her other two daughters were doing well in school and, otherwise, were developing to Helen's satisfaction. Her children's growing independence prompted her more serious consideration of her own future. Teaching had been a good career during her childbearing years. It had provided an excellent opportunity to work with children, as she'd dreamed of doing while in college. Further, it had been an interesting profession within which to grow and continue her personal development. By Age 37 Helen wanted a career which would foster a stronger sense of pride in her profession.

Briefly, Helen considered obtaining a doctorate in education and climbing the ladder for educational administrators. This goal direction did not inspire her, primarily because it would entail a continued affiliation with the school system. For a while, she tried to envision herself in any number of careers, but none sparked a genuine interest. When she discussed her desire for a career change with her husband, he suggested that she become a lawyer. Helen was not immediately responsive to this suggestion because she lacked confidence in her ability to succeed. Yet, she was attracted to the idea. Law school would be a challenge and a significant achievement. She was unclear about the career options within law, but she felt certain that the profession would foster her personal growth.

Helen took the L.S.A.T. and applied to only one law

school. She chose a school near her home, where her husband held an adjunct lecturer position. She anticipated that her husband's affiliation with the school would somehow facilitate her adjustment there. She hoped that attending this nearby school would be minimally disruptive to her family life. When she received an admission offer, she requested every family member's cooperation with her while in law school. Everyone was most supportive of her pursuit of this path. Happily, her husband was willing to assume sole responsibility for the family's economic needs, eliminating the need for her to combine work with her studies.

Helen began law school at Age 37. Returning to school on a full-time basis was a most difficult adjustment to make. Academically, her performance was barely satisfactory. All too often her study hours were taken up with housekeeping or childcare responsibilities. By the end of her first year, she felt that she was performing at a barely adequate level in both spheres of her life. Yet, she remained intrigued by the field of law and was optimistic that she would improve.

Helen's self-esteem suffered tremendously as she attempted to become a better student. She recognized that the emphasis on logic in courses required a fundamental restructuring of her cognitive style. She was "not a logical thinker by nature". At times it was a "wrenching" experience to think logically rather than intuitively. She

was pleased to have the friendship of other "over 30" students who were supportive of each other. She studied with these students sometimes, as well as with a younger woman who became her closest friend. Occasionally, she joined study groups formed by the black law students' association. She had expected that black students would be in the minority, but was surprised to find that blacks represented less than two percent of the student population.

Helen had begun her third year of study when she was formally requested to withdraw from school. Her grades had continued to be borderline and were unacceptable by this stage of her program. The request to withdraw mobilized her to devise an "emergency plan" which would enable her to continue. She informed school officials that she'd been shouldering a heavy set of family responsibilities. She negotiated a student leave for six months to allow time to reduce these family demands. A meeting was held with her family to inform them of her plight, and to implore their more visible cooperation with housekeeping chores. Thereafter, with each family member's help, she was able to devote more time to study. Her grades improved sufficiently to attain an acceptable academic standing.

In effect, the request to withdraw had intensified Helen's determination to succeed. She felt a special obligation to her husband, particularly since he was on the school's

faculty, to do as well as possible. During her last year of school, she renewed the physical exercise program which she'd begun at Age 30 and later abandoned. She resumed jogging three to four times weekly. On her fortieth birthday, she achieved her goal of running five miles! In this and other ways, Helen poured herself into mastering the challenge of completing law school. Increasingly, she was becoming impatient with being a student and was eager to return to paid employment.

Two months after her 41st birthday Helen graduated from law school. She was ecstatic at achieving her goal and took great pleasure in her family's pride in her accomplishment. However, given her low standing in her graduating class, she anticipated some problems in securing an attractive position. She began interviewing for jobs during her last month of law school. Within a few months she found a satisfactory position in a district attorney's office. She hoped the position would provide valuable relationships with her colleagues and would allow her continued development as a lawyer. She was not surprised at failing the bar examination on her first attempt since she had studied for such a short time. She took an intensive course to prepare for the bar and, a year after her first attempt, succeeded in passing.

Period V: Age 41-44

Initially, Helen worked in the criminal court handling a variety of cases. She was exhilarated at being a new lawyer and was eager to gain experience with a diversity of cases. For a while she was very intimidated in interactions with the judges, but this was soon alleviated with more experience. She was reassigned to the area of sex crimes after less than a year in criminal court. The work with sex crimes was most engrossing, primarily because it required intense contact with the victims. The lawyer-client relationship in this area allowed her to use her "social work" skills. She attempted to foster a trusting relationship, to provide counseling, and sometimes, to refer the client for needed social or psychological services.

Helen requested a transfer after almost two years in the area of sex crimes. Her work load had become too heavy in view of her extensive involvement with victims. Often, these clients could not separate from her; they continued to seek contact long after their legal cases were closed. Helen felt unable to extricate herself from these relationships and, thus, was burdened by the volume of old and new cases. Thereafter, she spent a required year with the Grand Jury before being assigned to another criminal bureau. When she was interviewed at Age 44, Helen noted that her excitement with the field of law was akin to the

high level of satisfaction she'd experienced in her first teaching job. Yet, there was one persisting problem which seemed to defy solution.

Helen defined her central problem as one of disorganization and inattention to important details in preparing cases. She felt she was still trying to develop a more systematic, logical approach to law. She believed she'd progressed in this direction, but she was dissatisfied with this tendency toward being disorganized. All too often she was more responsive to external, environmental events in planning and executing her work, rather than proceeding from a coherent, systematic plan for her work. As a consequence, she often felt "fragmented and overloaded" by cases that needed more in-depth attention than she could give.

Helen's family continued to be the most dominant force in her emotional life in the years after she completed law school. Within a year of her graduation, her oldest daughter graduated from high school. Two years later, her second daughter had also earned her high school diploma. Since Age 41, Helen had been intimately involved in her daughter's plans for their future. Happily, since each had fared well academically, college was an obvious choice for both. Her older daughter had gained admission to Howard University and the younger one hoped to attend a Boston college. Helen and her husband were committed to helping their daughters acquire a college education, but the high

cost of tuition would surely tax the family's finances. Helen recognized that her career plans would have to be made with a realistic aim of earning a higher salary than was currently the case.

Helen's marital relationship continued to be a nurturing, satisfying attachment throughout the years. The relationship had been tension-ridden during her years in law school, but these difficulties had been minimal. Helen was pleased that their shared identities as lawyers had led to a stronger bond. She enjoyed discussing the law with her husband and, frequently, consulted with him about cases she was defending. Indeed, their comradeship as a couple was a key element of her love for the legal profession during these post-law school years.

The death of two family members were the only depressive experiences Helen encountered in these post-law school years. She was 41 years old when her mother-in-law died, following a prolonged illness. She was deeply saddened by this loss and, for the first time in her life, had to make funeral arrangements. Less than a year later, her father died of cancer. Once again, she made funeral arrangements. In the years immediately following their deaths, Helen became more thoughtful about death than ever before. When she was interviewed at Age 44, Helen asserted that she had become a believer in reincarnation. She no longer felt fearful of her eventual death, or the deaths of her loved

ones. She believed that, through reincarnation, everyone's spirit continued to live long after their mortal selves ceased to exist.

Helen was completing her fourth year in the district attorney's office when she was interviewed. At this point in time, she was in the midst of considering her future career options. Recently, she had been asked if she'd allow her name to be submitted in consideration for a judgeship. She had been flattered that her work was so favorably regarded, but had clarified that, despite her age, she did not have the required ten years experience for a judgeship. The experience had stimulated her thinking about this future possibility. Tentatively, she planned to enter private practice as an associate in a colleague's law firm. She envisioned practicing for another five or six years and pursuing a judgeship by Age 50.

Helen felt lucky to have been invited into a private practice since a solo practice would have been economically impossible. She had met the Hispanic man who was to become her friend and colleague during her first year at the D.A.'s office. He invited her to join him as an associate, with the prospect of becoming a full partner at a later date when he assumed a judgeship. Helen found the offer a most attractive one which she accepted without hesitation. She hoped that the arrangement would allow her to do work in the area of matrimonial law. This area of work appealed to her

more than any other because it required a special sensitivity to the lawyer-client relationship. By this point in time, she felt particularly skillful with the interpersonal dimensions of such relationships.

Helen's future plans also included a wish to become involved in mental health-mental retardation organizations. Her own experience in caring for a retarded child had prompted a desire to volunteer legal counsel in this area. Currently, however, she had little time for active involvements with groups beyond her family. She had joined the Bedford-Stuyvesant Lawyers' Association, but had too little time to devote to this organization of black lawyers.

After almost four years in the district attorney's office, Helen was quite reflective about the plight of blacks as she'd observed it within the court system. Sadly, blacks were overrepresented in the criminal population, and underrepresented among the lawyers and judges. Moreover, the ineffectiveness of the court system, and the incompetent handling of cases, contributed to her sense of frustration and futility. The desire to become a judge had arisen, in part, from her wish to redress some of these issues from a more powerful position. Her experiences as a lawyer had heightened her awareness of the tragic circumstances of many black peoples' lives. She looked forward to future opportunities to contribute to the development of social

programs which might prevent black youth's involvement in criminal activity.

In reviewing her early adult years, Helen emphasized that the most consistent theme had been her efforts to continue growing, personally and professionally. She felt confident that this basic drive to become "self-actualized" would continue to be a theme in her middle years.

Chapter Four

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS: LIFE STRUCTURES

This chapter provides an analysis of the findings based on the research questions outlined in Chapter Two. Following a discussion of the components of life structures, the evolution of life structures is considered in detail. The section on evolution of life structures reviews subjects' lives in each of the developmental periods. The chapter concludes with a summary of the most salient findings.

The Components of the Life Structure

Based on his sample of men, Levinson concluded that life structures are composed of one or two components, rarely as many as three. These components were seen to have a central place in the life structure, while others were marginal, or peripheral, to the center. Central components were thought to have the greatest significance for the self, and to receive the largest share of time and energy. Components central in men's lives were: occupation, marriage-family, friendships and peer relationships, religion, and ethnicity. Two modifications were required in the use of Levinson's terms to facilitate our review of components for

subjects in the present study. Levinson's "marriage-family" and "ethnicity" components were addressed in specific ways within the present study.

The term "marriage-family" refers to a broad range of relationships and responsibilities. Levinson acknowledges that there may be great variation in the structure of families within our society, but regardless of the form of the family institution, marriage and childrearing were seen to be its primary functions. The process of forming a marriage and family begins with a specific developmental task: "his first developmental task is to form the capability of having adult peer relationships with women". (p. 106)

Thereafter, according to Levinson, the developmental work is that of becoming married, raising children, and building a marriage and family.

Theoretically and practically, the marriage-family component can be subdivided into, at minimum, three separate components. These are: love relationships, marriage, and childrearing. Levinson traces a sequence of exploring love relationships, then marriage, followed by childrearing. Quite obviously, while such a sequence may be characteristic of the larger population, it is not applicable to all subgroups.

The present research sample includes women who had love relationships but never married; those who married but did not have children; and, those who had children without marrying. The sample dictates our use of the three separate components of marriage-family in order to trace subjects' development through the adult years.

The second issue regarding the components is that of ethnicity. Levinson's conceptualization of this component raises problems for the analysis of our subjects' lives. The primary components of the life structure are seen, fundamentally, as the choices a person makes: "To choose something means to have a relationship with it. The relationship becomes a vehicle for living out certain aspects of the self and for engaging in certain modes of participation in the world" (p. 44). In Levinson's framework components are neither features of the self, nor features of the world.

Ethnicity is the only component of those noted by Levinson which does not reflect an adult choice. In fact, ethnicity is a feature of the self, reflecting one's heredity and cultural heritage. In effect, when we treat ethnicity as a component, we are analyzing subject's relationships to an aspect of themselves. Thus, subjects' relationships to race are likely to be better understood using theories of the self, than by using a theory of the life structure. Given these conceptual problems, we have elected to not treat ethnicity

as a component. Rather, our examination of ethnicity will occur in the context of the newly formulated developmental task.

The Central Components

We have examined each subject's life structure in terms of which components were present during each developmental period. Since the components in each life structure changed across periods, we were interested in what patterns would emerge for the sample as a whole. This type of analysis produced three patterns which will be described in detail. These were: The Integrators; The Age 30 Mothers; and, The Careerists.

The components present during the Early Adult Transition (E.A.T.) were the same for all subjects i.e. occupation and friendships. Each subject was engaged in educational programs related to their occupational goals. And, with great variation among subjects, each formed friendships and peer relationships which were of value in separating from their families. However, in the next developmental period of Entering the Adult World (E.A.W.), there were significant differences among subjects in terms of the components of life structures.

Three subjects (Dora, Grace, and Helen) evidenced a pattern which we refer to as "The Integrators". These women married between Ages 22 and 26 and began raising a family soon thereafter. Their life structure components during the

E.A.W. were: marriage, childrearing, and occupation. These components continued to be central throughout the remaining developmental periods. Thus, one of the key issues in these women's adult lives was that of managing multiple commitments, and achieving an integration of three central components.

A second pattern was evidenced by two subjects (Annie and Eva). We refer to this pattern as "Age 30 Mothers". These women remained single throughout the E.A.W. period, or married rather late in the period. Their life structure components during most of the E.A.W. period were: occupation and friendships. At the beginning, or at the end, of the Age Thirty Transition (A.T.T.), these subjects chose to become mothers. In subsequent developmental periods, each subjects' life structure components were: childrearing, occupation, and love relationships.

We refer to the third pattern relative to life structure components as "The Careerists". These women (Barbara, Carol, and Fran) sustained a major investment in their careers from the E.A.W. period through the middle years. None chose to become mothers during their childrearing years, and to make this an ongoing aspect of their adult lives. Each formed life structures in which the components varied considerably in each developmental period.

Barbara's life structure included marriage mid-way through E.A.W., but from the A.T.T. period on these components were:

love relationships and occupation. Carol's life structure components from the E.A.W. through the Mid-Life Transition (M.L.T.) were: occupation and childrearing (as a surrogate mother). Her involvement in love relationships increased considerably during her M.L.T. The most central components from her M.L.T. through Entering Middle Adulthood (E.M.A.) were: occupation and love relationships. Fran's marriage mid-way through E.A.W. effected a transitory change in her life structure. The central components in her life from E.A.W. through Settling Down (S.D.) were: occupation and love relationships. From late S.D. through E.M.A. the central components were: occupation and marriage.

In summary of this section on life structure components, we may draw several conclusions with respect to Levinson's theory. First, we found it essential to subdivide "marriage-family" into three separate components to accommodate the life patterns of our subjects. The detachment of love relationships from marriage, and of childrearing from marriage, made it possible to analyze lives without regard for their deviance from the sequence implicit in Levinson's theory.

Second, given these subdivisions, we found that each subject's life evidenced the centrality of two or three components. The categorization of subjects as Integrators, Age 30 Mothers, and Careerists followed from a consideration of when, or if, childrearing was integrated with other

components. Only the Integrators combined occupation with marriage and childrearing throughout their adult lives. The Age 30 Mothers combined occupation with childrearing and love relationships from the A.T.T. on. The Careerists combined occupation with either love relationships, marriage, or childrearing (as a surrogate mother).

Also, we found that friendships were a vital component for all of our subjects, though they were not central components after the E.A.W. Generally, friendships continued as an important component throughout the adult lives of the Age 30 Mothers and the Careerists. Friendships appeared to become more peripheral in the Integrators lives after they assumed marriage and childrearing responsibilities.

As for other components, we found that, except for Barbara, religion was a peripheral, or absent, component in every subject's adult life. Though religion had been a dominant influence during the childhood years for all but three subjects (Annie, Grace, and Helen), only Barbara sustained a significant involvement with this aspect of her earlier identity. During E.A.W. Barbara attempted to renew her commitment to the Catholic faith, but this effort was transitory. She separated, again, from the Catholic church at the point of her marital separation. Thereafter, religion was a peripheral component of her life structure.

Finally, we took issue with Levinson's conceptualization of ethnicity as a component of the life structure. Instead,

we considered ethnicity to be a feature of the self and, thus, an enduring aspect of adult lives. Issues regarding ethnicity will be discussed more fully in Chapter Five.

The Process of Life Structure Evolution

This discussion of findings regarding life structure evolution addresses the sample in terms of developmental tasks for each of the six developmental periods. Following the review of subjects' lives in each period, we consider whether their lives evidenced an alternation between stable and transitional periods, and summarize data on the age ranges associated with each developmental period. This section begins with an examination of tasks for the Novice Phase. Then, subjects' lives in the E.A.T., E.A.W., A.T.T., S.D., and M.L.T. periods are discussed. The E.M.A. period is described for the three subjects for whom it is applicable.

The Novice Phase

The periods beginning with the E.A.T. and ending with the A.T.T. constitute a phase which Levinsons labels the Novice phase. Four tasks were seen to be common to this phase in men's lives. They were: 1) Forming a Dream and giving it a place in the life structure; 2) Forming an occupation; 3) Forming mentor relationships; and, 4) Forming love relationships, marriage and family. Each of these tasks is

discussed for the sample as a whole.

Forming a Dream

The concept of the Dream proved to be quite valuable in interpreting the nature of developmental work for our subjects. As we anticipated, there was some variation among subjects in the extent to which Dreams were articulated and in their actual content. Most subjects reported Dreams that were revised and refined throughout their adult lives. Generally, the absence of Dreams during the E.A.T. reflected subjects' problems in separating from their families of origin.

Three varieties of Dreams appeared to be present in the sample studied. One variation was that of a vague, poorly articulated Dream which subjects gave little definition to, and which exerted minimal influence on life structures. A second variation was that of a rather clearly articulated Dream which included occupational and family goals. These Dreams were sometimes revised during the A.T.T. Thirdly, another subgroup evidenced gradual, steady articulation of Dreams relative to occupation, with relatively slower formation of Dreams relative to marriage-family.

Two subjects (Carol and Eva) were considered to have absent, or quite vague Dreams. Carol completed college, at her parent's urging, without a clear vision of her future goals and aspirations. In the absence of a personally

defined Dream, Carol chose to join her brother in pursuit of his Dream. Throughout the E.A.W. and beyond, she remained preoccupied with her ambivalently chosen career in teaching. Yet, she never pursued this Dream energetically. Developmentally, it appears that she never formed an intensely personal, or more articulated, Dream for her life. Rather, her life seems to reflect self-sacrifice and a loyalty to her brother's Dream.

Eva also completed her E.A.T. without a clear conception of her future life plans. In the absence of a Dream, it appears that she relied on her sister's advice to go to college and, later, to become a teacher. This may be viewed as her reliance on her sister's Dream for her. Further, though her pregnancy at Age 30 was not a conscious, deliberate choice, we may speculate that it reflected a Dream, heretofore unarticulated, of becoming a mother.

The second variation of Dream formation was expressed in Dora, Grace, and Helen's lives. Each of these women had evolved a Dream by the end of the E.A.T., or early in the E.A.W. period. Essentially, the Dream which gave direction to their Novice phase was that of combining occupation (teaching) with marriage and family. Dora's Novice phase reflected an early Dream formation and a steadfast commitment to living out her Dream. She experienced little conflict in creating a life which embodied her Dream, and did not substantially revise it at any point in her life.

By contrast, while Grace and Helen also evidenced early Dream formation, their Dreams underwent a radical transformation in their thirties. Grace's Dream was revised during the A.T.T., while Helen's Dream was not revised until the S.D. period. Both women's later Dreams reflected desires to improve upon and refine earlier (E.A.T.) career planning.

The third variation of Dream formation was expressed in the lives of three subjects (Annie, Barbara, and Fran). Each of these women evidenced a steady, increasing articulation of occupational Dreams, with relatively less articulated Dreams regarding marriage-family. Each woman's Novice phase was dominated by efforts to gain greater clarity about their occupational interests. Thus, Annie's Dream shifted from becoming a ballet dancer, to becoming a practical nurse, to modern dancing, to becoming a professional nurse, and finally, to being an activist in health care.

Barbara had an early Dream of becoming a psychiatrist, or of obtaining a liberal arts degree. This Dream was revised during her E.A.T. to that of becoming a professional nurse. Later, during her E.A.W. period, she dreamed of becoming a psychologist. Following her marital separation during the A.T.T., her Dream was continually reworked to address her ambivalence about a career in professional nursing.

Fran's E.A.T. Dream of "combating poverty and racism" was revised by the E.A.W. to that of becoming a social worker.

Following the adoption of her child and, later, after her brief marriage, her occupational Dream became more articulated. By the end of the Novice phase, her life was organized around achievement of her Dream of providing leadership for social service agencies.

Forming an Occupation

Levinson found that the process of forming an occupation extended over the Novice phase. His male sample of four occupational groups included those who made an early, intense commitment to occupation, those who remained undecided, and those who made major occupational shifts during their twenties. The present study was designed to study the lives of women in four occupational groups. Our primary concern in this section is with their patterns of investment in these professions. Not surprisingly, these patterns of relating to occupations parallel those underlying Dream formation.

One subgroup (Dora, Grace, and Helen) made early, rather intense career commitments which were not changed, if at all, until the end of the A.T.T. Another subgroup (Carol and Eva) made early choices of occupation about which they remained ambivalent. The remaining subgroup (Annie, Barbara, and Fran) made several shifts during their twenties.

The first subgroup's intense commitment to their

(teaching) careers entailed a sequence in which an occupational choice was made during college and, thereafter, subjects acquired credentials to insure their security within the field. Also, each began with entry-level (classroom teaching) positions, and later chose functional areas which complemented personal interests. By the end of the Novice phase, each had selected a specialty area within which to continue building a career.

Thus, by the end of the Novice phase, Dora had become a specialist in curriculum development; Grace had advanced to a Guidance Counselor; and, Helen had become a trainer for teachers. However, there were important differences within this subgroup reflecting varied relationships to the occupation itself. Dora's commitment to teaching was experienced as a satisfying "job", rather than as a career. Dora sought to keep her occupational commitment within limits which would not disrupt family life, and felt successful in doing so.

By contrast, Grace evolved a relationship to teaching in which there was less apparent competition between family and career goals. She was intensely involved with her career until her late twenties when it was set aside to raise her children. Thereafter, she experimented with new career paths (educational consultation) before resuming a commitment to teaching, as a Guidance Counselor. She was vitally concerned with matters of career building and,

therefore, viewed teaching as a crucial aspect of her identity.

Helen's relationship to teaching reflects yet another variation within this pattern of early, intense career commitment. Throughout the Novice phase, teaching was experienced as a job, and as a competitor with family responsibilities. She did not feel successful in managing these multiple commitments during most of the Novice phase.

The second subgroup remained indecisive about career commitments. Carol sustained a commitment to the family business throughout the Novice phase because she could conceive of no alternatives. Her relationship to the "business" field appeared to be less a commitment to the field itself, than a commitment to her family of origin. Eva's career development reflects unclarity throughout the Novice phase. Although she remained in the profession until the end of her A.T.T., she had ongoing difficulties in experiencing it as a satisfying pursuit. In fact, she considered leaving the field on several occasions. She finally acted on her ambivalence about teaching by leaving the school system at the end of the Novice phase.

The third subgroup experimented with more than one career choice in their twenties, but made a relatively firm choice by the late twenties. Thus, by the end of the Novice phase, each had evidenced a substantial commitment to some occupational endeavor. By Age 27 Annie had given up her

dancing career; from then on she was engaged in professional nursing pursuits. From Age 27 on Barbara devoted herself to psychiatric nursing, having ruled out earlier career interests in psychiatry or psychology. Fran made a short-term (three years) commitment to social work with individuals and then began a shift toward administration. From Age 28 through the S.D. period, she was intensely committed to the field of community organization and development.

Forming Mentor Relationships

Levinson found that a significant number of men in his sample had been mentored. The mentor was a person, usually male, who supported and facilitated realization of the Dream. Mentors also functioned as teachers, served as sponsors, provided counsel, and served as exemplars. Since this study's sample was composed of professionals, we anticipated that women who had made an occupational commitment would, very likely, have mentoring experiences. However, using Levinson's definitions of mentoring, we found that a majority of our sample did not have mentors. Only three women described relationships which could easily be translated into Levinson's terms. In the discussion to follow, we will describe the three instances of mentoring before considering its absence in other subjects' lives.

Barbara and Dora's accounts of mentoring included

relationships which endured for at least three years, and which were of significant value in supporting their careers. Barbara's near seven year relationship with the black, female psychiatrist occurred toward the end of the Novice phase (Ages 29-36). Her mentor was also her boss; their close working relationship had begun with Barbara's expectation of learning from a senior professional. Later, when Barbara pursued a career in educational administration, she was also mentored by her boss i.e. her dean. This second mentoring experience with a black male was more conflicted than with her female mentor. Issues of sexual seduction, perhaps mutually determined, served to offset its value to her career development. Nevertheless, in both instances, the relationships were used to learn about the fields, to make crucial career decisions, and for moral support.

Dora's mentoring relationship occurred in the context of her work as a curriculum specialist. Her mentor, also her boss, was a black female who was senior to Dora in this field. The mentoring occurred after the Novice phase, during the S.D. period (Ages 31-40). Dora believed that her career was strongly influenced by this woman who she admired and respected.

The third instance of mentoring was reported by Eva. Toward the end of the Novice phase (Ages 31-35), Eva was mentored by her boss, a researcher and educational

specialist. During these years, she gained skills in educational research and was much inspired by this dynamic, highly respected black man. However, unlike Barbara and Dora, Eva did not use this mentoring experience for her development within an educational career. Given her weak connection to the teaching field, the years with her mentor seemed to serve more personally defined interests. She was identified with the man himself, not the profession he represented. She did not strive to emulate his work or to follow his lead in crafting her own career.

Significantly, all of the mentoring experiences in the present study occurred toward the end of the Novice phase, or after the phase had ended. There is the suggestion that subjects were either too ambivalent about their careers, or were too little invested in them, to seek or be receptive to mentoring before this time in their lives. It is also significant that the only mentoring experiences were with other black people; two of whom were other women. This suggests that whites were unavailable to these black women for mentoring, and/or that the subjects themselves were more receptive to blacks as mentors.

In the absence of mentoring, subjects reported several varieties of relationships which were helpful for career development. Every subject, except Carol, described transitory relationships with persons who provided career advice, job recommendations, or other forms of support. Eva

emphasized that her involvement with the group of male teachers, at her first teaching job, provided career support. The group as a whole, not specific individuals, served as a mentor during this time. Fran described her boss in the consulting firm as a mentor. Toward the end of her S.D. period, her boss had facilitated her transition from social service agencies to consultation in the business world.

Further, most of the married subjects viewed their husbands as playing key roles in their evolving careers. Annie's husband provided guidance to her in interpreting professional nursing roles from a cultural nationalist perspective. Helen's husband provided crucial advice and counseling with respect to her new law career. Fran's husband became her "primary mentor and guide" in her new business career.

These variations in mentoring experiences vary in several ways from Levinson's conceptualization. Levinson views the mentor as a transitional figure in early adulthood. Theoretically, mentoring relationships are time-limited and derive their meaning from both parties relationship to the mentee's career. Thus, while these variations in mentoring were undoubtedly of help in career development, they do not satisfy the criteria implicit in Levinson's theory. And, while several husbands served mentoring functions, these are probably best viewed as a variation in marital

relationships, than as mentoring per se.

Forming a Marriage and Family

Levinson's sample of men were all married by the end of the A.T.T. About half of his sample married during the E.A.T.; another 30 percent married during the E.A.W.; and, the remaining 20 percent married at the A.T.T. The sample for the present study differs sharply from Levinson's male subjects. None of these women married during the E.A.T.; five were married during the E.A.W.; and, three remained unmarried through the Novice phase. Further, by the end of the Novice phase, only three subjects remained in a marital relationship.

In this section we will describe the central issues which subjects encountered in effecting a marriage and family during the Novice phase. The discussion will utilize the categorization of subjects which was noted in reviewing life structure components: the Integrators; the Age 30 Mothers; and, the Careerists. These categorizations permit a focus on the developmental issues of relevance for each subgroup.

Generally, the Integrators (Dora, Grace, and Helen) married during E.A.W. following a limited period of exploring relationships with men. Each woman was concerned with developing peer relationships with men during their E.A.T. and early in E.A.W. For these subjects, as well as the others, the developmental task of forming adult

relationships with men was fraught with anxiety about sexual expression and possible pregnancy. Indeed, one subject (Helen) was married earlier than she preferred because of an unplanned pregnancy. We suggest that one view of the differences between the subgroups is their use of exploration during the E.A.T. and beyond. The Integrators elected to have relatively short periods of exploring relationships with men. They made early long-term commitments to one man and to raising a family.

By contrast, the Age 30 Mothers had a relatively longer period of exploring relationships with men. Plans for marriage did not emerge until late in E.A.W. Each woman engaged in relationships with men that reflected their personalities and their attitudes about sexual expression. Annie's relationships with her high school boyfriend embodied aspects of friendship more than those of sexual intimacy. The relationship aided in becoming more trusting of men, while also placing emphasis on her career building. By the time she married at Age 27, she had achieved some occupational stability and clarified other aspects of her identity. The early years of her marriage allowed for her continued personal development, unencumbered with childrearing responsibilities. Apparently, she did not become desirous of a child until her A.T.T. Her husband's refusal to expand the marriage to include a child might well reflect their different developmental needs. In any event,

Annie's development reflected: a relatively long period of exploring relationships with men; a de-emphasis on the sexual aspects of these relationships until late in E.A.W.; a marriage after a period of career building; and, the emergence of conscious desires to become a mother at Age 30.

Similarly, Eva's experiences throughout the E.A.W. allowed her to explore relationships with men. She had been sexually active, but had prevented a pregnancy until Age 30. The pregnancy occurred after marriage plans had failed, and while she was in the midst of reworking her relationship to occupation. Eva's development during the Novice phase reflected: a relatively long period of exploring relationships with men; an active expression of her sexuality in these relationships; a frustration of her wishes for marriage toward the end of E.A.W.; and, an unplanned pregnancy at Age 30. By the end of the Novice phase, both Annie and Eva were basing their choices on the strength of their desires to be mothers, despite the unavailability of a marriage. Neither felt willing to forego, or postpone, motherhood in order to acquire a marriage.

The Careerists evidenced even further divergence from the "traditional" sequence of love relationships, followed by marriage and childrearing. Although two subjects (Barbara and Fran) were married by Age 25, they were all unmarried by the end of the Novice phase. With considerable variation

among the subjects, the bulk of the Novice phase was devoted to career building, with limited or absent desires for family life. Each subject's Novice phase can be characterized as an extended period of exploring love relationships, including sexual expression. Decisions about contraception were a key element during this phase. Barbara and Carol made such decisions during the E.A.W. Fran did not begin to use contraception routinely until the end of the A.T.T.; reflecting her ambivalence about sexual expression and, probably, about pregnancy. Each was strongly ambivalent about marriage and acutely sensitive to men's controlling, possessive behaviors. Further, these women consciously rejected raising their own children and becoming a mother. Each woman perceived herself to be pursuing a more autonomous life, devoid of the confining aspects of marriage and childrearing.

Relative to the "developmental task" of forming a marriage and family, only the Integrators evidenced work in both spheres during the Novice phase. The remaining five subjects developed life structures in which either marriage or childrearing, or neither sphere was pursued. For reasons owing to their own personalities, and their actual experiences with men, a majority of this sample pursued lifestyles which emphasized autonomous, individualistic interests. These matters will be considered at greater length in Chapter Six. At this point, we turn to a review of

subjects' lives in the six developmental periods.

The Early Adult Transition

Levinson conceives of the E.A.T. as having twin tasks: to terminate pre-adulthood and to begin early adulthood. More specifically, these tasks were defined as follows: 1) To start moving out of the pre-adult world; to question the nature of that world and one's place in it; to modify or terminate existing relationships with important persons, groups, and institutions; to reappraise and modify the self that formed in it. 2) To make a preliminary step into the adult world: to explore its possibilities, to consolidate an initial adult identity, to make and test some preliminary choices for adult living (p. 73).

Our analysis of subjects' lives provides support for Levinson's conception of this period. With little variation among subjects, these developmental tasks were pursued by each individual. Prior to a description of subjects' transitions, some comments are in order on the sample as a whole.

First, it was necessary to establish guidelines for the onset of the E.A.T. in each life. Preliminarily, we selected the date of high school graduation as the period's onset. This date represented a symbolic marker of beginning adulthood and signaled the assumption of adult responsibilities for most subjects. This date proved useful for the examination of all but one of our subjects' lives

i.e. Fran. This subject completed high school at Age 14. For purposes of data analysis, we have retained high school graduation as the onset of E.A.T., and have treated Fran's situation as an instance of premature entry into adulthood.

Second, we have determined that the E.A.T. ended when subjects made some specific, preliminary life choices. Most frequently, these were choices in the occupational sphere which were made upon completing a professional education program. In other instances the choices reflected key decisions regarding an "initial adult identity".

Figure 1 provides an outline of the Early Adult Transition in terms of: events signaling the period's onset; key events occurring during the period; and, events signaling the period's end in each subject's life. In the discussion which follows, the E.A.T. is summarized for the sample as a whole before individual variations are described.

Every subject's E.A.T. was characterized by specific indications of moving out of their pre-adult worlds. Half of the sample (Barbara, Carol, Eva, and Fran) effected geographical separations from their families, while the remaining subjects continued living in parents' homes, or lived in quarters provided by parents. Most of these women remained economically dependent on their parents throughout the phase, but some subjects (Annie and Carol) assumed partial economic support for themselves.

Every subject was involved in an educational program which

Figure 1: The Early Adult Transition

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Annie	H.S. Graduation	Dancing Career Partial Self-Support Lived Alone L.P.N. School A.A. Degree	B.S. Education
Eva	H.S. Graduation	Geographical Separation B.S. Degree	First Professional Job
Grace	H.S. Graduation	Lived with Parents B.S. Degree	First Professional Job
Helen	H.S. Graduation	Lived with Parents B.S. Degree	First Employment
Dora	H.S. Graduation	Lived with Parents Engagement B.S. Degree	First Professional Job
Barbara	H.S. Graduation	Geographical Separation Nursing Diploma	First Professional Job; and Geographical Separation
Carol	H.S. Graduation	Geographical Separation B.S. Degree Partial Self-Support	Business Partnership; Geographical Separation
Fran	Left Chicago College	Geographical Separation B.S. Degree First Employment Graduate Study	Pregnancy

served as the arena for reappraising and modifying pre-adult selves. For most of these women, the period entailed major concerns about developing social skills, particularly in friendships and heterosexual relations. Subjects varied in their degree of exploration of relationships with men, but all evidenced some work on integrating their sexuality into emerging adult identities.

This transitional period was the occasion for initial decisions regarding occupation for every subject. Most made preliminary choices which, by the period's end, were solidifying. Significantly, only a few subjects (Grace and Dora) ended the period with relatively unambivalent occupational choices. Most of these women used the period to gain greater clarity about occupational identities but, at the period's end, had not fully committed themselves to a singular occupational path.

The task of terminating relationships with parents was a central theme for every subject. Several women (Barbara, Eva, and Fran) had intense conflicts with authority figures which reflected their difficulties in achieving a separate sense of self. Generally, every woman described a gradual process of becoming more emotionally independent. Within the sample studied, Fran appeared to have the most crisis-like transitional period.

As we've already noted, Fran's E.A.T. followed a period of premature entry into adulthood. Her descriptions of her

years (Ages 14-16) at the mid-western college indicate that, while there, she made a painful shift from being a "little girl" to a "young woman". Her relationships with the nun-faculty had reflected strong dependency needs and major difficulties with being separated from her family. In part, her transfer from this predominantly white college to the black college was a form of flight from the immature self which she'd experienced there. However, her years at Howard University reflected her continuing difficulties with separation. She effected some peer relations with men and women, but she was unable to consolidate an initial adult identity. In the years following college graduation, she vacillated between independent adult living and continued dependence on family or parental surrogates. This transitional period ended when, after an active sexual life without contraception, she became pregnant. The pregnancy symbolized her confusion about her adult identity and her options.

For every subject except Fran, the E.A.T. ended with the assumption of a job, and/or with continued professional education. Thus, most of these women ended their transitions with an initial occupational identity, and with an improved capacity for economic independence.

Entering the Adult World

This period in adult development entails the building of the first adult life structure. Levinson defines its chief

task as one of fashioning a provisional structure. The two primary yet antithetical tasks are: 1) To explore the possibilities for adult living: to keep one's options open, avoiding strong commitments and maximizing the alternatives. 2) To create a stable life structure: becoming more responsible and making something of one's life. Levinson clarifies that finding a balance between these tasks is not an easy matter. Lives which emphasize the first task may have an extremely transient, rootless quality. When the second task predominates, there is the danger of premature commitment, without sufficient exploration of alternatives.

We have already noted that this period began when subjects made specific, preliminary life choices. For purposes of data analysis, the period ends when any one of several features of the next transitional period become manifest. These transitional features involved reappraisal of the life structure, exploration of possibilities for change, or termination of one or more components of the E.A.W. Again, generally, our findings provide support for Levinson's description of development during this period.

Figure 2 provides an outline of E.A.W. in terms of its onset, key events, and its end in each subject's life.

The first adult life structure for every subject evidenced their commitment to one or more occupational identities. Every subject established a relationship to their occupation

Figure 2A: Entering The Adult World

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Annie	B.S. Education	Professional Dancer B.S. Degree M.S. Degree Marriage First Professional Job (R.N.)	Began Teaching Career; Ended Dancing Career
Eva	First Professional Job	Teaching Lived with Parents Failed Marriage Plans	Moved Out of Parents' Home
Grace	First Professional Job	Teaching M.Ed. Degree Lived with Parents Marriage Childrearing	Ended Maternity Leave
Helen	First Employment	Teaching Lived with Parents Marriage Childrearing M.Ed. Education	Third Pregnancy

Figure 2B: Entering The Adult World--Continued

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Dora	First Professional Job	Teaching Lived with Parents Marriage Childrearing M.Ed. Degree	Changed to Curriculum Development
Barbara	First Professional Job	R.N. Job B.S. Degree Psychotherapy Lived with Roommate Marriage M.S. Degree	Marital Separation
Carol	Business Partnership	Developing Business Engagement Surrogate Mothering	Considered Leaving Business
Fran	Pregnancy	Child's Adoption 1st Professional Job Psychotherapy Marriage Shift to Administration M.S. Degree	Moved to New York

which signaled the assumption of adult responsibility. However, there were varying patterns of addressing marriage and family life which characterized this period. One subject (Dora) made an early commitment to marriage and childrearing which she sustained throughout the period. Other subjects' life structures reflected themes of balancing the tasks of continued "exploration" versus stabilizing one's life.

Four subjects evidenced a contrast between the first half of this period and the second half. These women (Barbara, Grace, Fran, and Helen) used the first half of E.A.W. to solidify professional identities, and to continue exploring their adult options. All combined occupational interests with an active social life and other pursuits. The second half of E.A.W. entailed major modifications in each subjects' life structure. Both Grace and Helen moved out of their parents' homes and married at this time (Ages 24 or 25). Their life structures were further modified by the addition of childrearing responsibilities in the latter half of E.A.W. Barbara and Fran also made marriage a component of their life structures mid-way through E.A.W. These two subjects separated from roommates and established marital relationships. Fran's marriage was a transient feature of her life structure; while Barbara's marriage lasted until the end of E.A.W.

The remaining subjects (Annie, Eva, and Carol) had E.A.W.

periods in which continued exploration of adult options was the dominant theme. Annie kept her options open occupationally by concurrent, tentative commitments to dancing and professional nursing. She did not relinquish her commitment to dancing until toward the end of E.A.W. Annie also used these years to review and examine various socio-political belief systems before consolidating her identity as a cultural nationalist. She avoided a marital commitment until late in E.A.W. when she chose a husband who was also a cultural nationalist.

Eva's descriptions of life during E.A.W. emphasized the pleasures of an active social life and an extensive circle of friends. She did not make plans for marriage until late in E.A.W. when she felt greater urges to settle down. Carol's E.A.W. entailed keeping her options open in relation to marriage, but she assumed early responsibility as a business partner with limited exploration of other options. Her tentative plans for marriage, at Age 24, were readily abandoned in response to her fiancée's possessive behaviors. The latter half of Carol's E.A.W. reflected a modification of her life structure to include responsibilities as a surrogate mother.

The end of E.A.W. in each subjects' life signaled the emergence of transitional features. For two subjects, the significant changes were, primarily, in the occupational sphere. Thus, for Annie, this stable period ended when she

terminated her career in professional dance, and when she began a career in teaching psychiatric nursing. This change reflected the solidity of her identity as a nurse, as well as her wish to explore her options within the nursing profession. Dora's E.A.W. also ended with a shift in professional obligations. At Age 29 she left classroom teaching and began a specialization in curriculum development.

For three further subjects, the end of E.A.W. entailed a re-alignment, or re-patterning, of marital and occupational commitments. Barbara terminated her marriage and began life anew as a single woman. Grace ended her three years of maternity leave and resumed professional employment. In so doing she modified her life structure from a primary investment in marriage and family, to an integration of these responsibilities with occupation. Helen's first adult life structure ended with her third pregnancy at Age 30. The event ushered in a crisis because it required an intensification of family commitments at a time when she wished to expand occupational commitments.

Eva and Fran's E.A.W. ended on a theme of relocation. Eva moved out of her parents' home and attempted to live as a single woman, despite failed marriage plans. The change reflected an effort to live more independent of her parents. Fran's E.A.W. ended with her decision to enhance her career options by moving to New York. The decision was

based in an increasingly solid occupational identity, including heightened achievement aspirations.

Carol's E.A.W. ended with a serious appraisal of the costs of an exhausting, restrictive work schedule. At Age 29 she briefly considered leaving the business partnership.

The Age Thirty Transition

According to Levinson, the first adult life structure is seen to undergo a revision during the period, roughly, between Age 28 and 33. The A.T.T., like all transitional periods, includes the following key dimensions: 1) Reappraisal of the existing life structure; 2) Exploration of new options for adult living and of the possibilities for change; 3) Termination or modification of one or more components of the existing life structure. Levinson's sample of men evidenced varying degrees and forms of change during the A.T.T. Some had smooth transitions, without overt disruption or sense of crisis. However, for most men the A.T.T. had a stressful form, "the age thirty crisis": "a developmental crisis occurs when a man has great difficulty with the developmental tasks of a period; he finds his present life structure intolerable, yet seems unable to form a better one" (p. 58).

Our findings parallel Levinson's in terms of the degrees and forms of change. Only three subjects (Carol, Dora, and Fran) seemed to have relatively smooth, non-disruptive A.T.T.'s. Two further subjects (Annie and Grace) made

substantive or dramatic changes in life structures such that there was much discontinuity between life at the beginning of the A.T.T. and at its end. Though there were elements of crisis, these two subjects had a subjective sense of coping effectively. The remaining subjects (Barbara, Eva, and Helen) had very stressful A.T.T.'s whose overall character was that of a crisis. Major disruptions occurred and great difficulty was experienced in re-stabilizing lives.

In the analysis of findings which follows, we have adopted a particular criteria for the ending of the A.T.T. in each subject's life. Levinson suggests that the period ends "when the tasks of questioning and exploring have lost their urgency" (p. 52). However, since all of our subjects' lives do not evidence active questioning and exploration, this conception does not facilitate data analysis. Though Levinson cautions that particular events should not be equated with the ending of a period, we found that such events often symbolized the ending of re-appraisal. For purposes of data analysis, the ending of A.T.T. has been defined as: an event which symbolizes the end of re-appraisal, and/or the emergence of S.D. features. Generally, attempts toward advancement, affirmation, and independence are viewed as S.D. features.

Figure 3 outlines the A.T.T.'s onset, its key events, and its end in each subject's life. In the discussion which follows, the A.T.T. is described in terms of the degrees and

Figure 3A: The Age Thirty Transition

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Annie	Began Teaching Career	Teaching Nursing Health Activism Abortion Marital Problems	Marital Separation
Eva	Moved Out of Parents' Home	Career Change Mother's Death Pregnancy Unstable Residence Returned to Teaching	Stable Residence Left Teaching
Grace	Ended Maternity Leave	Educational Consultant Stable Marriage/Family Dissatisfaction with Teaching Left Teaching	Began Law School
Helen	Third Pregnancy	Revised Family Relations Self-Improvement Activities Marriage Enrichment	Aborted Fourth Pregnancy

Figure 3B: The Age Thirty Transition--Continued

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Dora	Change to Curriculum Development	Stable Marriage/Family Teaching becomes a Career	Senior Administrator Position
Barbara	Marital Separation	Psychotherapy Homosexual Episode Developing Career in Clinical Administration	Renewed Heterosexual Relations
Carol	Considered Leaving Business	Re-commitment to Business Remained Single Surrogate Mothering	Love Relationship
Fran	Moved to New York	Re-entry into Family of Origin Remained Single Developing Career in Community Organization	Routine Use of Birth Control Love Relationship

forms of change.

Three subjects (Carol, Dora, and Fran) had transitional periods which were relatively smooth and non-disruptive. Carol made modest re-appraisals of her involvement in the family business and of her single lifestyle. For a brief period she considered her options for alternate careers. She was unhappy at working so hard, but could not conceive of other possibilities. Similarly, she reflected on being unmarried, but felt ambivalent about giving up her "freedom". Effectively, Carol used this period to re-commit herself to the business and to her single status. Further, the period occasioned an accommodation of the 35 pounds of excess weight she'd acquired during E.A.W.

Apparently, Carol was not strongly motivated to make major changes in her life and/or felt incapable of doing so. Yet, she was desirous of forming a satisfying love relationship. Her A.T.T. ended when she entered into a long-term (4 years) relationship with a lover. Her receptivity to this relationship suggests that her fearfulness of men had decreased, and that she sought an alternative to her aloneness.

Dora's marriage and family life continued to be a stable, satisfying experience throughout this period. Reappraisal of her life structure was restricted to her career. This transitional period began with her decision to take a job in the curriculum development area. Her high job satisfaction

in this work soon contributed to a changed relationship to her profession. During this period, she began to view teaching more as a "career" than as a "job". Previously, she had felt prepared to quit work at whatever point her husband's income would allow. Increasingly, this stance had been revised. Work as a curriculum specialist promoted a stronger, more positive professional identity. This transitional period ended with her assumption of a senior administrative position in the Board of Education. The position signaled her willingness to assume a "second in command" leadership role. By now she was aware of a career ladder within her field, and could envision her advancement up the ladder.

Fran's transitional period entailed a renegotiation of her relationship with her family, an intensification of career commitment, and continuing ambivalence about commitment in a love relationship. The period began with her relocation to New York and the intent of seeking leadership positions. Very soon after her move, her brother's death and, later, her sister's psychosis, compelled her to become re-connected to her family. She had avoided family contact since her pregnancy in early E.A.W. These family stresses provided an opportunity to affirm family ties and to reappraise her attachment to the family.

Also, during this period, Fran sustained important attachments to female friends. However, relationships with

men remained rather casual and uncommitted. When she did enter a committed relationship at the end of A.T.T., she did so with a married man. Significantly, she was 30 years old when she made the decision to use birth control routinely. The decision represented her willingness to assume responsibility for being sexually active.

Fran's A.T.T. ended on this theme of taking responsibility for her sexual self, and of making an emotional commitment within a love relationship which gave her limited options for marriage. By the end of the A.T.T., she had reaffirmed her desires for career success. For the time being, she felt no desire for marriage. Career success remained the driving force, the central organizer of her life.

Yet another pattern of undergoing the A.T.T. was expressed in two further subjects' lives i.e. Annie and Grace. Their A.T.T.'s had elements of crisis. Annie's A.T.T. entailed an emerging stability in her occupational life, paralleled by the deterioration of her marriage. Throughout these years, she sustained a commitment to teaching psychiatric nursing at a school of nursing. This represented the longest institutional affiliation of her adult life. She found that she had some talent for teaching and, importantly, that it provided a channel for her intellectual growth. During this time period, her identity as a cultural nationalist served as an organizing framework for both her professional and marital life. To a large extent, she hoped that cultural

nationalism would provide a sufficient rationale for all life choices. Her unplanned pregnancy at Age 32 led to a crisis because of her husband's refusal to raise a child; and because she was forced to confront the limited influence which ideology could have on her marriage.

Annie's crisis during the A.T.T. was stimulated by her multiple losses. Following her abortion, she underwent an intense reappraisal of her life, particularly her marriage. The abortion had induced strong feelings of guilt and had compelled her to assess the strength of her desire for a child. She clarified that she felt some urgency to become a mother which would have to be reckoned with. Eventually, she became unhappy in the marriage which could not support her desires for motherhood. This transitional period ended when she separated from her husband and, soon thereafter, resolved to become pregnant. At the end of her A.T.T. she had lost a child and had experienced a painful marital separation. As well, the transition had effected a fundamental change in her life structure.

Grace's A.T.T. began with experimenting with a new path within education and ended with a decision to change careers. Throughout the period, her marriage and family life remained stable and highly satisfactory. Her identity as a wife and mother sustained vital aspects of her self, but her professional identity became intolerable. Increasingly, she was unhappy with work as a guidance

counselor and disgusted with her fellow teachers. Her transitional period was used to reappraise her professional identity and to explore alternatives. By the period's end, she had made a decision to become a lawyer. The period had been used to acknowledge the intensity of her achievement aspirations and to improve upon earlier (E.A.T.) career planning.

Finally, with regard to the A.T.T., three subjects (Barbara, Eva, and Helen) had transitions in which major crises were experienced. Barbara re-entered psychotherapy soon after her decision to separate from her husband. Between Age 30 and 33 she used therapy to manage a sense of crisis in her personal life. During this period, her professional life was a relatively stable, satisfying experience. In fact, her work evidenced the assumption of increasingly more responsible, powerful positions. Therapy was needed to manage the depression she'd experienced after the separation, and to cope with being alone. Her acute feelings of loneliness had influenced her decision to take a roommate. For a brief period she was responsive to this roommate's sexual advances. She was initially confused about her motives in this homosexual encounter, but eventually came to view it as an expression of unmet needs for "mothering", and as a flight from men.

Eva recalled that the period of her life between Age 29 and 31 was the most crisis-ridden of her entire life. In

the year since she'd moved away from her parent's home, she'd been aware of a growing desire for a professional change. She had become bored with teaching and had begun the process of changing careers. Her career change had barely gotten started when she suffered the loss of her mother. Undoubtedly, her grief over this loss contributed to a strong sense of vulnerability. We speculate that her pregnancy reflected unconscious wishes for a union to replace the lost tie with her mother. Consciously, however, she had no awareness of a desire for a child.

Eva's life was characterized by numerous relocations and considerable difficulty at achieving stability. In these three years, she had five different residences; none of which lasted over a year. Professionally, she left teaching for work in a travel agency, and then returned to teaching. Her job satisfaction was low throughout this period. Her child's birth at Age 30 had led to exploring alternatives for her future life. Initially, she relied on her family to provide needed support. Thereafter, she attempted a family arrangement with her child's father. When this failed, she established a separate household with her son in the Bronx. Finally, she returned to her native Brooklyn where her life as a single parent achieved greater stability. This transitional period ended with a stable residence and a commitment to single parenthood. Additionally, it ended with leaving the teaching field for work in an educational

research firm.

Helen's A.T.T. began with an unplanned and unwelcome pregnancy. The sense of crisis which ensued was compounded when she discovered her husband had had an extramarital affair. This transitional period was used to reappraise her life and revise her attachment to her family. Unhappy with herself, she pursued various self-improvement activities to foster self-esteem. Further, she was engaged in other efforts to review and evaluate her marriage. These concerns with self-improvement and marriage enrichment overshadowed considerations of her career. Family commitments were also intensified by the birth of a retarded daughter. However, following her year long maternity leave, and after earning the M.Ed. degree, career issues became more urgent. Her dissatisfaction with teaching mounted during these years without a clear conception of her choices.

Helen's transitional period came to an end when she'd achieved a revised attachment to her family life. Her decision to abort her pregnancy at Age 34 represented a rejection of further childrearing responsibility. Further, late in this period, she had relinquished responsibility for the teenager who'd been informally adopted by her family. Thus, it appears that she'd achieved greater clarity about her limits in nurturing others, but re-committed herself to her marriage and family with the intent of better managing its demands.

The Settling Down Period

In Levinson's scheme the Settling Down period ordinarily began at Age 32 or 33 and usually ended at 40 or 41. Two major tasks were found to be applicable to the men in Levinson's sample. These were: 1) To establish one's niche in society. This entailed a deepening of roots and anchoring life more firmly in family, occupation, or community. 2) To work at advancement. Advancement refers to a broad range of behaviors: building a better life, improving and using one's skills, or becoming more creative, contributing to society and being affirmed by it.

Levinson found two distinct phases within the S.D. period. The first was seen to occur between Age 33 and 36/37 and was called "Early Settling Down". Men were viewed as establishing a niche in society through attempts at anchoring lives more firmly. The second phase, occurring between Age 36/37 and 40/41, was called "Becoming One's Own Man"(B.O.O.M.). This second phase represented a peaking of early adulthood aspirations. Men were seen to be preoccupied with becoming more independent and self-sufficient, and as seeking affirmation in society.

Levinson distinguished five patterns which men evidenced in establishing the second adult life structure. These were: A) Advancement within a stable life structure; B) Serious failure or decline within a stable life structure; C) Breaking Out: trying for a new life structure; D)

Advancement which itself produces a change in life structure; E) Unstable life structure.

A majority (55%) of the men in Levinson's sample followed the Sequence A pattern. The remaining subjects had major difficulties during this period, with less satisfactory outcomes.

Our findings provided some support for Levinson's conception of this developmental period, but also revealed the limited applicability of S.D. conceptions for women's lives. Only half of our small sample was judged to have Sequence A/Advancement outcomes. Their lives were most easily interpreted within Levinson's theory. The next subgroup was characterized as Sequence C/Breaking Out outcomes. These three subjects had S.D. periods which contained elements of stability and transition. Only one of our subjects evidenced an unstable life structure during S.D. We will return to the limitations of S.D. conceptions in the section summarizing this chapter's findings and, later, in the final chapter.

For purposes of data analysis, we have established the end of the S.D. period according to a specific culminating event. Levinson defines the culminating event as a marker for the end of B.O.O.M. and the start of the mid-life transition. In his sample of men, the culminating event was only occasionally a great success. Most frequently, the culminating event was experienced as "a failure or a flawed

success"(p. 201).

Figure 4 outlines the onset, key events, and the end of the S.D. period in each subject's life. In the discussion which follows, we present subjects according to their outcomes in Levinson's scheme. Sequence A outcomes are presented first (Annie, Barbara, Carol, and Dora), followed by those with Sequence C outcomes (Fran, Grace, and Helen). Finally, Eva's unstable outcome is presented.

Sequence A/Advancement Outcomes

Annie's most intense involvement during this period was in adjusting to her new role as a single parent. Toward the latter half of the period, she was more actively engaged in efforts to advance occupationally. In these years her life became increasingly stabilized as a single parent, as a scholarly nurse, and as a health care activist. The period began with delivering her daughter and securing a name change. The name change reflected her interest in establishing a separate identity which would obviate using her ex-husband's surname. It signified her intense desire to re-stabilize her life in an autonomous pattern, unattached in any manner to her previous husband.

The period also began with Annie's taking a professorship in nursing at a predominantly white university. By now her commitment to teaching had deepened, and her identity as a scholar and theoretician was emerging. Her decision to seek

Figure 4A: Settling Down

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Annie	Marital Separation	Childrearing Name Change Developing as Scholar Health Activism Ph.D. Study	Home Invaded
Eva	Stable Residence Left Teaching	Childrearing Career Change Substitute Teaching Partial Self-Support Love Relationship	Returned to Parents' Home
Grace	Began Law School	Integrating Roles as Mother, Student, and Wife	Passed Bar Exam; 1st Job as Lawyer
Helen	Abortion	Left Teaching Began Law School Integrating Roles as Student, Wife, and Mother	Passed Bar Exam; 1st Job as Lawyer

Figure 4B: Settling Down--Continued

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Dora	Senior Administrator Position	Climbed Career Ladder Stable Family Life	University Administrator Role
Barbara	Renewed Heterosexual Relations	Doctoral Study Academic Administration Brief Affairs Suicide Gesture Psychotherapy Entered Love Relationship	Earned Ed.D. Deanship
Carol	Entered Love Relationship	Business Partnership Near Engagement Surrogate Mothering	Rejected Marriage
Fran	Entered Love Relationship	Climbed Career Ladder Near Marriage Ex-Husband's Death Left Social Service Began Organizational Consultation Parents' Deaths	Marriage; Independent Practice

a Ph.D. (Age 36) represented a peaking of aspirations regarding her intellectual self. Annie had begun her adult life with considerable uncertainty about her intellectual abilities. Gradually, she had crafted an identity in which her intellect was valued and trusted. The Ph.D. would provide affirmation of her intellectual abilities, and would secure her place in a valued world i.e. the university community.

Yet, while Annie's university affiliation served vital interests, it did not contain other significant aspects of her identity. These years also entailed a re-working of her identity as a black nurse concerned with health care. In the latter portion of this period, she was involved in a specific community activity which embodied her activist strivings. She assumed a major leadership role in a community-based protest against the closing of a Harlem hospital. This activism in health care was integrated with scholarly concerns in her dissertation on gentrification.

The culminating event in Annie's S.D. occurred at Age 39. It was then that her home was invaded by federal agents who accused her of being affiliated with the Black Liberation Army. The event evoked a sense of crisis; she sought psychotherapy to manage the depression which ensued. The invasion symbolized her vulnerability and oppression as a black person. The core aspect of her identity as an activist had been dramatically challenged. The costs and

consequences of her life as an activist would have to be re-examined.

Barbara's life during the early portion of S.D. differed sharply from that of the later years. From Age 33-36 she worked toward a D.P.A. degree and remained at the psychiatric service where she'd been employed since Age 29. Initially, she had several love affairs, but had no desire for a committed relationship. It was during her thirty-fifth year that she made key career decisions and revised her relationships with men. Careerwise, she elected to seek an Ed.D. and, thus, chose to ensure her advancement within academia. She was also 35 when she confronted the intensity of her desire for a more enduring love relationship. Her suicide gesture at Age 35 had followed the loss of a lover. In the year of psychotherapy which followed, she re-evaluated her needs for a committed relationship. By Age 37 she had effected a more satisfying love relationship which was longer lasting, but which limited her options for marriage.

From Age 36/37 to 40 Barbara's life was organized around a stable love relationship and advancement on an academic career ladder. Throughout this period she was ambivalent about career success and feared that her ambitions would adversely affect her relationships with men. Nevertheless, her occupational commitments served as the central organizer of her life.

The culminating event for Barbara's S.D. was earning her doctorate in education. The event symbolized her career success and enabled her to assume a position on a higher rung of the educational administration ladder i.e. as a dean.

Carol's S.D. can also be characterized in terms of the contrast between the earlier portion and the later years. From Age 33 to 37 she sustained a committed love relationship and, concurrently, remained deeply immersed in the family business. She reconsidered leaving the business (for the third time) at Age 35, but could not tolerate the frustrations of starting a new career. Further, when she discovered that her lover of four years was already married, she terminated the relationship.

From Age 37 to 39 Carol revised the overall character of her life in the direction of her greater investment in a love relationship. During these years she effected an intense romantic liaison with a man who lived out of state. For a while she was attracted to the prospect of marrying this lover. Ultimately, she rejected marriage because it would require major changes in her lifestyle.

A geographical relocation for the sake of marrying would require a reconsideration of her career. She feared that her credentials in teaching were outdated and that her skills as a businesswoman were unmarketable. Alternatively, her lover's relocation to New York evoked fears of his

dependency on her. Either choice would entail a dramatic change in her life; both choices had frightening aspects. Her rejection of marriage is viewed as the culminating event in Carol's S.D. It represented her decision to remain "wedded" to the family business which was becoming increasingly profitable, rather than risking failure in a new, uncertain venture.

Dora's life evidenced a stable relationship to both her career and her family during S. D. Throughout the period she made steady progress on a career ladder, but consistently avoided a top administrative post. To a large extent, her desires for advancement were subordinate to family life. The culminating event of S.D. was her movement out of the institution where she'd been employed since Age 20. At Age 40 she assumed a higher level administrative position in a university setting. The event represented her success in climbing the ladder, but also reflected her continued avoidance of its top rungs.

Sequence C/Breaking Out Outcomes

Between Age 31 and 34 Fran's life was stabilized occupationally and in terms of a committed love relationship. During these years, her drive for career success continued as a central organizer of her life. At Age 34 she achieved a position which symbolized her considerable success within her field. In that same year

she terminated her relationship with her married lover and made plans to remarry her first husband. For the first time since Age 25, she became desirous of a marital commitment which might anchor her life more firmly. Tragically, the death of her intended husband prevented the realization of this life plan. From Age 34 to 36 Fran was again absorbed in her career; while grieving for her lover, she was unable to enter another love relationship.

The period between Age 36 and 40 entailed a series of radical changes in Fran's life. At Age 36 she made a "radical transition" in her career by shifting to the field of organizational consultation. At Age 38 she married and introduced an element of stability for which she had longed for several years. Additionally, marriage represented her conformance with societal prescriptions for women. Since her early college years, she had rebelled against her mother's advice to marry for the sake of social acceptance. By Age 38 she had determined that marriage would be desirable both for its stabilizing, nurturing influences and for its affirming aspects. By Age 39 Fran made another career change in establishing an independent consulting practice.

The culminating events in Fran's S.D. were identified as both her marriage and her initiation of an independent practice. Her marriage represented a recognition and acceptance of needs for interdependence, while

occupationally she sought increased independence. Unlike the subjects who evidenced considerable stability during S.D., Fran's life included many elements of a transitional nature during this period. Co-mingled with her push for advancement was an intense reappraisal of her life, and a major restructuring to accommodate desires which had remained unaddressed.

Since Grace's S.D. began with admission to law school, the period entailed major difficulties in achieving stability. From Age 35 to 38, she struggled to attain some stability in her family life while pursuing a new professional identity. The task of integrating family and career demands proved more difficult than at any previous time. The rigors of student life and financial problems contributed to a sense of constant stress and turmoil. Upon completing law school at Age 38, her major preoccupation was that of restabilizing her life.

The culminating event in Grace's S.D. was passing the bar examination. At Age 39 she had secured her status within an esteemed profession. As well, she had been successful in obtaining a position on the staff of a prestigious insurance company. In the ensuing years she was most reflective about the meanings of her success.

Helen's life was stabilized around family life and an ambivalent career commitment from Age 34 to 37. The prospect of a secure teaching career did not satisfy her ambitions,

and did not represent the degree of success she desired. Her decision to enter law school at Age 37 represented an intensification of needs for occupational advancement. Between Age 37 and 41 Helen sought to integrate family and law school demands. Her near failure at this task required redoubling her efforts to succeed. Upon graduating from law school at Age 41, she was enormously proud of her success despite a low standing in the graduating class. The culminating event of her S.D. was passing the bar examination. The coming years would entail numerous efforts to restabilize her life as a "young" lawyer.

Unstable Outcome

Eva's life during S.D. evidenced areas of stability, but its overall character was unstable. The stable elements were her residence of, approximately, six years and her enduring commitment to childrearing. Her occupational life and her love relationships reflected ongoing difficulties in becoming anchored. From Age 31 to 35, Eva had attempted to make a career change which would allow her to leave the teaching field. The years at the educational research firm had been valuable and satisfying in many respects, but she had been unable to gain clarity about an alternative career direction. From Age 35 to 38, Eva elected to accept economic support from her lover. Temporarily, she chose to avoid issues of professional identity and did substitute

teaching on a part-time basis.

By the end of S.D. when Eva's love relationship ended, she was confronted with serious difficulties in achieving a relatively independent life. The culminating event in her S.D., just weeks before her 38th birthday, was moving back to her parents' home. The event symbolized her serious limitations at achieving independence from her family. S.D. had not been a period of advancement, except perhaps in becoming a better parent. Instead, her culminating event represented a degree of failure at establishing a career commitment which might have contributed to stabilization during this period.

The Mid-Life Transition

In Levinson's theory the late thirties mark the culmination of early adulthood. The mid-life transition (M.L.T.) is viewed as the bridge between early and middle adulthood. The three major tasks proposed for this period are: 1) Reappraising the past. This reappraisal includes the broader task of deillusionment. 2) Modifying the life structure. 3) Mid-life Individuation through resolution of the four polarities. The polarities were: young and old; destruction and creation; masculine and feminine; and, attachment and separateness.

In order to terminate the era of early adulthood, life in this era is reviewed and reappraised. Levinson uses the term deillusionment to identify the broader process which

merits special attention during reappraisal. It refers to the process of losing or reducing illusions, resulting in the recognition, often painfully, that long-held assumptions and beliefs about self and world are not true.

The second task of modifying the life structure entails planning for the next phase and making choices about desired changes. Levinson's male subjects were seen to make changes in both the external and internal aspects of their life structures. Whether the structural changes were modest or profound, "...the final test of the developmental work...is the satisfactoriness of the life structure emerging from it"(p. 194). Mid-life changes were observed in several components of the life structure. Changes in occupation, marriage, and the Dream were most apparent in Levinson's subjects. Additionally, the M.L.T. allowed many men to become mentors. Levinson emphasized that men's development as mentors represented a special contribution to society in middle adulthood.

The final task of the M.L.T. involves resolution of the four polarities. The young-old polarity requires confronting both the young and old within oneself and finding positive meanings of being older. It also entails a recognition of one's mortality and a consideration of the legacy i.e. what is passed on to future generations. The destruction-creation polarity follows from an awareness of one's mortality. At mid-life the growing wish to be

creative was accompanied by a greater awareness of destructive forces in oneself and others.

Integrating the masculine and feminine in oneself was also of great importance to all the men in Levinson's study. Such integration was seen to result in fuller expression of previously inhibited feminine qualities. Men were then able to free themselves from anxiety-ridden images of their mothers, and to establish qualitatively improved love relationships. Further, mentoring experiences became easier and more rewarding for men upon integrating these polarities. The final polarity of attachment-separateness required integration of needs for attachment with equally important needs for separateness. Inherent in this developmental work was a turning inward and a process of detribalization. Men became less dependent on tribal rewards and more critical of the tribe i.e. the social matrix to which he was most attached.

For the fifteen men in Levinson's sample who completed this period, the M.L.T. had an onset at Age 40 or 41 and a termination between 44 and 47. The period lasted about five years. The majority of Levinson's subjects (about 80%) had M.L.T.'s of moderate or severe crisis. For the sample of women in the present study, only three appeared to have ended the M.L.T. The majority were judged to be in the midst of this transitional period. Thus, in contrast to the retrospective data provided about earlier periods, our data

on most M.L.T.'s was on subjects' quite recent past or their present.

While the greater majority of Levinson's subjects had M.L.T.'s of crisis, only half of our sample could be so characterized. A sense of crisis occurred in two of the subjects with Advancement outcomes (Annie and Barbara), in one subject who'd had a Breaking Out outcome (Fran), and in the only subject who'd had an unstable life structure at the end of S.D.

For purposes of data analysis, we have already established the onset of M.L.T. as the culminating event of S.D. The termination of M.L.T. was more loosely defined as: the end of reappraisal and/or the enacting of life choices which were made during the transition. It will be noted that our findings with respect to the M.L.T. vary considerably among subjects. Most subjects did not evidence work on all the tasks which Levinson defined for the M.L.T.

Only two subjects (Annie and Barbara) had M.L.T.'s which included intense reappraisal, life structure modifications, and work on all the polarities. This subgroup is labeled Full Transitions in the discussion which follows. Two further subjects (Grace and Helen) were involved in active reappraisal and work on all the polarities, but they did not effect major changes in their life structures. This subgroup is labeled Modified Transitions. The remaining subjects made modest or major changes in life structures,

with limited reappraisal of lives, and with minimal work on the polarities. This subgroup is labeled Limited Transitions.

Figure 5 outlines the onset, key events, and the end of the M.L.T. in each subjects' life. In the discussion of data which follows, subjects are presented according to their patterns of undergoing the transition.

Full Transitions

When interviewed at Age 41, Annie announced that she'd just undergone a "transformation". Throughout the interviews, it was apparent that she was still actively reappraising her adult life. Annie had experienced a sense of crisis when, at Age 39, her home had been invaded by federal agents. This shocking event had catalyzed an intensive review of her life. For a few months she had used psychotherapy to cope with the anxiety, rage, and depression she'd felt. Psychotherapy had been most helpful in treating these emotional states and had facilitated her ability to think about her life more objectively. By Age 41 she was eager to articulate her insights.

Annie's reappraisal included a review of: her activist efforts; her identity as a cultural nationalist; her failed marriage; her professional identity as a young anthropologist; her development as a mother; and more. Virtually no aspect of her past life had escaped scrutiny.

Figure 5A: The Mid-Life Transition

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Annie	Home Invaded	Psychotherapy Short-term Institutional Affiliations Ph.D. Study Health Activism Childrearing	Unknown
Eva	Returned to Parents' Home	Unstable Residence Childrearing Love Relationship Employment in Community Service Bought Home	Unknown
Grace	1st Job as Lawyer	Restabilized Finances Marital Problems Development as New Lawyer Father's Death	Unknown
Helen	1st Job as Lawyer	Father's Death Marital Enrichment Career Planning with Daughters Plans for Private Practice	Unknown

Figure 5B: The Mid-Life Transition--Continued

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Dora	University Administrator Role	Husband's Heart Attack Accepted Top Administrative Position	Unknown
Barbara	Deanship	Psychotherapy Sister's Death Terminations from: Lover, College "Family", and 12 year Residence	Moved to Michigan; Bought Home
Carol	Rejected Marriage	Love Relationship Reduced Work Hours Father's Death Ended Surrogate Mothering	Stable Love Relationship
Fran	Marriage; Independent Practice	Tubular Pregnancy Loss of Scalp Hair Marital Estrangement Psychotherapy	Terminated Therapy

Generally, she described herself as: feeling more loving toward mankind; feeling more comfortable with her dependence on others, particularly her network of female friends; more aware of women's acceptance of their interdependence, as compared to men's apparent preference for independence; and, reflective about the costs and consequences of her "revolutionary" ideals.

Annie's mid-life individuation process reflected work on each of the polarities. She felt positive about growing older, in large part, because she could speak more authoritatively as a health activist. When younger she had often been accused of adolescent idealism. In the future she hoped her age would shield her from such accusations, and would enable her idealistic views to be heard nonetheless. Her work on the attachment-separateness polarity was apparent in her reflections on women's issues. Marriage and childrearing had promoted greater acceptance of her attachment to others, but had led her to avoid the considerable dependency which she'd experienced with her husband. She viewed this dependency as an example of the problematic aspects of marriage for women. Unwittingly, she had subordinated herself to her husband and had rationalized this within the cultural nationalist ideology. Now she was becoming more interested in feminism as an alternative belief system.

Masculine-feminine concerns were integral to Annie's

reappraisal. Temporarily, she chose to remain uncommitted in a love relationship. It seemed to her that men confused love with their needs for power and dominance over women. Her own traumatic experiences with men had led her to be acutely sensitive to men's limitations in being genuinely loving.

Annie's future plans reflected increased desires to be creative, as well as rejection of attachments to traditional institutions. Her dominant wish was to contribute research for the improved health care of blacks. Her choice of a non-traditional, new institution with black leadership would, she hoped, allow such contributions. If this plan could be effected, her affiliation with predominantly white institutions would be limited. Probably, she thought, she would continue her pattern since Age 37 of short-term affiliations with academic institutions.

Barbara re-entered psychotherapy at Age 41 to contemplate changes in several areas of her life. She wanted to separate from several relationships, but felt emotionally unable to do so. She wanted to leave the college where she'd been employed since Age 35, but felt entangled with her boss and unclear about her career choices. As well, she sensed that her love relationship with Thomas would not lead to the marriage she desired. She was already in therapy when, tragically, her sister's death also contributed to a sense of crisis in her life.

Barbara used psychotherapy to cope with her actual and anticipated losses during this period. She terminated with the college "family" which she'd become attached to, and extricated herself from the intense attachments to her boss and her lover. She opted to continue climbing the educational administration ladder by taking a deanship out of state. The move required a further termination from her stable residence of over 12 years. The massive change occurring during these years made for an extremely stressful transition.

Barbara's reappraisal of her life had confronted her with work on all of the polarities. If she wished to continue climbing a career ladder, she would have to opt for deanships in nursing or seek other non-nursing administrative positions. The latter seemed impossible to find within New York. Virtually every commitment she'd made heretofore was relinquished. She made choices which challenged her capacity for a more separate, autonomous life. As well, she opted for a path in which her desires for power and achievement would be realized. At this juncture in her life, she was aware that issues of masculinity and femininity were core aspects of her decision. Her choices seemed to be ones of acting on (masculine) needs for power and achievement, or of de-emphasizing such needs and restructuring her life to accommodate (feminine) needs for nurturing relationships.

In effect, she chose the masculine expression in which her needs for nurturing relationships were de-emphasized.

Throughout this period, Barbara was aware of an urgent need to act decisively. She could no longer postpone the choice between nursing and non-nursing positions. Nor could she center her life in a marital relationship in the absence of a prospective partner. Getting older meant that she would have to take her professional future more seriously than ever before. If she chose wisely, the new college setting could provide a new "home base" where life could be stabilized. Getting older meant facing the possibility that her future life might not include marriage. At mid-life Barbara wrestled with the illusion that success and power would bring increasing happiness. Instead, it had required far more compromises than she'd imagined.

Modified Transitions

Upon initiating her new career as a lawyer, Grace was strongly motivated to restabilize her family life. During her M.L.T. she was involved in efforts to achieve this stability, while also reappraising her life. The most significant changes during this period appeared to be internal. No major changes were effected in her life structure.

Grace's reappraisal centered on her new identity as a lawyer and on her marriage. She had given much thought to

the meaning of her success. She seemed to have undergone a process of detribalization in which she felt less dependent on her profession for self-esteem. Further, in reappraising her marriage, she'd revised her needs for attachment; she was more interested in having areas of functioning separate from her husband. Growing older was a positive experience in many respects. She felt more loving toward herself and less dependent on others' appraisals of her. She enjoyed being a physically attractive woman and felt much less inhibited sexually. In the past years, she'd become more desirous of "passionate" relationships. She now wished to express all of her feelings more openly, instead of being emotionally "cool" and contained.

At the time of the interviews, Grace's work on the young-old polarity was characterized by these concerns with personality change. She had not done work on issues regarding her mortality, or on the creative-destructive polarity. She had been unable to grieve when her father died. It had been too painful to think about his death, or about their past relationship. She was aware that she had a pattern of being slow to forgive others for transgressions toward her. Her parents and her sister's hurtful behaviors toward her in earlier years were still remembered vividly. In a sense, she harbored an image of herself as an abused child. Given this self-image, she was more preoccupied with others' destructiveness toward her than with her own

destructiveness. She had not yet come to terms with the coexistence of loving and destructive impulses in herself as well as others.

Helen's mid-life transition included: an adjustment to her new lawyer identity; an increased involvement with her daughter's career plans; the development of a stronger marital bond; and, plans to enter private practice as an associate to a senior colleague. The period was devoted to restabilizing her life post-law school with a modest reappraisal of her past life. Few actual changes were made in her life structure. Her report of the period suggested that the primary changes were in integrating a new professional identity, and in re-examining her personality.

This was a period of quite high job satisfaction for Helen. She enjoyed her work as a lawyer and felt prideful in her accomplishment. Yet, she was aware that some personality patterns made her adjustment difficult. Her tendencies to be disorganized and inattentive to details created some problems. Further, she continued to effect too intense attachments to clients which made her job unwieldy at times. She was acutely aware that these were long-standing personality patterns which would require her continued attention. To some extent, she was becoming more accepting of these personal limitations. She felt more willing to accept responsibility for the influence of her disorganization on her family life in earlier years.

Previously, she had been inclined to blame family members, or other factors, for the sense of role overload she'd felt.

Helen's plan to enter private practice reflected her desire to function more independently. As well, she was envisioning a judgeship in her future. Generally, she looked forward to a time when she could shift her focus from family commitments to providing leadership for social problems. Getting older, she hoped, would allow her to contribute more to societal betterment, particularly for black people. Her Dream was undergoing revision in the direction of becoming a powerful member of the dominant generation. Although she was mindful that there were few women judges, she was optimistic that she could achieve her goal. Apparently, her feminine sense of self was changing to include heightened achievement aspirations. Now her identity allowed for the masculine qualities which could not be expressed during her childbearing years.

There were no further indications of Helen's work on the polarities. She felt positive about growing older and wished to be more generative, but she had considerable difficulty coping with death. Her mother-in-law's death and, later, her father's death had been very painful experiences. Adaptively, she had resorted to a belief in reincarnation to manage the anxiety caused by these loved ones' deaths.

Limited Transitions

Carol's mid-life transition began with a rejection of marriage. During the period she made several changes in her life. She entered into a stable love relationship; she changed her work hours to allow for more personal time; and, she no longer served as a surrogate mother to nieces and nephews. Each of these changes was effected with minimal reappraisal of her life. There was no evidence that the period included an intensification of questions about her life, or a desire to re-evaluate previous life choices. Her descriptions of decisions made during the period conveyed her sense of being more influenced by external factors than by internal motives. Thus, for example, she attributed her reduction in work hours to her brother's suggestion that they do so.

Further, there were no clear indications of Carol's effort to become more individuated. She had re-affirmed her needs for separateness when she rejected marriage, again, at Age 43, but she had not reflected on the intensity of her needs for autonomy and separateness. Growing older was not a conscious concern. Carol asserted that she had changed very little since her twenties. She had little awareness of signs of aging and, moreover, was determined to "stay young".

Generally, Carol's mid-life period may be seen as one of

minimal reappraisal and limited individuation, but with significant modifications in her life structure nevertheless. Not even her father's death had evoked thoughts about her own mortality. Such reflections seemed too painful to allow into awareness.

Dora's M.L.T. also evidenced a major change in her life structure with limited reappraisal of her life. She'd accepted a top administrative post because of her husband's heart attack. Thus, the change reflected her response to external forces, instead of internally based desires for change. Generally, she'd given little thought to growing older. She had investigated an early retirement in order to consider her possibilities for a second career, or to allow for extensive travel. She had no particular plans for a second career, but was mildly intrigued with the idea.

Dora emphasized that she was "the same person I've always been. I haven't changed". She was prideful that, even when her husband had almost died, she had not become reflective about death. Instead, she had mobilized herself to attend to the practical economic issues she'd face if he'd died.

There was little evidence of Dora's work on the polarities. She made the change to her new position with little reflection on matters of separateness and attachment, or on masculine and feminine issues. Further, she had not experienced any change in terms of desires to be creative, or considered her own or others' destructiveness. Mid-life

for Dora was much like other periods in her life: orderly, free of significant conflict, and imminently manageable.

Eva lived in three different settings before acquiring a stable residence during this period. She had a limited sense of personal responsibility for the apparent instability of this period. For example, she believed the frequent moves had been a reflection of her "bad luck" in finding suitable living quarters. Generally, her M.L.T. reflected a limited reappraisal of her life. Her primary concern was one of stabilizing life for her and her son. She was prideful of her success in buying a home because it represented being a good parent. Similarly, Eva continued to work in her job as a program director primarily for economic stability. She was quite unhappy in the job, but she was determined to be a good provider for her son.

Eva's intensified desire to be a good parent appeared to be the major developmental work of this period. Growing older stimulated her to feel more identified with her own (deceased) parents. In a sense, her goal had become one of being as good a parent to her son as her parents had been for her. Growing older also stimulated desires to function more autonomously in the occupational sphere. Eva fantasized launching an independent practice, but did not yet know how this could be achieved. Since her occupational identity had not been firmly established, it was difficult for this investigator to imagine how she could accomplish

this goal.

Apart from these evidences of developmental work, Eva's M.L.T. was unremarkable. Individuation, with related work on the polarities, was not a dominant concern. She did not undergo the self-evaluation which might have resulted in questions about her early adult years. Internal exploration was neither familiar nor comfortable. In fact, she disparaged the term "mid-life transition". Defensively, she asserted that the term was a unique invention of whites to describe their own problems with aging. The notion that mid-life could include an increased sense of vulnerability felt alien and offensive to her.

Fran's mid-life transition reflected a moderate degree of crisis. The sense of crisis followed her years of grieving over her parents' deaths. Subsequently, her tubular pregnancy (Age 42) was followed by loss of her scalp hair and an excessive weight gain. Further, her step-daughter joined the family and marital conflict became more apparent. By Age 43 Fran felt overwhelmed by her losses and in need of psychotherapeutic help.

Fran terminated psychotherapy after only three months. We speculate that this M.L.T. evoked intense anxieties about losses which were expressed in somatic symptoms and body-image problems, rather than in psychological work. The therapy process had entailed reviewing her childhood past, particularly her relationship with her mother. Reappraisal,

in the context of psychotherapy, had re-awakened painful memories from which she took flight. Also, quite possibly, her efforts at restabilizing her life following a late S.D. marriage may have promoted resistance to the task of reappraisal. In any event, it is striking to note that her M.L.T. was characterized more by symptom expression than by active reappraisal.

Fran made few modifications in her life structure during this period, and evidenced little work on the polarities. It was not until she was 49 years old that she became more reflective about the meanings of growing older. Her M.L.T. was consumed with continued efforts at advancement through her independent practice, and with managing the stressors she encountered. Again, speculatively, Fran's emphasis on mastery and control over her life may have prevented greater awareness of individuation issues. Her approach to mid-life was one of taking flight from the depression she experienced and avoiding the regressive pulls it encouraged.

Entering Middle Adulthood

Levinson's theory of development proposes that the M.L.T. is followed by building a life structure for the start of a new era. The picture offered for Entering Middle Adulthood (E.M.A.) was more sketchy than for the earlier periods. The main tasks for E.M.A. were: 1) To make crucial choices for life in middle adulthood. 2) To build a life structure around these choices.

We have already established the end of M.L.T., and therefore, the beginning of E.M.A. as: the end of reappraisal and/or the enacting of life choices made during the transition. Based on these criteria, only three subjects appeared to be in the E.M.A. period i.e. Barbara, Carol, and Fran. Figure 6 outlines the onset, key events, and the end of this period for each subject.

Barbara

Barbara's M.L.T. had entailed massive changes in her life structure. By the period's end, she had become better adjusted to life in Michigan, and had made a commitment to her new deanship. Also, she had bought a home; thereby achieving a degree of stability in her new home base. By Age 46 she made yet another decision to solidify her new life in Michigan: she invited her mother to live with her. When she was interviewed at Age 46, Barbara reported an emerging sense of stability and contentment with her life. There had been some difficulty in adjusting to life with her mother, but on the whole, this had been a good decision of mutual benefit.

At Age 46 Barbara anticipated that she would have only one or two further career moves to make. If she elected to strive for a vice-presidency, a provost position, or a presidency, she would have to begin plotting such a course soon. However, if she could settle for more modest goals,

Figure 6: Entering Middle Adulthood

Subjects	Onset of Period	Key Events	End of Period
Barbara	Moved to Michigan; Bought Home	New Deanship Living with Mother Love Relationship (Long Distance)	Unknown
Carol	Stable Love Relationship	Maintained Reduced Work Hours Increased Involvement with Widowed Mother Indecision re: Hysterectomy	Unknown
Fran	Terminated Psychotherapy	Established Own Consulting Company Marital Estrangement	Unknown

she might remain at her present position longer. She was ambivalent about striving for continued advancement on the academic ladder. For the present, she was content to enjoy her life without feeling immediate pressure to draft other plans.

Barbara had been unable to establish romantic ties in her new home base. Since the black population was quite small, she had met few unmarried black men. She had sustained the relationship with her New York lover, in part, because of limited choices. Yet, she was aware of the vulnerability of this long-distance romance. Given the stability of other aspects of her life, she hoped that the relationship would sustain itself. In this early portion of middle adulthood, she rated her life satisfaction as moderately high. Whether or not the love relationship endured, she was confident in her ability to adapt to this loss.

Carol

During these years Carol sustained her love relationship with Ben. Their intimacy deepened and she felt much enriched by this stable relationship. Occupationally, she was able to maintain a reduced work load and to keep her occupational life within manageable boundaries. New concerns during this period were her increased involvement with her widowed mother, and her indecision regarding a hysterectomy. Carol felt a special sense of responsibility to provide financial

and emotional support to her mother. Thus far, the mother was in good health. Carol hoped her mother would remain alive for many further years. Indeed, she found it impossible to contemplate the loss of her mother.

Carol's indecisiveness regarding a hysterectomy seemed to reflect her denial of the significance of such a procedure. She was aware of fearing surgery itself, but had not considered the meanings of losing this symbol of her feminine self. She denied any negative reactions to the end of her childbearing years but, at the same time, was notably conflicted about a procedure which would eliminate the possibility of a pregnancy.

Carol's middle adult years reflected clear indications of stability and a moderately high level of life satisfaction. However, this stability was achieved without reflection on the meanings of growing older. Undoubtedly, the coming years would bring new threats to her denial of aging, and new opportunities to come to terms with it.

Fran

Fran's early years of middle adulthood entailed: establishing a relatively profitable consulting company; an emerging focus for this work of "cultural diversity in management"; and, increasing estrangement in her marriage. When she was interviewed at Age 49, Fran expressed a sense of approaching a "transition" in her life. She felt an

increased desire to contribute creative products, but did not yet know what form this might take. She imagined publishing her ideas, or perhaps, developing audio-visual tools for educational purposes. Her marital estrangement caused unhappiness for many reasons, but was especially troublesome because she wanted her husband's support in pursuing these creative urges.

Fran's life evidenced clear elements of stability during these years, but she rated her life satisfaction as low to fair. Periodically, in recent years she'd thought about suicide. She had never attempted such, but depressive feelings persisted during this period. She was insightful regarding her tendencies toward self-hatred but, in this investigator's view, underestimated the unconscious influences at work. Fran's self-image since early in E.A.W. had been that of a "self-actualizer". She had believed that her superior intellect, and her conscious desire to grow, would ensure her continued development. This self-actualizing philosophy had been minimally revised to take into account the inevitable limitations imposed by aging. We speculate that Fran's development in the coming years will necessitate coming to terms with her limitations and vulnerabilities in a deeper way. At Age 49 it seemed that she was still guided by an idealized goal of perfection which made despair an everpresent feature of her life.

Summary of Findings

The preceding discussions of subjects' lives in each developmental period has illuminated aspects of Levinson's theory which received support, as well as those which were unsupported by the data. Our findings paralleled Levinson's regarding the centrality of two or three components in a given life structure. Also, we found that subject's "developmental work" for the Novice phase was comparable to that of Levinson's male sample, with some notable exceptions. The "developmental tasks" of forming mentor relationships, and of forming a marriage and family, were not applicable to every subject's life. Also, not surprisingly, we found that these women's choices relative to managing sexuality and the potential for pregnancy were pivotal to the developmental work during the Novice phase.

Our findings regarding the S.D. and the M.L.T. periods provided only minimal support for Levinson's conception of these periods. Our review of three subjects' lives during the E.M.A. provided support for Levinson's conception of this period, but stimulated questions regarding the evaluation of the "satisfactoriness" of life structures in E.M.A.

This section also summarizes our findings in terms of the two key propositions of Levinson's theory. These concern the age ranges for the developmental periods, and the

occurrence of alternating stable and transitional periods. The discussion takes our findings regarding the S.D. and M.L.T. periods into account.

The Age Ranges

A key proposition of Levinson's theory is that the life cycle evolves through a sequence of age-linked eras, each of which contains a series of developmental periods. Levinson concluded that: "There is a single, most frequent age at which each period begins. There is a range of variation, usually about two years above and below the average" (p. 53).

Table 2 provides a summary of our findings with regard to age ranges for each developmental period, except for the M.L.T. and E.M.A. periods since we do not have data regarding these periods' endings. Generally, our findings provided support for this aspect of Levinson's theory, but raised questions regarding its limitations. Our approach to data analysis involved examining each life based on specific criteria for the beginning and end of each developmental period. Using this approach, we found that every subjects' age ranges for the E.A.T. and E.A.W. periods corresponded to those predicted by the theory. However, beginning with the A.T.T., there were several instances in which our assigned age ranges differed from those predicted by the theory.

Table 2: Age Ranges for Four Developmental Periods

	Developmental Periods			
	E.A.T.	E.A.W.	A.T.T.	S.D.
Predicted Age Ranges	17/18 to 22/23	22/23 to 28/29	28/29 to 33/34	33/34 to 40/41
Observed Age Ranges	16-23	20-30	28-34	31-40

Transitional periods were thought to last four or five years; while stable periods lasted six or seven years, or ten at most. Since a majority of our subjects were in the midst of the M.L.T. period, we cannot draw conclusions about the duration of this period. Our data regarding subjects' A.T.T. and S.D. periods can, however, be so evaluated. Half of our subjects had A.T.T.'s which lasted about three years. But, four subjects (Carol, Dora, Eva, and Fran) had A.T.T.'s of only two years duration. A majority of subjects had S.D. periods of six years or more, but two subjects (Annie and Grace) had S.D.'s which lasted only about five years.

Apparently, our subjects differed from Levinson's male sample in having shorter A.T.T.'s. The data regarding the S.D. period is more difficult to interpret. Quite possibly, our assignment of age ranges for the two subjects with shortened S.D.'s is problematic. Conceivably, their S.D. periods could be extended into the time period which we have labeled M.L.T. However, based on our application of the criteria for each period, we believe our assigned age ranges to be valid interpretations of the theory. Accordingly, we are more inclined to raise questions about Levinson's conceptualization of stable versus transitional periods.

Stable versus Transitional Periods

Perhaps the most pivotal proposition in Levinson's theory is that the life structure evolves through "a relatively

orderly sequence" during the adult years. The essential character of the sequence was described as: "a series of alternating stable (structure-building) periods and transitional (structure-changing) periods" (p. 49). At this point we address the question of whether the "essential character" of the lives we studied was one of alternating stable and transitional periods.

Our primary finding is as follows: All subjects evidenced an early adult transition which was followed by a stable, first adult life structure. Thereafter, the sample was evenly divided into subgroups of those whose lives evidenced a continuing alternation between transitional and stable periods, and those whose lives did not. The first subgroup provides confirmation for Levinson's theory. The second subgroup challenges the theory from several perspectives.

The first subgroup was composed of subjects who sustained a career commitment throughout their adult lives i.e. Annie, Barbara, Carol, and Dora. We speculate that these career commitments provided an anchoring and a continuity which influenced the overall character of lives. Importantly, within this subgroup there were sharp differences in the way life structure changes were manifested.

Annie and Barbara's transitional periods reflected exploration of their internal worlds, and an intense reappraisal of existing life structures. Changes occurring

during their transitional periods reflected internally motivated modifications in life structures. By contrast, Carol and Dora's transitional periods reflected a limited exploration of internal worlds. Changes during the A.T.T. and M.L.T. seemed to be stimulated by external, environmental influences. Thus, while all four subjects' lives evidenced an alternation between stable and transitional periods, there were qualitative differences in styles of effecting change. Annie and Barbara assumed more proactive stances in shaping their lives, while Carol and Dora's stances were more reactive.

The second subgroup evidenced an early adult transition and a stable, first adult life structure. Thereafter, their life courses reflected major changes emanating from decisions made during the A.T.T., or during the S.D. period. Each of these subjects had S.D. periods which had elements of a transitional nature, or which was unstable.

Three of these subjects used the S.D. period to restructure their lives and to accommodate new identities i.e. Fran, Grace, and Helen. Their S.D. periods have elements of a transitional nature intermingled with elements of stability. And, their M.L.T.'s reflect continuing efforts to achieve stability. The fourth member of this subgroup, Eva, evidenced continuing problems with stabilizing her life during S.D.

This second subgroup raises several issues relative to

Levinson's conception of an orderly sequence. Significantly, the second subgroup was composed of subjects who lacked continuity in occupational identities. In fact, we account for the difference between the subgroups in terms of subjects' relationships to their careers.

Subjects in the first subgroup retained core professional identities which they altered in response to career goals. Thus, Dora continued in the field of education, though she shifted to different specialty areas during transitions. Annie and Barbara remained committed to the nursing profession, though they each pursued specific roles which were meaningful to them. Carol continued as a partner in the family business, despite urges to escape this demanding work.

Generally, subjects in the second subgroup were expressing strong dissatisfaction with their professional identities. Grace elected to leave teaching because it provided too little support for a sense of positive self-esteem. Eva's life post-A.T.T. reflected a rejection of teaching, as well as continuing unclarity about her occupational choices. Helen left teaching to counter feelings of stagnation; her new lawyer identity supported a desire to grow and continue achieving. Fran left social work to become an organizational consultant because she viewed the change as an advancement.

This second subgroup can also be subdivided into patterns

of life structure change. Grace and Helen made changes following periods of active reappraisal of their lives. Their pursuit of new occupational identities was aimed at achieving a better fit between "self" and "world". By contrast, Eva and Fran's changes were not a consequence of such reappraisal. Eva left teaching without a clear (internal) picture of her dissatisfactions with the profession. Fran's career change was also made in the absence of a picture of the self to be revised. Neither Eva nor Fran joined issues of career change with those of desired changes in the self.

Irrespective of the motives for changing professional identities, all of the subjects in the first subgroup had Sequence A/Advancement outcomes at the end of S.D. Subjects in the second subgroup had either Breaking Out or Unstable outcomes. Clearly, the S.D. period exerted a significant influence on the overall pattern of an "orderly" sequence alternating between stable and transitional periods.

In our final chapter we will offer several interpretations of these findings regarding both the S.D. period and the overall pattern of life structure change.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS: RACIAL IDENTITY

We have already taken issue with Levinson's conceptualization of ethnicity as a component of the life structure. In this theoretical model, ethnicity was conceived of as a component, whose place in the life structure was individually determined. Thus, had we elected to treat ethnicity as such, each subject's life would have been examined in terms of whether ethnicity occupied a central place, was more peripheral, or even marginal in the structure. Levinson's guiding assumption was that individuals might choose to make race a vital component of their lives, or might be relatively uninvested in their racial identity. He notes that, through the life course, components may shift from center to periphery, or vice-versa; formerly important components may be eliminated altogether (p.44). Clearly, such changes would be possible only if racial identity is not a feature of the self.

When racial identity is conceived of as a feature of the self, its role in life structure evolution is broadened beyond that of a "choice" in adult living. We suggest that racial identity, like gender and other biologically determined identities, is more accurately viewed as an

enduring, immutable fact of existence. Accordingly, individuals may be seen to have a wide range of choice in establishing relationships to their racial identities, but life structures would always be influenced by race. Based on this revised conception of race, the research question for the present study is not whether race is a central or a peripheral component, but more fundamentally: How is the overall character of life structure evolution influenced by racial identity ?

This particular conception of the role of racial identity in adult development requires that we analyze the influence of the "racial self" on life structure evolution. Such an analysis would be aided by theories regarding the self, including the racial self. Levinson's theory of the life structure offers only a limited view of the interfaces between life structure evolution and development of the self.

It is generally recognized that the childhood years mark the emergence of racial identity. Upon beginning adulthood, racial identity, like other aspects of identity, has already been firmly established. An accurate understanding of the evolution of racial identity in adulthood would, necessarily, build upon insights about childhood development. Yet, Levinson's theory makes no attempt to portray the individual's adult development as a process which builds upon a childhood past. Life structures are

analyzed without a systematic consideration of a childhood past, or of its continuing influence on adult development. Concepts such as separation-individuation provide some continuity with developmental processes in childhood, but a given individual's specific history and developmental issues are not systematically considered in Levinson's approach.

Given these limitations in Levinson's conceptualization of ethnicity, and in the theory's consideration of a childhood past, we have few choices for analyzing our findings regarding the evolution of a racial self. For purposes of this exploratory research, we have identified three approaches to analyzing the influence of racial identity on adult development. Each approach provides a descriptive account of subject's relationship to race during adulthood. First, we reviewed Dreams to determine how subjects' awareness of racial issues was expressed in visions of their future lives. Second, we describe the "coping styles" which each subject used in adapting to the racial situation. Finally, we formulated a new developmental task which allowed us to examine how racial self-esteem evolved over the adult life course.

The Dream

Our analysis of subjects' Dreams revealed several significant differences in terms of the influence of racial

identity. The most obvious differences were determined by the subject's chronological age and the presence or absence of racial segregation at the time when Dreams were being formed. All of our subjects were born during a historical era in which racial segregation was an unavoidable fact of life. Born between 1934 and 1941, every subject had childhood experiences with segregation and discrimination against black people. We can only speculate about how each subject's adult Dream was shaped by these early experiences with racism.

However, beginning with the E.A.T., we discerned several specific influences on the Dream. The E.A.T. represented subjects first adult life choices. For some subjects these choices were dramatically restricted by racial segregation. Women who completed high school between 1948 and 1953 were most overtly affected i.e. Barbara, Carol, and Fran. These women were prohibited from freely choosing educational institutions. Their decision-making began with a consideration of whether to attend a predominantly black, or a racially integrated school. Carol's parents made the choice for her, believing that a predominantly black school was the best choice for her. By contrast, Barbara and Fran opted to seek admission to racially integrated schools. Both had the experience of being rejected by these white institutions. Yet, both persisted in their attempts and, eventually, were successful in becoming one of "the first"

black persons to gain admission to their schools.

These three women dreamed of a successful life despite their encounters with a segregated society. Since they had grown up in a southern state, they were aware that their life choices would continue to be restricted if they remained in the south. By the end of the E.A.T., all three had relocated to a northern state to improve their opportunities for a successful life. In effect, they opted to seek a society where their Dreams would be more easily pursued, absent the flagrant racism they'd experienced in the south.

The remaining subjects began their E.A.T. in a northern state. Their decisions regarding college were made between 1955 and 1959. This period pre-dated civil rights legislation, affirmative action, and other forms of social change which made segregation illegal. These younger subjects did not encounter the flagrant forms of racism experienced by Barbara, Carol, and Fran during the E.A.T. They were not rejected by schools on the basis of their race, but each was aware of how few blacks had achieved success in previous generations. Each subject recognized that racism was a social pathology to be contended with in shaping their adult lives. They formed Dreams of occupational achievement despite the odds against their success. In many instances, their Dreams embodied their parent's hopes for the next generation.

We may also examine the Dream in terms of its explicit attention to racial issues. Half of the sample formed Dreams in which racial issues were so addressed. Annie's Dream of becoming a ballet dancer was revised during the E.A.T. precisely because she despaired of her chances for success as a black person. She began her adult life on a theme of restricting her choices; avoiding paths which had been infrequently chosen by other blacks. Grace's Dream of becoming a teacher had been nourished in a family which was embittered by racism. Her Dream evolved with the knowledge that her father had been prevented from realizing the same Dream upon moving to New York. Her parents provided ongoing advice about the obstacles posed for blacks in a racist society. Grace began her adult life on a theme of being determined to succeed where her father had failed. As such, her Dream represented a generational challenge.

Barbara's Dream of becoming a professional was also fueled by the knowledge of her mother's encounters with racism. Her mother's encouragement to "Dream big" expressed her hope that Barbara would rise above their status as poor people. Though Barbara saw no examples of "successful" blacks in her hometown, she dreamed of breaking the cycle of poverty and despair. She began E.A.W. on a note of being "the first" black person to graduate from her nursing school. This identity as "the first" fostered some positive self-esteem, and exerted a strong influence on her continuing Dream

formation.

Fran's earliest Dream also contained explicit attention to racial issues. Initially, she dreamed of becoming a sociologist who would combat poverty and racism. Her Dream reflected a desire to improve the welfare of blacks who, like her family, had been oppressed, poor people. Her Dream formation was based in a sense of a special responsibility to past and future generations of blacks.

Other subjects' Dreams did not evidence such explicit attention to race, but were clearly influenced by the racial climate. These women earned professional degrees prior to the social upheaval of the 1960's. Upon graduating from college, they represented a very small percentage of blacks who had earned this symbol of success. During their E.A.T. periods, every subject was aware that a Dream of earning a college degree set them apart from the masses of black people. They began E.A.W. with the hope that their adult lives would be made easier by virtue of these credentials.

Significantly, every one of these subjects chose occupational identities as a teacher, nurse, or social worker. Their economic limitations served as the major influence on Dream formation. Thus, they chose professions which were most economically feasible. In addition, in making these choices, they selected female-dominated professions which emphasize service to others, and which are most frequently chosen by black women. Thus, their early

adult life choices were most strongly influenced by economics and racial/cultural influences. For these subjects, Dream formation appeared to be influenced less by individual factors, than by racial and economic factors.

Coping Styles

Every subject's adult life contained indicators of their "coping styles" in addressing racial concerns. By coping styles, we refer to a broad range of behaviors which, taken together, culminate in a pattern of coping with life in a racist society. The behaviors included in an assessment of coping styles included: the presence or absence of socio-political value systems relative to the racial situation; patterns of employment in racially segregated versus racially integrated institutions; the assumption of leadership for blacks as a race of people; patterns of socializing with blacks and whites; the presence or absence of "race consciousness"; and, generally, any other specific influences of racial identity on adult choices.

The first coping style is represented by Annie only. Her adult life evidences the use of racial identity as a central organizing theme for a majority of life choices. Beginning in the E.A.W., Annie attempted to use cultural nationalism as a rationale for life choices. From the E.A.W. through the A.T.T., she was employed by predominantly black

institutions. She conceived of herself as an activist and revolutionary in providing leadership for blacks as a people. Her three years of work in a predominantly white institution during S.D. was followed by a decision to work, primarily, in black institutions. She had little social contact with whites after her E.A.T. and tended to conduct her life in all black social circles.

The second coping style is represented by Barbara, Eva, and Fran. Their adult lives evidence the use of racial identity as an organizing theme for professional work. Each woman felt a special responsibility to improve the welfare of blacks through professional leadership. None had a particularly elaborate socio-political value system on which to base their work, but all were strongly motivated to use their professional skills to develop programs for blacks.

Within this second coping style, employment patterns revealed important concerns about race. Eva's professional work took place entirely in predominantly black institutions. At no point did she substantially revise this pattern. Barbara spent the bulk of the years from E.A.W. through S.D. in predominantly black institutions. During her M.L.T., she confronted the advantages and disadvantages of being so affiliated. Her decision to seek a major leadership role in a white institution represented a willingness to adapt to the unique demands of black leadership in a white institution.

Fran worked in integrated institutions throughout the E.A.W. Most of her work from the A.T.T. through early S.D. was in community development for poor and black people. During the latter half of S.D., she began a new pattern of being the sole black person in a white institution. Thereafter, from the M.L.T on, she left institutional life and began an independent consulting practice. Her consulting practice evolved a specific focus on racial issues i.e. "cultural diversity in management". Thus, the majority of her adult life entailed an acute sensitivity to racial matters.

Apparently, despite individual responses to these issues, the mid-life transition represented a critical decision-making period for Annie, Barbara, Eva, and Fran. Developmentally, the task of reappraising lives contained crucial questions regarding an optimal fit between "self" and institutional life. Only Barbara opted to assume a major leadership role in an interracial settings. The other subjects opted for continued affiliation with black institutions, or limited affiliations with white institutions.

The third coping style to be described evidences the use of racial identity as a background theme for various life choices. The remaining subjects can be so described. None of these subjects devoted lives to the welfare of blacks as a people, but all remained conscious of the racial climate

relative to blacks. Most relied on black people for a social circle, and had limited social contact with whites. None developed under a particular socio-political value system, except perhaps that of a belief in self-determination for blacks. None were actively engaged in extensive organizational work to address blacks' social and civic rights. Yet, all expressed continuing awareness of events and circumstances contributing to social change for blacks.

The background theme for these subjects was quite individually determined. Carol felt a special responsibility to enable her nieces and nephews gain a vocational or college education. She evidenced a strong sense of family loyalty, as well as the conviction that black families should help the next generation to succeed. Dora felt a special sensitivity to her husband's need for a dominant role in his family; she expressed the belief that his family life should provide a relief from the pressures on black men in the wider society.

Grace remained consistently focused on blacks need for "self-reliance" in the face of whites racist, non-supportive roles. By the M.L.T. she had become even more strongly convinced of the necessity for self-reliance. Her experiences with racism had reinforced this view on numerous occasions. Helen also felt a sense of responsibility to contribute to the improved welfare of blacks. Her work with

the reading program during early adulthood reflected her commitment to blacks. By the M.L.T. she had become even more committed to address the social and welfare problems of blacks.

A New Developmental Task

In Chapter One we clarified the distinction between personal self-esteem and racial self-esteem. The latter was defined as a set of affective evaluations about one's race. Further, we suggested that it is racial self-esteem which has undergone revision among blacks in the past few decades. Historically, blacks have been forced to adapt to a social context which has been hostile or indifferent to their development. Maintenance of positive racial self-esteem has been extremely difficult, if not impossible, in such a context.

We anticipated that the sample studied would provide data regarding the maintenance of racial self-esteem through the adult years. Indeed, because this psychological work is seen to be central to adult development, we formulated a developmental task to guide our examination of adult lives. The newly formulated task is as follows:

To develop a relationship to race that facilitates a recognition of racism as a social fact; and to develop positive racial self-esteem.

This task was defined to emphasize the importance of reality appropriate coping for healthy adaptation. It directs our attention to the adaptive mechanisms which may be used to cope with racism. And, it underscores the value of positive racial self-esteem for growth and development. In the analyses which follow, each subject's work on this task is discussed. The presentations differ from our earlier analyses of life structures in that they focus on subject's personalities and styles of adaptation.

Annie

Racial identity was a central organizing theme for virtually all of Annie's life choices. Annie captured the essence of her commitment to black people in this manner: "The struggle is my life and my life is the struggle". This expression conveys her sense of total dedication to a life of activism and "revolutionary struggle". As well, it characterizes her life as one of frustration and hardship by virtue of this commitment.

Annie's relationship to race entailed a high degree of consciousness about issues of race and oppression. She remained vigilant in assessing the presence of racism in any given environmental setting. Her adaptation reflected the element of "healthy paranoia" described by Grier and Cobbs (1968). That is, she maintained a high degree of suspicion toward whites in which her sense of reality remained intact. In Annie's view, racism was at the core of American

culture, infesting every institution with its pathological effects.

Adaptively, throughout the adult years, Annie sought to explain the whys and wherefores of societal racism. She relied heavily on elaborate "theories" of racism to organize her response to the racial situation. Annie's suspiciousness of whites, her hypervigilance to external danger, and her preoccupation with injustice suggest her extensive use of projection. Though these behaviors were based in reality perceptions of racism, we assume that her own unacknowledged feelings and self-perceptions were integral to the process.

Thus, the positive racial self-esteem evidenced by Annie was achieved by these adaptive means. Her mission of a lifetime struggle on the behalf of blacks was rooted in aspects of her personality, as well as actual experiences with racism. From a developmental perspective, we may view her adult life as a continuing pursuit of an integrated identity. Her adolescent idealism made revolutionary struggle a natural channel for identity consolidation. Issues of resistance to authority and elaborate moral codes were prominent features of her adolescence and in later periods. She began her adult life at a historical moment for blacks; the black liberation movement provided specific identities at a time when she needed to consolidate an initial adult identity.

From her E.A.T. through mid-life, Annie equated her personal development with her development as a black person. However, at mid-life it was apparent that she was re-working this perspective. Annie's perception of the change was one of "becoming more human". At mid-life she was increasingly aware of her human limitations and vulnerabilities. She remained concerned with matters of racial identity, but she could now perceive some important human needs which transcended race.

Barbara

Racial identity was an organizing theme for Barbara's professional work. Her relationship to race included a high degree of consciousness about racism, but racial themes did not dominate her development. Her adult life evidences two parallel lines of growth and change. She was consistently committed to her personal growth, and used psychotherapy to gain insight into her personality or self. At the same time, she pursued her growth as a black person providing creative leadership in programs for blacks.

Adaptively, Barbara coped with racism in her work setting through her intellectual contributions. She devoted many years to creating scholarly publications about racial issues in psychiatry. Also, she evidenced a pragmatic and creative approach to designing treatment programs for blacks. Her energies were channeled into producing services of lasting benefit to blacks.

Barbara's racial self-esteem became increasingly positive throughout her adult years. By mid-life she was able to reappraise her professional work using insights she had gained into her personal self. Developmentally, she determined that she no longer needed to restrict herself to racially homogenous groups. At mid-life she felt better prepared to withstand the inevitable threats to racial self-esteem which she would encounter within white institutions.

Carol

Carol's self-assessment was one of positive racial self-esteem, but there were several indications that this had been achieved, primarily, through avoidance of contacts with whites. Carol's pre-adult and adult years evidenced a segregated lifestyle. Her only period of involvement in an interracial setting was for a few months post-college. Thereafter, she worked and lived in black neighborhoods and had an all black social circle. Her relationship to race included an avoidance of competition with whites, and a restriction of her contact with institutions beyond that of her own family.

Carol remained somewhat oblivious to racial matters, except for her concern about her own family, and at times when dramatic events in the wider society pressed these on her consciousness. She behaved as if she had been forbidden to cross racial boundaries, but was not consciously aware of

anxieties or fears contributing to her self-segregation.

There was no evidence of changes in Carol's racial self-concept throughout her adult years. Her work on the developmental tasks for each period in adult life demonstrated her strident avoidance of changes which might require her separation from the narrow social world in which she lived.

Dora

Dora's pre-adult years had included painful encounters with racism. As a child she had been forbidden to have contact with whites (in Virginia), while her near-white cousins had not been so treated. Despite these experiences, her adult life reflected minimal concern with her racial identity. Dora began E.A.W. with the belief that she would be judged on her own merit; and that racism would be of little consequence in her life. Strategically, she opted to fashion her career in an institution which promised to be free of racial bias.

Adaptively, Dora had minimal awareness of any threats to her as a black person. She was aware of the "black liberation" movement, but did not view it as particularly relevant to her own life. Dora's infrequent encounters with racist whites were shrugged off and minimized. In such situations, she was inclined to be conciliatory and "good-natured".

Developmentally, Dora's relationship to race remained

constant. Racial issues were of no greater concern in one period than any other. While she reported a continuing sense of positive racial self-esteem, it appeared that this was achieved by (unconscious) avoidance of racial conflict.

Eva

Racial identity was an organizing theme for Eva's professional work. She sustained a high degree of race consciousness throughout her adult years. Her relationship to race included persistent concerns about the welfare of blacks, alongside a strong inclination to disparage whites. Eva's assertion that the term "mid-life transition" was irrelevant for blacks expresses her tendency to view whites as vulnerable, weak individuals, while blacks were more positively regarded. Whites served as acceptable targets for her own unacknowledged vulnerabilities.

Developmentally, Eva evidenced several changes in her relationship to race. During her E.A.T. and E.A.W. periods, she had been minimally engaged with social action. However, during the A.T.T. she became a central figure in the changes affecting black teachers and schools. For a brief period, she was intensely involved in the organizing of black teachers, and in the movement for community control. Thereafter, her activities in the racial arena were diminished. She continued to work in black institutions, but was not on the forefront of social change efforts.

Eva's A.T.T. leadership seems to reflect her response to

environmental demands, rather than an abiding commitment to leadership for social change. Apparently, she remained affiliated with black institutions for complex reasons. We speculate that these affiliations were based in motives to protect herself from the anxieties generated in cross-racial settings. The positive racial self-esteem which Eva reported at mid-life was strongly influenced by her segregated, protected life in black institutions.

Fran

Racial identity was an organizing theme for most of Fran's professional life. Her relationship to race underwent changes at each developmental period. During the E.A.T. she was extremely idealistic and wished to combat poverty and racism. By the E.A.W. this adolescent idealism had been revised to more delimited, realistic goals which were addressed as a social worker with individuals. Her A.T.T. and early S.D. periods entailed yet another shift by assuming leadership for community systems. During E.M.A. she was considering making scholarly contributions relating to interracial dynamics in organizations.

Adaptively, Fran was inclined to seek intellectually based explanations of racial dynamics, and to contribute leadership in interracial settings. The positive racial self-esteem which she reported during E.M.A. had emerged during years of cross-racial work. She referred to her focus on cultural issues in management as the end-point of

her "life's work".

Grace

Grace's experiences with racism during her E.A.T. were remembered through the years as prototypical of the racial situation. In the ensuing years she had encountered other hostile environments which challenged her positive racial self-esteem. Developmentally, Grace's life evidences a growing reliance on self-affirmation, and a decreasing need for affirmation by whites.

Grace's hypervigilance to white racism, her suspiciousness toward whites, and her tendency to focus on injustices done to her, all suggest her use of projection. Her behaviors are also reminiscent of Grier and Cobb's (1968) descriptions of "healthy paranoia". While her behavior was based in reality perceptions of racism, her own unacknowledged feelings and problems with self-esteem were probably integral to the process. We speculate that her perceptions of racism during her teenage years was strongly influenced by the occurrence of conflict with her mother. Quite possibly, her angry, fearful feelings toward her mother were displaced onto the racial situation. In any event, it is significant that, by mid-life, Grace had achieved a stronger sense of personal self-esteem which decreased her need for affirmation by whites.

Helen

Helen's relationship to race included a recognition of

racism as a social fact, but her adult life evidenced only a moderate degree of race consciousness. She was most intensely concerned with racial matters during the A.T.T. when she, as the only black teacher in her school, developed a reading program for underachieving blacks. These interests were again evident during M.L.T. when she encountered the legal system's ineffectiveness with blacks. However, generally, race remained a background theme to other, more compelling developmental demands.

Helen's mid-life Dream of becoming a judge embodies the intent of continuing altruistic service to others. Developmentally, her relationship to race evidenced growing positive racial self-esteem, as well as increased concerns about generativity.

Summary

This discussion of our findings regarding racial identity has provided information on three broad areas: the Dream; coping styles; and, a newly formulated developmental task. With respect to the Dream, we have noted that every subject's Dream was influenced by the racial climate. "Older" subjects began their adult lives with restrictions on their life choices. "Younger" subjects were less dramatically restricted, but their Dreams also evidenced recognition of limitations imposed by racial

discrimination.

Half of the sample formed Dreams which contained explicit attention to racial themes; while the remaining subjects formed Dreams in which race was not explicitly addressed. Also, all the the subjects' Dreams were strongly influenced by economic and cultural factors. Every subject chose occupational identities, during the E.A.T., which corresponded to those chosen by a majority of black women.

Three categories of coping styles were discussed. These were: 1) Racial identity as an organizing theme for all life choices; 2) Racial identity as an organizing theme for professional work; and, 3) Racial identity as a background theme for adult life choices. These three subgroups evidenced significant differences in: employment patterns in white or black institutions; adherence to socio-political value systems; the assumption of leadership roles for black people; and, integrationist or segregationist life styles.

Finally, we provided analyses of each subject's relationship to race through an examination of a newly formulated developmental task. Subjects differed considerably in terms of their degree of race consciousness, and in their adaptation to the racial situation. Several subjects were reliant on projection and were seen to use "healthy paranoia" to adapt to perceived racism.

Each subject's life evidenced the development of positive racial self-esteem, but there were significant differences

in the means by which this was achieved. Some subjects conducted their lives with ongoing, relatively constant attention to their development as a black person. These subjects reported important changes in their self-concepts over the adult years. These changes included: a transcending of racial perspectives to a more humanistic perspective; a receptivity to assuming leadership in a white institution; a continuing refinement and articulation of theoretical views about interracial dynamics; and, a growing self-affirmation, as opposed to needs for affirmation by whites. It appeared that the mid-life period represented a crucial period for these subjects' developmental work on racial identity. Other subjects evidenced minimal or absent developmental change in terms of racial identity.

Our review of the newly formulated developmental task also raised questions regarding the influence of cross-racial contact on developmental work. The positive racial self-esteem reported by all subjects had been achieved with differing patterns of contact with whites. Some subjects had led segregated lifestyles in which contact with whites was quite limited. Others had sustained ongoing contact with whites in interracial settings. Our review of the new developmental task raised the conceptual issue of, comparatively, how cross-racial contact or segregated lifestyles foster the achievement of racial self-esteem.

The final chapter reviews all of this study's findings and

considers the various theoretical and methodological issues which it has raised.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this final chapter we will discuss this study's findings from several different perspectives. First, we consider the issues raised and the limitations imposed by the particular methodology which was used. Thereafter, we discuss the findings in terms of the central issues in women's lives, focusing specifically on the implications for a revision of Levinson's theory. Following this consideration of women's lives, our findings regarding racial identity are reviewed. Next, we suggest alternative conceptions which may be derived using other theoretical models for adult development. Finally, prior to a discussion of our conclusions, we consider some clinical implications of this research on adult development.

Methodological Considerations and Limitations

The Interviewing

Perhaps the most pivotal issue relative to methodology was the reliance on retrospective life history data. Subjects varied enormously in their ability to provide comprehensive

accounts of their lives in previous periods. The most articulate and insightful subjects were most easily engaged in the research task of finding an underlying order in lives. By contrast, some subjects were limited in verbal skills, and had great difficulty in providing full accounts of their past. As a result, the data obtained about subjects is, necessarily, lacking in uniformity. For example, most subjects spoke freely and with minimal defensiveness about their relationships with marital partners or lovers, while others evidenced a level of defensiveness which made these discussions quite difficult and, perhaps, deficient in valuable information.

Ultimately, the findings obtained were based on the interviewer's skill in both the eliciting of relevant information, and in promoting the fullest possible level of self-disclosure. Most probably, this ideal outcome was not achieved with every subject. Thus, the study's findings must be interpreted with these limitations as a backdrop.

Throughout the interviews, the investigator was aware that she was engaged in a highly personal process of unique dimensions. Some comments on the experience of conducting retrospective life history interviews, within this particular research project, are in order. These considerations of the personal aspects of the interviewing should clarify the milieu in which the research took place.

Very early in the interviewing, the investigator inquired

into subjects' reasons for agreeing to participate in this research. Not unexpectedly, most subjects expressed an interest in taking advantage of "the opportunity to review your life history with a psychologist". Since most subjects were in their Mid-Life Transition, the opportunity coincided with current efforts at reappraising lives. However, the most consistent response from subjects was an expression of their positive reaction to the investigator as a black woman.

Some subjects emphasized that they would have been unwilling to be interviewed by a white person, but were more favorably disposed to participate with a black researcher. Others suggested that a primary motive was that of contributing to more and/or better research about black women. Still others commented that they felt a sense of responsibility to help other blacks achieve his/her goals.

Thus, from various perspectives, the black women who participated in this research felt positively related to a researcher who was also a black female. Though it was not possible to trace the influence of these factors on the interviewing process, or to judge how the process may have differed with a non-black, or non-female investigator, it was our impression that the overall effect was beneficial. Subjects began the interviews highly motivated to cooperate, and with the assumption that this research would, ultimately, be a positive influence in their lives.

As the interviewing progressed with each subject, several dynamics emerged which highlighted the unique dimensions of the process. Generally, these dynamics reflected the difficulties, for subject and investigator, of maintaining role and task boundaries. Both the investigator and subjects were vulnerable to emotional pulls to redefine the task to that of psychotherapy. This proved particularly awkward when subjects revealed the poorly understood, painful aspects of their lives. Similarly, the process of telling about lives promoted a degree of intimacy between subject and investigator which sometimes threatened to blur the boundary between "friendship" and research.

As Levinson (1980) has observed: "Biographical interviewing requires an amalgam of the skills of clinician, survey researcher, and fieldwork sociologist....as well as bartender and friend." (p. 32) Since this investigator's interview skills were gained, primarily, as a psychotherapist, the research required an expansion and refinement of these skills. Most probably, the last subject interacted with a more sophisticated biographical interviewer than did the first subject!

The Procedures

Related to the interviewing itself was the procedure for collecting data. Each subject was interviewed for a total of 10-12 hours. This length of time seemed adequate for every subject, but a longer period may have been valuable

for the older subjects, or for those who had limited verbal facility. Quite possibly, as many as 14-16 hours of interviewing would have allowed for more in-depth exploration of difficult topics. Further, a specific procedure seemed indicated given the nature of the research. That is, future research might be enhanced by providing subjects with an opportunity to validate the investigator's analysis of when developmental periods began and ended, and whether specific developmental tasks were pursued in each period.

The present study's findings might have received validation by each subject if this had been an explicit objective in the planning of the research. Such a procedure would entail presenting each subject with a detailed analysis of her life structure. Areas of agreement or disagreement between subject and investigator could then be determined. A somewhat modified, abbreviated version of this procedure was, in fact, used in the present study. Each subject was asked, at the end of the interviewing, whether she perceived distinct periods in her adult life and, if so, how she would characterize these. This rather crude assessment provided some validation of the investigator's analysis, but a lengthier, more systematic process would have been even more fruitful.

Finally, with respect to the study's procedures, we would concur with Rubin (1979) that "nothing replaces the smaller

sample qualitative research based on face-to-face interaction with other humans". (p. 224) Although Rubin's research on women in mid-life entailed only 3 to 5 hours of interviewing for each subject, her descriptions of these women's lives seems to demonstrate the value of life-history interviews in obtaining substantial data about lives.

The Subjects

This study was designed to explore the lives of black women between the ages of 40 and 50 years. As a result, a sample was obtained in which a majority of subjects was in the Mid-Life Transition. The most obvious limitation of such a design was that our findings regarding the M.L.T. are incomplete, and therefore, inconclusive. Further, it is possible that subjects' life reviews were significantly different during this transitional period, than they may have been before or after the M.L.T. We can only speculate as to the nature and direction of the influences of transitional phenomena on the study's findings. However, as we've already noted, it was the investigator's impression that subjects in the M.L.T. period were highly motivated to engage in life reviews.

To a large extent, this study provided the opportunity to examine the varied patterns which individuals use in coping with the transition from early to middle adulthood. It was the investigator's impression that attitudes toward aging were the most influential factors in subjects' patterns of

coping with this transitional stage. This factor will be elaborated upon in the discussion of women's lives in the M.L.T.

Utilizing a Theory "In Progress"

The present study was conducted with an aim of testing the limits of Levinson's theory for a select sample of black women. Thus, the research process was significantly influenced by the current status of Levinson's theory. Levinson's early formulations of theory were based on extensive studies of male subjects; currently, Levinson is completing research on a sample of women. Undoubtedly, the theory will undergo continuing revision and refinement as insights are gained from diverse samples. Based on the present study, two specific problems were identified which resulted from utilizing a theory "in progress".

First, despite the fact that Levinson's theory is premised on the notion of "a single, most frequent age" at which each developmental period begins, Levinson's guidelines for determining a period's beginning or end are imprecise. In the absence of more precise means for making this determination, the investigator had to interpret Levinson's theoretical views. In several instances, some uncertainty surrounded this assignment of ages to developmental periods. Future research will be appreciably enhanced by other replications of Levinson's research, and by Levinson's own clarification of methods by which his theory may be

validated. In the future, more sophisticated research methodologies must be generated which provide unambiguous support or refutation of Levinson's claim of "a single, most frequent age" for each developmental period.

Second, this research was constrained by the absence of operational definitions for many of Levinson's terms. The most critical terms were for "stable" or "transitional" periods. "Components" of the life structure were also defined in a manner which required redefinition i.e. ethnicity. In effect, this investigator interpreted each of these terms, and provided working definitions which could be applied to each subject's life. Though the study's analyses of lives were judged to be consonant with Levinson's theory, some uncertainty remains. This limitation is, in fact, a crucial one since our findings regarding the "stability" of the Settling Down period run counter to the theory's prediction. Future research along the lines of the present study would be facilitated by operational definitions of these central concepts.

Interpreting the Findings

Essentially, the present study provided support for those aspects of Levinson's theory regarding the components of life structures, and his description of development during the E.A.T. and E.A.W. Our findings illuminated several

problems relative to Levinson's conceptualizations of the "developmental tasks" for subsequent periods. In the sections which follow, we will consider our findings in terms of the theory's applicability to women's lives.

Women's Lives and the Novice Phase

Levinson's conception of men's development during the period from, approximately, ages 16 through 33 can be compared with the picture which emerged from our study of women. Generally, men were seen to be significantly invested in forming occupational identities, while also effecting marital and family commitments. Men's development in these spheres reflected themes of increasing clarification of adult identities, improved capacities for adult peer relationships with women, and a progressive acceptance of adult responsibilities. Friendships were peripheral or marginal in men's life structures, but mentoring relationships were central. Mentors were judged to be of crucial importance to men in forming potentially satisfying, successful relationships to occupation. Wives, as well as mentors, were seen to be critical to men's forming a Dream, and constructing lives which would allow realization of Dreams.

The picture of women's development during the Novice phase, as it emerged in the present study, is markedly different from Levinson's conception. The women in this study also began their adult lives with a Dream of

occupational achievement, but the nature of these commitments varied considerably from those of men. During this period, these women pursued occupations with some tentativeness and with varying degrees of ambivalence. We speculate that the absence of mentoring for these women during this period reflected two interrelated issues. That is, on the one hand, they did not encounter individuals who invited them into a mentoring relationship, or otherwise communicated their availability for such. On the other hand, most of these women were not yet conceiving of themselves in long-term career commitments, and therefore, were not desirous of mentoring relationships.

Between the ages of 16 and 33, the central issues in every one of our subjects' lives were those of effecting satisfying love relationships and friendships, as well as forming an occupation. We suggest that the period was most heavily influenced by women's choices regarding exploration of relationships with men. Unlike men, women's explorations were influenced by the irreversible consequences of their choices in relation to sexual expression. That is, women's capacities for pregnancy required critical decisions regarding the assumption of childrearing responsibility. Because women's decisions during this period have the potential for shaping the remainder of their adult lives, a specific developmental task seems warranted.

We propose that a primary developmental task for women in

the Novice phase, and throughout early adulthood, is: the management of one's sexuality and the making of choices concerning childrearing. Levinson's formulation of the task as "exploration of relationships" with the opposite sex does not highlight the degree of responsibility which women have in this area. Any theory of adult development addressing women's lives would need to take into account women's reproductive capacities, and the consequences of their choices for shaping an entire life course.

Our examination of the Novice phase also illuminated some of the issues which black women encounter in integrating marriage and family with occupational commitments. These issues will be discussed in our section on racial identity.

Women's Lives and The Settling Down Period

Upon beginning the Settling Down period, the women in this study had adopted roles as wives with children, singles without children, or as single heads of households (as mothers or surrogate mothers). Though our findings provided some support for Levinson's conception of this period, several revisions in the theory seem warranted. Levinson emphasized that the period entailed concerted efforts towards advancement, in conjunction with concerns for greater independence, self-sufficiency, and efforts toward achieving affirmation in society. This conception facilitated our interpretation of many aspects of these women's lives, but other developmental issues seemed at

least equally compelling.

In the second "stable" period of early adulthood, we found several patterns of structuring, or restructuring, lives. The first pattern was exemplified by the three women who made major career changes. Grace, Helen, and Fran opted to seek second careers; their life structures were revised to allow for their pursuit of alternative career paths. The second S.D. pattern was evident in the lives of two subjects (Annie and Eva). These women were adjusting to their new roles as single parents, and restructuring their lives to accommodate this new identity. The third S.D. pattern was expressed in three subjects' lives (Barbara, Carol, and Fran). These women evidenced an intensified interest in love relationships which represented efforts to achieve a new balance of commitments to love and work. One of these three women married at the end of S.D., while the other two entered into committed love relationships.

Only one of the women in our small sample (Dora) achieved a stable life structure during S.D. with minor changes in both the occupational and family sphere. Thus, a majority of the sample tended to make significant changes to restructure their lives. Like Taylor (1981), we found that, rather than "settle down", women tended to "open out" in this second stable period of early adulthood. These patterns were applicable to the Integrators, the Age 30 Mothers, and the Careerists.

Further, while Levinson conceived of late Settling Down as a peaking of desires for independence and self-sufficiency, our subjects are inadequately explained by this conception. By contrast, the women in the present study seemed to be preoccupied with equally intense desires for interdependence. These women tended to combine efforts at occupational advancement with parallel efforts at anchoring their lives in committed love relationships. Thus, the "Becoming One's Own Man/Person" period in these women's lives may be more accurately characterized as a peaking of desires for an integration of independence and interdependence strivings.

This alternative conception is particularly useful in understanding the one subject with an unstable outcome at the end of S.D. This subject (Eva) may be viewed as avoiding independence and seeking economic and emotional dependence on her lover. This proved to be a problematic solution precisely because she exchanged needs for dependence with equally important needs for independence. Nevertheless, her life in the S.D. period illustrates the possibility of maladaptive solutions to the difficult task of integrating needs for independence, particularly through achievement in the occupational sphere, with parallel needs for interdependence.

Women's Lives and the Mid-Life Transition

As we have noted, our findings regarding the M.L.T. are

incomplete since several subjects had not ended this transition. However, our interpretations of this period are strengthened by our data on the other transitional periods i.e. the E.A.T. and the A.T.T. Generally, after the E.A.T., there was considerable variation among subjects in the nature of transitions undergone. That is, there was a greater similarity among subjects in their Early Adult Transitions, than was true for later transitions. There is the suggestion that the E.A.T. was much influenced by subjects' involvement in educational programs. These programs provided a moratorium on adult responsibilities, and a socially sanctioned period for separating from pre-adult worlds.

The major limitation in interpreting our findings regarding transitions is that our criteria for the onset and end of these periods may be problematic. However, if our criteria are valid interpretations of Levinson's theory, several conclusions are permitted. Taylor's (1981) findings regarding the influence of character styles on patterns of undergoing transitions help to explain the data. Taylor concluded that visible transitions occur in the lives of individuals who are given to reflective decision-making, and are absent in the lives of individuals with intuitive or impulsive character styles.

Yet, while the notion of character style is valuable to interpreting the findings, our data requires a life-course

perspective. When we examine subjects' styles of undergoing transitions through the early adulthood period, several patterns emerge. One subgroup (Carol and Dora) tended to make limited use of each transitional period. These subjects effected life structures which emphasized constancy and stability. Life structure changes reflected minimal reappraisal; modifications were often stimulated by external events. This subgroup may be viewed as an example of the limited use of transitions in rigid character types. In the discussion which follows, we refer to this subgroup as Limited Transitions.

Another subgroup tended to make significant use of each transition. These subjects (Annie, Grace, and Helen) may be viewed as more flexible character types who were responsive to both internal and external events. These subjects engaged in active reappraisal of past choices, and used transitions to achieve a better fit between "self" and "world". We refer to this subgroup as Adaptive Transitions.

The final subgroup (Barbara, Eva and Fran) may be viewed as having greater difficulty in effectively managing transitional periods. Two of the three transitions studied were characterized as crisis-ridden for these subjects. Apparently, transitions stimulated intense reactions to loss and/or change which threatened to overwhelm these subjects. One subject used psychotherapy to manage each transition. The other women had considerable difficulty in exploring

their internal worlds and, thus, tended to make limited use of reappraisal. We refer to this subgroup as Crisis-Ridden Transitions.

The above description of "transitional styles" leads us to a more detailed consideration of subjects' patterns in undergoing the M.L.T. We have already noted that most subjects did not evidence work on all the tasks which Levinson defined for this period. Our interpretation of this finding is based in a consideration of transitional styles, as well as another phenomena which we refer to as attitudes toward aging. Analysis of M.L.T. data revealed significant differences among subjects in their ability to recognize their shift from early to middle adulthood, and to cope with the attendant anxieties. Two broad subgroups seemed to occur in the sample.

The first subgroup (Annie, Barbara, Grace, and Helen) was viewed as fundamentally committed to self-discovery, or learning about themselves. Each subject evidenced a high degree of reappraisal of life structures, and a willingness to explore the personal meanings of growing older. Their M.L.T.'s were closer to Levinson's descriptions of development during this period than were other subjects. The second subgroup (Carol, Dora, Eva, and Fran) were, alternatively, viewed as having stronger desires for self-protection. These subjects had limited inclination or ability to engage in reappraisal, and were resistant to

explorations of the personal meanings of growing older. Their M.L.T.'s were most divergent from Levinson's conception of this period.

Apparently, subjects' inclination toward a "self-discovering" or a "self-protecting" stance during the M.L.T. resulted in different ways of undergoing this transition. Importantly, neither of these stances was correlated entirely with the transitional styles described above. That is, subjects with "Crisis-Ridden Transitions" had either self-discovering or self-protecting stances. However, subjects with "Limited Transitions" were viewed only as self-protecting; and subjects with "Adaptive Transitions" were viewed only as self-discovering.

Since our M.L.T. data is incomplete, we believe it inadvisable to further extend interpretations of this data. Future research would be enhanced by more extensive inquiry into the influence of attitudes toward aging on the character of the M.L.T. Our data suggests that, when women were committed to self-protection, they made quite limited use of this transitional period. From a life-course perspective, the question is raised as to the differential effects of a self-discovering, versus a self-protecting, stance on development during the years following the M.L.T. Since we were able to raise this question for only three of our subjects, our conclusions are necessarily tentative.

Women's Lives and Entering Middle Adulthood

Our analysis of findings regarding the E.M.A. provided support for Levinson's conception of this period. However, as noted in Chapter Two, we began this study with an interest in how life structures could be evaluated. Levinson's approach to evaluation is limited to a focus on the "satisfactoriness" of life structures. In an effort to expand upon Levinson's approach, this matter was treated as an area for generating hypotheses about adaptation.

We observed that each of the three subjects offered unsolicited comments on her degree of "life satisfaction" at the time when interviews took place. Two subjects rated their life satisfaction as moderate to high, while one subject's rating was of low to moderate. These comments on life satisfaction served as a basis for generating hypotheses about the evaluation of adaptation during this period.

Each subject's rating of life satisfaction was viewed as a subjective assessment of satisfaction with: one's life circumstances, and one's effectiveness in adapting to these circumstances. Further, in order to differentiate these subjects, we took note of data regarding their "transitional styles", their outcomes at the end of Settling Down, and their stance toward self-discovery or self-protection during the M.L.T.

We noted that the one subject who rated her life satisfaction as low to moderate was characterized as a

Crisis-Ridden Transitional Style, with a "Breaking Out" outcome at the end of S.D., and a self-protective stance during the M.L.T. (i.e. Fran). The other two subjects were characterized as: a Limited Transition, with a self-protective stance during the M.L.T.(Carol), or as a Crisis-Ridden Transitional Style, with a self-discovery stance during the M.L.T.(Barbara). These latter two subjects were judged to have Sequence A (Advancement) outcomes at the end of Settling Down.

Thus, from various perspectives, we are particularly interested in the adaptation of the subject with a lower rating of life satisfaction during the E.M.A. period. Her adaptation seems to reflect the interplay of, at minimum, a vulnerability during transitional periods, a tendency to emphasize self-protection, and a continuing dimension of instability in her life since the end of Settling Down. Her life raises questions which are, perhaps, less apparent in other subjects' lives. That is, we are led to questions of the adequacy of her psychological defenses in managing life stresses, and the need for more objective means of assessing her adaptation.

Our consideration of the objective assessment of adaptation is, necessarily, limited to suggestions for future research. The present study has generated two hypotheses regarding adaptation which require different methodologies than those employed in this research. The

first hypothesis follows from the observation that the subject who reported the lowest life satisfaction also had longstanding, unresolved conflict with her mother. Significantly, Fran's M.L.T. had entailed an effort, albeit briefly, to clarify the childhood roots of her continued experiencing of feelings of self-hatred. Her mother's death, and her accidental discovery of the mother's diary, had re-kindled memories of her childhood past.

Fran's adult life history evidenced, on the one hand, exceptionally high levels of occupational achievement and continued development of her intellectual abilities. Yet, it was also true that she'd had frequent periods of depression, suicidal ideation, and symptom expression through somatic channels. Our review of Fran's adult life, as well as those of other subjects, raised questions regarding the relationship between unresolved childhood conflicts and adaptation at successive stages of the adult life course.

Our data suggests that Fran's problems with her physical health, morale, and life satisfaction were strongly influenced by intrapsychic conflicts originating in her relationship with a depressive mother. At Age 49 she had major difficulties in tolerating imperfections in herself and others, with accompanying tendencies toward self-hatred. Thus, her development in the E.M.A. evidenced continuing problems with sustaining a healthy level of

narcissism to offset feelings of despair.

This view of the influence of early development on subsequent life stages is entirely compatible with a clinical orientation to life histories. However, the assumption that early developmental conflicts lead to difficulties in later stages has received only limited support through research. As George (1982) has suggested, this assumption could be transformed into potentially testable research questions: "...under what conditions do developmental difficulties hinder adaptation during adulthood, and conversely, under what conditions are individuals able to attain adequate adult adjustment in spite of earlier developmental problems?"(pp 26-27).

Our review of eight women's adult histories highlights the importance of more extensive data regarding childhood histories, including material on mother-daughter relationships. Such information would be essential for clarifying the relationship between early developmental problems and later adaptation. Based on data from the present study, we hypothesize that women's middle years are significantly influenced by the resolution, or not, of early conflicts with their own mothers. The direction of this hypothesis has already been suggested by Lowenthal (1975) who found that, among the middle-aged women in her sample, the most stressed had had experiences of early childhood deprivation.

Although this hypothesis is discussed here in relation to women's lives, it is recognized that such concerns are also relevant for men. The essential questions concern the fate of early developmental problems. Our data supports the view that the mid-life period, for women and men, may entail a greater vulnerability to narcissistic injury, and the potential for regression to earlier adaptive patterns.

Our second hypothesis concerns the relationship between adaptation and self-protecting versus self-discovering stances. The finding that subjects with self-protective stances were most divergent from Levinson's descriptions of the M.L.T. requires more systematic study. The question is raised also as to the long-term consequences of such an M.L.T. stance. That is, do individuals who use the M.L.T. as opportunities for growth and change fare better in the later years? Does a self-protective stance during the M.L.T. necessarily result in maladaptation in later years? We believe these questions to be important ones because they focus on several of the implicit assumptions in Levinson's theory. The theory portrays adults as continuously tending toward a more individuated and complex self. Transitions are viewed as opportunities for self re-evaluation. The implication is that individuals who do not do work on the proposed developmental tasks are impaired in their development during subsequent periods.

Our findings suggest that the relationship between

development and self-learning or self-evaluation deserves further study. It appeared that either a self-discovering or a self-protecting stance in our subjects was correlated with healthy adaptation. We interpret our findings as an indication that there may be varieties of adult development in which "transitional styles" play a major role.

Moreover, our findings raise the broader question of whether Levinson's view of adult development as a process of individuation and achievement is most relevant for women's lives. As Gilligan (1982) has noted, males and females typically have spoken of "different truths: males of the role of separation in development as it comes to define and empower the self; females of the ongoing process of attachment that creates and sustains the human community". (p. 94)

Racial Identity

The present study was designed with an interest in understanding how racial identity influenced stages of adult development. Our findings raised several important issues for Levinson's theory. In this section, we will discuss three of these issues before offering hypotheses regarding racial identity and stages of development.

We begin with a consideration of the issues which black women encounter in integrating marriage and family with

occupational commitments. By the end of the Novice phase, a majority of the sample was unmarried. In effect, a majority of our sample was unable to achieve an integration of occupation with family life. The adult lives of these black women raise several specific issues for a theory of adult development. The question is raised as to how we may interpret their development. To the extent that some subjects deviated from the wider population with respect to marriage/family, does their deviation constitute a developmental failure, the lack of development in this particular area, or a deviation from a societal norm?

Our findings illuminate the limitations of Levinson's theory in interpreting deviations from his "developmental tasks". Though we cannot assume that our small sample is representative of all black women, or even of all black, professional women, we believe it to be illustrative of the adult life patterns of a sizeable group of black women. As such, we suspect that any theory of adult development which conceives of marriage/family as a developmental task will pose problems in interpreting the lives of many black women.

The crux of the matter concerns the role of culture within the black subsociety. For reasons more complex than can be described in this research report, the black population has adopted various alternatives to the nuclear family. Theories based in the assumption that marriage and a two

parent are attainable, and/or desirable, goals for everyone will, unavoidably, be biased against the realities of black culture.

We suggest that the lives of the women studied were strongly influenced by cultural forces affecting marital and family patterns. By the end of the Novice phase, a majority of the sample was pursuing lives in which their autonomy and independence were emphasized. Marriages were viewed as either unattainable, undesirable, or impossible to sustain. If we take a more purely individual focus on these women's lives, we are led to analyses of their problems with intimacy, and the developmental roots of such problems. Indeed, every one of the women who was unmarried at the end of the Novice phase had particular conflicts in effecting mature relationships with men. However, if we neglect the currents within the black subsociety, we arrive at a distorted picture of their adult development.

We suggest that the most primary developmental task of significance to these women's lives was: forming the capability of adult peer relations with men, and increasing the capacity for heterosexual intimacy. Our review of their lives was enhanced by tracing their development within love relationships, whether or not these were embedded in a marital relationship. Importantly, our proposed developmental task focuses on maturation of the individual's capacity for mature relationships, not on the adoption of

specific roles.

Apparently, there are forces within the black subsociety which culminate in women remaining single, becoming single parents, or becoming divorced in larger percentages than is true within the white population (Rodgers-Rose, 1980; Noble, 1978). As Colarusso and Nemiroff (1981) have observed, each culture produces adult personalities that are adaptive to that particular society and which ensure the continuity and cohesiveness of the culture (p. 171). These black womens' lives illustrate how the social context may operate to limit opportunities for marital roles and, thus, how alternative patterns may be chosen by necessity. For some of these women, their emphasis on autonomous, independent lifestyles represented an adaptive pattern which is well known, historically, within the black subsociety.

Further, regarding the adaptive patterns of these black women, note should be taken of their limited use of mentoring as a form of personal and career support. Apparently, each woman utilized other forms of support to achieve career goals, particularly from their families, or others in the black subsociety. We suspect that, if "mentoring" had been defined more broadly to include these alternate means of support, it would better clarify their unique developmental issues. In a recent study on the role of mentoring for black female administrators, Malone (1981) found that the concept of mentoring was best understood when

examined along with other forms of support i.e. from families, the black community, and other types of professional support. (p. 104)

Next, we consider the role of "ethnicity" as a component of the life structure. Apparently, the reality of race relations in this society is such that none of our subjects developed without special attention to their blackness. Levinson's conception of ethnicity/racial identity as a component is more likely to apply to whites than to blacks. At issue here is the fundamental difference in the white versus the black experience in adult development. Our analysis of these women's lives dictated using two parallel lines of inquiry. That is, we analyzed each life in terms of universal developmental issues, and in terms of the unique features of development as a black person. We doubt that the analysis of white people's lives would require a consideration of their development as whites. Rather, racial identity is more easily treated as a component, of a marginal or peripheral influence, in whites' lives.

Our findings lead us to appreciate the complexities inherent in development along two parallel lines. In fact, our findings suggested that the mid-life transition posed critical issues relative to the convergence of these developmental lines. Mid-life confronted several subjects with choices of continued affiliation with white institutions, or of terminating such affiliations. Further,

some subjects' positive racial self-esteem had been achieved through segregated life styles; while others had achieved racial self-esteem by extensive interracial contact.

We propose that continued research on the adult development of blacks would be aided by the concept of: the black-white polarity. Apparently, black people in this society bear the unique responsibility for work on this polarity. This conception follows Levinson's notion of the polarity as: opposing tendencies or states which are usually experienced as polar opposites. But, while Levinson proposed that work on the polarities took place during mid-life only, we view work on the black-white polarity as a developmental task throughout the adult years.

Historically, white racism has placed an added burden on the psychological adaptation of blacks. As Kovel (1970) has described, not only has racism been an integral part of American life since slavery, but fantasies about race have energized human culture since the beginning of western civilization. Throughout history blackness and whiteness have represented symbols of culture which contain fantasies about race. As Kovel (1970) wrote: "Whatever a white man experiences as bad in himself, as springing from what Fanon described as 'an inordinately black hollow in the remotest depth of the European consciousness', whatever is forbidden and horrifying in human nature, may be designated as black and projected onto a man whose dark skin and oppressed past

fit him to receive the symbol"(pp. 65-66).

Thus, white racism has served as an elaborate defensive maneuver to externalize painful psychic conflicts. As Kovel (1970) notes, fantasies of blackness include: the blackness of night and fears of darkness, fears of death, fears of the return of projected monsters, and fears about the return of the repressed (p. 92).

Developmentally, work on the black-white polarity can be viewed as a process of reconciling the coexistence of opposing, contradictory trends within the self. Unconsciously, while whiteness has been symbolized as purity, cleanliness, innocence, and goodness, blackness is symbolized as impurity, dirty, uncleanliness, and badness. To a large extent, the developmental work for blacks is one of sustaining positive racial self-esteem in a social context which is based in such primitive symbols. As Jenkins (1982) has noted, the goal of racist practices and ideology has been to dehumanize black people. That is, "...blacks are not seen as capable of or entitled to a full sense of self-worth and competence"(p. 146).

Developmentally, black people are faced with the difficult task of resisting their dehumanization and possible assaults on racial self-esteem. Work on the black-white polarity entails arriving at an integrated view of the "blackness" and "whiteness" in oneself and others. It was unclear in the present study whether such work is aided or hindered by

development in racially segregated institutions or cultural settings. Theoretically, cross-racial contacts should provide reality-based experiences with whites which can then be contrasted with more primitive experiences of the races. Future research could shed light on the relationship between racial self-esteem and the nature of cross-racial contact through the adult life course. To date available research in this area has focused on children's racial self-esteem in segregated versus integrated settings. Yet, it would appear that research is also needed on the effects of segregated or integrated life styles on the racial self-esteem of adults.

Finally, with regard to racial identity and adult development, we offer a hypothesis in terms of developmental stages. Thus far we have called attention to the unique experiences of these black women during the Novice phase and the Mid-Life Transition. As well, we have proposed that work on the black-white polarity is a unique developmental task for blacks throughout the adult years.

Our review of these eight black women's lives represents an intensive study of one of many possible cohorts. Our consideration of an adult developmental hypothesis begins with an examination of the cohort itself. When we describe this social group's behavior from the early adult years through mid-life, several developmental themes are illuminated.

Without exception, the women in the present study began

their lives as children of poor, working-class parents. Upon beginning their early adult years, each had been impressed with the importance of education as a means to achieve a successful life. Moreover, every woman began her adult life with the expectation that she would secure an occupational identity and, thus, would become capable of economic self-support. Despite differences among subjects in their feminine self-concepts, every woman's earliest identity included aspirations for occupational achievement.

This socialization for occupational identities was paralleled by another prominent feature in these black womens' lives. Most were strongly discouraged by parents from engaging in pre-marital sexual activity. They were advised that an early pregnancy would lead to alienation from their families, and/or would severely compromise their adult lives. During the early adult years, many of these women viewed chastity as essential to their respectability, and to their upward mobility. Pregnancy represented a distinct threat to these women given their awareness of the large number of pregnancies among poor, young black women. In the effort to overcome stereotypes of the black woman as "whore" and "mammy", these women sought paths which would avoid early pregnancy and, potentially, remaining in the lower classes.

The finding that these black women were socialized to be economically self-supporting has already been described in

previous research on black women (Turner, 1972; Epstein, 1973). As well, others have commented on the socialization of some black women to avoid early pregnancies. Nobles (1978) coins the phrase, "The Respectability Syndrome" in her discussion of black women's socialization for upward mobility (p. 334).

The cohort of women studied was also characterized by their selection of occupations within nursing, teaching, or social work. Among the small percentage of black women in the professions, a majority select one of these professions (Rodgers-Rose, 1980). Thus, these black women began their adult lives within one of the female-dominated, helping professions which have been traditionally chosen by black women.

By their early or mid-thirties, each of these women had achieved some degree of occupational success. Indeed, one of the more interesting aspects of the sample is that, despite their success, most were discontent with their achievements. By the end of their thirties, or in their early forties, a majority of the sample had escalated their efforts at advancement. Within this subgroup, one subject became a doctoral candidate; another earned a doctoral degree; another made a career change to the more lucrative field of organizational consultation; and, two opted to seek careers in the prestigious field of law. Unquestionably, the sample studied was a high

achievement-oriented group of women whose educational and occupational accomplishments exceeded that of a majority of women, both black and white.

These considerations of the particular group studied generate further questions regarding their development. What dynamics were operative within the black subsociety, or within the individuals themselves, which promoted such achievement aspirations? What were the specific developmental processes which allowed these women to enter mid-life at such high levels of achievement?

Our review of these black women's lives leads us to appreciate the interactive effects of: sex-role socialization; work on the black-white polarity; and, developmental imperatives. We suggest that these black women were socialized to perceive themselves as androgynous i.e. as capable of combining masculine and feminine traits in a positive way. They began their adult lives with important needs for independence, particularly through occupational pursuits. Perceiving themselves in androgynous terms, they had little difficulty integrating an occupational identity into self-concepts. The concept of androgyny has been used in numerous studies on women's socialization. At least one study found that black women were more androgynous than white women. (Galvin, 1981)

Further, we suggest that these black women's achievement aspirations were an integral aspect of work on the

black-white polarity. That is, we assert that the ability to achieve in a racist society requires a transcending of racial stereotypes, and an internalization of healthy racial images. Though all of the women in the present study may be viewed as high-achievers, we observed important differences among them in their willingness to seek success in the "white world". We noted that two subjects (Carol and Eva) conducted most of their adult lives in black communities. These two subjects did not opt to compete with whites for the degrees, positions, or other such symbols of success in this society. We suspect that these subjects were (unconsciously) avoiding competition with whites and, perhaps, were protecting themselves from the anxieties of cross-racial contact.

These observations on sex-role socialization and work on the black-white polarity contribute to a particular view of the "Settling Down" period. We suggest that, for black people, the S.D. period represents a culmination of aspirations for success in a white world. "Becoming One's Own Man/Person", in the view of blacks, is significantly related to becoming free of internal and external prohibitions against one's growth as a black person. From this perspective, it is particularly interesting to note that, in S.D., we had three subjects with Breaking Out outcomes. Their life structures were revised in the direction of careers which brought higher social status and

financial reward.

Since we do not have data on the frequency of Breaking Out outcomes among blacks, we can only speculate about its expression in the sample studied. Each of the three subjects with such outcomes was improving upon earlier career planning. As well, they may be viewed as "breaking away" from stereotyped notions of black womens' roles. In this sense they were expanding their perception of what roles were appropriate, and attainable, for themselves as black women.

Finally, in conclusion of this section on racial identity, our hypotheses regarding developmental stages for black women are summarized. First, we hypothesized that black women, in significantly greater numbers than white women, begin their early adult years with an androgynous self-concept. Second, we hypothesized that, under favorable conditions, the evolution of life structures in early adulthood involves an increase in racial self-esteem, and a transcending of racial stereotypes. Such developmental work on the black-white polarity is viewed as essential for black men and women's work on the "advancement" task which Levinson has proposed. Conversely, we hypothesize that the lack of developmental work on racial self-esteem during early adulthood negatively influences developmental work on advancement.

Alternative Conceptions of Adult Development

Levinson's theory of adult development is, fundamentally, a conception of how individuals change during the adult years. Levinson notes: "The concept of life structure...gives us a way of looking at the engagement of the individual in society. It requires us to consider both self and world, and the relationships between them...When I speak of adult development, I mean the evolution of the life structure during the adult years" (pp. 41-42). In this section we will compare and contrast Levinson's model with other models of adult change.

Levinson's model for development is based in several basic premises. These are: 1) Developmental change is expressed through changes in the life structure; 2) The life structure evolves through a relatively orderly sequence of developmental periods; 3) Each developmental period is linked to specific chronological ages; 4) Each developmental period has specific developmental tasks; and, 5) The developmental periods are characteristic of the species and, therefore, are universally observable.

Our findings raised important questions about Levinson's premises regarding the orderly sequence of developmental periods, age-linked periods, and the specific developmental tasks for the thirties and beyond i.e. the Settling Down and Mid-Life Transition periods. Further, in considering

interpretations of how subjects' life structures evolved, we became interested in the differences among subjects in their patterns of undergoing transitional periods.

The limits of Levinson's theory for the women studied can be visualized in the grid outlined in Figure 7. This graphic illustration illuminates the four life patterns which emerged in the study.

Subjects who had self-discovery motivational stances, and whose life courses evidenced an alternation between stable and transitional periods, corresponded most closely to Levinson's descriptions of development. The other two subjects who also evidenced alternating stable and transitional periods were characterized as having self-protective stances. They made limited use of transitions.

Subjects who did not evidence an alternation between stable and transitional periods were so evaluated on the basis of findings regarding the Settling Down period. Within this subgroup, two subjects each were characterized as having self-discovery or self-protection stances. Generally, the lack of stability during the Settling Down period was most heavily influenced by changes within the occupational sphere. Career changes, or problems in advancement within an occupation, contributed to the presence of transitional elements during this presumably stable period.

Figure 7

DEVELOPMENTAL PATTERNS and MOTIVATIONAL STANCES

<u>Developmental Periods</u>	<u>Motivational Stances</u>	
	<u>Self-Discovery</u>	<u>Self-Protection</u>
Alternating Stable and Transitional Periods (Sequence A Outcomes)	(I) Annie Barbara	(II) Carol Dora
Unstable Settling Down Period (Breaking Out and Unstable Outcomes)	(III) Grace Helen	(IV) Eva Fran

Importantly, our findings regarding "motivational stances" do not contradict Levinson's conception of developmental periods as such. Theoretically, Levinson maintains that, though everyone lives through the same developmental periods, "...people go through them in radically different ways" (p. 41). However, our findings do raise questions as to whether women's adult development is linked to specific chronological ages. Most probably, development proceeds along the staircase pattern which Levinson describes when lives are firmly anchored in a stable occupational identity. When individuals initiate major revisions in occupational identities (and other identities?) development is unlikely to proceed along the lines of age-linked periods.

Given that women's lives reflect variability in the timing and sequencing of work and family commitments, it would be expected that their lives would evidence variability in the "seasons" in which certain developmental tasks are pursued. Our findings provided data on this variability in women's lives.

Further, the notion of specific developmental tasks for each developmental period proved to be more applicable for the Novice phase, than for the years from the mid-thirties on. This problem seems to reflect Levinson's conception of the S.D. period as a "culminating life structure". The individual is viewed as advancing toward a level of

achievement heretofore unknown; reaching the summit of his/her desires. Such a conception provides insufficient room for individuals, particularly women, who have changed courses mid-stream e.g. who have elected to pursue alternate careers. For such individuals, development is less accurately characterized as a culmination, than as a correction and/or revision of early adult planning.

Our findings regarding the problem of assigning ages to developmental periods have already been discussed by Vaillant and Milofsky (1980). These researchers reviewed Erikson's model of the life cycle in a study with a large sample of men. They report that "...we found no fixed chronological age at which interpersonal or occupational competence was established". (p. 1358) Vaillant and Milofsky's research, as well as the present study, support the view of adult maturation as an open-ended process. Both men and women are likely to evidence variability in the ages at which developmental tasks are accomplished.

Finally, we address the matter of the universality of developmental periods. The present study was an inquiry into whether every individual develops according to the stages which Levinson proposed. Our data suggest that there are, at least, two alternative conceptions of the changes occurring in these subjects' lives. Selected aspects of their adult change can be explained within a timing-of-events and/or an adult socialization model.

Timing-of-events models propose that adult change occurs on one or several dimensions of the life course, triggered by specific personal or environmental events. According to Perun and Bielby (1980), each of the many dimensions of human development has its own developmental progression, with its own antecedents, transitions, and sequelae (p. 103). This model suggests that development during the adult years is best understood by examining the various spheres of adult life. For example, occupational life and family life might well evidence their own developmental progressions. This particular view of how adults change encourages us to trace an individual's growth and change along developmental lines, in specific spheres of adult life.

The notion of lines of development is a familiar one among psychoanalytically oriented clinicians. The concept was originally introduced by Anna Freud (1962, 1965). Freud proposed that the development of the total personality proceeds along "lines of development" which reflect the combined influences of drive and ego development. Developmental lines "trace the child's gradual outgrowing of dependent, irrational, id and object determined attitudes to an increasing ego mastery of his internal and external world" (1965, p. 63).

When we examine adult changes for subjects in the present study, we observe that, for some individuals, these changes appeared to occur within only one or a few spheres, rather

than in the overall character of adult lives. A consideration of both the timing of events, as well as lines of development, appears to be useful in interpreting changes for these subjects. The discussion which follows is organized around the summary of developmental patterns noted in Figure 7.

Subjects in Cell II were seen to be significantly influenced by specific life events which triggered developmental change. Thus, Carol's life course was altered, for example, in response to the departure of her brothers' children from her home, and by revisions in her work schedule. Dora's life changes were influenced by her orderly pursuit of a clearly defined career ladder, and by her husband's heart attack. Subjects in Cell III represent developmental change in individuals taking flight from an unsatisfying profession. The life events of career change represented developmental progression within the occupational sphere, and were the key events in life structure changes.

The adult socialization model focuses upon "the sequence of social roles enacted over the adult life course and the ways in which individuals obtain these roles and are prepared to enact them" (George, 1982, p. 29). From this perspective, we are concerned with, primarily, role changes and career changes during the life course. Thus, in reviewing subjects' lives, we would analyze, for example,

the role changes occurring at mid-life for Carol; the influences of Dora's mothering role on her avoidance of first-line administrative roles; the transition from singleness to single-parent roles in Annie's and Eva's lives; and so on.

Both the timing-of-events model and the adult socialization model provide important perspectives on adult change. Each model directs our attention to the substantial body of knowledge available on normative changes which occur in adult lives. Each model also elaborates on the role of social and cultural factors in the process of adult change. However, neither model is based in theories on adulthood, or on the role of subjective factors in adapting to changes. And, while the concept of "developmental lines" is valuable for examining personality changes, it does not allow us to trace development in the various other spheres of adult life.

In summary, when we focus on the causes of change in the lives of the women studied, the data can be interpreted from various perspectives. For some individuals, developmental change reflects continued maturation and psychosocial growth across the adult life course. Such individuals use transitional periods for reappraisal and, as a result, have life courses which reflect distinct developmental periods. Levinson's theory is quite valuable for describing these individuals progression toward a more individuated self.

For other individuals, it is less possible to discern the role of maturational processes in adult life. These individuals' transitional periods may be characterized less by reappraisal, than by the occurrence of role changes and/or career changes. The occurrence of developmental periods in these individuals' lives may reflect the organizing influences of change within a specific, circumscribed sphere of adult life on the overall character of lives.

For still other individuals, the concept of developmental periods may have limited applicability across the life course. This study of women's lives suggests that the notion of developmental periods, with specific developmental tasks, was more applicable, for some, for the period between adolescence and the mid-thirties. Thereafter, the notion of age-linked developmental periods proved to be a less persuasive framework for interpreting changes in adult lives.

Quite probably, all of these models for adult change are applicable to our subjects' lives, with some limitations. Our data raises the question of whether there are varieties of adult development which help to explain differences in how people change. Levinson's theory appears to describe one subgroup who are responsive to both internal and external events, for whom self-discovery and self-learning are consistent goals, and whose lives demonstrate a stable

relationship to occupation through the adult years. Yet another variety would appear to be those individuals who are relatively more responsive to external events as an impetus for change. Such individuals may be unable to use knowledges about the "self" as an organizing framework for life changes. Still other subgroups may be seen to combine these different approaches to change, or to vary their approaches across the life course.

Clinical Implications

The present study has provided detailed accounts of the adult life histories of eight black women. As such it represents an important data base from which to generate questions about psychological work with these women. Four broad areas relative to clinical work are suggested by this research. These are: 1) The use of life structure as an organizing concept for psychological evaluation and/or psychotherapy; 2) The diagnosis of adult developmental issues; 3) The role of psychotherapy during transitional periods; and, 4) The significance of depression in women's life courses.

Newton and Levinson (1977) have previously suggested that the concept of life structure may serve a valuable function in organizing clinical data. The concept directs our attention to both the individual's personality, as it

influences the expression of clinical symptoms, and to the specific problems encountered in achieving a satisfactory fit between self and world. Clinicians who employ the concept of life structure may be seen to treat clinical data in several significant ways.

First, clinicians are advised to obtain systematic accounts of an individual's life structure history. Such accounts are likely to reveal important data about how components have shifted or remained stable, the nature of choices made at varying points in time, and characteristic styles of undergoing transitional periods. The life history approach lends itself to a focus on when, developmentally, the person's efforts to achieve a satisfactory life structure failed, or conversely, when these efforts were successful.

Second, the concept of life structure requires the clinician to assess impairments in personality functioning, as well as problems in creating suitable life structures. For some subgroups of patients who are severely impaired, such distinctions are irrelevant. Such patients may be woefully unable to engage in purposeful efforts at shaping lives in adaptive patterns. However, we would suggest that, for many patients, the distinction between an impaired "self" and an impaired, or flawed, life structure is a useful one. We speculate that such distinctions were quite relevant, for example, for Barbara when she returned to

therapy during the M.L.T. Given her longstanding difficulties with heterosexual relations, she was faced with critical decisions regarding alternatives for structuring her life in a more satisfying pattern.

As Levinson notes, every life structure contains "a mixture of order and disorder, unity and diversity, integration and fragmentation. It is always flawed in some respects" (p. 54). From a clinical standpoint, one issue is that of clarifying the patient's own interpretation of how his/her life structure is flawed. Such a line of inquiry is likely to yield important data about such issues as: the disparity between the patient's earliest Dreams and the realities of his/her current life; the patient's assumptions regarding how "healthy" or "normal" his/her life patterns are; and what understandings the patient has of his/her choices in creating a more suitable life structure.

But, while the concept of life structure is likely to be helpful in organizing clinical data, the diagnosis of adult developmental issues requires a more elaborate approach. As Colarusso and Nemiroff (1981) have noted, the clinical aim should be that of joining understandings of the patient's developmental patterns in childhood and adulthood with evaluations of intrapsychic conflicts (p. 189). Clinicians who are concerned with adult development will differ in several important ways in their diagnostic approach from those who do not diagnose adult development.

First, developmental histories that describe the individual's life, from birth to the present, are an essential aspect of the diagnostic process. Many clinicians do not obtain such histories since the prevailing assumption is that there is little development in the adult years. Yet, life histories generate valuable information both about key life events and the individual's own understanding of why he/she has changed over the adult years. Moreover, the therapeutic process may well benefit from the patient's awareness of the clinician's interest in how he/she evolved through time.

Second, the concept of developmental lines is useful to the collection of data about the patient and to diagnostic formulation. Colarusso and Nemiroff (1981) have provided an outline of the major themes in adult development which might guide clinical assessment. Their themes outline the broad developmental issues of significance for four periods i.e. the late teens and early 20's; the 20's and 30's; the 40's and 50's; and, the 60's and 70's. The themes noted were: 1) Intimacy, Love, and Sex; 2) The Body; 3) Time and Death; 4) Relationship to Children; 5) Relationship to Parents; 6) Mentor Relationships; 7) Relationship to Society; 8) Work; 9) Play; and 10) Finances. (pp. 201-207)

Finally, the developmental formulation clarifies the relationship between symptom formation and conflict and central developmental issues. Obviously, such formulations

will be expressed in terms which are compatible with any given clinician's theoretical orientation. The critical consideration is that such formulations address development for each period of adult life. Thus, for example, using Levinson's framework, assessment of the 50 year old patient would address each of six developmental periods, and would clarify how symptoms are related to key developmental issues from earlier periods.

We turn now to a consideration of the role of psychotherapy during transitional periods. In the sample studied, we observed that three subjects sought psychotherapy during such times. Two subjects did so during the Early Adult Transition; one entered therapy during the Age Thirty Transition; and, three subjects had therapy experiences during the Mid-Life Transition. Indeed, one of these subjects used therapy to cope with each transition.

Little need be said about the important role which therapy can play during the Early Adult Transition. The literature on psychotherapy for the adolescent, or young adult, is already extensive. However, in the absence of theory about adult development, therapeutic approaches for periods beyond adolescence tend not to address specific stages of adulthood. Recently, greater attention has been devoted to therapy of the "older patient", but such approaches are more available for the geriatric (over 60 years) population, than for the earlier stages of adulthood.

Our findings offer some insights into the valuable role which therapy can play during the Age Thirty Transition and the Mid-Life Transition. We suggest that the client who seeks therapy during these periods would be aided by approaches which view transitions as an opportunity for re-evaluation of the self, and of life structures. Clinical interventions which foster the client's capacities for reappraisal are particularly indicated. When clinicians view the client's symptoms as an indication of disturbances in development, therapy is more sharply cast in the role of removing impediments to growth and maturation. (Colarusso and Nemoroff, 1982, p. 218)

When therapy is conceived of as an attempt to facilitate growth in a still evolving personality, the clinician will be alert to the urgency of specific themes during transitional periods. Thus, the Age Thirty Transition, particularly for women, might include such concerns as: the desire for children and awareness of one's biological timetable; continuing needs to develop capacities for intimacy; the beginning of mourning for the loss of youth; emerging difficulties in balancing love and work; and, issues regarding separation from one's parents.

Developmental themes during the mid-life transition might include: reactions to declining physical prowess and other responses to the aging body; mourning for the lost illusions and unfulfilled Dreams of early adulthood; recognition of

the inevitability of one's personal death; intensification of desires for creativity; and, reintegration of the self following a parent's death. A developmental approach to the therapy of clients in transitional periods places particular emphasis on the normative crises of the periods, and facilitates clients' work on these age-appropriate issues. In addition, as Colarusso and Nemoroff (1981) have noted, the patient's unique experiences with loss receive a special emphasis in therapy during such periods: "...the developmental psychotherapist feels that the emotional understanding and experience of the processes involved in loss, mourning, and new internalizations are essential to both growth and increased capacity for self-observation and differentiation". (p. 240)

Finally, we briefly consider our data which illuminates the significance of depression in women's life courses. Given such a small sample of research subjects, it appears significant that a majority of this group reported periods of depression. For most subjects, the depressive experiences occurred during transitional periods. Apparently, the Early Adult Transition, the Age Thirty Transition, and the Mid-Life Transition evoked depressive responses to the various losses which subjects encountered. We believe this data adds further support to the view that women's life courses are strongly influenced by needs for attachments and the pain of losses and separations.

Much has been written about women's greater vulnerability to depression, including the higher prevalence of depressive disorders among women in comparison to men (Scarf, 1980; Weissman and Klerman, 1977). The present study has provided additional data on the relationship between women's experience of depression and stages of the life course. This data suggests that the overriding developmental task for women, throughout the adult years, is forming the capacity for healthy adaptations to separations and losses.

We took note of the fact that one of our subjects used psychotherapy, on at least four separate occasions, to cope with depression (i.e. Barbara). Her life history illuminates the valuable role which therapy can play in fostering improved capacity to tolerate losses. Yet, we are also led to speculate what her outcome might have been in the absence of psychotherapy as a component of her life structure. The question arises as to whether women, in particular, might benefit from a wider variety of therapeutic approaches to cope with such a fundamental developmental issue. Our finding of the rather frequent occurrence of depression in these women's life courses might serve as encouragement to clinicians to provide more diverse approaches to aid women's psychological work on issues of separation and loss.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the present study represented an examination of the uses and limits of Levinson's theory for a sample of black, professional women. Our findings provided inconclusive support for two basic premises i.e. that the life course evolves with alternating stable and transitional periods; and, that there is an average, most frequent age for the onset and completion of each developmental period. Nevertheless, Levinson's model proved to be quite valuable for organizing life history data, and for illuminating the key developmental issues of several periods.

Two specific revisions were suggested to better capture developmental issues. The task of managing one's sexuality and choices regarding childrearing was proposed for the Novice phase. The task of integration of needs for independence and for interdependence was proposed as an alternative to Levinson's conception of the Settling Down period.

Further, several questions were raised regarding the assumption that transitional periods were universal occurrences. Alternatively, data from this study suggests that transitional periods reflected the interplay of motivational stances toward self-discovery or self-protection, and the timing of events such as role and career changes. Our review of three subjects' development in the Entering Middle Adulthood period led to questions

about the relationships between adaptation and earlier developmental problems, and between adaptation and motivations toward self-discovery or self-protection.

In considering the influence of racial identity on adult development, we proposed that "forming the capacity for heterosexual intimacy" was a more appropriate developmental task than "forming a marriage and family". Further, we suggested that developmental work on the black-white polarity was specifically indicated for blacks in a racist society. Such work represents the unique developmental demands placed upon black people in a racist society.

Finally, we discussed the clinical implications of this study on women's adult development. The life structure was viewed as a valuable concept for organizing clinical data, particularly in conjunction with a developmental approach to therapy. The role of therapy during transitional periods was outlined, and note was made of the need for diverse approaches to psychological work with women to aid in coping with depressive responses to separation and loss.

Although this study had several specific methodological limitations, it represents a confirmation of several central notions in Levinson's theoretical framework, while also suggesting directions for future research. The notion of varieties of adult development is one such area which warrants study. Apparently, only some individual's development can be conceptualized as a process of maturation

and growth, within age-linked developmental periods. Other varieties of development may not follow age-linked periods, evidence alternating stable and transitional periods, and/or reflect continued progress toward a more complex, individuated self.

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