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**DIFFERENT REALITIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NINETEEN BLACK
AND WHITE FEMALE SINGLE PARENTS IN PHILADELPHIA**

City University of New York

PH.D. 1986

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DIFFERENT REALITIES: A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF NINETEEN BLACK AND WHITE
FEMALE SINGLE PARENTS IN PHILADELPHIA

by

Anne Francis Okongwu

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
Faculty in Anthropology in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University
of New York.

1986

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

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Abstract

DIFFERENT REALITIES: A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF NINETEEN BLACK AND WHITE
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by

Anne Francis Okongwu

Adviser: Edward Hansen

This ethnographic study of nineteen Black and White female single-parent families examines the ways in which contemporary race and class relations condition the quality of life of female single-parent families.

Special attention is given to the ways in which the mothers generate income to support their families, and organize child care, child rearing and domestic activities.

The discussion provides a detailed description of the differences in the composition and content of material resources, services and information exchanged through the kinship/friendship network systems in which these families are embedded. These resources are reviewed from the perspective of how they, in conjunction with various types of state subsidies, condition the standard of living, life style and future life chances of these families.

Preface

This study represents an attempt to examine the experience of nineteen female single parents within the social and economic context in which they live their lives. Five years ago, when I began this research, I had a general idea of the contours of the female single-parent experience. I was familiar with models and studies that examined the ways in which the overarching institutions of the society and differential access to material resources, services and information affected the quality of life of American families.

I understood that the ways that mothers generated income to support their families, organized child care, child rearing and the daily reproduction of their households differed, and that these differences were conditioned by the existing structures of social inequality permeating the society.

However, I felt that it was necessary to have a deeper understanding and more specific knowledge of the ways in which historical and current patterns of race and class relations manifested themselves in the daily lives of women and children living in female single-parent families. I wanted to create a vehicle through which women could speak about their lives, and in this way to explore the degree to which the individual experiences of these participants as women, mothers and workers were reflective of wider patterns of social inequality and the lives of women in families.

The extent to which I have been successful in this endeavor results from the collective effort of many people. The contributions of some have been direct, of others have been indirect. However, without the combined support and contributions of all of those who have worked with me during the past five years, it would have been impossible to complete this project. The faults and shortcomings in this work belong solely to me.

First I must thank the women and children who continuously worked with me through the extended period of data collection and writing. In this case the term "participant" must be used in its widest sense. These women not only allowed me to enter their homes, work places, children's schools and other aspects of their lives, but also made the time to keep diaries and spent many hours sharing with me their experiences, ideas, hopes, disappointments and victories. They were sensitive and responsive to my schedule and time constraints. In addition, during the period that I was analyzing the data and writing, many of them called, came, gave me feedback on the material and provided general encouragement. The women also made time in their busy schedules to read their particular case studies, and to respond to my presentation of the data. This feedback proved invaluable in helping me to shape and organize my final draft.

I am especially thankful to my adviser, Professor Edward Hensen, and my committee members, Professors Joan Mencher and Roger Sanjek. They have all extended themselves far beyond the boundaries of a dissertation committee. During my years at the Graduate Center they have consistently

worked with me to develop the "academic tool box" and discipline necessary to complete this type of research. Through the years they have taken the time to formulate questions that have forced me to grow in the process of answering them. Most important, they have always provided sensitive, critical and honest feedback on my ideas and work. Without their encouragement and support this research could not have been possible.

I am also indebted to the faculty at the Graduate Center, particularly Professor Sydel Silverman and Delmos Jones. At each juncture in this long process they have provided encouragement, been responsive to my need for time and been sensitive to the problems I encountered during the process of my work.

I am also grateful to my friends who took the time out of their busy schedules to read and make comments on earlier drafts: Professors Lattee Fahm, Chu Okongwu, Rachel Weddington and Ann Sharmon. These discussions, as well as many useful comments provided by Maureen Pierce, Robert Handman and Rita Handman, enabled me to better focus the material and keep on writing.

Many others have indirectly contributed to this endeavor through the sharing of information, lively conversation, laughter and encouragement. In this regard, space does not permit me to mention them all. I would, however, particularly like to thank Dean Harrison and some of my friends at the Graduate Center for their consistent support and interest in my progress: Lotus Dix, Louise Parks, Beverly Brock-Gartrell,

Horace Batson, Warren Perry, John Rashford, Wallace Austin, Ansley LaMar and Paulette Pierce. I also must give a special thanks to Terri Vulcano for always taking the time to keep me informed about deadlines and procedures and who never failed in the process of giving me this information to add a word of encouragement.

Finally, I am deeply indebted to my family for their continuous support and encouragement. My mother, Violet Francis, and my sister and brother-in-law, Mei-Ling and Oliver Bullock, served as a testing ground for my questionnaire and assisted with other tasks related to the study. In addition, they have generously provided critical assistance through the years with child care and child rearing. My sons, Chudozie and Nmutaka, have shown an unflagging commitment to the completion of this project. To this end they have often adjusted their activities to meet my time constraints, made trips to the library for me and not complained about some of the pot-luck meals they have had to consume. At every juncture in this long process the members of my family have been willing to make the adjustments that were necessary for me to continue and complete this study.

As an expression of my appreciation and gratitude for the love and support they have generously provided, this dissertation is dedicated to them.

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INTRODUCTION

This is a comparative ethnographic study of nineteen Black and White female single-parent families of differing socioeconomic positions. The research was conducted in Philadelphia from the end of 1980 through 1983. This period was characterized by radical changes in political, economic and social policy brought about by the election of Ronald Reagan as President of the United States. The study focuses primarily on the ways in which these single mothers generated income to support their families while simultaneously organizing child care, child rearing and domestic activities.

The families are studied within the wider social context and the kinship/friendship social network system in which they are embedded. It examines the composition of their social network system and the content of the material resources, services and information exchanged among its members as well as those provided by the state. The dual lines of inquiry were designed to explore the degree to which the content of flows through the social network system and from the state condition the standard of living, lifestyle and current and future opportunities of these families.

The nineteen families represent significant variations in standard of living, lifestyle and organization of child care, child rearing and domestic activities. Thus, they yield valuable insight into the types

and range of activities and choices involved in providing economic support, child care and child rearing in contemporary urban settings.

A central point that emerges through examination of these female single-parent families is that the term "female single-parent family" obscures more than it clarifies. This term, in and of itself, does not delineate the number or gender of other adults that contribute to the economic support of the family, or who participates in child care, child rearing and domestic activities. Further, it does not indicate the standard of living or class position of the family. The data suggest that the central distinguishing characteristic of this family form is that, in the last instance, the mother has the primary responsibility for ensuring the economic support of the household and for determining the organization of child care and child rearing activities. As one mother put it, "I'm the only person who really stands between my children and the street." It seems that it is the pressure of having the ultimate responsibility for these dimensions of parenting responsibilities that most importantly distinguishes these mothers from working mothers in two-parent households.

In reality, most female single parents do not carry out the parenting process alone. They are assisted, to varying degrees, by the fathers of their children, relatives, friends and public and private institutions (Stack, 1975; Keniston, 1977; Manns, 1981). In addition, the roles their kinship/friendship network systems and public and private institutions play tend to expand, adjust or become more restricted in response to changes in the status of the mother and the changing developmental needs of the children. The interaction of both of these sources of support in the lives of female single-parent families is importantly conditioned by changes in the wider social and economic context.

For comparative purposes, the nineteen female single parents in the study are divided into three categories based on the mother's position in the occupational structure:

1. Professional mothers working full time: eight women, four White, four Black;
2. Mothers working full-time in career ladder situations: seven women, four Black, three White;
3. Mothers receiving public assistance: four women, two Black, two White.

Initially, it was thought that the placement of these mothers in the occupational structure would condition the ways in which income and other resources were generated to support the family's standard of living. Further, it was assumed that this classification would serve as a useful framework for examining the organization of child care and child rearing activities.

In the course of conducting the research, it became increasingly apparent that in order to understand and explain the quantitative and qualitative differences in the standards of living, lifestyle, career choices and income-generating activities of the women within and between these categories, it was necessary to give detailed attention to other factors. Thus, the line of inquiry was expanded to include: (1) the natal family and the resources (including opportunities and experiences) shared with the mother during various stages of life; (2) level of education; (3) training and employment history; (4) the composition of the social network system in which the family is embedded and the material resources, services and information that pass through them; and (5) the opportunity structure available to the person as an individual and as the member of a particular racial or ethnic group.

The inclusion of these factors helped explain observed differences between the actual standard of living and the income from the mother's primary income-generating activity. It also brought to light the differences in the types of goods, services, information and money exchanged between the mother's network system and the impact of these on the mother's occupational mobility and the standard of living of these families..

In the context of this study, life style is defined as the choices made given the constraints imposed by the resources (human and material) available to the family. In contrast, standard of living is viewed as the resources utilized, given the full range of resources available within the given social context. Thus, differences in the standard of living of families in the American context are linked to social mechanisms governed by race and class relations. These result in differential access to the society's goods, services, information and other resources. From this perspective, the wide variations in possible, as well as actual, income-generating activities of the Black and White female single parents of different socioeconomic positions are reflective of class and race relations operating in the wider society.

Class location and race relations manifest themselves in everyday life through social relations. In other words, they are manifested through activities, behavior and expressed and conceived attitudes operating between people which act to expand or constrain opportunities and access to goods, services, information and other resources that ultimately condition the quality of life that people live from day to day.

An analysis of the differences in contemporary strategies employed by female single parents to provide economic support for their families

should include more than their current location in the occupational structure, education and income. A more complete explanation of these differences must include the impact of class, race and family relations. The experiences of the nineteen participants in this study illuminate the inseparable relationships between race, class and family and their role in conditioning contemporary life experiences and life chances. Each family studied has an individual character. The woman heading each family has her own individual expression of being in the world. However, beneath this diversity, structuring the range, content and flexibility of the choices these mothers make for themselves and their children, is a structural consistency--i.e., the historical development of race, class identities and family relations.

Natal families function as the initial units of orientation to social relations. As such, they serve as conduits through which historically developed race and class are introduced. It is here that the initial experiences of race, class relations and family relations are manifested and transmitted to new family members. The way in which these three interrelated variables coalesce conditions the integration of these women into the relations of production and reproduction. It is the combination of these three variables, along with the way they coalesce, that serves as the foundation on which future life strategies and values are based.

The term "income generating activities" has been selected to allow for the examination and discussion of both the formal and informal ways in which income is generated to support the standards of living and life styles of these nineteen families. For a more complete understanding of the ways that female single parents generate income to support their families, it is necessary to review both the subjective and objective dimensions of this process.

Culture, at the individual level within a given society, is not uniform. Rather, it is a mosaic conditioned by the individual's and group's historical relationship to the over-arching dominant culture's ideals ideology, material resources, institutions and information. Therefore, the views held by people of "acceptable" standards of living, as well as other related choices made within a given socially and culturally determined standard, also vary by class, individual and group historical experiences. Seen in this context, the subjective dimension of this process may be viewed as the family's preference map, while the objective dimension defines the set of consumption possibilities. It is suggested that it is the subjective dimension, i.e., what the individual considers to be an acceptable standard of living and life style, that acts as a crucial variable in determining the range and types of strategies employed by these mothers in (1) generating income, (2) types of resources utilized for child care, and (3) types and range of experiences they consider necessary to prepare their children for future adult roles. To put it another way, how much money and what kinds of goods and services they feel are necessary to support their household and to provide for their children act as catalysts for their income-generating activities. At the same time, the objective dimension, i.e., their access to material resources, services and information, serves to determine the constraints within which their choices are made. This also conditions the range and types of income-generating activities that can be employed. Thus, the objective dimension, which is a function of socioeconomic position and class within the total social structure, ultimately determines the standard of living and life chances of family members.

The female single parents in the three designated categories are used to illustrate different aspects of this argument. Chapter IV presents eight Black and White professional mothers who are working full time. These cases are used to demonstrate the distortions that may arise when the factors of education, occupation and income from the mother's primary work situation are used as the only criteria for determining class location.

The seven female single parents in Chapter V work full-time and are involved in career mobility strategies. These women demonstrate the following: (1) the importance of expanding the model to include the integration of state-provided subsidies in examinations of the elements that determine the standard of living realized by contemporary American families; (2) the ways in which the dual processes of increasing penetration of the market and increasing institutionalization of aspects of family life have influenced contemporary social network formation and the nature of urban family life, and (3) the kinds of variables that condition career mobility and risk-taking in the job market.

Chapter VI examines two White and two Black female single-parent families receiving public assistance. Each of these families illustrates a different pattern in the integration of state subsidies with resources from other sources. The impact of the range of material and social supports utilized by these mothers is examined from the perspective of the ways in which they condition the standard of living, lifestyle and career mobility of these women and their children. Together, these three chapters serve to illustrate the range of diversity in the standard of living, lifestyle and current and future opportunities realized by these female-headed single-parent families.

Finally, this work represents an attempt to expand and operationalize the concept of class through a careful analysis of natal family, social network systems, occupation and work histories, and access to individual, group and state resources. It is suggested that by examining these areas we can better understand how single-parent families experience and maintain their class position.

The Setting

Philadelphia is a city that has undergone all of the transformations that mark the major stages of urban development in the United States. As a colonial city that held one of the closely guarded town charters issued by the British Crown, it quickly grew into a thriving commercial city. During the American Revolution, Philadelphia functioned as a center of political activity and decision-making. This gave rise to its becoming the first capital of the United States.

Independence from England accelerated the rate of economic development in the United States. No longer limited by the constraints of the British government on the course and shape of its economic and political development the country became increasingly urbanized as its population increased and it moved into an extended period of rapid industrial development.

During the early part of the 1800's, Philadelphia began the process of transformation from a commercial city to an industrial one. The steadily increasing growth of economic activity in the city led to a rapid influx of immigrants from northwestern Europe and to the movement of native-born white Americans from rural areas to Philadelphia. As a result, by 1810 Philadelphia's white population rose to 100,688 (DuBois, 1899).

Early in its history, Philadelphia had a Black population. From the establishment of Pennsylvania as a colony in 1682, under the leadership of William Penn, it was distinguished from other American colonies by the strong influence of its active Quaker population. The Quaker belief in equality and strong opposition to slavery early in the colony's history, combined with Philadelphia's location as a gateway city to the South, resulted in the establishment of a steadily increasing free Black population more than a century before the Civil War (DuBois, 1899; Hershberg, 1981). By 1810 this population had reached 10,522 (DuBois, 1899). However, unlike White migrants and residents they were barred from participation in the expanding manufacturing sector through discriminatory hiring practices.

By 1850 Philadelphia was a major manufacturing center in both the country and the world. It had a large heterogeneous population that was continuing to expand as more immigrants from Europe and migrants from rural areas and the South flooded into the city. The changing structure of employment opportunities and movement of both skilled and unskilled workers with differing political and economic interests, intensified the already existing economic and political competition between White native-born and foreign-born workers and Blacks and Whites. Already this conflict had led to Blacks losing the right to vote in 1838 and to a steady deterioration in the economic viability of Philadelphia's Black population. For example, between 1838 and 1856, the percentage of Black artisans unable to practice their trades because of prejudice rose from 23% to 38%. Further, in 1847, when the overwhelming percentage of white workers were employed in industry, only one-half of one percent of Blacks, despite their residential proximity to factories, were able to work in this important employment sector (Hershberg, 1981). However,

despite the increase in racial conflict and restricted employment opportunities in Philadelphia, the conditions in the south prior to the Civil War led to the Black population rising to more than 22,000 by 1860. As such it represented the largest free Black population outside the Slave South (Hershberg, 1981).

The major dislocations and disruptions caused by the Civil War did not curtail economic growth in Philadelphia. Industries continued to expand and, for some Philadelphians, fortunes generated during the war created the basis for entry into the city's upper class. This stratum of Philadelphia society during this period was slowly beginning the process of development from a local to a national upper class (Baltzell, 1979). At the same time, the continuing expansion and diversification of Philadelphia's manufacturing sector was stimulating the growth of an increasingly heterogeneous population and a reorganization of the city's spatial arrangements (Warner, 1968; Hershberg, 1981).

In the late 1880's, large numbers of immigrants from Italy, Poland and Russia moved into the city. This second wave of immigrants, unlike the previous immigrants from Ireland, Germany and England, settled in more ethnically concentrated enclaves in downtown Philadelphia. The city's changing ethnic and socioeconomic heterogeneity became reflected in the shifting spatial arrangements of its population. The majority of the poor and laboring White and Black population lived near concentrated centers of production. The middle and upper classes continued their movement to areas away from the commercial and manufacturing area in the center of the city.

These changing patterns of spatial organization were made possible in part by innovations and improvements in technology, transportation and communication (Warner, 1968; Hershberg, 1981). However, these changes

were also reflective of the process of class formation and conflict of interests between the owning and the working classes, as well as the pattern of race relations that emerged with the particular course of capitalist development in the United States. The restructuring of the productive process into larger units of production and policies implemented to expand production, markets and profits led to the need to exert greater control over labor. The residential concentration of worker close to their places of work, allowed for greater control over the work force (Gordon, 1978).

The divergent pattern of integration of Black and White workers into Philadelphia's manufacturing sector continued through the most generative period of the city's industrial development despite the rise in the city's Black population, which rose from 5% to 10% between 1900 and 1930 (Hershberg, 1981). Exclusion from these employment opportunities and related benefits was reflected in the significant differences in the standard of living of Philadelphia's Black community. Hershberg states:

In 1930 six blacks among ten--three times the proportion found among white workers--worked in domestic, personal service and laboring employment.... All groups enjoyed a rising standard of living that affected fecundity, fertility, and especially mortality. But Blacks were unable to make any relative gains in their occupational profile. The same proportion--roughly 60%--characterized the black and white occupational distributions in 1850, 1880, 1900 and 1930 (Hershberg, 1981:14).

This same report points out that by 1930 the position of Black workers in the city in relationship to White workers had only slightly improved.

It is useful to think of the industrializing and mature industrial period in the United States as a whole and, in Philadelphia in particular, as crucial in determining the subsequent experience of both native-born and immigrant Whites and Blacks in the United States. The

rapid and accelerated growth in technological innovations, the reorganization of production, and the expanding national and international markets for American manufacturers acted to propel Philadelphia and other manufacturing cities into nodal points of economic growth and decision-making.

The expansion in industrial production created not only increased employment opportunities, but greater diversity in the occupational structure. Those workers who were able to be integrated into this expanding productive base were able to use these opportunities as an economic foothold for socioeconomic mobility for themselves and their children. At the same time, the wealth generated during this period by those in a position to steer the direction of this economic movement or to enter the ranks of the upper class by virtue of the the wealth generated during this period were able to begin the process of consolidating their wealth and their political sphere of influence on national and international basis.

Between 1930 and 1980, there were major changes in the city's productive base and the composition of its population, as Philadelphia entered the process of transformation to a post-industrial city and expanded the service sector of its economy. The Black population rose to 40%, and there was a flow of Asians and Hispanics into the city. This period was characterized by a steady decline in the manufacturing sector, a movement of industries to industrial parks outside the city and to other parts of the country and the world in an effort to reduce production costs. This resulted in a serious decline in employment opportunities for semi-skilled and unskilled workers.

Increasingly, particularly during the 1960's and early 1970's, as a result of the civil rights movement, extreme forms of racial

discrimination in employment decreased. Paradoxically, at the same time that there was a greater range of employment opportunities and a much wider distribution of Blacks throughout the occupational structure, there were also reduced actual employment opportunities. The shift in the economy of the city to service, professional, and high-skilled industries has greatly reduced the demand for semi-skilled and unskilled labor.

The spatial arrangements in the city have also undergone radical changes in the last two decades. High income groups from the suburbs and young upwardly mobile professionals from other parts of the country have moved into the city (Saline, 1985). These groups have reclaimed residential areas close to the city's commercial and cultural center and to areas near Drexel University and the University of Pennsylvania. Lower income groups have been pushed away from the center of the city to "trolley" suburbs and West and North Philadelphia, thus creating residential spatial patterns that more closely resemble the patterns of the early 1800's than of the latter periods of the city's development.

Philadelphia's long history of urban development and changing racial and ethnic population make it possible to study the processes of transition in the city through all the stages of its urban development--commercial, industrializing, mature industrial, and post industrial. Thus, this city provides a particularly useful setting for the examination of the interrelationship between the growth of the city and the changing ethnic, race and class relations. The extensive documentation of all these stages in the city's history enables contemporary researchers to review the interaction of urban development, immigration and race and class relations from the city's inception to the present (DuBois, 1899; Baltzell, 1958; Warner, 1968; Davis and Hüller, 1973;

Erskowitz and Zikmund, 1973; Hershberg, 1981; Urban League of Philadelphia, 1981, 1982, 1983).

Philadelphia as a Dynamic Context

Hershberg provides a useful framework for the study of the differing experiences of groups within an urban context. He suggests that in urban histories it is useful to conceptualize the urban environment as a dynamic process rather than as a passive backdrop to the particular problem under study in an urban area (Hershberg, 1981). He states:

Urban as a process should be thought of as the dynamic modeling of the interrelationships among environment, behavior and group experience--three basic components in the larger urban system (Hershberg, 1982:28).

The usefulness of this approach is demonstrated by its application to the comparative study of the differing experience of "old immigrants," i.e., Irish, German, British, and "new immigrants," i.e., Italians, Poles, Russian Jews, and Blacks in Philadelphia from 1850 to 1880. He argues that it is necessary to focus on three key elements in order to explain the differences in the experience of these three groups: (1) the human capital carried by the group upon their arrival (skills, education, degree of experience in urban industrial areas and its complex economy, culture, values, (2) the structure of opportunity (jobs, housing, transportation, municipal services and their actual distribution in the city's spatial arrangements), and (3) discrimination faced by a group upon its arrival and attempt to enter the city's mainstream (Hershberg, 1981).

In this study, an attempt is made to operationalize Hershberg's conceptualization of the city as a dynamic context in an ethnographic study. The city is treated as a dynamic structural and sociological environment for examining the impact of wider social forces and a changing

social, political and economic climate on families of different socioeconomic, ethnic and racial backgrounds.

The focus of the study is the nineteen female single parents that head these families. Primary attention is given to the strategies they employ to carry out three central parenting activities: (1) the generation of income to support the family's standard of living, (2) child care, and (3) child rearing. Each of these activities is examined from several perspectives. Thus, it becomes possible to determine the degree to which the spatial arrangements of the city, the character of neighborhoods, and the location of service facilities interact with contemporary modes of transportation and communication to condition the ways in which these activities are carried out (Hershberg, 1981).

Some of the points that emerge from this approach to the study of contemporary urban families are:

1. the lack of congruence between the residential and social communities of these families; this lack of congruence reveals the limitations inherent in using the residential community as the unit of analysis for this type of study of urban family life, and demonstrates the problems that arise when the city is treated as a bounded entity;
2. the degree to which the market and the state have penetrated contemporary family life (Zaretsky, 1973; Braverman, 1974); this underscores the importance of looking at urban family life within a national and international context; and
3. the increased centralization of activities related to child care and child rearing, and the role that this plays in the development of contemporary social network systems.

Within this framework the generation of income to support the family's standard of living is reviewed from several perspectives:

(1) the spatial relationship between the job site and the location of child-related activities, (2) the interrelationship between the organization of child-related and domestic activities, and (3) the integration of various income-generating activities and the crystalization of these in the realization of a specific standard of living and life style.

With regard to the spatial relations between the primary work situation and the location of child-related activities, attention is given to the distance between the work place, residence, and children's schools. This is related to the mode of transportation utilized and the time and energy expended by the mother and the organization of child care and child rearing activities.

In reviewing the interrelationship between the organization of income-generating activities and the organization of child-related and domestic activities, attention is given to the actual time involved in carrying out the work responsibilities, the location and degree of flexibility in location and time in carrying out particular work responsibilities, the relationship between these two factors, and range and type of other income-generating strategies.

Finally, the range of income-generating strategies that support the family's standard of living is reviewed in terms of the economic and social context in which they live.

Philadelphia is popularly known as the "city of homes." It is characterized by residential neighborhoods comprised of row houses, semi-detached and single houses. These distinct residential communities reflect the socioeconomic position, racial and in some instances the ethnic affiliation of their residents. To a large extent, Philadelphia is balkanized along socioeconomic, racial and ethnic lines. The nineteen families who participated in this study were distributed throughout the

city. Four of the families lived in center city; the other fourteen lived in areas situated in varying degrees of proximity to the center of the city. Twelve lived in private homes; two families lived in two-family houses, two lived in low-rise apartment houses, and three lived in high-rise condominiums. In eighteen of the nineteen cases, the family's socioeconomic position and racial affiliation was congruent with that of their particular residential community. The one exception was a Black family that had recently moved into a working class White neighborhood. This family met with strong resistance from the community, including a cross-burning in front of their house and the breaking of windows of the house and car vandalism.

The other five families living in integrated neighborhoods (four White and one Black) lived in communities that were characterized by this kind of heterogeneity. These two neighborhoods are currently undergoing a process of gentrification and are now characterized by a wide range of socioeconomic and racial diversity. However, both are becoming increasingly homogeneous.

Despite the neighborhood organization of these communities, most of the mothers heading these families worked in other parts of the city and utilized services and facilities that were dispersed throughout the Philadelphia area. They and their children were dependent on a combination of public and private transportation to carry out the daily activities that characterize their life styles. All of the families used shopping facilities, services and resources located in center city. However, the areas of the city and the services and facilities they used most frequently varied. To some extent this was a function of their racial affiliation and socioeconomic position and the area in which they lived. Therefore, in a very real sense, it can be said that, although

all these families lived in Philadelphia, the Philadelphia they lived in and the way they experienced life in Philadelphia differed.

In all nineteen case, the kinship/friendship network systems were dispersed throughout and, in many instances, beyond the boundaries of the city. The families were able to maintain these relationships through telephone contacts and visits. As a result of an analysis of the ways in which they carried out the activities of income-generation, child care and child rearing cannot be restricted to their residential community. Instead it is necessary to take into account the ways in which contemporary transportation and communication systems interact with the spatial arrangements of the city to condition the nature of these processes.

The Context: Philadelphia, November 1980-December 1983

November 1980 to December 1983, the period during which this research was conducted, was a time of enormous economic, social and political change. At that time Philadelphia was the fourth largest city in the United States, with a population of 1,688,210 (U.S. Census Report, 1980). However, its population was declining in response to the changing opportunity structure of the country. In 1980 the country as a whole, and Philadelphia in particular, was in the process of adjusting to changes in economic and social policy that commended with the election of Ronald Reagan.

In January 1981, the unemployment rates were high and continued to rise during the data collection period. In 1980 the unemployment rate was 7.8% in Pennsylvania and 7.5% in Philadelphia. By the first quarter of 1983, these rates peaked at 11.2 for the country and 20.6 for the nation's black population (Vaughn-Cooke, 1984). During this period, Pennsylvania had one of the highest unemployment rates in the country:

14.3%. The unemployment rate in Philadelphia during this period was 10.8%. In addition, Philadelphia had the unwelcome distinction of having the highest rate of Black unemployment among the nation's ten largest cities (Perry, 1981). This is particularly significant when it is taken into consideration that roughly 40% of the city's total population is Black.

The female unemployment rate in Philadelphia was also high. In 1983, the unemployment rate for the total female population was 13%. The Black female unemployment rate was 17.7%, and the White female unemployment rate was 10% (Office of Employment Security). These rates were reflective of the steady closing of factories, supermarket chains and small businesses. For example, it has been estimated that between 1970 and 1980, 140,000 manufacturing jobs were lost in the Philadelphia area (Hershberg, 1981).

Philadelphia also reflected the national rise in single-parent headed households. Between 1979 and 1982 there had been a national increase in the percentage of both Black and White female-headed households. For White families, the percentage increased from 7.8% to 15%, and for Black families from 30.6% to 46.5%. The median income for White female-headed households was \$13,496 and for Black families in this category, \$7,458 (New York Times, November 20, 1983). According to the 1980 Census Report, 17% of White families and 52% of Black families in Philadelphia were female-headed (Cazenave, 1983).

The extended examination of these nineteen female-headed families shows how changes in the national, state and city social and economic policies during 1980-1983 affected specific female single-parent families. For example, the city's unemployment rates were directly felt by several

mothers becoming unemployed or experiencing the anxiety of expecting to be laid-off from their jobs. In other cases, the mother experienced a reduction in income, which resulted from the high unemployment rates in the areas she was assigned to conduct sales. In all cases where mothers lost their jobs, they had difficulty finding suitable employment.

Reductions in food stamp allotments were directly experienced by two mothers, one receiving unemployment compensation and the other primarily dependent on Public Assistance. In both cases, this led to the need for additional financial assistance for family essentials from members of their social network system.

The cuts in the Work Incentive Program and changes in the requirements for subsidized child care for pre-school children created serious hardships for one mother returning to full-time employment after several years of welfare dependence, and for several mothers who were attending school full-time in preparation for full-time entry into the work force.

As a whole, this study demonstrates the importance of studying families within an economic, political and social context. The process of capitalist development in the United States has created particular forms of urban development (Gordon, 1978). These combine to structure the dynamic context in which people organize and experience their families. Philadelphia today is a post-industrial city in the process of restructuring its economic base. The nineteen women heading these families are differentially integrated into this process. The historical integration of race, class and gender relations have given rise to their differential placement in the social system. The women's current location in the class structure, in the last instance determines the way they experience their lives as female single parents in Philadelphia's changing urban context.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

During the last two decades, there has been a rapid increase in single-parent-headed households in the United States. The growth of this household type has transcended racial, class and geographical boundaries. As a result, the single-parent household has emerged as one of the major forms of familial organization in the United States. That most of these single-parent households are headed by women, and that a significant proportion of these women and their dependent children are concentrated at the lower end of the economic scale, has created a resurgence of public and academic interest in female, single-parent families.

A review of some of the research stimulated by the publication of the 1980 United States Census report provides us with some of the statistical parameters of this phenomenon. In 1980, the United States Census Bureau reported that the total number of one-parent families increased by 79% between 1970 and 1980 (Community Nutrition Institute Weekly Report, September 1980:7). The number of female-headed households increased during this same period by 51% (Family Economics Review, Summer 1981:32). Between 1960 and 1982, the number of White female-headed households rose by more than 50%, from 6.0 to 13.9% of all White households, while, during the same period, Black female-headed households increased from 20.7% to 47.1% of all Black households (New York Times, November 20, 1983:56). In 1980, these national statistics were reflected in Philadelphia

as follows: 17% of White families and 52% of Black families in the city were headed by women (Cazenave, 1983:9). As a result of these widespread changes in family form, a significant number of American children will spend part of their lives in families headed by women.

Prior to this escalation of female-headed, single-parent families throughout society, most of the research on female single-parent families focused on Black families living in poverty. This literature can be divided into two categories: (1) work done prior to the Moynihan Report, and (2) work done in response to the Moynihan Report.

During the earlier period, most of the research on the Black family seemed to stem from the debate initiated by E. Franklin Frazier (1939) and Melville Herskovits (1941). The central point of divergence in this debate was the explanation of the relatively high proportion of female-headed single-parent households among the Black population in the United States. Frazier attributed this to socioeconomic factors stemming from the disruptive effect of slavery on the Black family and the socioeconomic context that Black people faced in the United States after emancipation.

Herskovits, whose research stressed the resilience of African culture in the New World, attempted to show the relationship between mother and children units in Africa and in the United States. Within this context, he saw the Black female-headed household in the United States as a carry-over from Africa. The issues of resiliency of culture, transfer of traditional cultures to New World societies, and the impact of socioeconomic factors on culture change, which are at the root of this debate, have remained important issues in anthropology.

An attempt to resolve this debate, as it relates to "African Survivals" in the New World, was put forth by Mintz and Price (1981). They suggested, after describing the diversity of West African cultures and European

slave systems, that, while it is impossible to transfer a culture intact, it is equally impossible to erase completely a cultural heritage. The socioeconomic context will determine how and to what degree cultural carry-overs will be manifested, transformed and expressed. Therefore, Herskovits was correct in asserting the resilient nature of culture, but he overestimated the level at which, and the degree to which, there was a transfer of African culture to the New World. It was further argued that Frazier, while correct in looking to socioeconomic factors and the destructiveness of the slave system for an explanation of current cultural patterns among the Black population, underestimated the resiliency of African culture in the New World. Mintz and Price argued that it is the combination of both of these forces that best explains the wide range of cultural patterns in New World Societies (Mintz and Price, 1981).

Researchers working in Caribbean societies have tended to fall on the Frazier side of the debate (MacDonald and MacDonald, 1978). In their work, they have attempted to demonstrate the relationship between socioeconomic position and family form (Henriques, 1953; R.T. Smith, 1956; Clarke, 1957; S. Greenfield, 1961; Otterbein, 1965) and have worked to clarify the distinction between the concepts of household and family (Solien, 1960; Davenport, 1968).

In the United States, with the exception of a few early studies which examined the Black family within an historical and socioeconomic context (DuBois, 1899, 1908; Johnson, 1934), much of the work done on the Black family has stressed the content of Black American culture rather than the socioeconomic context in which Black Americans lived. This work attempted to explain not only the relatively high occurrence of female-headed households, but also other expressions of the experience of Black Americans in the United States. As a result of this focus, a picture has

emerged in the literature of the female-headed single-parent family living in poverty as the predominant form of the Black family in the United States (Moynihan, 1965; Hannerz, 1969).

The work of Oscar Lewis in Mexico (1961), Puerto Rico and New York (1966) resulted in the introduction of the concept of the "Culture of Poverty." This concept provided the framework for much of the research that was done on the Black family in the 1960s. The "Culture of Poverty" was presented by Lewis as being a sub-culture that transcends national boundaries and internal regional urban/rural distinctions. He suggested that this culture has its own structure, rationale and way of life, and that it is were handed down from one generation to the next along family lines. The "Culture of Poverty" arose, according to Lewis, as both an adaptation and reaction of the poor to their marginal position in a class-stratified, highly individualistic, capitalist society. He further stated that once the "Culture of Poverty" comes into existence, it tends to perpetuate itself--that, in fact, it might be more difficult to eradicate than poverty itself. This culture was characterized by a matrifocal family structure, and the individuals growing up in it were said to have strong feelings of helplessness, dependence and inferiority. In addition, they were said to have a high incidence of weak ego structures, orality, confusion of sexual identification, lack of ability to defer gratification, and high tolerance for psychological pathology of all kinds (Lewis, 1966).

The concept of the "Culture of Poverty" was readily adopted by many social scientists, social workers, and policy-makers in the United States. The application of this concept to the Black family received its widest attention with the publication of the Moynihan report in 1965. In this government publication, Moynihan suggested that the problems of the

urban Blacks and the increasing gap in achievement between the Black and White populations could be attributed to the "crumbling" of the Negro family, a process which began with slavery, but which became most pronounced with the increased migration of Black people from rural to urban areas. Using divorce, separation, desertion, female family head, children in broken homes, and illegitimacy as indices of family pathology, he described the Black family as a "tangle of pathology."

Although he recognized that the root cause of the problems of Black families is economic, Moynihan shifted the focus of causation from economic factors to family structure. He suggested that the "matriarchial" family structure of a relatively high percentage of Black families is responsible for the relatively high delinquency rates, low academic achievement and poverty among the Black population. Interestingly, he also attributed the higher academic achievement of Black females in relationship to Black males to the matriarchal family structure, but in a perjorative sense. He suggests (via Young, 1974 and Pettigrew, 1964), that the Black mothers of these female-headed households, because of their embittered experience with Black men, show a preference for their daughters and, in cases where circumstances permit only one child the opportunity for higher education, the daughter is selected. This is seen as a problem because the higher educational achievement of Black women in relationship to their men can create problems in family functioning that can lead to disintegration of the family and, ultimately, to economic deprivation. Thus, these Black female heads act to perpetuate the mother-centered pattern.

Moynihan built a case in his report for the establishment of a patriarchal family structure, by positively correlating higher performance on standardized tests, lower levels of delinquency, and better preparation

for work patterns with the presence of the father in the home. In this instance, he emphasized the simple presence of the father in the home rather than the economic contributions the father might make, and suggested that escape from the "tangle of pathology," which he saw as the root of the problems of Black people in the United States, is the establishment of the patriarchal family. To this end, he suggested that the thrust of government intervention should be the "establishment of a stable Negro family structure." Thus, Moynihan equated family structure with family function and shifted responsibility for current problems of the Black population from the interaction of race and class variables in the United States to the Black family itself (Moynihan, 1965).

This report and indictment of the Black family stimulated a resurgence of research on the Black family. One of the major lines of inquiry was to look more carefully at the nature of the Black family in the United States (Billingsley, 1968). This work and closer attention to census statistics helped to dispel the myth that the majority of Black families were headed by women and that there was homogeneity in life style, standard of living and values among Black families.

This focus on differentiation among Black families yielded many useful insights. Hyman Lewis, in an article based on a research in which the skills of anthropologists and the participant observation method were utilized, suggested that neither culture nor class can be treated as variables in which behavioral characteristics are uniform. He pointed out that there is variation in attitude and life-style among people who belong to the same socioeconomic categories in the same way that there are variations among people belonging to the same culture. He saw these variations as crucial in conditioning families' child-rearing patterns (Lewis, 1967). The importance of giving close attention to variation in

the study of poor Black families was further reinforced by the work of Camille Jeffers. In a study of Black families living in a low-income project in Washington, D.C., using the participant observation method and interviews, she was able to demonstrate the wide variation in choices and priorities of families living within the double constraints of poverty and a low-income housing project (Jeffers, 1967).

Another important stream of research which contributed to changing the conception of the Black family in the United States, and which also pointed to the need for further comparative research on Black and White families of different socioeconomic during particular historical periods, was the work of Gutman (1976) and Hershberg (1981). Together they demonstrate that, when historical and systematic comparative research is done on Black and White families during specific historical period, a different picture of Black family life emerges. The Black female-headed single-parent household with more than one child, so prevalent in contemporary poverty literature, was not the predominant family form carried over from slavery and its aftermath. Rather, it became an increasingly important family form between 1950 and 1970. In addition, it is positively correlated, not just with increased rural-urban migration resulting from changes in agricultural production during this period, but also with increased unemployment and underemployment of Black people in urban areas. This finding was further supported by Furstenberg, Hershberg and Modell. In an historical and comparative study of female-headed Black families in Philadelphia, they found that when socioeconomic variables are introduced and comparisons are made among Black, Irish, German, and Native White Americans in 1850, 1870, and 1880, the family structures of these groups were very similar. In addition, they found, upon closer examination of the Black female-headed-household, that most of these

households were headed by widows; thus, the prevalent cause in these instances was death, not unmarried parenthood (Furstenberg, Hershberg, and Modell, 1975).

Response to the Moynihan report also generated a critique of the "culture of poverty" concept (Leeds, 1971; Leacock, 1971; Valentine, 1968) and a body of literature which stressed the relationship between family form, life style and socioeconomic variables (Leibow, 1967; Hannerz, 1969; Stack, 1974). These studies examined the organization and lifestyle of poor Black families from the perspective of ongoing adaptations to the conditions of poverty. They rejected the suggestion that they were the result of a persisting culture generated by poverty.

Other studies addressed the suggestion made in the report that Black families were pathological and directed attention to the strengths of the Black family (Staples, 1978; Davis, 1981). Although many useful insights have been generated through the study of poor Black families in the United States and the Caribbean, a focus on the Black poor family, with little attention given to Black families of different socioeconomic positions and White families of varying socioeconomic positions, has created a serious imbalance in the literature. Although there are a few studies of White poor and working-class families in the United States (among these, Komarovsky, 1967; Howell, 1973; Rubin, 1976), much more work is needed in this area if we are going to be able to make meaningful comparisons. In addition, more research is needed that includes both Black and White families in the context of the same study. Research stimulated by the publication of the U.S. Census reports in 1970 and 1980 has begun to address this problem.

The change in the structure of a significant number of American families has redirected the focus of inquiry on female-headed households

away from a unidimensional focus on poor Black female-headed households to research with wider application. An example of work in this area is the cross-cultural research designed to explain the high occurrence of female-headed households among a wide variety of groups at different points in time and in societies with various types of economic structures conducted by Rae Lesser Blumberg (1978). In this study, Blumberg rejected race as a primary factor in determining the occurrence of female-headed single-parent families, suggesting instead that when attention is given to urban and rural distinctions, and there is control for poverty instead of race; there is little or no difference in the rate of female-headed single-parent households. She further stated that the most important determinant of family structure is the mode of production and the way that women and men relate to it within different societies at different points in time. In this regard, there are several important variables that can be usefully examined cross-culturally: (1) the absolute level of women's real income, (2) the sources of women's income, (3) the relative level of women's income in relationship to the men of their class, and (4) the extent to which women's economic activities are compatible with their responsibilities for care of small children. Taken together, these variables can serve as a basis for predicting the degree to which female-headed single-parent families might occur in particular social contexts. In addition, there has been a greater movement to include the single-parent family in general discussions of the family in the United States (Keniston, 1977; Swerdlow, Bridenthal, Kelly and Vine, 1981).

This study represents an attempt to contribute to this body of literature. This ethnographic study of the similarities and differences within a group of nineteen female-headed single-parent households is

designed to explore the degree to which socioeconomic position and race condition the ways in which income is generated to support these households and child care and child rearing is provided.

The data suggests that the way in which these activities are organized and carried out is conditioned by the material and human resources available to the female household head. These resources, in turn, are conditioned by her location in the socioeconomic structure of the society, and the composition of the resources held by the social network system in which the family and household are embedded. The combination of these two variables determines the standard of living, the lifestyle, and the current, as well as future, life chances of its members.

Seen from this perspective, it is useful to examine the literature on class, race, the family and domestic labor as they relate to the female-headed household with children. This examination starts with some of the difficulties encountered by researchers as they attempt to develop appropriate criteria to identify and locate people in the class structure of the United States. Attention is given to literature that has been useful in helping researchers understand and analyze the ideological and material dimensions of family relations. Finally, the contributions of feminist researchers are reviewed as they relate to this study.

A major line of inquiry in this study is the work that women with children do. This focus leads to the study of three dimensions of the work of female single parents: (1) the work necessary for the generation of income for economic support of the household, (2) the work of daily reproduction--i.e., housework and such related activities as shopping, and (3) the work of extended social reproduction. Given the nature of these activities, it is crucial that these households and families not be studied as isolated units. Instead they are more accurately examined

from the perspective of units of social organization embedded in a network of social relations which holds and transmits particular bundles of resources. It is the way that these resources, goods, services and information are exchanged or withheld that conditions the quality of life and the life experience of these mothers and their children. The social network system forms an important component in the elements that come together to determine the location of these mothers in the social structure.

The study of these nineteen women in their role as heads of households with children illuminates the degree to which socioeconomic position determined the range of choices and strategies employed to provide economic support for their households and child care and child rearing for their children. However, to focus solely on their placement in the occupational structure distorts rather than clarifies their true socioeconomic position.

Some Problems in the Class, Race and Family Literature

The first problem that emerged in the process of conducting this research was accurate assessment of the socioeconomic positions of the women selected for the study. This illuminated several of the major problems in the literature that deals with race, class and family. Despite the long-standing recognition that family, race and class are interrelated and condition the life experience of families (Baltzell, 1979; Warner, 1949), most of the research fails to examine adequately the relationship among these three types of relations. This difficulty stems from two related but separate problems, one theoretical, the other methodological.

The theoretical problem emanates from an imprecise understanding of the relationship between race and class. As a result, there is difficulty in developing an adequate paradigm to conceptualize and examine race and class relations.

The methodological problem is rooted in difficulties related to the selection of an appropriate unit of analysis through which to study the relationships among family, race and class. This problem reinforces the distortions created by the theoretical models employed to address these relationships in the following ways: (1) failure to select an appropriate unit of analysis gives rise to limitations in research strategies that would show the comparative variations between families of different races, and (2) these strategies do not allow for adequate examination of differentiation within racial and socioeconomic groups.

Another problem in this literature is the set of criteria used by researchers to locate people in the class structure of the United States. The final problem is the manner in which the concept of class is operationalized in studies of the ways in which families provide economic support for their households and for child care and child rearing.

The differences in the treatment and criteria used to determine the location of people in the class structure of the United States seem to stem from differences in the Weberian and Marxist approaches to class. The central issue of departure in these two traditions arises from a difference in where Marx and Weber locate the determinant of class position. For Marx, class affiliation is determined by location in a system of social production. For Weber, class location is rooted in the system of exchange.

The Weberian approach is most useful in identifying ways in which people experience class affiliation; however, since it is rooted in the

system of exchange, it is less useful in helping the researcher determine the basis of class affiliation.

The kind of chance in the market is the decisive moment which presents a common condition for the individual's fate. 'Class situation' is, in this sense, ultimately 'market situation' (Weber, 1970:182).

Weber stresses that ownership or lack of ownership of property is central to the class position of individuals. However, this is seen from the perspective of individually carried out exchange rather than a collective position in a system of social production. This focus points more directly to the individual experience of class position than to the basis of class formation.

Weber makes a careful distinction between class and status. Status is seen as "an effective claim to social esteem founded upon lifestyle, formal education, heredity or occupation" (Bendix, 1974:152). All of these are individually held attributes. Thus, for him, both class situation and status appear as individually held attributes. Class situation is derived from competitive participation in the market and differential success in competing for valued goods and services. This, in turn, creates the basis for stratified groupings of people with stratified life chances and differential status. This focus on market forces does not allow for analysis of the way in which the organization of the productive processes of a society orders distribution of goods and services and structures the system of exchange. This perspective avoids analysis of the relationship of production to exchange. In order for goods and services to be exchanged, they must first be produced. Their production is a collective rather than an individual endeavor. Changes in technology and the organization of production tend to generate changes in all other aspects of the social system. An analytical framework that

fails to address this aspect of organization limits our ability to understand the process of social change.

The Marxist perspective presents a more holistic concept of human society. Through an analysis of the productive processes, we are able to see the relationship of this collective activity to the structuring of social relations in the society. The relations emanating from the way these processes are carried out structure the social relations of a society and, thus, determine the distribution and consumption of the social product and form the basis of class formation. The importance of this distinction becomes most apparent when we either try to develop a useful paradigm for understanding the relationship between race and class in the United States or attempt to operationalize the concept to class by locating people in the current class structure. It is here that we most centrally realize that the use of individually held attributes such as occupation, education and income as the criteria for locating people in the class structure distorts their location. Class is a social relation. People, as members of groups, carry out the activities of class relations. The way that these social relations act to provide or impede access to goods, services, information and other resources gives rise to the way that individuals experience their class position. Therefore, a focus on individuals devoid of the social network system in which they are embedded will not yield fruitful insights into the nature of class relations in a particular society. It will also not help us to examine a particular problem within the United States from the perspective of race and class.

The problems inherent in the use of individually held criteria to determine class location are not restricted to social scientists working within a particular theoretical framework. Both Marxists and non-Marxists tend to have difficulty operationalizing the concept of class as it

relates to particular problems in complex societies. Both have problems accurately locating people in the class structure. These problems can be seen by giving detailed attention to the work of Warner (1949) and Wright (1977, 1978). The work of these two social scientists represents two extremes in the approach to class analysis. As a result, it is possible to discern two central problems that permeate the literature on race and class.

Two Approaches to Class Analysis: W. Lloyd Warner (1949) and Eric Olin Wright (1977, 1978)

Warner was responding to the tension between the ideology of the United States as a classless society and the reality of social inequality in the United States. This tension stemmed from the particular historical development of the United States which, unlike European countries, was established on the principle of equality among men. Equality, in the American context, did not mean an absence of social strata but, rather, an equal opportunity to compete for differential placement in the social structure. However, given the legacy of slavery and racism and divisions in the occupational structure, both of which resulted in differential access to social resources, goods, services and status, the idea of equality had to be reconciled with the reality of social inequality. Key to the resolution of this tension was the idea of the possibility of unlimited social mobility, i.e., that anyone, through hard work and study, could rise to the top of the social structure. Therefore, the United States was projected as a fluid society in which there were no set social strata; class, in the American context, was a different phenomenon from class in Europe. Warner's work was designed to firmly establish that there is a true class system operating in the United States and,

while mobility is possible, in most cases it is not unlimited. According to Warner, factors other than hard work and study strongly condition the class affiliation, class experience and movement among the various social strata. In his book, Social Class in America, Warner states:

This book presents basic materials about social class in America...tells the reader (1) how to identify any class level, and (2) how to find the class level of any individual. It makes it possible to learn by reading and study, rather than through the half-knowledge and confused emotions of experience, what social class is and how to study and measure it (Warner, 1949:v).

The purpose of this work, he tells us, is to provide a "corrective instrument" that will allow people to evaluate their social situations, better adapt themselves to their social reality, and, therefore, develop appropriate aspirations. Warner attempts to carry out this mandate through the use of two methodological tools: Evaluated Participation (EP) and the Index of Status Characteristics (ISC). He suggests that when the two methods are used together they can give the researcher accurate procedures for measuring social class--i.e., what classes are present and the class position of individuals.

The EP method is based on the premise that people interacting in the social system of a community evaluate the participation of others. They are explicitly or implicitly aware of the ranking of others and they translate these evaluations into social class ratings. These ratings can be communicated to the researcher. This method is essentially a subjective measure of status. However, Warner suggests that social scientists can gain from it the material necessary for placement of individuals in the class structure. In reality, this method tells the researcher an individual's perception of the class structure in his or her community and gives insight into the criteria for this placement. Since class relations are carried out by people acting within the context of a social network

system, and perception importantly conditions behavior, this method can be useful to researchers interested in understanding the behavior of individuals. It can provide insight into the basis on which people make decisions that reflect the class relations of a particular community.

However, this method cannot provide the information necessary for accurate placement of individuals in a class system. The criteria and principles of class stratification differ from those of status in two important ways. Class is determined by objective concrete criteria. Status, since it is based on esteem, emanates from the subjective criteria of individually held, culturally determined values. An understanding of both is necessary for the understanding of behavior. One cannot, as Warner tried to do, substitute one for the other.

The EP method is operationalized through the use of interviewing techniques to obtain data from informants. These data are analyzed by using six techniques designed to rate an individual's social class position:

The ratings are based on the view of the informant. Warner sees them as being "the final authorities about the realities of American social class" (Warner, 1949:38).

The second method used in conjunction with the EP is the ISC. Based on the premise that "economic and other prestige factors are highly important and closely correlated with social class." For these factors' potential for rank to be realized, they must be translated into social class behavior acceptable to members of any given social level of the community. The status characteristics suggested are occupation, source of income, house type and dwelling area. Warner stresses that these criteria are not important in themselves, but are important for their symbolic value to informants.

Warner's criteria for delineating the class structure of a community and for locating people within it is primarily ideological. The E.P. which he suggests will identify the social group with which "the individual is actually found to participate in community living" and is a subjective rating system. The ISC, which is designed to factor out socioeconomic characteristics that play a part in determining what the social class participation is and at what level it will occur, is, in essence, a symbolic measure, and, as a result, his analysis of social class is rooted in the sphere of ideology.

In this work, Warner's analysis of social class in the United States excluded race relations. This reveals two major limitations of his approach: (1) the use of status and class interchangeably, and (2) the substitution of subjective and symbolic indices for objective, materially-based criteria for determining class affiliation. Warner separates race relations from class relations; he places race relations in the United States outside the purview of his study. He sees race relations as being determined by a color caste system lodged in a system of values and behavior which acts to place people thought to be White in a higher position than those thought to be Black. According to Warner, although the material conditions of an individual may change, placement in an inferior or superior position in this caste system is immutable.

Cox (1948) also examines caste, race and class relations in the United States and makes a distinction among them. Cox's analysis differs from Warner's in that he connects race relations to class relations by grounding race relations in the realm of labor, capital and profit relations and, thus, the material realm of capitalist society. Warner's treatment of race relations, like his treatment of class relations, is lodged in the realm of ideology and stems from an analysis of class which

is ahistorical and separated from the sphere of production. For him, race relations, like class relations, happen primarily in the head. He is unable to discuss the interaction of race and class in the United States.

Wright's Marxist analysis of social class stems from his conception of classes as structural positions within the social organization of production. This focus on structure directs his analysis away from treatment of class locations within a system of social relations that stem from differential integration into the organization of production in the United States. Further, it results not only in a conception of class that is devoid of people, but an analysis of the social relations of production divested of the relationships that constitute the fiber of social relations.

Although he attempts, in his analysis of particular occupations, to "decode the social relations of production...in order to uncover the class positions which they determine," he treats them within the narrow context of the occupational structure. This gives rise to a static and distorted conceptualization of this essential element of Marxist analysis. He states his position as follows:

To say that classes constitute positions implies... that there are 'empty places' in the social structure which are filled by individuals. The analysis of class must be understood primarily as the analysis of such empty places, and only secondarily of the actual individuals who fill the slots...Classes are not, however, just any 'empty places' in social structure which can be ordered in a hierarchical fashion....Classes constitute common positions within social relations of production, and this means that classes must always be understood in terms of their relationship to other classes. Thus, the theoretical starting point of class analysis is to decode the social relations of production within a particular society in order to uncover the class positions which they determine (Wright 1977:33).

Wright goes on to examine the expanded occupational structure of contemporary United States. He attempts to locate these occupational positions in the class structure. He does this by focusing on the elements of the various activities inherent in these occupations. This is done by isolating the three "processes underlying the basic capital-labor relationship": (1) control over physical means of production, (2) control over investments and resource allocation, and (3) control over labor power. He views class antagonism between workers and capitalists as the polarization of these three underlying processes.

The problem that Wright attempts to address, through analysis of these processes, is the limitations of the traditional Marxist typology of capitalists, workers, and petty bourgeoisie. He suggests that the current complexity of capitalist productive organization requires an expansion of this typology. He sees revision of this typology as one of the primary tasks of social scientists interested in analysis of the current class structure. He feels that this is best accomplished through careful delineation of the degree to which workers in various occupations participate in these three processes.

In carrying out this task, he discovers that in some occupations there is a lack of congruence among these three dimensions. To deal with these situations, he suggests the concept of "contradictory location." Wright argues that these contradictory locations must be studied in their own right (Wright, 1979). He posits two types of contradictory locations:

1. contradictory locations between bourgeoisie and proletariat defined by contradictory combinations of three processes underlying class relations within the capitalist mode of production (in this type some workers can be thought of as occupying a contradictory location around the boundary of

proletariat, e.g., foremen; others are best seen as occupying a contradictory location around the boundary of bourgeoisie, e.g., middle managers and technocrats).

2. contradictory location between petty bourgeoisie and both proletariat and bourgeoisie. These locations are situated between the capitalist mode of production and simple commodity production. These workers maintain the work process of the independent artisan while employed by capitalists as wage earners. Examples of occupations in this location are researchers in laboratories and professors in elite universities. Small employers in this model are thought to occupy a contradictory location between the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

From this perspective, Wright argues, only manual, non-supervisory employees who directly produce surplus value should be included in the proletariat. All other categories of wage laborers must be placed in separate classes (i.e., new petty bourgeoisie or in contradictory locations between classes). His efforts are designed to give such positions a precise theoretical meaning through which they can be systematically related to the class struggle (Wright, 1979). Using this model, Wright develops an elegant and elaborate analysis of the contradictory location of intellectuals and managers within the system of class relations (Wright, 1977, 1978).

Wright is correct in recognizing that the organization of production has increased in complexity and that this has given rise to a myriad of occupational types. This has resulted in the relations of production becoming increasingly complex. His concept of "contradictory location" is useful for capturing the confusion that workers may feel in their

efforts to locate themselves in the class structure. It also alerts researchers to the difficulties inherent in current class analysis in the United States. However, a unidimensional focus on work will not provide the data necessary for accurately placing people in the class structure.

People gain access to resources through means other than their wage labor. In my view, in order to understand a person's objective position in the class structure, one must explore the historical process through which he or she was integrated into the productive process. This means attention to genealogy, family, and the historical participation of racial and ethnic groups in the productive process. It also means attention to the social network system in which the individual is currently embedded. From this perspective, we are better able to understand differential access to the social product and, thereby, have some insight into both the subjective and objective dimensions of class affiliation. It is then possible to make some tentative projections about their potential for political activism.

Neither of these researchers was directly concerned with single-parent families; however, what is interesting and problematic in both of their analyses is their treatment of class in relation to family. Warner, while giving recognition to the pivotal position of family and "cliques" (circle of friends), fails to include these elements in the operationalization of the concept of class in his study of social class in the United States. This is an example of the previously discussed methodological problem that acts to reinforce distortions generated and the researchers' theoretical conception of the interaction of race, class and family in the United States. The methods employed by Warner, EP and ISC, and the unit of analysis selected for this study seriously limit the inclusion of important insights about the reality of class relations and

the relationship of these to family and social networks. His location of individuals in the class system becomes rooted in individually held attributes which are weighted by ideological and subjective criteria.

Wright's analysis, even though more elaborate and theoretically rigorous, is more limited than Warner's. Nowhere in his discussion does he include family relations. In addition, his treatment of race relations (1977) lacks an historical and dynamic perspective; as such, it is ahistorical and mechanistic. Again, we see another example of the limitations of methodology in the operationalization of class. His efforts to quantify the dimensions of class relations stem from his focus on employment, i.e., work. He uses comparative statistical data on full-time participants in the labor force in the categories of employers, managers, workers, petty bourgeoisie, and compares the percentages of White males, White females, Black males and Black females. He calls his discussion of these statistics "Race and Sex Comparisons within Class Categories." In reality, it is a comparison of race and sex distribution in occupational categories.

Prefacing his discussion with recognition of the fact that "some of the most significant race and sex effects undoubtedly operate through mechanisms which sort people into various categories in the first place," he tells us that both women and Blacks are under-represented in the manager category. Therefore, his theoretical construct informs both his methodology and analysis and forces him to use the individually held attribute of type of employment to operationalize the concepts of class. Perhaps if he had given greater attention to these mechanisms which sort people into classes in the first place, the criteria he used to determine class affiliation would have included an historical dimension, and his social structure would have been comprised of people carrying out the

activities inherent in social relations and, thus, would embody families and social network systems.

Another Marxist Approach to Class Location: Eric Wolf (1981)

The limitations of Wright's analysis of class locations are apparent when his approach is compared to that of Eric Wolf. In "The Mills of Inequality" (1981), Wolf's primary objective was to show the usefulness of Marxist theoretical framework in analyzing the underlying process of various forms of social inequality. One of the three modes of production he outlines is the capitalist mode of production. This discussion will serve as the basis for comparing the approaches of these two researchers to class location.

Wolf begins with a return to Marx. Both Wright and Wolf examine the underlying processes and basic antagonisms inherent in the capitalist mode of production. However, unlike Wright, his approach to class location is initiated by a careful re-examination of Marx's method. Thus, Wolf begins, as Marx does, with the "undeniable aspects of human experience": (1) the relations of human beings to nature, (2) the social relations of human beings with one another, (3) the human capacity to transform nature to human use, and (4) the symbolic capacities of human beings (Wolf, 1981).

The concept "productive process" is used to discuss Marx's conceptualization of the process through which human beings, in cooperation with each other, use their labor to transform nature to human use. For him, this process is inseparable from the social relations which structure the "deployment" of social labor and the "allocation" of the social product which is created. An examination of variations in the organization of social production necessarily includes a careful analysis of the types

of social inequality that stem from the historically developed social relations which govern these processes.

The concept "mode of production" is used to capture both of these aspects of social production. Various "modes of production" are distinguished from each other by the social relations which determine the specific mechanism through which surplus is extracted from the direct producer. The linkage consistently made between the way the process of work are organized and the social relations which govern them permit Wolf to avoid a concept of the capitalist mode of production as a static social structure comprised of "empty places" which are fitted with individuals (Wright, 1977). Wolf, at each juncture, roots these processes in people.

Wolf also draws attention to Marx's distinction between work and labor. Work is seen as the "activities of an individual expending energy to produce energy. But the labor-process as a whole is a social phenomenon, carried on by human beings linked to one another through social relationships" (Wolf, 1981:45). In other words, work (i.e., occupations), is particular in nature; the labor process is general. Attention to this distinction marks a central divergence in these two approaches. Wright attempts to locate people in the class structure through focusing on the highly diversified occupational structure of capitalist production in the United States. He looks at particular occupations, such as managers, intellectuals in universities, etc., and examines these in relationship to three central processes: (1) control over the means of production, (2) control over investments, and (3) control over labor power. Then, through an analysis of the degree to which these elements are present in various types of occupations, he allocates the workers who fill these occupational slots to particular locations in the class structure.

Wolf, on the other hand, determines the class location of people in terms of their placement in a system of social production, not their specific occupations. He examines the three intertwined characteristics of capitalist production: (1) capitalist control of the means of production, (2) laborers being denied independent access to the means of production and having to sell their labor power to capitalists, and (3) the maximization of surplus produced by laborers with the means of production owned by capitalists, which requires a "ceaseless accumulation accompanied by changes in the methods of production" (Wolf, 1981). Wolf then shows the relationship of these three characteristics to the unending competition between capitalists, increasing diversification of the work force and the creation of forms of social inequality. Of particular interest for this discussion of class location is his description of this process.

The capitalist mode, as conceptualized in this construct, therefore enshrines, one major inequality which it continuously reproduces: inequality between those who retain the means of production and those who must seek employment in order to gain their subsistence. But it continuously produces further inequalities: a continuous process of differentiation into victors and losers among the owners of the means of production, and another process--equally continuous--separating the working force into survivors and castaways. The two processes are actually linked since the shareholders in capital are continuously driven to seek new pools of tractable labor, or replace dear or intractable labor with machines (Wolf, 1981:49).

Described in this way, the model maintains its dynamic nature and demonstrates the linkage between economic processes and social inequality. Differentiation and specialization of the labor force is not just a mechanical occurrence creating "empty spaces" in the occupational structure to be filled by individuals; rather, it is the outward manifestation of the underlying processes of particular modes of production. The particular

ways in which this happens and the forms that it takes are related to historically specific relations of production which, in turn, create certain types of inequality.

The elasticity of this model enables researchers to examine the "survivors" and "castaways" during particular periods in the development of capitalism in various social contexts. The "survivors," within the contemporary American context, can be seen as those who are incorporated into the productive process through differential placement in the occupational structure. This incorporation is also dynamic, with workers being expelled and incorporated to varying degrees during particular points in time. Workers gain their differential access to the social product primarily through wages and their varying relationships to the state. Their differential placement in the system of social production determines their eligibility for a range of subsidies provided by the state. The eligibility criterion determines who, how and to what degree various members of the work force will be subsidized by the state during their employment history (this includes home mortgages, educational grants and loans, child care, unemployment compensation, health benefits, social security). The combination of these elements forms the basis for the class location of workers.

The "castaways" are those permanently expelled from or tenuously connected to the productive process. The concept of "underclass" then becomes a way of describing the form that this exclusion takes in contemporary United States. From this perspective, the distinction drawn between the previous lower class and unemployment during the "Great Depression" of the 1930's is not surprising. It was the logical outcome of capitalism at that stage of its development.

Given the focus of this study on nineteen Black and White female-headed households, a conceptualization of class, race and family is needed that can account for the wide degree of variation among members of the selected categories. A model was needed that could locate these women and their families in the class structure and reveal their differing socioeconomic positions. To develop this model, the works I found most useful, in addition to Wolf (1981) were those of DuBois (1899, 1908, 1935), Gutman (1966, 1976), Mullings (1978), Lieberman (1980), and Hershberg (1981, 1981a).

The understanding of contemporary manifestations of the interaction between race, class and family in the United States requires an historical examination. A line of inquiry that has proven fruitful in this respect is that employed by W. E. B. DuBois (1899, 1908, 1935). DuBois did an historical examination of the process through which different groups of people migrated to the United States, and the interaction of these groups in the organization and development of the forces of production. Through this dynamic analysis of the historical and productive processes, he was able to show the basis of class formation and the development and institutionalization of race relations in the United States. His discussion suggests that the United States is comprised of groups of people who immigrated during different periods of time and under different conditions. These people interacted with the native population and with each other in various ways in the developmental process of the forces of production; the ways in which these various groups were integrated into the productive processes of this country and the conditions under which this integration took place laid the foundation for the continuing process of class formation and the patterns of race relations in the following ways:

1. Differential placement in the organization of production generates different and often conflicting interests between groups.
2. It is these conflicting interests that form the cornerstone of class formation;
3. Class relations ultimately determine the processes through which production, distribution and consumption take place; and,
4. The use of African slave labor in the South and the development of a racist ideology to keep this system of production in place laid the foundation for conflict between White and Black labor in the North and South and acted to structure current forms of race and ethnic relations in the United States.

The power of this analysis stems from the use of a paradigm which includes immigration processes and the historical interaction between immigrant groups and the native-born White population. The inclusion of this key element in the formation and development of the productive forces and culture of the United States is usually omitted from contemporary American studies of race and class. Leith Mullings (1977, 1978) and Stanley Lieberson (1980) represent important exceptions to this limitation. Both of these researchers follow the lead of DuBois in giving serious attention to the immigration factor in the analysis of contemporary race, class and ethnic relations and, thus, are able to analyze the processes of race and class relations in a dynamic and historical way.

Race and class relations become intertwined and grounded in the realm of social production. Class affiliation and class antagonisms do not stem from the ideological realm, but are generated by the material conditions under which people live. Location within the class structure results from the historical processes of transformation of the environment

of the United States through development of the productive forces and the labor of immigrant groups coming to the United States during different periods and under different conditions and the mechanisms instituted for the deployment and utilization of this labor. As a result, we are able to think of differentiation within and between groups and two levels: the group experience of particular ethnic and racial groups, and the individual experience of particular families embodying a particular constellation of "human capital" and other resources upon their arrival.

Attention to this variable and a model that is useful in exploring this aspect is put forth by Hershberg (1981). In a discussion of Afro-Americans in Philadelphia, he draws attention to the fact that their experience was not uniform and attributes this to the interaction of three factors: (1) the human capital carried by the group (this term refers to prior exposure to the particular environment, culture, values and expectations), (2) structure of opportunity found upon arrival and settlement, which includes the means of earning a living and getting ahead, and (3) discrimination faced by the group as they attempt to enter the mainstream of the city. He argues that this third element acts as a filtering device between a group's human capital and the local opportunity structure. The examination of the interaction of these three elements can be usefully applied to other immigrant groups. In addition, it can be extended to the study of the experience of particular families, thus helping to explain both inter-group and intra-group differences.

To accurately locate families in the class structure, one must first place them historically in the transformation of the environment, society, and culture of the United States. Interestingly, when researchers study the upper class, this is the approach used (Baltzell, 1979; Collier and Horowitz, 1976). Attention must be given to the process of immigration

and integration into the American context and the part that the families to which they belong played in the transformation of the United States. Attention to these historical factors is crucial to the understanding of their current experience. To understand the way in which people currently experience their families, they must be examined within the context of the social network system in which they are embedded.

Demystification of the Family

How does one understand and examine the ways in which female single-parent headed families carry out the processes of generation of income for the economic support of their households, child care and child rearing within the context of contemporary United States? Here one must turn to the literature on family. The research I found most useful was the work that focuses on demystification of kinship and family relations and that examines the relationship between the domestic and public domains.

One of the central problems in the literature on kinship and family has been the mystification of these relations by social scientists. Janet Siskind (1978), in her discussion of kinship and the mode of production, suggests that one of the sources of this difficulty has been the ideological baggage carried by the researcher to the study of kinship relations.

A native's view of this mode of production is quite different from the analysis presented here since it reflects the ideological superstructure of the system...Since anthropologists share at least a limited form of this mode of production, many also share the ideology of their informants. Thus the division of labor is viewed as natural, pertaining to the inborn tendencies of men and women. Production is also natural, though the exchange of products between the sexes may be explained further. Kinship is neither associated with production nor

the division of labor but is mystified (Siskind, 1978:867).

Several streams of research have proven useful in understanding the relationship of kinship relations to other elements of the social system and the relationship between the ideological and material dimensions of kinship. The work of the French Marxists (Meillassoux, 1971, Terray, 1972, 1975; Godelier, 1975, 1977; Rey and Dupre, 1973) has stimulated extensive discussion on the form and nature of social inequality in various types of pre-capitalist societies, the articulation of non-capitalist modes of production with capitalist modes of production, and the relationship between production and reproduction in various types of social formations. Central to this discourse has been the form and function of kinship relations in various social contexts and the relationship of these to processes of production and reproduction.

Feminist researchers have examined the origin, nature and basis of the subordination of women in different social contexts (Rosaldo, 1974; Leacock, 1973; Sacks, 1974; Reiter, 1977). They have examined the various dimensions of women's work inside and outside the home (Oakley, 1974; Glazier-Malbin, 1976; Weinbaum and Bridges, 1976; Brown, 1982). In addition, they have examined the relationship between production and reproduction and, as a result, forced a re-examination of the relationship between women's role in biological reproduction, the sexual division of labor, and women's position in society (Dalla Costa and James, 1972; O'Laughlin; 1977, Molyneux, 1977, 1979; Aaby, 1977; Himmelweit and Mohun, 1977; Beneria, 1979; Oppong, 1982). They also have raised questions about the validity of conceptualizing family life as private and work outside the home as public in capitalist societies (Reiter, 1975; Rapp, 1978; Yanagisako, 1979; Zaretsky, 1973; Bridenthal, 1981). This re-examination has expanded our understanding of the various dimensions of

reproductive activities from one limited to the biological reproduction of human beings to one that includes the various dimensions of social reproduction, i.e., daily reproduction and reproduction of future labor power. It has also given rise to an increased sensitivity to the differences in the family experience of men and women and of families located at different points in the system of social stratification.

Another important body of work has been the research of family historians who have examined the changing composition, function and organization of families in the context of the development of capitalism. They have expanded our analysis of the family to include demographic material. They have also examined changes in the position of children in the family and child care and child rearing practices (Tilly and Scott, 1978; Landes, 1978; Rapp, Ross and Bridenthal, 1979; Pleck, 1976).

In this literature we see some new directions for the examination of the relationship between kinship relations and systems of production and reproduction. This has helped clarify the interaction between the ideological and material dimensions of kinship. The work that was most useful to me was the work of the French Marxists and feminists working within a Marxist framework. The point of departure, in both of these bodies of literature, is the examination of social inequality in social formations characterized by different modes of production. Their approaches to this problem differ in several crucial respects: (1) the central work used as the starting point of their inquiry, (2) the perspective from which they approach analysis of social inequality within both pre-capitalist and capitalist societies, and (3) divergencies in their treatment and analysis of kinship relations, the position of women and their role in systems of production and reproduction in both capitalist and pre-capitalist societies.

The French Marxists seem to be looking at the origin of social inequality in the context of class formation and treat the subordination of women almost as a by-product. Therefore, there is little attention given to differences in the experiences of women. As a result, they appear almost as appendages to the class of their men and as moveable objects to ensure both the biological and social reproduction of kin-based societies. Even though central attention is given to the organization and implementation of productive processes in these societies, the role of women and children in production is not fully integrated into the analysis. This has resulted in a presentation of women's role in these societies that is skewed in favor of their participation in the processes of biological reproduction and of social reproduction of the relations of dependence between elders and juniors in these pre-capitalist societies (Molyneus, 1975).

The feminist Marxists, on the other hand, tend to follow the lead suggested by the problematic Engels put forth in Origin of the Family, Property and the State. For these researchers, class formation and the subordination of women are so interlaced that it is impossible to analyze adequately a social formation and the degree to which class formation has been manifested without giving careful attention to the roles women play in the productive and reproductive processes of the society. Despite these important differences, two central issues emerge as necessary elements: (1) the relationship between production and reproduction within a given society at different points in time, and (2) the importance of the examination of the material as well as the ideological dimensions of kinship systems. Regardless of the major divergences in their treatment of these two problems, there is general agreement that, except for the role that women play in biological reproduction, the sexual division of

labor in a society arises from a material rather than an ideological base.

One must look to the requirements of the particular dominant mode of production of the social formation and, as Aaby (1977) correctly reminds us, to the ecological and demographic conditions under which people carry out these modes of production to understand the organization, structure and role of kinship systems at both the material and ideological levels. The family is not a natural unit. nor is the sexual division of labor a "natural" and automatically prescribed division.

Unraveling the veils of mystification surrounding kinship systems is an arduous process. A major breakthrough in the re-examination of kinship systems came with the publication of Claude Meillassoux's (1975) Femmes Greniers et Capitaux. Previously, anthropologists, starting with Morgan in 1877, had recognized that there was a relationship among forms of kinship, family organization, and subsistence strategies implemented in social and environmental contexts.

After Morgan's work was resurrected by Leslie White (1949, 1959), anthropologists working within an evolutionary framework then distinguished between general and specific evolution (service and Sahlins, 1960). Variations in kinship organization and family structure were examined from the perspective of their relationship to cultural complexity and variations in subsistence strategies in particular environmental contexts (Steward, 1955; Sahlins, 1961; Nimkoff and Middleton, 1960; Blumberg and Winch, 1968). This work was important because it added a material dimension to the analysis of kinship systems. In addition, it forced researchers to develop a more organized approach to the analysis of social organization which included the material dimension of human life.

However, the actual organization and variations in the subsistence strategies implemented in these societies and other elements or social organization were not adequately addressed. As a result, the analysis tended to be mechanical, and the relationship between various stages or levels of social organization was segmented and not adequately periodized. The use of a bounded unit of analysis to examine these inter-relationships distorted the inter-relationships between societies and their relationship with societies embodying different levels of social organization. Thus, these analyses hid the wide variation in the internal arrangements of societies classified within the various categories and gave little attention to the range of productive strategies carried on within the societies studied or to important variations in the internal relationships of these kinship systems, as they related to productive activities.

Kinship and the family began to take on new importance in the analysis of advanced capitalist societies. Central to these discussions was the role of kinship structure and family organization in the process of production and reproduction of capitalist societies. This focus on the role of kinship and family organization generated two lines of inquiry that relate to this study: (1) the discussion and refinement of the concepts of production and reproduction and their relationship to each other (Aaby, 1975; O'Laughlin, 1977; Himmelweit and Mohun, 1977; Beneria, 1979; Molyneux, 1979; Oppong, 1982), and (2) closer examination of family relations, domestic organization and its relationship to social production in capitalist societies (Dalla Costa and James, 1972; Zaretsky, 1973; Reiter, 1975; Rapp, 1978; Yanagisako, 1979; Bridenthal, 1981). Much of this discussion was stimulated by the questions posed by feminist scholars about the sexual division of labor and the position of women in different social contexts and during different historical periods.

Key to discussions of the relationship of the material dimensions of kinship relations to social organization are the concepts of production and reproduction. To address this problem, closer examination was given to the internal division of labor within the household and in production outside the home. Detailed attention was given to women's work within the household, to work that women perform in the roles of wife and mother, and the relationship of this work and these roles to social production and reproduction. Given the importance of these concepts, researchers working in the Marxist tradition were forced to clarify these concepts and the role of family relations in carrying out the processes of production and reproduction (O'Laughlin, 1977; Aaby, 1977; Beneria, 1979; Thomsen, 1981; Oppong, 1982; Molyneux, 1979).

Despite major differences in the treatment of these concepts and conceptualization of the relationship of the household to external production, these discussions created a movement away from (1) treatment of the family as an isolated, self-sufficient unit, (2) the focus on the affective dimensions of kinship and family relations in which male and female roles were expressions of the almost natural dichotomy between the expressive functions of women and instrumental functions of men, and (3) conceptions of the domestic sphere within capitalist society as private and separate from the public sphere. As a result of this redirection, the ideological content of family relations and male and female roles within the family could be examined from the perspective of the ways in which this ideology works to structure the behavior necessary for production and reproduction in capitalist society.

The contributions of Dalla Costa and James (1972) and Meillassoux (1975) have stimulated many fruitful discussions which have helped to clarify and deepen our understanding of these concepts and the ways in

which they can be applied in research on the family (Zaretsky, 1973; Reiter, 1975; Weinbaum and Bridges, 1976; Rapp, 1978; Himmelweit and Mohun, 1977; Yanagisako, 1979; Brown, 1981; Harris, 1981; Stivens, 1981; Bridenthal, 1981).

Dalla Costa and James, in The Power of Women and Subversion of the Community (1972), provided a Marxist analysis of the relationship of women and the work they do as housewives and mothers that served as the foundation and one of the major rationales for "the wages for housewives movement." In this work, they challenged the concept that housework, child care and child rearing were private work done for the family and suggested that women doing this work were more accurately perceived as the wageless sector of the labor force. They state:

The family under capitalism is a center of conditioning, of consumption and of reserve labor, but a center essentially of social production.... The commodity they produce, unlike all other commodities, is unique to capitalism: the living human being--'the laborer himself'--to describe its basic production and reproduction is to describe women's work (Dalla Costa and James, 1972:10-11).

They refute analyses of women's work, under capitalism, as solely the production of "use values" and focus instead on their role in both social production and reproduction of labor forces by describing the production of labor power. Their children, both biologically and socially, given the nature of capitalist production, are the essential commodities necessary for the generation of surplus value. Further, they show that while women receive a portion of the wage laborer's pay packet, this allows only for provisioning of the household; they are not paid for the work they do in daily reproduction of the household (i.e., housework, socialization and care of children).

They point out that all women, whether or not they work for wages outside the home, are housewives and, thus, perform this work without

pay. Although they see women's work within the household as being performed under pre-capitalist conditions, they see this work of social production and reproduction as being structured by capitalist relations and, thus, their approach would reject the model posited by other researchers of articulation between pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production in which social and biological reproduction are performed by relations external to capitalist relations of reproduction, as suggested by Meillassoux in 1975 (O'Laughlin, 1977).

This analysis helped to further uncover the nature of family relations in the capitalist society, and to dispel the myth that the family and the work that women do as wives and mothers in the household is private and separate from social production and reproduction. It also explored the various dimensions of women's work, not only in the household, but as consumers. It pointed to another dimension of the exploitation of the wage laborer by showing that, in reality, their wage packet was incomplete because they were forced to support wageless workers necessary for production. This focus created an analytic basis for a segment of the feminist movement in which patriarchal relations within the family could be seen and analyzed within the context of the mode of production in which they were embedded.

In addition, Dalla Costa and James suggest another interpretation of women's demands in the sphere of consumption that is positive rather than negative. They point out that these demands, in fact, guard against increased exploitation of workers and help guard against a decrease in the family standard of living by pushing employers, rather than workers and their families, to absorb inflation. Their analysis also has significance for the study of female single-parent in capitalist societies who, in addition to being wage laborers, also carry out the functions of

housewife and mother. Not only do they reproduce themselves on a daily basis for the labor market, but they also serve, in many instances, as their own safety valves, thus absorbing their own pressures and frustrations. Some researchers have related this to higher levels of stress in many female single parents (McAdoo, 1981). In the case of wage-earning single parents, the illusion of a separation between the supposedly private and public domain becomes less easy to maintain. In this instance, the ways in which these women carry out the activities necessary for household maintenance and child care are structured by the requirements of their income-generating activities. Since they both earn and disperse the wages, it is easier to see the gap between labor that is paid and unpaid, and the cost in terms of time, energy and money of producing future labor power.

As researchers continued to investigate domestic organization from this perspective, the debates moved from discussion of the functioning of the domestic unit in terms of a unified isolated unit that moved through various stages in relationship to the life cycle and demographic composition of the group (Goody, 1958) and discussions of the domestic mode of production in which the domestic unit was treated as self-sufficient in business to produce for the needs of its members (Sahlins, 1972). Instead, increasingly, social scientists talk about differences in the way men and women experience the domestic cycle (Sanjek, 1976) and move toward models that allow for linkages between the household and family and the wider society and the world (R.T. Smith, 1975; Sanjek, 1982).

Among feminist researchers, the discussions which focused on the sexual division of labor and subordination of women yielded closer examination of the relationship between the role of women in production and reproduction and the relationship between the work done in this

sphere and their subordinate position in relation to men within the home and the labor market (Sacks and Leacock, 1973). The concept of reproduction became increasingly differentiated and was treated from the perspective of the relationship of its three dimensions (biological, daily reproduction, and generational reproduction) to the overall system of production and reproduction in the wider society. There is disagreement among Marxist feminists about whether or not women's work should be treated as private production of use values or as social production (Himmelweit and Mohun, 1977; Dalla Costa and James, 1972). They also disagree on the treatment of the domestic sphere in terms of a separation between public and private domains (Reiter, 1975; Rapp, 1978; Molyneux, 1979; Yanagisako, 1979). These debates seem to hinge on disagreements among researchers about whether or not the social relations which characterize women's work in the domestic domain should be seen as non-capitalist or capitalist. Despite these disagreements, the discussion has proven useful because it has demonstrated that, regardless of how one characterizes the social relations of domestic labor, capitalist production and reproduction is dependent on the labor carried out within the domestic sphere. As a result, analysis of capitalist systems of production cannot exclude or separate the role of domestic labor. Family and kinship relations, as well as domestic organization, are key elements in the structure of production and reproduction in both the material and ideological realms of capitalist society (Bennholdt-Thomsen, 1981; Beneria, 1979; Zaretsky, 1973; Harris, 1981; Bridenthal, 1981).

Two points which emerge from this work and relate directly to this study are (1) that, given the class structure of capitalist society, the ways people experience their families and the content of family relations differs by race and class (Zaretsky, 1973; Rapp, 1978; Mullings 1980;

Bridenthal, 1981), and (2) the historical development of capitalism has resulted in major changes in the domestic sphere. Increased penetration of the market into the household has changed the content of housework (Braverman, 1974). There has been a change in both the activities and time devoted to preparing children for their future participation in society (Molyneux, 1979). Both have had a major impact on domestic organization. It has become increasingly clear that it is a distortion to conceptualize the family in capitalist societies as a "haven in a heartless world." Instead, we must look at changes in the structure and organization of families, as well as strategies employed by families to carry out the activities necessary for provisioning of the household and care of children, within the wider social context.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter will describe the research methods utilized to implement this study. The purpose of the discussion is two-fold: (1) to share with other researchers interested in doing ethnographic research in contemporary complex societies some of the strategies I found useful in implementing this research and some of the insights into contemporary urban life that some of the instruments employed in the process of carrying out the research revealed; and (2) to give detailed information on (a) how I selected the nineteen participants in the study and, as a result of the selection process, the distinguishing characteristics of the women; and (b) some of the problems I encountered in carrying out the research.

The Researcher

In a discussion of research methods, it is sometimes useful to describe the researcher. The researcher is also a member of a society. As such, who the researcher is i.e., his/her location in the class structure, life and employment experience and training often determines what kinds of problems are selected for study, the approach to the problem, the kinds of questions asked, and methods employed to collect data. It also plays a major role in the selection of the theoretical framework utilized to analyze the data and, thus, the conclusions reached.

At the time this study was initiated, I was a single parent on a one-year sabbatical from my counseling/lecturer position at Queens College C.U.N.Y. I was teaching two anthropology courses at a branch of a large university in Philadelphia, and living through the adolescent period of my oldest son. The fact that I was a working Black female single parent living in a large urban area in many ways directed my choice of a research topic.

Before beginning my anthropological training, I had worked for many years as a social worker. During the 1960s, I worked as a community organizer in Roxbury, Massachusetts, and as a sociological research assistant for a social agency conducting research in Roxbury and Columbia Point. Later I became a case worker for the Department of Social Services in Cambridge. During the 1970's, I worked as part of a community organization team in a public elementary school on triple session in a low-income area of New York City, and as a medical social worker in two large city hospitals.

As a result of these experiences of studying and providing services to poor people, I became sensitized to the many interlocking facets of living poor in northern urban cities of the United States. These experiences also acted to direct my area of interest to the study of social stratification in complex developed and under-developed societies. The study of social inequality in the context of the United States, given its particular historical development for me, necessarily became the study of the interaction of race and class relations.

Another major factor that shaped my decision to do research on female single parents was the rapid and accelerating increase in the number of female parent-headed households between 1970 and 1979. The 79% increase in single parent households during this period cut across the

boundaries of race and class. A comparison of the percentages of Black and White female single parent-headed households between 1960 and 1982 reveals that for White households the percentage rose from 6% in 1960 to 13.9% in 1982. For Black households during this same period, it rose from 20.7% to 47.1% (New York Times, 20 November 1983). Thus, although the proportion of Black female-headed households among the Black population is significantly higher than among the White population, both groups during this 20-year period experienced more than a 50% increase in the percentage of female-headed single-parent households. This change in the composition of a significant number of American families of differing socioeconomic positions shaped my decision to do a comparative study of Black and White female-headed households. I felt that an in-depth exploratory study of a limited number of such households would yield valuable insight into both the changes in family form and functioning and race and class relations in contemporary America.

To collect this kind of data, it was necessary to observe these families over a period of time and in various settings. To do this, a range of data collection methods was needed. It was not possible to rely solely on a questionnaire even though this would have allowed me to study more families. For example, an important part of this study was the examination of the participants' social network systems and the content of the material resources, services and information that passed through them. These were then analyzed to determine the degree to which they conditioned the standard of living, range of choices and life styles of these families. At the beginning of the study, the participants did not conceptualize their relationships with their family and friends as a social network system through which these types of resources were exchanged. Further, they saw their income generation strategies primarily

as those activities that were directly related to earning money or as payments from the government (unemployment compensation, Aid to Dependent Children). Therefore, if asked, they would not have included other types of subsidies, formal and informal work-related fringe benefits, or resources transmitted through their network systems as part of income generation. As they became increasingly aware of my interests in the role these played in the standard of living and life style realized by the families, they began to yield more detailed and richer data. This greatly expanded the data base for my analysis. This kind of information could not have been gleaned solely from a questionnaire.

Initial Research Plan: And Alterations

Initially, the time schedule for this study was to have been one year of full-time data collection. However, due to limitations placed on my leave from my position and difficulties in getting appropriate participants for the three categories of single parents to be included in the research, data collection began in late November 1979 and continued through 1983. This meant that some participants were involved in the study for as long as 26 months, while others were studied for only one year. It also meant that I was unable to collect data from all of the nineteen women simultaneously.

After the first six months, my research activities were restricted to three days a week, with longer blocks of time over the Christmas semester break and spring vacation periods, and three months during the summer. Thus, research that was initially planned to take one year, ended up taking more than two years.

Another time consuming element in the way in which data were collected was that I did all of the interviewing, participant observation,

telephone and diary collection work myself. Therefore, as the number of participants in the study grew, it became increasingly difficult to spend frequent time with them. I addressed this problem by increasing the number and frequency of telephone conversations with the women. This enabled me not only to address the time constraints on the mothers' and my schedules, but also to better deal with the geographical dispersion of the families. Given differences in socioeconomic position and race, the women lived throughout the Philadelphia area and utilized different parts of the city.

The advantage of the increased time schedule of the study was that I was unable to study these families over a longer period of time. Thus, I was able to observe their responses to changes in the social and economic climate, as well as changes in the internal organization of child care and domestic activities. It also allowed me to develop relationships with these women that proved invaluable in extending the depth of the data collected, both in terms of the kinds and degrees of information they were willing to share, and the level of commitment that the women developed to the quality and completion of the research. As a result, not only were they responsive to my contacts with them, but they also took the initiative in contacting me or making notes to inform me of incidents, events, and activities they felt would be important to the study.

In addition, I was able to develop relationships with many of their children and to observe their movement through longer periods in their developmental cycle. This extended period of time also provided an opportunity to observe the ways in which different women responded to an extended city-wide public school strike, periods of unemployment, job changes and other types of life crises, such as the death of a close

family member. Thus, the data collected have a dynamic rather than static quality, which more closely represents the reality of life for these nineteen participants.

Selection of Participants: How They Were Selected and Their Distinguishing Characteristics

Finding nineteen female single parents, distributed among the three specific categories, who were willing to participate in this type of process was a time and energy consuming process. In part, this difficulty was a consequence of the decision that I had made not to select my participants from any one source (e.g., church single-parent groups, social service agency, etc.). I felt that since this was an exploratory study with relatively few participants, it was important that the study group represent as wide a spectrum as possible of the female single-parent experience in each category. Selecting the participants from one source, given this goal, would skew the study group along the criterion that served as the baseline of eligibility of the designated agency, service or association. Given the time commitment necessary and the type of research I planned to conduct, it was my feeling that, initially, prospective participants would be more receptive to participation in the study if they were first approached by someone they knew. Thus, I used my social network system as a tool for approaching candidates for the study. I started by showing a written description of the study to some of my colleagues at work, family members, friends and acquaintances and asked them to assist me in locating female single parents, in the categories specified, who might be willing to participate. I also identified two female single parents (Edna and Sandra) in the courses I was teaching and decided to approach them the following semester when

they were no longer taking my courses. The first successful yield from this approach came from my sister. She was taking a course in the evening at a local college where she met a single-parent who was working full-time while completing her master's in early childhood (Beth). She asked her and a friend of her who had recently separated from her husband (Barbara) if they would be willing to discuss the project with me. Both women agreed and ultimately became participants.

One of my colleagues at work was very interested in this type of research. She knew many White professional single parents and became actively involved in recruiting them for the study. Eight of these women tentatively agreed to participate. However, after speaking with me on the phone about the study and learning that it involved more than a questionnaire, they all refused. Interestingly, each of these women contacted my colleague to explain why they refused. Their reasons varied from not having the time, to not wanting to be involved in a study that included participant observation.

After two months of actively looking for participants for the study (following-up on all possible candidates suggested with telephone contacts, some initial interviews and visits), I shared my frustration about not finding appropriate participants with another of my colleagues. She told me that she had a friend who would fit my professional White single-parent category and promised to approach her, not only to be part of the study, but also to look for other candidates. The next day she greeted me with a firm commitment from Miriam to be in the study herself, and to look for other participants. Miriam suggested five other women, only one of whom she knew well, as possible participants; through her contact with these women, I was able to include two other single parents who belonged in her category (Rachel and Cynthia). Interestingly, her friend refused.

By the beginning of the summer of 1980, I was fully involved with these women and, throughout the succeeding months, I was able to complete the study group of nineteen single parents. The two categories I found most difficult to complete were "White professional single parents" and "White single-parents receiving public assistance." The latter category was the last completed. This became possible only as a result of an active search by Sarah (a woman in the "Black single-parent receiving public assistance" category). She explored possibilities for participants in this category at school and at her son's nursery school on campus. She worked very hard at this task because she shared my concern about including only Black women in the "public assistance" category. Once Linda agreed to participate, she suggested another woman she had met through some friends. With the addition of Lena, I had several representatives in each category.

This method of recruitment allowed me to compose a study group of nineteen women with a wide range of diversity in each of the three categories. These women lived in different parts of the city, utilized different types of services and resources and, within the "White single-parent" category, represented the ethnic diversity of the city. The "Black single-parent" category is ethnically homogeneous to the extent that it includes only families that either migrated from one to four generations ago from the South, with one family coming from Pittsburgh. None of these families is of West Indian descent. However, despite the diversity of this group, the women have several characteristics in common which, I think, stem from the nature of the study and the methods employed to gather data. In addition to being single parents by choice (none of the women was deserted by the father of her children or had contested the divorce), all are bright, verbal and active women who basically feel

comfortable about their status as single parents and about themselves as people. They are all people who consciously use the method of critical reflection on past experiences as a tool for making current decisions related to choices they have to make for themselves and their children. In addition, they are all intellectually curious and able to make a long-term commitment to a process. Therefore, although the method of selection was designed to avoid skewing the participants along a particular set of criteria, the nature of the study itself became somewhat self-selecting.

Another important characteristic of this group is that, despite major differences in the standard of living within each category and between categories, all of these families live above a marginal existence. They are able, through the combination of all of their income generating activities, to provide for themselves and their children: (1) an adequate and varied diet, (2) housing that ranges from being satisfactory-to excellent (hot and cold water, heat in the winter, gas and electric, basic appliances (stoves and refrigerators) in working order, and decoration which, to varying degrees, expresses the aesthetics of the mother; (3) clothing that is not only adequate, but attractive; and (4) access to and utilization of health care and educational facilities. Therefore, using the basic subsistence items of food, clothing, shelter and health care, I am characterizing all these families as living above the basic subsistence level. Another important characteristic of these single-parents is that they all are working toward and expect to improve their current standard of living.

Although these female-headed single-parent families represent a range of standards of living and life styles, because of the way they

were selected they cannot be treated as a sample from which generalizations about the group can be made. They do, however, provide valuable insight that can serve as a basis for future studies into aspects of not only female single-parent life, but also contemporary family experience in the United States.

Methods

Because of the limited resources, I was unable to pay any of the participants. Thus, continued participation in the study by these women was dependent upon (1) the relationship I established with the women, (2) commitment to the research project, and (3) benefits they were able to gain from the process of the study itself.

The initial contact with each woman was a consequence of her relationship with someone who was familiar with the purpose of the study or in four cases, a result of prior contact with me in a work or meeting context. As a result, they had already indicated interest in the study. After the initial telephone contact, an appointment was made to discuss the study and what participation in it required of them. At this first meeting, I explained (1) that this research constituted part of the requirements for my leave (2) that I was working on a limited budget (self-funded), (3) my qualifications to do the research, my prior training and work experience), and (4) why I thought this type of research was important. I further explained that I was also a female single-parent. I then gave them a written description of the purpose of the study and answered any questions they posed.

I stressed that I knew they had many demands on their time and that I was interested in understanding the processes through which they generated the income to support their households and provide child care

and child rearing for their children. Therefore, rather than interrupting them in the process of carrying out these activities, I wanted to join and participate with them in the process. I also asked if they minded if I used a tape recorder when I visited, explaining that note-taking might interrupt the process. I also shared with them my work schedule so that they would better understand the pattern of my contacts.

After this discussion, I explained the diary and its use in helping me understand and identify the people in their "subsistence network" and child-care and child-rearing networks. I also assured each woman that she would have the opportunity to read the material before it was finally submitted so that if there was any material she felt uncomfortable about or if she felt that she could be identified by my descriptions, we could address these problems before I completed the final copy. It was also made clear to all of the women that I was available to them in the same way that they were available to me, that I was prepared to answer any questions they might have about me or my life in the same way that I questioned them. In addition, any information or services they might be able to utilize, that I had at my disposal, I was willing to share with them.

Questionnaire

The next step was implementation of the open-ended questionnaire schedule. This served as the basis for our next several meetings. The questionnaire includes questions about what they consider to be subsistence for them, adequate child care, and discussion about the child-rearing process. We discussed in detail how they have dealt with these aspects of parenting up to the present in order to get information on adjustments they have made as their children have moved through different stages of

the developmental cycle. It also shows the relationship of this to their employment histories. In addition, I asked them to describe the kinds of people they hope they are raising their children to be, and what they are consciously doing to help their children to realize these possibilities.

These questions gave me some understanding of their values, perceptions of the world, and the place they see for themselves and their children in it. Questions were also asked about their definition of "family" and the content of family roles, as they understand them. These questions addressed both their ideology of family and family roles, as well as their experiences. Through these questions, I hoped to gain some insight into some of the contradictions between the American ideology of family and reality as experienced by these nineteen women. I was also interested in the extent to which similarities in the ideology and experience of family transcended both racial and socioeconomic boundaries.

The combination of these questions, plus questions concerning how they see their roles and the difficulties they confront as single-parents, helped me to better understand the experiences of these women in their natal families, the way they carried out aspects of parenting prior to the study, their present relationships with the fathers of their children, and how they presently handle the role of remale single-parent.

Diaries

The women kept diaries of telephone and personal contacts they had during the week (usually for ten-day periods, every three to four months). In these they listed the contacts and, when we went over them, they specified the relationship they have with the people listed and the content of the contact. Business contacts and people with whom they come in contact in the course of their jobs, unless they have a more extensive

relation with them, were excluded. Some of the women were better at keeping these diaries than others. Some found it easier to make notations on their calendars, and some forgot over several days in sequence to make notations in the diaries. Others found the diaries a useful tool for them in understanding the way they used their time, to whom they spoke, and with whom they spent time, so that they continued the process throughout the duration of the study.

However, despite the unevenness of the diaries, they proved useful in developing a sense of who the key people were in the network systems of these women. They also helped me to get a sense of the pattern, frequency and intensity of these interactions and changes in patterns in response to particular situations.

Telephone Conversations

Since all of the women were working or going to school, and they lived all over the city, the telephone proved to be a very useful research tool. I initially called the women one to three times a week to keep up with how they were doing. After the study group increased, my calls were less frequent, but I regularly kept in touch with all of the women several times a month. In addition, most of the women would call me when something they felt would be important to the study occurred or was being planned so that I could participate. In addition, several women developed a pattern of calling me in addition to these contacts just to talk about things that were happening in their lives.

The telephone was also useful because women could talk with me or go over the diary without interrupting their schedules (i.e., very early in the morning or late at night). I often kept a record of the content of these calls if they were related to the research.

Participant Observation

I spent time with these women and their children, friends and families in their homes or at social times. I also spent time with them at their jobs, visited their children's schools and day-care centers, attended religious events or services with some of the women, and participated with them in other life events. Seeing these women in different roles and settings and participating with them in a variety of activities gave me a better understanding of the women, their families, their mobility patterns, and the different parts of the city they used.

I was also, through the combination of these methods, able to learn the different ways in which these women organized their child care, child rearing and domestic activities and to see differences in their presentation of self in different settings. I observed the extent to which their activities, time organization and behavior were congruent with their goals for themselves and their children.

Network Analysis

Network analysis has been widely used in various types of urban research (Mitchell, 1969; Bott, 1957; Sanjek, 1974, 1978; Stack, 1975). Among other applications it is a useful method by which to discern the range and type of the social relationships of an individual. In the present study, network analysis was used as a method through which to examine the composition of the individual single-parent's kinship and friendship network system, and the content of the material resources, services and information that were exchanged through them in relationship to three fundamental processes of parenting. The three processes addressed are posed as questions: (1) How do these kinship and friendship network systems act to enable these single parents to generate the income

necessary for the economic support of their families? (2) What forces come into play that enable these mothers to provide child care for their children? (3) How do these female single parents organize and carry out the process of child rearing? The analysis of the networks employed to carry out these processes is designed as a vehicle for linking these families to the wider social processes of race and class relations.

On the micro-level, the focal point of the analysis was the individual single-parent and her "personal community." "Community" in this context is not a geographical location but, rather, the activated core and extended social relationships that the female single parent has with people and institutions that form the fiber of the family's life experience. In short, it is the social network system in which the person is embedded.

Given the level of complexity of the contemporary United States, the development of its communication and transportation systems, and the myriad of interactions that people have in the daily activities of life in an urban setting, many of the important activities of life take place out of their residential communities. Important communications, exchanges of information and resources can and often do take place over long distances. Thus, researchers interested in the study of the ways in which certain types of essential life processes are carried out find it necessary to employ methods and tools that will reveal the linkages that people have with others and the types of exchanges that take place as a result of these various types of relationships.

The identification of the social network of an individual, and the analysis of the interaction of the members of the network system in relationship to these processes is one way to approach this problem. Since people are involved in a myriad of interactions, activities and processes, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to identify and

analyze the total social network field of the individual. Therefore, it is important for analytical purposes to carefully limit the identification and analysis of the individual network systems in relationship to the central problem addressed.

The following three chapters demonstrate the usefulness of these methods in collecting the data necessary for a comparative analysis of these nineteen families.

CHAPTER IV
GENERATION OF INCOME, STANDARD OF LIVING AND LIFE STYLE:
FEMALE SINGLE-PARENTS, WORKING FULL-TIME
IN PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS

The eight female single parents presented in this chapter represent a wide range of standards of living and life styles. Collectively they demonstrate the distortions that arise when education, occupation and income are used as the only criteria for determining the socioeconomic position of female single-parent families. The women in this category differ in the ways they generate the income to support their families and the ways in which they organize child care, child rearing and domestic activities. Seven of the eight women have earned B.A. degrees, and five have had graduate training. All of the women have areas of specialization and have professional status in their occupations. All of these women earn \$19,000 or more from their primary work situation.

The data for the working, full-time professional mother category were gathered from four white and four black women. There is variation in income and education between and within racial categories. In addition, there is a difference as a group between the Black and White women in their distribution between the public and private employment sectors. All of the White women work in the private sector; three of the Black women work in city or federal agencies, and one woman works in a Catholic agency.

Except for Rachael, who owns her business and employs others, all of the women in this category are wage earners. Three earn between \$30,000 and \$35,000; four women earn \$19,000 to \$25,000 from their stated primary income-generating source--i.e., their jobs. Rachel's actual income, which can be directed toward economic support of her family, varies because she is in the process of expanding her business, and the equipment maintenance expenses, number of workers she employs, travel expenses and actual income from her business vary, depending on the volume, type and location of the contracts she gets for the range of video services she offers.

At the initiation of the study, the women ranged in age from 34 to 42 and had one to three children, ranging in age from two to 18. Seven of the women lived in households comprised of themselves and their children. One woman, Cynthia, was in the process of relocating from Paris, France, and was living with her mother during this transition. It was her intent to live with her mother for a short period while exploring available employment opportunities in her field; she ultimately returned to her job in Paris. The occupation, income listed in the chart and discussion of her work situation are based on the job from which she was currently on leave. Another of these women, Louise, had a sleep-in housekeeper three days a week; therefore, although technically, not a full-time member of the household, the housekeeper was an integral part of its functioning.

A review of the chart shows that all of the White professional women lived in center city within walking distance of the central shopping center, cultural institutions (the main branch of the public library, the museums, the Academy of Music, etc.), and were also in the district for an excellent public elementary school and a well-known private school, a

major medical facility and convergence points for public transportation leading to the various parts of the city and Fairmount Park. Their residences were in high-rent areas. Two of the women, Miriam and Louise, were purchasing their housing; Rachael was renting her apartment, and Cynthia was living in her mother's condominium. In addition, they all had regular help to assist with child care and domestic work.

In contrast, three of the black professional women lived on the outer boundaries of the city in middle-income housing; one woman, Marie, lived near the University of Pennsylvania in an area of escalating value. Brenda and Marie owned their houses; Margaret was in the process of buying her house, and Diane was renting. None of these women hired household help. Miriam and Rachael sent their children to the public elementary school in the area. At the beginning of the study, Louise's youngest son was attending public school; her oldest son attended a specialized career public high school, and her daughter was a freshman at a branch of the university in which she worked. Cynthia's son attended a private nursery school. Diane's and Brenda's sons attended public schools in their respective neighborhoods. Marie's daughter was enrolled in a private nursery school, and her eldest son was enrolled in a Catholic school.

Using the criteria of residence, easy access to varied activities, and regular household help, even though both groups of women in this category had a similar distribution of wages from their primary income-generating activity, the White families' standard of living was higher than that of the Black families. Further, in terms of other aspects of their standard of living and life style (organization of household activities, household furnishings and appliances, organization and type of money spent on social activities, and experiences and activities of

their children), there was a qualitative difference in the standard of living and life style between the two groups of women in this category.

The central point that emerges from this comparison, and which is demonstrated by the quantitative and qualitative differences in the life experience of these eight families, is that the indicators of occupation, income and education are not sufficient criteria from which to draw conclusions about the socioeconomic position or location of individuals or families in the class structure. In this case, this is demonstrated through a comparison of Black and White professional women; however, it might have been equally demonstrated by close examination of eight women of the same racial affiliation (Sharman, 1980,N.D.).¹

In order to explain the range of variation in the standard of living and life style of these families, it was necessary to expand the variables to include a detailed examination of their income-generating activities and the exchanges made through their kinship/friendship network system. The analysis begins with a detailed study of the various dimensions of the paid work these mothers do, and the relationship of these to the organization of their child care, child rearing and domestic activities.

¹Personal communications with Anne Sharmon during the course of the study on her work with low income Black families in Philadelphia further substantiated the wide range of variation possible within specific income and racial groups.

Table 4.1
White Professional Mothers

Name	Education	Income	Occupation
Miriam	Ph.D.	35,000+	Dir., Youth Program International Private Agency
Cynthia	B.A.	20,000	French language trainer, private French Inst.
Rachael	B.S.	50,000 (variable)	Owner of video business
Louise	Ph.D.	25,000	Dir., Learning Center, private University

Black Professional Mothers

Name	Education	Income	Occupation
Diane	B.A., 1-1/2 yrs. grd. work	30,000	Dir., Public Relations
Marie	M.A., Early Childhood + 30 graduate credits	35,000	Bd. of Ed., Early Childhood head teachers
Margaret	3 yrs. college	24,000	Fed. Govt., GS-12
Brenda	B.A., MSW	19,000	Coordinator, Community Ed. Outreach Program

Table 4.2

Household Composition, Residence Type and Location

Name	Age	Children & Ages	Residence	Area
Miriam	39	Jack, 10	3-bedroom condominium	Center City
Cynthia	35	Luke, 4	Mother's condo- minium; 2 bedroom. Full-time house- keeper (9-6)	Center City
Rachael	34	Judy, 9, Karl 7	3 bedroom apt. in condominium bldg. House- keeper, full- time. Care for children after school and during work- related travel.	Center City
Louise	42	Mark, 12, Charlie, 16, Sharon, 18	Town House 3-day sleep-in housekeeper.	Center City
Diane	35	Chuma, 8	Rented house	Germantown
Marie	35	Keia, 2	House	Univ. City
Margaret	33	Billy, 4, Tom, 11	House	Oaklane
Brenda	34	Ronald, 11	House	W. Phila.

Table 4.3

Work: Location, Transportation and Flexibility
of Time and Location

<u>Name</u>	<u>Job Location</u>	<u>Transportation</u>	<u>Time Flex.</u>	<u>Location Flex.</u>
Miriam	Center City	Walk; free apt. bus.	Organ. task-related	Office or home
Rachael	Center City Office on 1st floor of residence building	Elevator, station wagon, airplane	Organ. task-related in terms of volume of contact and type	On location and office
Louise	Center City	Walk, car or bus	Organ. task-related	Office and home
Diane	Center City	Family car pool public trans.	9-5 + extended hrs. in relationship to task	Office Home
Marie	N. Phila.	Car	8:30-3:30	Day Care Center
Margaret	Univ. City	Car	8:45-4:45	Office and field
Brenda	Germantown	Car	Task-related course schedule	Office-Community

Work: Job Responsibilities, Flexibility of Time and Location

The time and mode of transportation utilized to get to work and the degree of flexibility in the organization of time and location of work-related responsibilities are aspects of work that have major implications in the way that female single parents carry out other aspects of the parenting process. To a large extent, these serve as major factors in determining the organization of child care, participation of mothers in child-related activities (help with homework, school and extra-curricular activities), the organization and time devoted to housework and shopping, and the range and type of additional income-generating activities. These also condition the structure, type and range of the mothers' non-child-related social activities and the content and degree of interaction with their kinship and friendship social network systems. The interaction of all these variables is related to the degree of stress and physical energy expenditure of these mothers and their resulting physical and mental stress.

Cynthia is not included on this chart because, at the point she was included in the study, she had been in Philadelphia for several months and was actively looking for work. She thought her B.A. from a French University and five years of experience as a language trainer for adults needing to learn English in a short period of time for use in sales and other aspects of business would be a valuable asset. In addition, she had six years of other types of work experience. She had worked developing and conducting programs for teachers for the French government and other agencies and had other business-related and teaching experience. At the initiation of the study, she was confident that this type of work history, combined with her knowledge of spoken Spanish, Italian, German and Russian, and typing skills, would help her find a job in the private

sector. She was looking for a position that would provide her and her son with a standard of living comparable to the one she had in Paris on roughly \$20,000 annual salary, benefits and continued partial assistance in an emergency from her mother and in-laws.

I felt that her experience as a single parent, relocating to Philadelphia after 16 years in France, would provide useful information on the way a professional woman, not pressured to find immediate employment, would go about the process of finding work. Also, I was interested in the way she would find housing and gain information about resources for herself and her son in the city. At the point at which she returned, she had only a few friends in her age group in the city, and one cousin and his family in the suburbs. Therefore, I was interested in the process through which she would expand her social network system.

During the 18 months Cynthia was in Philadelphia, she and her son were supported primarily by her mother. Her mother had encouraged her to return to Philadelphia and had agreed to support her until she found work. They both thought she would find employment and move into her own apartment in a relatively short period of time--three months at most. At the point she decided to relocate she sold everything except her personal belongings. She took an indefinite leave of absence from her job and moved into her mother's apartment with \$10,000 in savings, her son and her dog.

While in Paris, she had lived in a two-bedroom apartment in a relatively small apartment building. Initially she lived with her husband and son, Luke. They separated when Luke was two, and she continued to live there, sometimes sharing the apartment with a roommate and, later for a period, with a couple. This arrangement reduced expenses and provided emotional support and help with child care and child

rearing. When Luke was two, she returned to her job at the Institute and sent him to a Red Cross-sponsored day care center in her district. The hours of the center were 9 to 12 with a lunch break from 12 to 1:30, then an afternoon session from 1:30 to 6 p.m. In addition to paying for the center, she had to make arrangements on the days his father did not spend the lunch break with him to have a friend or baby-sitter pick him up, give him lunch and return him to the center. During this period, she got him ready for school, took him in the morning, and picked him up in the afternoon. If she was delayed at work, she relied on friends to pick him up and care for him until she came home. If he was sick, she stayed with him or had a friend care for him. Later she was able to enroll him in a state-sponsored nursery school from 8:30 to 4:30. This eliminated the lunch break problem.

The hours at the Institute were related to classes and workshops. Cynthia worked three-quarter time. The Institute was a non-profit organization that taught languages, trained teachers and did research in language teaching methods.

Job Advantages

Some of the advantages of her job were:

1. contacts for other employment opportunities;
2. 13-month salary (extra month given--half at Christmas and half in June);
3. six weeks paid holiday (the law in France provides for a four-week paid holiday);
4. lunch vouchers for subsidized lunches which could be used in restaurants or at take-out food-service shops; in the latter case, the food was then often taken home;

5. the Institute paid for public transportation and for travel time if she worked outside the city;
6. paid sick leave: month one, 100 percent; month two 60 percent;
7. contributory health insurance scheme: 50 percent contributed by the employer and 50 percent by the employee;
8. occasional cash bonuses;
9. gifts on special occasions from a job-located social committee;
10. company loans for buying or refurnishing apartment;
11. reduced costs of trips and training programs;
12. 10 percent reduction on book costs because she was a teacher;
13. free use of the telephone;
14. extended, unpaid holidays;
15. peer support for professional growth and development.

Given the additional benefits of this job and subsidized child care, the actual cost of maintaining her job in terms of carfare and lunches was low. Her teaching job was demanding but not pressured. There was no competition among workers; they all received the same salary and benefits and were willing to share information and be supportive.

While in Philadelphia, Cynthia was primarily engaged in part-time and temporary work and in activities designed to help her find employment. Her major difficulty in finding work was her unfamiliarity with the ways her skills could be translated to work situations here and her knowledge of possible employment opportunities. For this information she relied on family members and relationships she was in the process of developing. Even though there was no financial pressure for her to find work, she found complete dependency on her mother for the essentials of life very stressful. As time passed without her finding work, she began to feel that her situation was inappropriate for her age and status. She

was developing friendships with professional women who were working full-time; this compounded her anxiety and affected the patience and energy she needed to spend time with her son. Her guilt about this added to the building anxiety.

During this period, she developed her resume and sent it to a list of French companies obtained from the French Embassy. She contacted training directors of large companies to discuss employment possibilities. In addition, she answered job advertisements in the newspapers and went to two agencies that specialized in placing people in private industry. One of these agencies found a job for her shortly before she left for France but, by that time, she had made plans to leave. The most fruitful line of employment stemmed from personal contacts with friends. Both of her work situations in Philadelphia materialized in this way. She worked part-time in her mother's best friend's boutique. Initially Mrs. Jones planned to train and use her as a buyer, but her business began to decline. Instead, Cynthia worked a few days a week in the store when business allowed. For this work she received minimum wage and got her clothes at cost or free of charge. This arrangement for clothes had been a long-standing one so she did not consider it a fringe benefit. She also accompanied Mrs. Jones on buying trips to New York and learned a little about buying.

Later, through a college friend who was head of sales for a hotel chain, she got a job for three months at the tourist and information center for a foreign country. The first contract job paid \$174 per week with no tax withholding. Her responsibilities included developing a list of marketing research companies and contacting them. The second contract she had on this job lasted one month, and her salary was reduced to \$150 per week. This job was a fill-in job for a vacationing employee. The

benefits included: (1) use of the postal system for personal mail, (2) use of the phone for local calls, (3) liquor and cigarettes at government prices, and (4) freedom to leave early for her son or a dental appointment. In addition, the director of this agency contacted a friend for employment for Cynthia at a tourist agency. This job also materialized shortly before she returned to France.

While she had this job, she assumed the cost of \$50 per week for her son's school, bought some clothes for herself and her son, and purchased some food for the house (over her mother's protests). She also always paid for her own social activities and baby sitters on evenings when she went out. Both these jobs were within walking distance of her residence and required that she dress well. Given her arrangement for clothes, this was not an additional expense. Child care during this period was not a problem. Private transportation took Luke to and from school. Her mother's housekeeper took care of him until she returned from work. Some of the most important factors which influenced Cynthia's decision to return to her former job and life in France were:

1. the realization that her education and skills would not allow her to get a job in the United States that would provide her and her son with the same standard of living and life-style she could realize in France. If she remained in Philadelphia, she felt she would have to send her son to private school. In France she felt comfortable sending him to public school;
2. rent in center city was expensive and she wanted to continued to live in that area;
3. many of the benefits provided by the state in France in the form of training and child development programs and activities would have to be paid for in the United States; and, finally,

4. she had an extensive network of friends in Paris that would help with child care and with whom she could share activities, emotional support and social time. In Philadelphia she was slowly building a network of friends, but she felt that the quality of friendship was very different from those she had in France. Finally, with the financial help of her mother and in-laws, she returned to France and her former job as a full-time, rather than a three-quarter time, employee.

The seven other women in this category were all working full-time when they entered the study. Four of these women, Brenda, Louise, Miriam, and Rachael, had work situations that allowed for a great deal of flexibility in time organization. In addition, they were also able to do some of their work at home. This flexibility of time and location did not reduce the amount of time, energy and effort they put into their primary work responsibilities; it meant that they could work longer hours and integrate other income-generating activities into the course of their expanded working hours. For these women, this type of flexibility resulted in longer working hours, more types of jobs, and increased incomes. In addition, they were able to respond to child-related emergencies and unplanned household situations with less difficulty.

Diane and Margaret had jobs with fixed hours. They also were required to leave their offices to carry out some of their work responsibilities. Diane had the use of an official car for transportation to some of these sites and also had some flexibility of time. This allowed her to respond quickly to emergencies (once, upon her son's return from school he found that the house had been broken into; on this occasion she had to go home immediately). She could also leave work for short periods of time to go to her son's school or to respond to child-related

emergencies. However, the heavy demands of her job required that she stay late most evenings, at least until 6:00 p.m. She also often brought work home with her.

Margaret's work, although it technically had fixed hours, often required that she take trips to other parts of the country. In these instances, she either went by car or airplane, and sometimes had to be away for several days. When she was in the office, her hours were strictly scheduled with 8:15 to 4:45 hours, with one hour for lunch. If she had to leave the office for an emergency, the time was deducted from her annual leave or sick time.

Marie's job also had little flexibility in time; most of her work was restricted to the day care center. However, as lead teacher she had to attend monthly meetings and sometimes had to deliver reports to the central office. In addition, she had an emergency time provision built into her work situation so that she could leave work early or during the day to respond to emergencies; she also had personal leave days. Further, although it was not encouraged, she could in the case of a child care problem, bring her child with her to work.

Given the lack of time flexibility and choice of location in carrying out their jobs responsibilities, these two women were not able to do much part-time work to expand their incomes. Of this group of three women, only Marie and Diane expanded their incomes by a little part-time work. Marie sold Tupperware about once a month, and Diane did a limited amount of free-lance public relations work and writing.

The four women who lived in center city had easy access to their offices and to their children's schools. Miriam and Cynthia (when she worked) either walked to work or caught the building bus. Rachel's office was on the first floor of her building so that she was able to

move easily between her office and her apartment. Given the unevenness and irregularity of her working hours, this proximity made it possible for her to be accessible to her children and to take breaks during the afternoons and on weekends to spend time with them.

Diane lived in Germantown, some 30-45 minutes drive from her office in Center City. She rides in the family car pool (parents, brother and cousin) to work every morning and, in the evenings when she works late, she comes home by public transportation. Since her son goes to school close to their home in Germantown, she has to make special arrangements at work to visit his school during the day. Her brother and his family live eight doors from her, so she has made arrangements with her sister-in-law, who is a housewife, to be available to her son in the afternoons when he returns from his after-school program.

Marie and Brenda live about a half-hour's drive from work. Brenda is able, because of the time flexibility of her job, to see her son off in the mornings and to visit his school or pick him up in the afternoon when necessary without too much difficulty. However, if she has a problem with her car, she has major difficulty getting to work and carrying aspects of her job responsibilities. Marie is also dependent on her car to get to work and to get her daughter to the day care center.

Margaret, because of the location of her house in relationship to public transportation, is also dependent on her car to get her youngest son to his day care center and to get to work. If her car is out of order, this process can take her over two hours. Her children go to different schools in her residential area, and she has a fixed schedule at work. Therefore, getting to the boys' respective schools requires

careful planning, released time from work, and travel time. Luckily, she was able to work out an arrangement with her supervisor to have a 15-minute allowance in the morning, when needed, which could be made up at the end of the day. This arrangement has allowed her to avoid having a record of frequent absences or undue lateness to work, which would be reflected in her yearly evaluation and could result in her having difficulty getting promoted.

This brief discussion of location and mode of transportation between home, work and children's schools gives an indication of some of the problems and constraints of mothers who work at a distance from home and their children's schools. The women who work furthest from home and their children's schools spend more time and money on transportation. Two mothers in this category, Diane and Margaret, are further constrained by a lack of flexibility and choice in time and location. The combination of both these factors makes it more difficult for them to respond to child-related and household emergencies. It also imposes fixed constraints on their organization of child care and domestic work. In addition, it limits their ability to expand their incomes through additional part-time work.

These points will be further illuminated through a brief discussion of seven women's primary and additional paid income-generating activities. The discussion will endeavor to demonstrate the relationship of their paid income-generating activities to the ways in which they organize child care for their children and carry out domestic activities (housework, cooking, and shopping). In addition, the discussion will include a description of the actual work these mothers do. In this way, the reader will be able to better understand the degree of physical and mental energy expended by these women and the amount of stress related to their

jobs. Further, these cases will be used to demonstrate the cost of maintaining particular jobs.

Brenda: Black Female, Single Parent; One Child, Age 11

Brenda's job, as coordinator of a Community Education Program of a Catholic college, requires, in addition to spending a great deal of time in her office on campus, that she attend meetings and events in the community and visit sites of community education courses. This means that although her official hours are 9 to 5, five days a week, she works many evenings and weekends. In addition, she is also a faculty advisor to the minority students association on campus, serves on college committees, and is a coordinator of a Philadelphia Black women's club.

Because of the recognized unevenness of the hours required to do her job, she is able to arrange her hours in response to the demands of her responsibilities. This flexibility allows her to fit the teaching of two courses into her schedule, which increases her income and gives her teaching experience. Since ultimately she plans to move into full-time teaching, this is an important part of her career development planning. However, it means expanded working hours and additional pressure to an already demanding schedule. These courses require six hours a week of teaching time plus preparation and marking papers.

Brenda owns a house in West Philadelphia on the same street as her mother. Her house is a large, three-story row house, and from time to time she rents parts of the house to friends. At the initiation of the study she was renting a room to a close friend she has known since college. However, since her tenants are usually friends in transition and are often having financial difficulties, she cannot depend on them to pay rent regularly. However, having a friend in the house and her

mother, foster-sister, and brother close by provides her with a great deal of child care help. Given her hectic schedule and financial constraints, help is needed and welcome.

Her son attends a public school within walking distance of her house and moves freely between his grandmother's house and home. He often eats and spends time at his grandmother's house. He also spends time with his friends in the immediate neighborhood. Since Brenda grew up on the street where she is currently living, she knows many of her neighbors, who are a source of additional support. For example, she is able to get small repairs done on her house far below cost by one of her neighbors and is kept well informed about things happening in the neighborhood.

Given the nature of her job and activities, Brenda knows a lot of people in Philadelphia and has extensive knowledge of services, political issues and events. As a result, she is able to take advantage of services for which she is eligible and to pass on information to others. She is constantly on the move, and it is not unusual for her to be in at least two or three parts of the city in the course of a day. Therefore, she is dependent on her car for work and considers it an important element in her income-generation. Thus, she must include gas and car maintenance as essential items in her budget.

Brenda starts her day by getting her son up, giving him breakfast, and getting him off to school. She then drives 30 to 45 minutes, depending on traffic, to her office, arriving there about 10:00 a.m. She works in her office carrying out some of her responsibilities (proposal writing, curriculum planning, monitoring courses currently in progress, writing memos or developing flyers or informational material advertising courses or events, writing reports on community meetings or events, or attending planning meetings with other staff members, supervising work-study

Table 4-4
Additional Income-Generating Activity

Name	Full-time Position	Other Income-Generating Activity	Location	Child Care
Brenda	Coordinator Community Organization Program	Adjunct Lecturer; 1 course at university of primary employment, 1 at other university; 3 hrs./wk. + prep.	30-45 min. drive from home	Mother (5) doors away), friends
Louise	Dir., Learning Center	Writing workshops; writing for publication; field teacher for 1-2 students; consultant for company writing programs	1st fl. of her house converted. Location of contract	House-keeper Youngest child not in need of constant care
Diane	Dir. Public Relations	Free Lance writing; occasional public relations	Home	After-school program; relatives
Rachael	Video Business	Expanding business	Offices on 1st floor of apt. bldg. Location of contracts	Full-time house-keeper; baby-sitters
Miriam	Dir., Youth Program	Adjunct Prof. 2 courses; therapy, 3-5 patients	University (20-min. drive; apartment	
Marie	Lead Teacher	Tupperware	Friends' homes	Takes child

students). During the day she also attends scheduled committee meetings and meets with students. While in her office, one has the feeling that many things are going on at the same time--the phone ringing, people coming in and out, and Brenda moving in and out of other offices in the building. One the days she teaches, she takes time out to go to her class and then returns to her office.

Around 5 o'clock, she either goes home to check on her son and make sure he has eaten, or telephones to check arrangements for the evening. On the evenings she has meetings, community activities or visits to the sites of her courses; if she had previously gone home, she will take her son with her if the experience will be a positive one for him; if not, she makes sure of his evening arrangements and returns home late in the evening.

Given the extreme time and energy pressures of her job, Brenda does not have time for regular housework, shopping or cooking. She fits these activities in where she can, but relies heavily on her mother for cooked meals. She also has an arrangement with her foster sister, who lives with her mother, to help her about twice a month with housework. For this service she pays a nominal fee of \$5.00.

Brenda has many job-related expenses, even though she does not have to pay for child care. She must purchase appropriate clothing. Because she is actively involved in community life, she is constantly purchasing tickets to community and other agency events. She drives a lot and does not have a new car, so gas and care maintenance are expensive items in her budget. Fortunately, there is an inexpensive faculty dining room on campus, so that when she has time for lunch she is able to eat there.

The physical cost in energy output for Brenda was extremely high. In addition, she was concerned about the amount of time she was able to

give her son and about some of his academic problems. In response to these concerns, she made time in her schedule to visit his school regularly and to take him with her whenever possible; however, she didn't feel this was enough. She also was not comfortable with her organization of housework or the condition of her house. Structurally, she liked the house, but it needed many repairs. In the winter, heating bills were high because the house needed insulation. The organization of the rooms (including three bathrooms, one on every floor), after renovation, could allow for one good-sized apartment. She was unable to implement this because of the expense. Therefore, because she didn't have the money to renovate the house, it detracted from rather than expanded her income.

Another important aspect of work is the fringe benefit package provided. In addition to time flexibility, Brenda received full health coverage for herself and her son, free tuition if she wanted to take a course at the college, and the option of belonging to the credit union, an important financial back-up. She saved money there, and was able to get a low interest loan to fix her roof and have painting done.

A review of this situation shows that for Brenda to function effectively in her job, expand her income by teaching two courses, and provide supervision for her 11-year-old son, several things were necessary: (1) a great deal of flexibility in her work situation, (2) unlimited, unpaid child care services from her mother, (3) a car, (4) back-up child care from friends, and (5) assumption of some of her domestic work by her mother and foster-sister. This allowed her to expand her income by approximately \$4,000, bringing her annual income to about \$23,000. Without these back-up services she would not have been able to maintain her job and expand her income.

Rachael: White Female Single Parent; Two Children, 7 and 9

Rachael has a great deal of flexibility in her work hours. She owns an expanding video business and, like Brenda, supports herself and her children. The nature of her work and the financial returns she receives from it have allowed her to support her family at a much higher standard of living than Brenda and to build in a better organization of child care and domestic activities.

Rachael rents a three-bedroom apartment in the same building where she maintains her office. Living and working in this high-rent building has many advantages for her business and for the organization of her child care and child rearing activities. The proximity of her office to her apartment allows her to arrange spontaneous activities and time with her children and often to combine work with recreational activities. For example, a central gathering place for her building is the pool. Rachael goes there often with her children. While there, she meets other tenants. Through informal conversations, useful business information is often shared, and other residents learn about the types of services she offers. She is also able to make contacts that result in referrals for her services. Rachael also serves on some of the building's committees; this allows her to meet people and make friends. She met one of her best friends, Charles, in this way. As a result of the relationship they developed working together on a committee, the friendship has expanded to the point where he freely gives her business consultation and other useful business information. They also jointly purchased a suite of offices in the building, which they divided for individual use. In addition, through one of his friends (a lawyer), he was able to help her get out of a lease for a nearby apartment she had planned to move into when the building was converted to a condominium. This saved her three

months' rent (\$2,400). Her building has other advantages. Its location in Center City allows her clients easy access to her offices. It is within walking distance of a very good public school which her children attend. This is very important to her; although she makes a great deal of money, she has a high overhead. Further, since her business is expanding, she has to reinvest her profits into equipment, transportation and employees. At this point, she has six video-workers and a part-time clerical worker. She also has a friend in the building who is a paralegal whom she pays far below cost to help her with billing and related clerical work.

In addition, because of her schedule and the types of contracts she gets in Philadelphia and other parts of the country, Rachael must have a full-time housekeeper and back-up baby sitters. Thus, at this point, she has a cash flow problem and cannot afford to send her children to private school. Another important reason that Rachael considers her living and business arrangement essential, although expensive, is that it allows her to be accessible to her children when she is working in her office. It permits her to take breaks to spend time with them when they are home. She either goes up to the apartment or, if they want to see her, they can drop in. The main reason Rachael says that she has to work hard is because she is determined to make "a good life" for her children despite the fact that she gets limited child support or help in child care from her husband. She is currently in the process of getting a divorce, and this is becoming a very expensive procedure. She often has to take her husband to court for child support, which is rarely forthcoming. She is unable to save money in child care because she cannot depend on him to take the children regularly. Thus, she has to organize her baby-sitting arrangements independently.

Rachael does legal, medical, accident and training video-taping. For example, if a lawyer needs the testimony of a doctor for a case, rather than having the doctor come to court, he can present taped testimony of himself and the other attorney questioning the witness. What follows is a description of the work that goes into one court appearance. It should be kept in mind that she might have two or three jobs in one day and, in addition to working herself, she employs six other workers. She also wears a beeper and has a telephone answering service so that if her workers have a problem, they can get in touch with her immediately. The charge for her service is \$175.00 per half-day, and \$350.00 for a whole day. Her workers are paid \$50.00 for a half-day and \$100.00 for a whole day. She provides them with the equipment; they provide their own transportation. One of her complaints is that she is taxed on her gross income, even when she pays workers.

In addition to the actual taping time, she has to spend time editing and reviewing the tapes. It is not unusual for her to do this late at night or as early as one or two in the morning when the children are sleeping. This work is always done in her office. If she has to be in court at 9:00 a.m., she is in her office by 6:00, checking her equipment. She leaves the building by 7:45 and packs the equipment in her station wagon. For a court appearance, she has to have three video machines: one for the judge, one for the jury, and a third for the lawyers. She also has to have monitors to make sure the voice level is high enough. She packs this equipment herself and moves it on rolling tables. When she arrives, she unpacks the equipment, rolls it in, and sets it up in the courtroom. During the showing, she carefully watches the tape and equipment so that if a problem arises she can correct it quickly. She estimates that a three-hour job in court requires 12 hours of work.

Presentation of self is a very important element of her business. For any job she does, she dresses in a professional manner--blazer and skirt or suit, shirtwaist dress, heels and stockings. She feels that a professional appearance allows her to demand the type of fees she charges. In addition, she spends time talking pleasantly with the lawyers and has the name of her business prominently displayed on her equipment. She has found that lawyers tend to share information about her service with others, and this has been an important element in expanding her business. Every time she works she is advertising her business.

In order to save money on clothes, she goes to well known designer factories and buys in multiples. This way she gets a much lower price and is able to wear the clothing for years. She buys inexpensive pocket-books but puts cardboard in the sides, which makes them look like "good bags." Because of the nature of her work she goes through stockings very quickly. All in all, the purchasing and cleaning of her business clothing is an important expense. In the office she wears shirts and jeans.

A central element in her organization of child care and housework and her ability to the long hours necessary is her full-time housekeeper, Shirley. She refers to her, because of the domestic and child care functions she carries out, as "my wife." Shirley is able to arrange her work schedule to fit Rachael's needs. They are very close friends and she is more like a "grandmother" than a housekeeper to the children. Although she doesn't always sleep over, she is willing to do so when Rachael needs her. She meets the children after school and when she is taking care of them, she makes the decisions. Rachael supports her decisions even if she is in the building and the children ask her to over-rule Shirley. If Shirley want to go out, she is free to take the children with her. On Wednesdays she has another job and on Thursday

evenings she has choir practice, so at these times Rachael uses back-up baby sitters. If these arrangements don't work out, Shirley is willing to cancel her plans. Rachael has complete faith in Shirley and, therefore, peace of mind when she leaves the children in her care. Shirley assists with housework; however, her primary responsibility is child care.

Rachael works so hard that she rarely has the time or energy for purely social activities. The little free time that she has she prefers to spend with her children rather than on dates. In addition, until now, money for socializing has been a problem. It has only been recently that she has been able to generate any unplanned-for surplus income. Previously she used extra money for the business or to help her mother who is currently living in Las Vegas. At this point she has so many contracts that it is hard for her to keep up with them; however, as the volume of work increases and her financial situation improves, the level of physical and time input she must make also increases. Therefore, at the point in her career she is exhausted most of the time.

Rachael's income-generating activities are dependent on several factors: (1) extensive child care, (2) proximity of home and office, (3) location, (4) equipment, (5) an efficient communication system (i.e., beeper and answering service), (6) clerical work, and (7) transportation. She must pay for all these services; thus, to make money she must be able to generate money constantly. To run and expand her business is expensive in time, physical energy, clothing and money. Because she is able to generate enough money from her work, she is able not only to expand her business, but to have effective household and child care organization.

In the cases of both Brenda and Rachael, what we see are women who have the primary responsibility for the economic support of their

families. Both women work long and irregular hours and had had to relinquish the major part of their jobs. In order to work, they are dependent upon extensive child-care services during the times their children are not in school. In terms of education, Brenda has an advanced degree in social work and Rachael has a B.S. and training and experience as a court reporter. In addition, she gained experience in bookkeeping and business management in her natal family when she assisted her mother in keeping the books for her father's psychiatric practice.

A major difference between these two women is the amount of financial return they receive on the emotional, physical and time inputs they make. This, of course, is determined by the fact that one woman owns a lucrative, expanding business and the other is completely dependent upon wages. The vast difference in the incomes of these professional women has directly affected the organization of care of their children. Rachael is able to hire a full-time housekeeper and back-up baby sitters and to be personally available to them when she is working in the building. Brenda has to depend on the services of her mother and friends to provide supervision and care for her son. She is able to make herself available to him when she is working only if she is able to take him with her.

In terms of housework and meals, Rachael is able to provide these through her housekeeper. Brenda, again, has to call upon her family for assistance in these areas. In short, in one situation the services are provided through the market to support the sales of services in the market which generates economic support for the family. In the other, kinship relations support the sale of services for wages, that provide the basis economic support for the family.

A short analysis of the types of resources transferred through the kinship and friendship networks of the women mentioned briefly above

shows that in one case, Rachael's the information and services provided were related to expansion of income to support the family's standard of living (business information, contracts, help with billing, help in getting financial release from a release). In Brenda's case, they were related to maintenance of the family's current situation (small house repairs, housework, child care, domestic services). As we continue with the analysis of the content of resources passed through the social networks of these eight women at different points in time and other aspects of their lives, it will be important at each juncture to evaluate the flow of resources in terms of maintenance of their current quality of life, or improvement and expansion of the quality of the family's life experience.

Diane: Black Female Single Parent; One Child, 8

Diane's work situation allows for little flexibility in time or location. In addition to the constraints placed on her formal working day, the volume and type of work that she does as Director of Public Relations for the Philadelphia branch of a national agency forces her to work many extra hours. It is not unusual for her to get to work at 8:00 a.m., to stay in the office until 6:00 p.m., and then to bring work home with her. The time and energy involved in this work situation severely limits her ability to do additional part-time work. However, she does do some freelance writing and public relations work. For this additional work she charges \$20.00 an hour and adds about \$1,000 a year to her income. In addition, she does a presentation every summer in Texas for a Black women's organization, for which she receives travel expenses, room and board. This serves as her vacation. She also does some volunteer work; this is important to her long-range career goals. This work has

expanded her visibility in the city and allowed her to work with "key" people in the area. She sees these activities as important to the expansion of her professional network system. At points, she has taught writing in local universities and served as the editor for a non-profit organization's annual publication.

Diane rides to work in a family car pool consisting of her parents, cousin and brother. Her son attends a public school within walking distance of the house she rents in Germantown. Her brother and his family live eight doors away from her. After school, her son attends a structured after-school program. Her sister-in-law, who is a housewife, is available for back-up child care if Diane is late coming home. In addition to these arrangements, her son regularly spends Friday evenings with her parents, who also live close by.

A key element in Diane's professional mobility has been the financial safety net provided by her parents. They have assured her that they will provide the financial support necessary to maintain her standard of living during periods of temporary unemployment. This has allowed her to select jobs in terms of their role in her career development, not in terms of job security. Her current position falls in this category.

Diane's job is multi-faceted. It includes planning and implementing events, such as large meetings and dinners, designing and implementing programs, preparing presentations on agency programs and delivering them to public officials, and preparing and delivering press releases. To carry out this work she has a small staff (four), a private secretary who keeps her appointment book, takes all calls and assists in various ways, and a T.V., typewriter and tape recorder in her office. Every day she starts her work by carefully reading four newspapers (Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, and a Philadelphia paper). As

she reads, she stars all articles related to the agency. After doing this, she must send a memo to the director, delineating all the things he should read. When the director finishes with the papers, he sends them back to her office, and a member of her staff clips the starred articles and files them.

After working on the newspapers, she starts working on the current projects in progress. Because her agency is highly visible, under constant scrutiny, and dependent on federal funding, Diane has to be sensitive to the public's and officials' perceptions of the effectiveness of the functioning of agency programs. She has to respond quickly and effectively to anything that might negatively affect the agency's image. As a result, she is constantly under pressure not only to be well informed, but to be able to respond to information appropriately through formal and informal channels. This requires her to do what is necessary to develop and maintain positive relationships with many people throughout the city and country. It also means that she must be willing to extend assistance and support to other agencies, projects and programs. This extends the work load of her office.

Diane has made a conscious decision to limit her activities to work and child rearing. When she is not working, she spends time with her son. On weekends she takes care of household responsibilities and participates mainly in child-centered activities. During the summer her son visits his father for about a month in Massachusetts and attends day camp. His father is sensitive to Diane's career goals and is willing to organize the periods of the visits to accommodate them.

In addition to her salary, Diane receives a fringe benefit package from her job which includes extensive health benefits for herself and son, dental care, 20 sick days a year, and two week vacation. Although

there is a credit union, because Diane's position is dependent on "soft money," she has not been encouraged to use it. An unofficial benefit of her job has been an extension of professional networks which she feels will be useful to her in future employment opportunities and the development of large event planning which she learned on this job.

In order to maintain her current position, Diane has been dependent on child care services provided primarily through three sources: a paid after-school program or day camp, her relatives (brother, sister-in-law, parents), and the public school system. She has not had to purchase a car because she can ride to work with her parents; her brother lives a few doors from her and his family has a car. She is also close to public transportation. In addition, she has the use of an official agency car for visits to some of the sites she must visit in the course of her work. Diane must have appropriate clothes to wear to work, but she has restricted her wardrobe to a few multi-purpose outfits so she doesn't see this as a major expense. She doesn't own her own house; therefore, she is not responsible for repairs. Towards the end of the data collection period she bought a second-hand car in good condition, so she did not have major car maintenance expenses.

Basically, Diane's major expenses are rent, things related to child care and child rearing, and career development. She is able to meet these through her own salary and some assistance from her parents. In addition, although she doesn't receive regular child support, her son's father contributes through spending time with his son and provision of special experiences they both feel are useful to his growth and development.

Miriam: White Female Single Parent; One Child, 10

Miriam has a Ph.D. in psychology and works as director of youth programs for a large international private agency. In this position, she works long hours; however, she is able to structure her time in the office around the requirements of the programs she designs and implements. Since she provides services for young people who are in school during the day, the most important time for her to be in her office is after 3:00 p.m. This allows her to structure her activities and time to fit the requirements of both her full-time job and other income-generating activities. At the agency, Miriam, with the help of her full-time secretary, directs, organizes and supervises the work of agency volunteers in the implementation of youth programs. The most hectic time at her office is during the school year. Things are slower in the summer, except for the three-week period she has to go away to a camp to help implement a leadership training program for young people from all over the world. She has the option to take her son.

Miriam is able to set her own time and location for her agency work. She usually gets to her office by 10:00. She does much of her written and telephone work at home in the morning or in the evening. This flexibility allows her to provide therapy for three to five patients whom she sees at home in the evening. In addition, she teaches two courses at a large university each semester and teaches one course during summer session. In the summer she sometimes holds class at her apartment. During the fall and spring semesters she is required to be on campus only during the time she is teaching. Although this work requires preparation time and a great deal of time listening to the students' tapes and reading papers, she can do this work at home. Sometimes she listens to the tapes while ironing and doing other household chores. Both her

teaching and agency jobs are within 20 minutes of her home. Many mornings she walks to work; however, if she is going to the university from home she drives. The proximity of the university to both her home and office allows her to move easily between both jobs.

Miriam is a highly organized woman. She has a housekeeper who comes once a week. She has arranged for her to come late in the day on the evenings she teaches. This arrangement allows the housekeeper to cook and eat dinner with her son the evening her schedule doesn't allow them to eat together. Although the housekeeper usually comes only once a week, she considers her to be an essential part of her household and child care organization. She does all of the heavy cleaning, fixes dinner for Jack and once in a while, when Miriam's work keeps her out late or overnight, she will come to her apartment after working for other people to spend the night.

Miriam saves both time and money by doing her grocery shopping in a large supermarket out of the city about once every six or eight weeks. For this, she takes her car and stocks up on the staples she will need. She also buys meat in bulk from the butcher and freezes it. Vegetables and fruits she buys in town on her way to and from work. She also is able to buy items she may need during this period in the grocery store on the first floor of her building. In addition to food provisions for herself and her son, she feels that a "company shelf" is essential to her lifestyle. These are foods that are kept in a separate place in her kitchen to serve to unexpected guests. These foods are quick and easy to prepare, but a little special. Given the way Miriam organizes her time and income-generating activities between her home and office, being able to extend hospitality is essential to both her lifestyle and income-generation. Since her office is located in the central shopping area of

the city, she is able to do other kinds of shopping during the lunch hour or after work.

Ongoing housework is shared by Miriam and her son. They usually sit down in the fall and plan the division of household work. Miriam feels that it is important for children to learn to be responsible and independent. The decision-making about the division of housework, their decision about his organization of time after school before she returns from work, and other decisions she encourages him to make alone or with her, are all part of her overall child rearing pattern.

This brief description of Miriam's organization of income-generating activities, child-care and domestic activities demonstrates the advantages of flexibility of time and choice of location, combined with proximity of work and home to the expansion of income-generating activities. It also shows the relationship of these to the way child care and domestic activities are organized. Although Miriam works long hours and is usually exhausted by the end of the day, she can and does provide the major part of Jack's child care when he is not in school. She is also better able to supervise directly and participate in many aspects of his child rearing process.

The cost of maintaining these three jobs and organizing her child care and child rearing in this way is expensive in time, money and energy. She is in the process of buying a large, three-bedroom condominium in a high-rent area that has its own bus service. The location and bus service, in addition to being convenient for her, is important for her patients who don't drive and see her at night. She uses the third room as an office to do both agency work and therapy. The location allows her to move quickly and easily between home and both of her jobs. She also has to dress appropriately for her work.

Although she doesn't do much physical work, all her jobs involved working closely with people. In each setting she has to use her skills and herself differently. At all of her jobs she is constantly required to think, listen and talk; thus, there is an enormous outlay of mental and emotional energy.

In addition to her salary as youth director, Miriam receives fringe benefits. These include health coverage for herself and her son, paid vacation and sick time. An additional informal benefit is the sensitivity of her supervisor to the needs of the working single-parent mothers and his responsiveness and willingness to be flexible.

Miriam's ability to function effectively in these three jobs is dependent upon several factors: (1) flexibility in time and choice of location in carrying out aspects of her work responsibilities, (2) the proximity between her two job sites and home, (3) assistance with child care and housework, and (4) her car. Without these she would not be able to organize her three income-generating activities to allow her to support her family's current standard of living while playing the major direct supervisory role in her son's child care and child rearing activities.

Louise: White Female Single Parent; Three Children, 12, 15 and 18

Louise's income-generating activities, housework, child care and child rearing have undergone major changes during the six years she has been a single-parent. At the time of her divorce, her children were six, nine and 12. She lived in a Philadelphia suburb and was working at a branch of a large university. Given the ages of her children, the distance of her job from the area where she lived, and her work schedule (late afternoon and evening), she needed extensive child care services.

These factors, combined with unpredictable weather conditions in the winter, led to the hiring of a five-day, full-time live-in housekeeper. Given her income at that time, she was unable to meet this expense alone; therefore, her mother helped her meet these expenses.

Several years ago, after her house was completely destroyed by fire, she purchased a three-story town house in Center City, approximately a 20-minute ride from her job. The house is very large, with a separate apartment on the first floor. At certain times she rented it, but at other times, such as now, she uses it as a place to do her writing and to run workshops.

Now that the children are older, she has reached the housekeeper's time to three days a week. In addition, in the last year she completed work on her Ph.D. through a non-traditional program and has expanded her income-generating activities.

Currently, Louise's organization of child care, domestic work and shopping pivots around the services of her housekeeper, with the assistance of Louise and her children who live at home, her appliances (washing machine, dryer, etc.) and the telephone-order and free delivery service of a supermarket in the vicinity. With these she is able to keep her busy schedule, provide child care when needed for her youngest son, and keep a large house in good order. In addition, she is also able to provide regular meals at home for her family, accommodate visiting friends and entertain on major holidays.

Louise's primary source of support is her job at a private university which has campuses throughout the country and the world. She works there four days a week as administrator of the learning center and supervises a secretary and four full-time workers, plus some tutors. In addition, some semesters she teaches a course in creative writing. Because of the

nature of the program, most of the classes meet in the evenings so that students may go to school full-time while they work full-time. Most of the teaching faculty come to work in the afternoon so that they can be available to students in the evening. There are no set work hours, but there are responsibilities which people are expected to meet. Usually the administrative staff is available all day and, if they are not teaching or involved in work in the evening, they leave sometime after five. There is no system of tenure at the center, and people, once they reach the top of their line, can go for years with no raises. The administrative staff and much of the faculty have been there for many years. Although people work on the basis of a yearly contract, there is some job stability and, because of the nature of the job, a great deal of time flexibility. Creativity is encouraged in the center, and the faculty recognizes the need for developing non-traditional approaches to meet the needs of the school's special population, most of whom are minority women who must work full-time and meet many family responsibilities.

In addition to developing programs and supervising the center's learning center, which includes a small library with a librarian, Louise is responsible for working with other administrators and developing program-wide policies and directions for the center. This includes work on committees and administrative staff meetings. Her department is also responsible for the placement tests for all students entering the center and assessment of writing skills for students before they graduate. Those deficient in reading and writing skills are placed in classes run by her department and cannot graduate without a release from the department. Making decisions about students who are ready to graduate because they have finished their course work places stress on faculty at the end

of every semester because there are usually a few students who are borderline in the writing area. The time and energy Louise puts into this job often result in taking work home. In addition, assessment tests are held on Saturdays, and she often has a six-day work week.

Louise makes less than \$25,000 a year; however, she receives full tuition for all her children, plus their travel expenses for colleges at the University's main campus, and out-of-state campuses, worth more than \$8,000 a year. Since Louise has three children, one of whom is in college now and one who will start in a year, this is a major benefit. As a result, she plans to stay at this job at least until these two children graduate. She also receives other fringe benefits such as health care and a prescription plan.

The flexibility of her hours and free access to the telephone allow her to take care of problems that arise at home or with the children and give her time to do the other five things she does to make money: (1) writing articles which she is now selling regularly to a local newspaper (\$30 for each article); (2) working with private students in creative writing for another university (\$800 per year per student)--she used to have five students who came to her house to work, until last year when she stopped to finish her novel; now that it is finished and she has finished her dissertation, she has notified the university that she is ready to take students again; (3) accepting referrals from a psychologist to work with people who are writers and blocked or people who are having difficulty in their careers because of writing problems; (4) running writers' workshops; and (5) running company workshops with secretaries to improve their writing skills. Therefore, Louise is actively involved in six activities to earn money. However, aside from her central job, she can plan on making money for only a set period of time (six months to a

year) in one of these activities: teaching students from the college. All the additional jobs have come through her social network system; in each case it is a friend or a friend-of-a-friend who initially recommends the services she offers. After she starts the work, her own expertise ensures her future relationship with the users of her services. She works very hard, putting a lot of time and energy into meeting the needs of the people she serves. The articles she writes are on current community issues, and she received such a response from her work that the paper is more willing to accept articles she submits.

In addition to the money she earns, she gets child support for two of the three children. Her ex-husband is a successful psychologist who is involved with his children; therefore, in addition to payments for the children, he can sometimes be counted on to meet emergencies.

Despite all her money-generating activities, Louise is under serious financial strain. She makes a budget and tries to stick to it; however, emergencies with the children, the house or the car are always "cropping up." When this happens, she has to think of more ways to generate income (writing more articles, looking for more students, typing papers for people or credit). Sometimes she can get access to services that would be very expensive through her friends. For example, all her children needed braces. The friend of one of her closest friends and, also a friend of hers, is an orthodontist who provided the children's braces free of charge. However, although Louise gets help from friends, she is also very responsive to their needs. When Ken (a close friend) was sick last year, he stayed with her for well over a month; when he got out of the hospital, she took care of him. She is always willing to help her friends' children if they have problems, and her house is open to them. When they have a crisis, she not only calls them, but stops what she is

doing and goes to them. She meets many of the maternal needs for Ken's children, whose mother is dead, like helping his youngest son and daughter-in-law buy clothes for the baby they are expecting.

After talking and spending time with Louise and her family, it became clear that, although she is primarily responsible for three children and herself, the maintenance of her household is greatly expanded by the many other people for whom she takes responsibility, in different ways; but, it is not a one-way flow. Their responses to her, in terms of goods, services, information and, in some instances, money, enable her and her family to do many things to grow and develop in directions that are important to them. The flexibility of her job and the other job benefits enable her to do the many other things she has to do to make a living for herself and her family that would not be possible in a job with a more restrictive time schedule.

Another central underpinning to the quality of life that Louise and her children enjoy is the kinds of goods, resources and services that pass through her social network system:

1. her mother found and paid for a housekeeper when she was first separated;
2. friends helped her when her house burned down by providing emotional and material support;
3. it was through friends that she found a renovated house near her work;
4. a college friend helped her move through her master's program, find a reliable plumber and electrician, both willing to take care of house emergencies at low costs;
5. her friend, Ken, helped her buy a house out the city and provides emotional support for her professional development;

6. friends help her gain access to additional jobs';
7. a friend provided three sets of braces for her children, which saved her thousands of dollars;
8. her ex-husband helps with parenting and gives some financial support;
9. her sister provides emotional support and also gave financial support during Louise's illness by coming to help, paying for an extension of housekeeping services from three days to the entire week, and taking care of some financial matters; and
10. her co-workers and friends at work give her support.

As a result of her kinship and friendship networks, her family is able to maintain and expand its style of life, standard of living, and future life expectancies and life chances.

Marie: Black Female Single Parent; One Child, 2

Marie's central income-generating activity is working as a lead teacher in a city day care center for children ages three to five. She works from 8:30 to 3:30, five days a week; in addition to responsibility for her own class, she is ultimately responsible for all of the classes in the center and a staff of 12. She writes the center's monthly reports, serves as liaison between the administration and staff and does on-site supervision for the teachers in her center.

Before going to the center, which is located in North Philadelphia, she leaves her two-year-old daughter at nursery school. Her daughter's school is about ten minutes from her job. She leaves her at 8:00 a.m. and picks her up at 5:00 p.m. This allows her to use some time in the afternoon to shop, do some errands or some housework. The evening that she takes courses from four to six she leaves her daughter overnight with

a close friend who is also her daughter's godmother. The fringe benefit package of her job includes full family health coverage, dental coverage, optical benefits, free legal service, 10 sick days, three weeks vacation, and three personal leave days.

In order to carry out her work responsibilities, Marie is dependent on reliable child care services. Although her mother lives next door and her brother lives down the street, she gets very little assistance from them in this area. Thus, she also needs the time flexibility provided by the center for emergencies and her personal leave days to respond to child-related emergencies. She is also dependent on her car.

Marie's extra paid income-generating activities are restricted to the limited sale of Tupperware. She does this more as a social outlet than as a way to make money. She gives or attends one Tupperware party a month and sells items from the book the rest of the time. When she attends a party, she takes her daughter with her. The other activities involved in this part-time work take about 10 hours a week (paper work, pick-up of items, packaging and delivery).

Before Marie gave birth to her daughter, she was involved in many additional income-generating activities (real estate, sponsoring large events--e.g., discos, trips), and selling; however, since the birth of her daughter, the requirements of child care and child rearing have forced her to restrict her income-generating activities primarily to her full-time job.

Margaret: Black Female, Single Parent; Two Children, 4 and 11

Margaret has no paid work other than her full-time job. The restrictions in time and choice of location of her position, combined with her child care and child-rearing responsibilities and course work, do not

permit the time for additional work. There are no provisions for emergency time without deductions from other leave time at her job. In addition to her actual wages, she has a fringe benefit package that includes health care.

Since Margaret is required to travel to other parts of the country as part of her job, she has had to make arrangements with her mother and brother to care for her children. Usually she arranges for her sons to stay with her mother for the two or three days, once a month, she is away. However, if a trip is to a place that can accommodate children and fits into their vacation schedule, she makes arrangements to take them. She does this about once a year. On other occasions, her brother will stay at her house to care for the boys. Given the inflexibility of her time and the distance of her job from her home, Margaret has to fit her housekeeping tasks into her weekend schedule. She also does most of her shopping on the weekend and prepares the house and clothing for herself and her sons for the following week. She also uses the weekend time to catch up on her own course work.

During the week, Margaret takes one hour from her annual leave time for the two nights she attends classes so that she can return home to cook meals and check her boys' homework before she goes to school. The other evenings she is able to do this at a more leisurely pace.

In addition to the child care services she gets from her family, through her friends and members of her religious community, she is able to get information about cultural events, children's programs, evaluation of the various public schools and methods to make them accessible to her children. She is also able to get free legal advice from two of her friends. This information has reduced the cost of the legal fees for her divorce and helped her plan for a public school for her older son after

he graduates from Catholic school and to find a better early childhood center for her youngest son.

The above discussion provides a brief but detailed description of the ways that women combine their primary jobs with income-expanding work. I have attempted to demonstrate the relationship between their income-generating activities and the organization of their child care and domestic activities. What is apparent in this discussion is that in order to generate income to support their families all of these women are dependent upon supportive child care services. The ages of the children, the type of work they do, and the flexibility of time and location they have in their primary work situations determine two things: (1) the extensiveness of the help that they need in child care, and (2) the degree to which they can expand their income-generating activities.

A comparison of Brenda's and Rachael's child care and domestic organization provides us with insight into several dimensions of the process of income-generation and its relationship to standards of living and life style. Both of these women provide the primary source of economic support for their children. To do this they work very long and irregular hours and have had to relinquish the major part of their domestic activities to others. Both women have a high degree of time and location flexibility in their work situations. One of these women, Rachael, has a B.S. degree and owns a video business that services professionals and other businesses. Although she did not inherit the money to start her business from her natal family and does not receive financial assistance from her mother or other relatives now, the experiences and training she had in her natal family prepared to run a business effectively and to do some of the types of video work she now does. In addition, her prior work experience as a court recorder and work in legal

offices is extremely useful to her in her current work. These and other prior work experience, combined with her intelligence and determination to work as hard as she must to provide a "good and happy" life for her children, has resulted in her being able to market her skills in such a way as to build a very lucrative business. The money she generates from these activities plus her investments in real estate allow her to pay for the type of child care and domestic services and residential and work space that permit her children to have easy access to her both in the apartment and in her office. It also allows for a smoother and regular organization of housekeeping activities.

Brenda has also invested in education and has had extensive work experience. She has a M.S.W. and has worked in many social service agencies and has had prior teaching experience. However, Brenda provides services primarily to low income people of various types (social services and educational opportunities). She does this in a social and economic context of shrinking resources to the poor. This type of work, although time and energy intensive, is not usually high-paying. As a result, her income from her primary position does not allow her to purchase the extensive child care and domestic services she needs to do her job effectively. Therefore, she depends on the unpaid, but freely given, services of her friends and family for child care and help with domestic work. Since her mother lives close by, this assistance is usually given in her own house and, thus, Brenda's own domestic work has to be neglected.

Because she has limited resources, she has to depend on her family for the services that enable her to work. In addition, she cannot afford to do the renovations and repairs on her house that would allow her to reduce the maintenance costs. These improvements would have enabled her

to turn part of her house into income-generating property. In addition, although she is dependent on a car to work, she cannot afford to buy a new car; thus, she is constantly confronted with unexpected car costs. Therefore, the end result of her income-generating activities, even though they are time and energy intensive, is that they serve to maintain her current standard of living, not to improve or expand it.

Brenda's natal family experiences were also central to preparing her for the kind of work she does, her stance in life and the goals she has for her son. Growing up in her neighborhood, she says that she learned that young, poor Black people have "no choice, except to make it." If they don't, then there is really no future for them in this country except a marginal uncertain existence. It was this understanding, plus her commitment to this population, that motivated her to become a social worker. This also serves as a motivating force in her determination to prepare her son to be a productive member of the world community. In her community, her family was more financially secure than many of her neighbors. Her father owned his own painting and paper-hanging business and was able through this to buy several other houses in the neighborhood. Some time after Brenda separated from her son's father, she moved into one of these houses down the street from her parents. She inherited it when her father died. Another dimension of the comparison of these two women is the content and impact of the resources, services and information that pass through their kinship and friendship network systems. Both women work in areas that bring them into contact with many people. Their residential arrangements also help them to develop relationships with their neighbors.

Brenda is able to get child care, meals, emotional support and financial help and loans from her mother. It was a \$2,000 loan from her

mother that allowed her to buy her present car. She is also able to get small short-term loans and child care services from her brothers and foster-sister. In addition, she also gets help with housework from her foster-sister. A neighbor provides small house repairs at low cost, and several of there friends are willing to help with child care. In addition, she gets free legal advice from a friend and medical advice and prescriptions free of charge for both herself and her son from her doctor. Brenda, because of her work and other activities, has a wealth of information about social services, activities in the city and political information.

However, she is ineligible for most of the social services she knows about, and the type of political information she has is not translatable into material resources. However, she is able to use this information in her work and to help her friends. An analysis of the content of resources and information that flow through her network system suggests that these services enable her to save money that she would otherwise have to spend on essential services, and thus they serve as an important part of the foundation on which her standard of living and lifestyle are based. However, they do allow her to qualitatively expand her material resource base.

Rachael's kinship and friendship network system serves a dual purpose. Although her mother and sister live in Las Vegas, they are an important part of her network system. She can depend on them for emotional support and child care in a crisis; during the 50-day public school strike she sent her children to Las Vegas to her mother and sister, who cared for them and enrolled them in school. From friends in her building she is able to get information that is helpful to her business, cooperation in business ventures, help with legal matters, and

help with business paper work at reduced cost. From other friends she is able to secure back-up baby sitting services directly or through their children. In all of these situations, the help and support are reciprocal. Rachael, despite her schedule, makes time to be available to others.

An analysis of the content of the services and information that flow through her network system reveals that she is able to save money on services that she would have to pay for or receives these services at reduced cost; thus, she is able to use this money in other ways. Some of the information and referrals she receives help her to expand her resource base so that it is an important element not only in supporting her current standard of living and life style, but also in qualitatively improving it.

The discussion of Louise's income-generating activities, in addition to demonstrating the importance of flexibility in the work situation to the expansion of income, shows the dual effect of the content of social network exchanges. She is able to gain access to services and resources that enable her to maintain the current standard of living and to expand and improve the resource base on which her family's standard of living is based. A close examination of these network exchanges reveals that in order to maintain her job, improve her professional standing and expand her income she needed vital supports during the following transitional periods: (1) when she initially separated from her husband, in order to maintain her job, she needed extensive child care and housekeeping services for which she was unable to pay; the resources of her natal family enabled her mother to pay for a full-time housekeeper to help her; (2) when her house burned down, both material and emotional support; (3) during the periods she was working on her advanced degrees (M.A. and

Ph.D.); (4) to gain access to additional jobs to increase her income as her expenses increased; and (5) when she was ill.

In addition to the help she received that enabled her to make these transitions successfully, she has also received essential services that have allowed her to save the money she would have had to spend and, therefore, use it in other ways: (1) a friend provided three sets of braces for her children; this allowed her to save approximately \$6,000 since she doesn't receive dental coverage from her primary job; (2) another friend helped her find a reliable plumber and electrician, both willing to take care of house emergencies at tailored prices; and (3) she was also able, through the use of a friend's Veteran Administration mortgage and shared mortgage payments, to buy a house out of the city for writing and quiet vacation time with her family and friends. In addition, unlike Rachael or Brenda, she receives regular child support payments and help with parenting and financial help for car repairs from her ex-husband.

Louise's social network system, like most of the other women in this study, is not geographically bounded. Her mother and sister live in New York; her friends are dispersed throughout Philadelphia and New Jersey. However, as a result of the shared financial support, services, information and other resources in her kinship/friendship network system, she has been able to maintain and improve the standard of living and lifestyle of her family.

An examination of Miriam's income-generating activities demonstrates how flexibility in time and choice of location in the primary work situation, combined with proximity of work locations and home, can allow for expanded income through extra work. The treatment of three to five patients weekly, if she charges \$25 per hour, can generate between \$75 and \$125 per week. If she charges the more normal rate for professionals

with her level of training--\$40 per hour, she can generate between \$120 and \$200 per week (she didn't provide information on fees). The teaching of two courses per semester at \$1,400 per course, plus summer session adds \$7,200 per year to her income. This brings the minimum additional income she earns from these two sources to \$11,000 per year.

The discussion of the organization of child care and domestic activities illuminates the way in which these activities are conditioned by the age of the child and the proximity of the mother's work locations, home and children's schools. These factors, combined with flexibility, can be important factors in determining the expense of child care services or dependence on family and friends for child care.

The age of Miriam's son (10) and his proximity to both home, school, and his mother's office, plus her flexibility in the choice of location for all of her income-generating activities, allow her to provide supervision and care for her son without major financial expenditure or dependence on family and friends. As a result, Miriam is able, through her own income-generating activities and "generous" child support payments, to have additional financial resources for major child related expenditures (camp, experiences, private school, etc.). This, plus Jack's weekly allowance from his father, helps support the family's current standard of living and lifestyle.

Major factors in Miriam's ability to do the kinds of work she does to generate income are her advanced degree and her work experience, both gained while she was married and shortly after her divorce. She began her doctoral studies while she was married. At that time, she lived close to the university where she was studying, and was married to a successful businessman. After the birth of her son, she hired a full-time housekeeper who cared for him while she continued to go to school.

When she reached the final stage of her studies, she began teaching part-time at the university. When it became apparent that her marriage was ending, she gave full attention to completing her Ph.D. At the time of the divorce, her son was two years old. After her divorce, she remained in the same house, kept the services of her housekeeper and began teaching full-time. She feels that a major reason why she didn't have some of the uncertainties that some women have about "making it on their own" was because she had already completed her training and had started a career with future possibilities.

Miriam has an extensive kinship/friendship network system that emanates from relationships that she and her family established and maintained from her childhood to the present. This social network is further extended by friendships she developed in college and through work. In addition, she has a few good friends in her building. Her social network system extends throughout Philadelphia, Wilmington, Delaware, Baltimore and New Jersey. She stays in close contact with these relatives and friends through regular phone calls and visits. However, except for her uncle's co-signing of the mortgage which enabled her to buy her condominium, she doesn't rely on her family for financial assistance or information leading to income-generation. This network system is essential, however, to her child rearing activities and is a major source of moral and emotional support. Thus, the financial base on which this family depends for its current standard of living is Miriam's income-generating activities and the financial assistance given by her ex-husband.

The importance of giving detailed attention to (1) the range of income-generating activities employed by single-parents, (2) the time and energy demands of the primary work situation, (3) flexibility of time and

location in work situations, (4) proximity between home and work, and (5) content of resources exchanged through kinship/friendship networks can be further demonstrated by a comparison of these variables in the single-parent experiences of Miriam and Diane.

Both these women earn roughly the same salary from their primary work situations. They have both made the decision to focus their attention primarily on career development and care of their pre-adolescent sons. However, they differ in the standard of living they are able to provide for their families and the organization of child care, child rearing and domestic activities. They also differ in the degree of economic vulnerability they have to changes in the economic and political climates. These differences seem to stem from the type of work and skills they utilize to earn a living for their families, the degree of flexibility they have in time and choice of location of their primary jobs, and the amount and type of contributions the fathers of their sons provide to the household.

The comparison of these two women is particularly interesting because, although the cultural content of their natal family experiences differs (second-generation Jewish family, fourth-generation Black Philadelphia family), the structure and placement of their natal families in the occupational and income structure was not vastly different. Both women grew up in the Germantown area of Philadelphia, in families in which kinship relations and residential proximity of relatives formed an important part of their childhood experiences. Both natal families owned their own houses in primarily residential areas, and the incomes of the families were not vastly different. Miriam's father was a salesman, and Diane's father worked in the post office. Both of their mothers remained home until they were teenagers.

The families of these women placed a high premium on upward mobility through higher education. Although neither of their parents had gone to college, Diane's grandmother and aunts were college graduates, and her father did return to school and earn a B.A. degree after her graduation. Both women went to college immediately after high school. The major differences in their college experiences were their responses to the social context in which they were living. They went to college during the 1960's. Diane became deeply involved in the civil rights movement, which shaped her academic direction, professional goals and current lifestyle. Miriam's involvement in Jewish life has determined the focus and content of her career and lifestyle. The major divergence in the choices they each made during and after graduation from college conditioned the strategies they employed to prepare them for their current occupations and the kind of work they do.

The major differences in their work situation and differences in the proximity of their offices and residences have importantly conditioned the amount of money they can generate through additional part-time work. Diane's job requires that she spend long hours in her office and regularly take work home with her. She has very little flexibility in time or choice of location in carrying out the daily responsibilities of her job. In addition, she lives approximately 30 to 45 minutes by car from her office. Therefore, she cannot move quickly and easily between work and home, or between her office and her son's school. She is dependent, because of the distance between her office and home and the length of time she must spend in her office, on a structured after-school program for her son and back-up child care services from her family. The requirements and lack of flexibility of her work situation restrict the time she can spend doing free-lance public relations work and writing.

It also means that, in prior years, she was rarely able to teach a course in writing at the local universities. Thus, recently she has only been able to generate about \$1,000 a year through additional part-time work.

Examination of her kinship/friendship network reveals that she has been able to get child care services free of charge from her parents, brother and sister-in-law. In addition, her parents are willing to provide a financial safety net for Diane and her son. They have expressed a willingness to support them at their current standard of living between jobs. Although she has never had to use this, it has allowed her to take risks in the job market that have been useful to the upward mobility of her income and career. For example, she was able to leave a job at a large company that had built-in job security but slow income and career ladder mobility to take a better paying, more visible and better titled position doing public relations work for a national agency, even though it was a short, temporary position. This decision enabled her to move into her current position which, because of its vulnerability to federal budget decisions, has very little job security. Each of these professional moves helps her to extend her network of professional contacts and friends. Establishing and maintaining these relationships is essential to the effective implementation of her current responsibilities. In addition, the freedom to make these kinds of choices enables her to occasionally volunteer her public relations and writing services and further extend her network system. The development of these professional contacts and friendships has been, and will be, useful to her in the realization of her future career goals.

In addition, her parents are willing to give her short-term or extended loans. For example, her parents recently loaned her the \$1,200 down payment for her car. She will repay this money at a later date, but

it enabled her to take advantage of a good price on a second-hand car in excellent condition. This increased mobility for Diane and her son.

An analysis of Diane's kinship/friendship network system shows that it not only enables her to maintain but also expand her income-generating potential, which has led to a steady rise in the standard of living she is able to provide for herself and her son. Diane receives no regular financial assistance from her son's father; however, he does provide child care during part of the summer and is willing to help as much as possible (he lives in Massachusetts) with Diane's career goals by arranging trips and visits to fit Diane's schedule. In addition, he actively participates in the child rearing of his son through frequent telephone calls, provision of enriching experiences and visits.

This brief discussion demonstrates that although these women earn roughly similar salaries in their primary jobs, the two main sources through which Miriam expands her income--additional part-time work and child support and additional financial help for major child-related expenses from Jack's father, are present to a much lesser degree in Diane's income-generating process. It is the large difference in the contribution from these two sources that accounts for the quantitative and qualitative differences in the current standards of living and lifestyles of these particular two women.

Fringe Benefits

The fringe benefits attached to the wages of workers are important in the total resource package that families have available to them. The services made available through fringe benefits allow workers to use the money they receive in wages to support other aspects of the standard of living realized by the family unit. In some cases, these benefits make

the critical difference between the family's being able or unable to use some available professional services or arranging payments for household essentials in a way that doesn't cripple the family budget. The necessity of giving attention to the differences in the fringe benefit packages connected with different jobs and employment situations and the impact of these differences on the standard of living of families can be usefully demonstrated by reviewing the impact of these benefits on the families of Brenda, Margaret, Louise, Marie and Cynthia.

Brenda's fringe benefit package, in addition to two weeks paid vacation and paid sick days, includes: full health coverage for her family, free tuition for courses offered by the college, and a credit union that allows employees to borrow money at low interest rates. Given Brenda's financial constraints and the repairs she needs on her house, the credit union was extremely helpful to her in making ends meet when there were disturbances in her cash flow resulting from unexpected expenses. In addition, when she needed major repairs on her roof and some painting done in her house, she was able to borrow the money at a low interest rate.

Margaret is unable to engage in any part-time work to expand her income because of the lack of time flexibility in her work situation, the ages of her sons (four and eleven) and the course work she is doing to complete her B.A. She also has difficulty making ends meet. Her fringe benefit package includes three weeks paid vacation, two weeks paid sick pay, full tuition plus books for job-related courses, partial health benefits--the job pays one-third and she pays two-thirds, and a credit union that offers low interest loans and takes repayment directly out of the employee's wages.

Future mobility in her job is dependent upon her being able to complete her B.A. Given the lack of regular financial assistance from her husband and her dependence upon a nursery school situation for her son for which she has to pay, and tuition for Catholic school for her eldest son, Margaret would not be able to afford to go to school without the tuition and books benefit she receives from her job. This benefit is allowing her to take two courses each semester at the University of Pennsylvania towards her degree.

Margaret has to meet all the expenses for her family through her earnings. She is ineligible for many types of assistance because her salary is considered too high--\$24,000. Her mother and other family members are not in a financial position to help through loans or the provision of material goods or services. In a crisis, she is able to get small short-term loans from friends; however, an important source of money to meet emergency expenses and for help during periods of high financial output (in September, when her son returns to school, and Christmas) is the credit union. The use of this benefit enables her to meet these extra expenses without seriously upsetting the family budget.

Marie's fringe benefit package includes full health coverage, dental coverage, optical with free glasses, legal services, three weeks paid vacation, three personal leave days, 10 sick days per year, and a credit union. She has been able to use the health benefits for herself and her daughter; given the age of her daughter (two years old), this benefit has saved her a great deal of money in pediatric services. It also paid the costs for her prenatal care and hospitalization for the birth of her daughter. She wears glasses and is able to get them free of charge through the optical plan. When she was buying her house, she was able to save in legal costs through the free legal services offered through her

employment benefits. A review of the costs if she had to pay for these benefits shows that she has saved well over \$1,000 through these benefits. In addition, the personal leave days and provision of emergency time have enabled her to respond to personal and child-related emergencies without too much difficulty.

Louise receives as part of her fringe benefit package full hospitalization, prescription plan, and full tuition for her children plus their travel expenses at any of the university's campuses throughout the country and the world. These benefits have been of enormous help to her and her family because she has a serious medical problem. Prior to the institution of the prescription plan, she had to spend \$30.00 a month to have her regular prescription filled; with the plan, the cost of her medication has been reduced to \$2.00. Thus, she saves about \$28.00 a month on medication. In addition, she has been able to use the medical plan for doctor's visits for herself and her family. She has three children, the oldest of whom started college this year at the main campus of the university, which is out of the state. The tuition benefit saved her more than \$8,000 this year in tuition and college-related travel. She is planning to use this benefit to educate all three of her children, which will save her in excess of \$32,000 in college costs for each child. It will also mean that her children will not have to apply for educational loans to finance their educations and will not have to begin their working lives deeply in debt. Another benefit that will prove useful to her during her children's years of college is that, as an administrator, she has to travel to the main campus of the university at least once a year. The expenses for this trip (travel, room and meals) are paid for by the university. This will allow her to visit her children without cost at least once a year. Although Louise, with the help of her ex-

husband (a successful psychologist) and loans would have been able to provide a college education for the three children, this benefit will allow them to use their financial resources in other ways.

Cynthia returned to her job in Paris at the end of July 1982. A major factor in her decision to return to France was the enormous difference in the fringe benefits she was able to obtain from her job and the subsidies provided by the state, in particular the quality of state-funded public education and enrichment programs for school-age children. I had the opportunity to spend time with her when she returned to visit her mother for a month during the summer of 1983 and was able to discuss this aspect of work and to verify the qualitative differences in the standard of living she is able to provide for herself and her son through her own income-generating activities and the help of her ex-husband's parents and her mother.

Central to this discussion was the greater financial independence she is able to have in that social context as a result of job and state benefits to workers. She is able to provide the essential basics of life at a level that she considers acceptable through her own wages and job-related fringe benefits. Through the state she is able to provide her son with an excellent education which includes a week trip in the fall to another part of the country that is related to a school subject, and a well-developed Saturday program. Through her in-laws and her mother, she was able to furnish her apartment and provide the extra things that enrich their lives, such as trips and expensive entertainment.

The fringe benefit package of her job includes a 13-month salary, extra month's money given one-half a Christmas and one-half in June, a six-week paid holiday, lunch vouchers for subsidized lunches, free public transportation to and from work and extra money for travel time if she is

scheduled to work outside the city, occasional bonuses, loans at very low interest for buying an apartment or refurnishing an apartment, reductions on trips and training programs, 10 percent reduction on books, extended, unpaid holidays, and one month full-paid sick leave.

Cynthia has been able to take advantage of most of these benefits; the travel costs to and from work and the subsidized lunches reduce the cost of commuting on a daily basis. The 13-month pay schedule allows her to have extra money at the times of year that her expenses are increased (Christmas and vacation), and the paid vacation time allows her to visit her mother every summer without loss of pay.

What becomes apparent through the examination of these different benefit packages is the variation in the quantity and types of benefits offered in different work situations. Margaret, who has the least flexibility in time and choice of location in her work situation, also has the least developed fringe benefit package in terms of paid sick leave and health benefits. Louise, who has the most extensive part-time income-generating work schedule, in addition to time flexibility in her work situation, is also able to save the most money through her benefit program.

Another illuminating aspect that emerges in relationship to these women's different standards of living and lifestyles is the role these benefits play in enabling them to maintain or expand their families' standard of living. For Brenda, Margaret and Marie, given the composition and content of resources held by their friendship/kinship network system, these benefits are crucial to the maintenance of their standard of living or organization of child care. For Louise and Cynthia, these fringe benefits allow for their economic resources to be deployed toward support or expansion of the standard of living and lifestyle they have

chosen for themselves and their children. They are not crucial to the ongoing functioning of their family units. For all these women, the fringe benefit packages, when evaluated in financial terms, represent important additions to the income they are able to provide for economic support for their families.

Looking for Work and Risk-Taking in the Job Market

The data for this study were collected over a three-year period (end of 1980 to 1983). This made it possible to study these families over an extended period and to observe changes in their income-generating strategies, child care and domestic organization.

During this period, two women in this category (Cynthia and Brenda) were actively looking for work. In addition, Diane, because of the vulnerability of her agency, particularly during the period of "supply side economics," remained in a constant state of preparation for the possibility of being released from her position. This situation provided an opportunity to observe the processes through which women in different socioeconomic positions with different skills and work experience engaged in the process of looking for work. Examination of this process also illuminated some of the factors that influence female heads of households to take risks in the job market.

The two women in this category whose job situations were most vulnerable during this period were both Black women, Brenda and Diane. These women worked in agencies that provided services for populations sensitive to and dependent on federal funding policies. As a result of the cuts in funding under the Reagan Administration for social services and higher education, people who worked in social service agencies and educational institutions were placed in vulnerable employment situations.

The Catholic college that sponsored the community education program in which Brenda worked was forced, because of low student enrollment, resulting from cuts in student financial aid, to eliminate several administrative positions. As a result, in February 1983, Brenda was faced with the situation of either being reduced to a part-time worker with a 50 percent reduction in pay or being laid off. Given her dependence on full-time employment to support herself and her son, she decided that she would be in a better financial position if she were laid off and applied for unemployment compensation, using these benefits to support her family while she gave full attention to looking for full-time employment. Brenda could depend on her family and friends for emotional support and a small amount of financial assistance; however, she knew that they could not afford to support her household completely, even for one month. As a result, she planned to find full-time work in teaching or social work as quickly as possible and to accept the best possible work situation immediately available, even if it was not completely acceptable, and to work in this position while continuing to look for a better job.

She started the process of job-hunting by contacting the many people she knew in her friendship and professional network systems throughout the city to explore employment possibilities in social agencies and educational institutions in the area. She prepared two resumes, one that focused on her teaching experience, and the other highlighting her experiences in the social work field. Using her personal network system and advertisements in the want-ad sections in the Philadelphia Inquirer, and the Philadelphia Tribune and neighborhood papers, she began actively looking for work. Unlike previous years when she had been in the employment market, she found that full-time positions in either of these areas

were extremely difficult to find. Her friends and acquaintances were very responsive and sensitive to her situation and frequently informed her of job openings and suggested possibilities. However, given the high unemployment situation in Pennsylvania in general, and in Philadelphia in particular, and the shrinking of positions available in both social service agencies and colleges and universities, every opening in these areas was over-responded to. In several instances friends saw that she at least received an interview for an available position, but none of these resulted in employment. As time progressed, her financial situation became increasingly problematic and as she approached the end of her unemployment benefits, the need for employment became critical.

A short time before her benefits came to an end, she was offered a social work position at a state mental institution at a salary of \$15,700. This was a \$3,500 reduction from her former position. In addition, this position has no flexibility in time or choice of location; thus, it limited her ability to do daytime, part-time teaching. However, given the seriousness of her financial situation, she felt that she had no choice except to accept the position. During the time she was unemployed, in order to be eligible for unemployment compensation, she was limited to one adjunct teaching position. Not only did she lose her full-time job, but also some of her sources of additional money. Thus, being unemployed really meant an inability to fully recover financially from this reduction in income.

Brenda accepted this position and continued to look for work. Almost a year later she was offered a full-time teaching position in a college on the outskirts of Philadelphia at a starting salary of \$18,000. Although accepting this job meant that she would have to be annually appointed for five years before receiving tenure, she planned to take the

position. However, upon accepting the job, she learned that in addition to no real job security, she would not receive any health benefits for the first year and health benefits only for herself in the second year. After exploring the cost of health coverage for herself and her son and learning the expense of the type of coverage she previously had, she decided not to accept the job. Her decision was based on the reality that she would have no job security and, in addition, could not really afford to provide herself with an acceptable fringe benefit package. She was, however, able to arrange to teach one course in the evening at this college to expand her income. She continues to look for other work.

Cynthia, during the course of the study, was also looking for work. Earlier in this discussion the strategies she employed in the process were described. There were significant differences in the ways Cynthia and Brenda experienced their periods of unemployment, the strategies they employed in exploring employment possibilities, and the basis on which the ultimate decisions to return to full-time work were made. These differences arise from the differences in the range and types of choices they are able to make given their different locations in the class structure. The current class location of these women is related to the historical interaction of race and class relations which channeled their natal families into different spheres of the productive process. Thus, the resources the natal families were able to share with their daughters during periods of unemployment were vastly different. An analysis of just this aspect of their lives underscores the importance of exploring more than individually held attributes, such as education, work experience and occupation to more accurately locate people in the class structure.

Cynthia's mother, through resources she inherited from her family, Cynthia's father, and her second husband was able to completely support

Cynthia and her son for as long a period as necessary for her to find employment to support her previous standard of living. She was able to pay for services previously provided by Cynthia's wages, her fringe benefits package, and the state so that the quality of life realized by Cynthia and her son during her period of unemployment was not reduced. Cynthia was able, because her standard of living and lifestyle was maintained by the resources of her natal family, to risk leaving a secure job, send her belongings and relocate in another country. Her approach to seeking employment was not hurried by financial pressure. She was able to explore employment opportunities in Philadelphia for more than a year. After considering and comparing the employment options she had in both Philadelphia and Paris, and coming to the conclusion that she had better opportunities in Paris, she decided to return to her former job. She was able to return with the financial assistance of her mother and her ex-husband's parents. The ability to make these decisions and choices did not emanate from resources that she had been able to generate through her work history, but were the result of her access to the historically accumulated resources of her natal family.

Diane's approach to career development is based upon risk-taking in the job market. The above discussion highlighted the role that her family plays in this strategy of career advancement. Although she was not laid off during the period of the study, she remained prepared for this possibility. She informed people in her professional and friendship networks that she might be interested in changing jobs. They kept her informed of positions that were or might become available. She carefully evaluated this information to determine if any of these openings warranted a change of jobs. The important element in this process, as it relates to the current discussion, is that the choice she made to keep her job

was not influenced by the relative security of her situation, but by whether or not these other positions fit into her career goals.

The ability to approach the job market in this way was not based on financial security generated as a result of her own earnings, but rather on the stability of her parents' financial position. It was the financial buttressing that her parents were able to provide through resources they had generated and accumulated through their wages over time. This allows their children to take the professional risks in the employment market that might, and in Diane's case did, lead to an improvement in the standard of living of their families.

In comparing Brenda's and Diane's experiences during this period, two points emerge that are suggestive of the need for further research into the nature of the reportedly "expanding Black middle class": (1) the particular segment of the occupational structure in which these middle class incomes are earned, and (2) the degree to which the "middle class" standard of living realized by these families is determined solely by individually earned, regular wages. In comparing the cases of these women, we see that they were both employed in areas that were extremely vulnerable to changes in government spending for social services. However, Brenda, unlike Diane, was completely dependent on her own earnings to ensure a "middle class" standard of living for her family. Therefore, although both these women, based on their own incomes, occupations and educations, would be placed in the same category, the foundation upon which their middle class status is based fundamentally differs. Further, a comparative analysis of the data on the Black and White female single-parents presented in this chapter suggests that a similar line of inquiry might prove useful in examining differences

between Black and White female single parents earning "middle class" incomes.

These data suggest that in order to understand the career choices that female single-parents make, it is necessary not only to examine the psychological dimensions of these choices (fear of success, etc.), but also to look at the financial foundation on which their families' standards of living and lifestyles are based. It seems that when the financial security of their families' standards of living is assured through their kinship and/or friendship network, they are more willing to take risks that might lead to advancement in their careers.

Brenda's case suggests that for people who are employed in certain sectors of the economy, during the current employment climate, a single-parent might find it necessary to choose a position with lower pay, relative job security and fringe benefits than to risk taking a less secure job, with higher status, higher pay and few essential fringe benefits.

Conclusion

The above discussion has examined the various dimensions of the income-generating activities of eight professional female single parents. Close attention has been given to the specific ways in which these women go about the process of providing the range of material resources and services necessary to support the standard of living and life styles of their families. The central point that emerged from the discussion is that an analysis of the ways in which female single parents provide economic support for their families must include more than the wages earned from their primary work situation. This type of analysis should be expanded to include (1) an examination of the various aspects of the

conditions under which they work, (2) fringe benefits attached to wages, (3) the organization of their child care and domestic activities, (4) additional income-generating activities, and (5) income generated through kinship/friendship network systems.

Through an examination of all these factors, it was possible to understand and explain the significant differences in the standards of living and lifestyles of these eight women with roughly the same range of income generated through their primary work situations. However, the four white professional women realized a much higher standard of living than the families of the four black professional women.

What becomes apparent, in the course of examination of the variables listed above, is that in the case of these particular eight professional women, the work situations of the three white women allowed for greater flexibility in time and choice of location in carrying out their work responsibilities. This flexibility enabled them to expand their incomes through additional part-time work. Further, the types of financial resources, services and information that passed through the kinship/friendship network systems of these two groups of women were qualitatively different. In most instances, three of the four cases the exchanges transmitted through the social network systems of the Black mothers acted to maintain the standard of living of these families; for the White families, these exchanges served to expand the resource base on which their standard of living was based.

A review of the data of the natal families of these women also reveals important differences that have conditioned the work histories, current range of choices and standard of living of these families. The chart below illustrates the differences in the resources of the natal families during the period these women were growing up. The figures

presented for family income are estimated; exact figures were not available.

The chart shows that in three of the four white female single-parents presented, the natal families had estimated incomes of about \$50,000 per year during the period when the women were growing up. In the remaining case the income was roughly \$15,000. In all cases these families were instrumental in preparing their daughters in terms of aspirations and educational experiences for professional careers. In two of the four cases, the natal families were able to provide major financial support after their daughters had separated from their husbands. This assistance was crucial to the range and types of choices they were able to make in relationship to their professional careers.

In the case of the four Black female single-parents, three of the four cases presented, the natal families had estimated incomes of about \$15,000 per year during the period they were growing up, and one family had an estimated income of \$8,000. All these families were financially stable and able to provide the educational foundation and encouragement for their daughters to finish high school and, in three of the four cases, they encouraged their daughters to go to college. In one of the four cases the natal family is willing and able to provide a financial safety net; this has enabled the mother to take risks in the job market that have led to career mobility. In the other three cases, the natal families at this point are unable to provide major financial assistance.

In all eight cases, the women are in close contact with members of their natal families and can rely on them in varying degrees for emotional support and help with child care.

Table 4.5
Resources of Natal Families

White Professional Single-Parents

Name	Occupation	Education and Income	Parents Occupation and Income*
Miriam	Dir., Youth Prog. Teaching; Therapist	Ph.D. \$35,000 Additional Income	Father: Salesman Mother: Housewife later bookkeeper Homeowners; \$15,000
Cynthia	French Language Trainer	B.A. \$20,000	Father: Business Mother: Housewife Homeowners: \$50,000
Rachael	Owner of Business Volume of Business Expanding	B.S. \$50,000 Additional Income	Father: Psychiatrist Mother: Housewife (Attended Med. Sch.) Homeowners: \$50,000
Louise B.A.	Dir., Learning Center Consultant for Writing Programs Free Lance Writer	Ph.D. \$25,000 Additional Income	Father: Tax Lawyer Mother: Housewife, Homeowners: \$50,000

Black Professional Single-Parents

Name	Occupation	Education and Income	Parents Occupation and Income*
Diane	Dir., Public Relations Free Lance Writer	B.A. + \$30,000 Additional Income	Father: P.O. Worker Mother: Housewife, then City Worker Homeowners: \$15,000
Marie	Early Childhood Ed. Teacher Tupperware Sales	M.A. + \$35,000 Additional Income	Father: Blue Collar Mother: Housekeeper Rented house: \$8,000
Margaret	Federal Worker	\$24,000 3 yrs. College	Father: Engineer Mother: Housewife Homeowners: \$15,000
Brenda	Cord. Comm. Ed. Prog. Adjunct	M.S.W. \$19,000 Additional Income	Father: Owned Business Mother: Housewife State foster mother Homeowners: \$15,000

* Estimated income during subjects childhood years.

One of the central points that became apparent from studying the families from these various perspectives was that the standard of living realized by these families was not a result of the mother's current individual activities. In each case the standard of living represented a collective historical integration of resources, services and information provided by their kinship/friendship network systems and their own income-generating activities, i.e., work and fringe benefits. A review of data the eight families suggests that there were important differences in the content of these elements and in the ways in which they were integrated. It appears that these differences were responsible for the quantitative and qualitative differences in the standard of living and life styles experienced by these families.

Therefore, in order to understand how female single parents generate the income to support the standard of living and lifestyle realized by their families, it is necessary to examine the sum total of their income-generating strategies. To do this, the variables must be expanded beyond formal stated income, occupation and education. In reality, sole reliance on these variables distorts rather than illuminates the bases on which families generate the resources on which their varying standards of living depend.

CHAPTER V

WORK, SOCIAL NETWORK SYSTEMS AND CAREER MOBILITY

In increasing numbers, women with young children are faced with the responsibility of providing economic support for their families. This chapter examines the experiences of seven female single parents who are working full-time while engaged in career mobility strategies. Detailed attention is given to the ways in which these mothers have organized their child care, child rearing and domestic activities in response to the changing developmental needs of their children and shifts in their income-generating activities.

Attention is given to the way that five of these women made the transition to female single-parent status. An examination is made of the range and types of exchanges that were transmitted through their social network systems during this period, and the relationship of these to the types of services and subsidies they utilized during different stages of the process. The social network systems of all seven women are examined in relationship to income generation, career mobility and risk-taking in the job market.

The women in this category are divided into two groups: (1) four women using their work situations as a means of career mobility, and (2) three women enrolled in accredited degree granting programs. These two strategies have different requirements that directly affect the amount of

time and energy devoted to the primary work situation, the organization of domestic activities, child care and child rearing arrangements, and the way in which current and future family resources are deployed (e.g., tuition, educational expenses, and level of education related debt). Each of the seven families is used to illustrate a type of variation in the single-parent family experience. Together, these families provide a deeper understanding of some of the crucial variable that determine the standard of living realized by single-parent families, and factors that act to limit or enable them to realize career mobility. The data further demonstrate the distortions that arise when income, education and occupation are used as the sole determinants of class location in the social structure.

The Women

All of the women in this category were involved in career mobility strategies. Three of the mothers, two Black and one White, were enrolled in courses at local universities. Thus, in addition to problems of time allocation, they had to meet tuition and course and one White, were enrolled in courses at local universities. Thus, in addition to problems of time allocation, they had to meet tuition and course-related expenses. The other four women were engaged in a variety of career development activities. One woman had recently interrupted her college education to return to work and had, within a short period, made a job change that would allow her to get additional pay, experience in stocks and investments, greater job security and advancement opportunities.

Another participant, Maureen, has moved up to director of the local chapter of a non-profit organization from a position as a

TABLE
5-1

Working Full-Time in Career Ladder Situations
Black Female Single Parents

NAME	Education	Occupation	Income	Career Goal
Sandra	In process of completing B.A.,	Board of Ed. computer asst.	\$ 9,396	Secure professional position
Marcia	B.A.	Sales Rep. for large cookie company	\$19,000	District Manager for company
Edna	In process of completing B.A., Human Services	Caseworker for Dept. of Social Services	\$16,000	Career in decision-making level of social services or treatment
Barbara	H.S., training as X-ray Tech. (2 yrs.)	X-ray technician Private Medical Center	\$15,468	Movement in field

TABLE
5-2

Working Full-Time in Career Ladder Situations
White Female Single-Parents

Name	Education	Occupation	Income	Career Goal
Maureen	B.A., Ivy League University	Director of Non-profit Org., Phila. branch	\$13,000	Position at the national level
Katie	1 semester of college	Wire person for investment brokerage firm	\$14,000	Upper levels of investment and stock trading
Beth	B.A. Montessori Training In process of completing M.A. (Early Childhood Education)	Head Start teacher	\$10,000	Ph. D.

TABLE
5-3

Household Composition
Residence Location in Relation to Work

Name	Age	Residence	Household Composition	Job Location	School or Training Situation	Mode of Transportation
Sandra	26	Wynnewood	Sandra Son Paul, 2 yrs.	Center City	Center City (University)	Public Trans.
Maureen	33	Germantown House (buying)	Maureen Rita 5 yrs.	Center City	Work Situation	Car
Marcia	31	Phila. (Fringe suburb) House	Marcia Daughters, 2½ and 9 yrs.	West Phila.	Work Situation	Car
Katie	36	Germantown House (renting)	Katie Daughter, 4 yrs. Housemate, Ronald (sharing house expenses)	Center City	Work Situation	Car

TABLE
5-3 (continued)

Edna	33	Germantown Apartment	Daughter, 11 yrs Son, 9 yrs. Shared apt. with friend for 6 mos.	West Phila.	Center City (University)	Public Trans.
Beth	34	Phila. (fringe suburb)	Beth Daughter, 9 yrs. Son, 11 yrs.	Center City	Chestnut Hill (College)	Car
Barbara	31	Germantown Apartment	Barbara 2 daughters 7 and 9 yrs.	German- town	Work Situation	Car

part-time worker. She sees her current job as preparation for a position at the national level. As a result, she engages in activities that expand the parameters of her present job, and spends longer hours devoted to job-related tasks at the office, and at home. She also travels to national meetings and conferences.

Marcia is a sales representative for a large cookie company, working toward becoming district manager. She has to make and surpass her territory quotas and expand the number of sales in her territory either by increasing the quantity of items offered by her current stores or by adding new outlets.

Finally, one mother, Barbara, has recently separated from her husband and returned to full-time employment as an x-ray technician at a private medical center. For eight years she had been a housewife who occasionally worked part-time; her career and occupational mobility had been interrupted by marriage and the birth of two children.

The salary range of these eight women was \$9,396 to \$19,000. They all had training after high school which prepared them for the present positions; however, only three completed college. Two of the three White mothers worked in the private sector. One woman worked as an early childhood teacher. Two of the four Black mothers worked in the private sector and two worked for public agencies. Thus, in this category, two worked public agencies and five for private employers.

Female Single Parents Using Current Work Situations as Vehicles for Occupational Mobility: Maureen and Katie (White Female Single Parents) and Marcia and Barbara (Black Female Single Parents)

The four women employing this strategy of occupational mobility work in the private sector. They are not currently enrolled in formal courses

or training programs. For each of these single parents, upward mobility in their respective fields is dependent upon: (1) more than satisfactory performance in the current position, (2) demonstration of the ability to effectively develop the skills, attitudes and personal attributes required for the positions to which they aspire, and (3) recognition of their above average performance, skills and personal attributes by those who will recommend and/or make decisions about their professional mobility. Thus, they are under constant pressure to perform effectively in their work situations and to organize their child care, child rearing and domestic activities in relationship to these demands.

An examination of their different work histories in relationship to the ages of their children and their transition to female single-parent status provides useful insights into shifts in the use and content of the material resources and services transmitted through the kinship and friendship network systems and the integration of these with those provided by the state. These four families represent different patterns of integration of the content of exchanges made through their social network systems and types of government subsidies utilized as a result of their transition to single-parent status.

A central point which emerges is the variation in the degree to which the social network system of the mother was able to provide direct or indirect economic assistance to the family and critical assistance in child care and child rearing. The data suggest that this is strongly correlated with the socioeconomic position of the mother and the location of the core and extended members of her kinship/friendship network system in the class structure.

In some cases, the composition of the members of the mother's social network system, in terms of access to material resources, services and

information, was fairly uniform to hers. In others there was a wider range of access. Each family was able to gain access to goods, services, and information reflective of the differential access to the social product that members of the mother's social network system had. Often this resulted in a standard of living and quality of life for the family that appear to be incongruent with the mother's current socioeconomic position. This, in some instances gave rise to the family's upward mobility as the mother was able to expand financial resources which provide economic support for the family, and was able to utilize a wider range of services, and exercise a greater degree of choice in making decisions for herself and her family.

The examination of two sets of relationships is used to demonstrate differences in the process through which four of these women made the transition to female single-parent status. The first is the relationship between the composition and content of flows through the mother's social network system, and the degree and type of dependence on the state for the essentials of life. The second is the relationship between the content of material resources, services and information exchanged within the social network system and upward mobility in the occupational structure, standard of living and quality of life. For two of these women, Marcia and Katie, this transition was made possible through increased dependence on the state in the form of Aid to Dependent Children, and a change in their utilization of resources, services and information transmitted through their social network systems. For another mother, Maureen, it required a reorganization of her relationships with her parents and a change in the types of services and information provided by friends in her network system. In Barbara's case it was necessary to reorganize and expand the services provided by her kinship/friendship network system.

A comparison of the composition and content of exchanges in the kinship/friendship network systems of Barbara, Maureen, and Katie illustrates: (1) the lack of congruence in contemporary urban environments between the geographic and social community of families; this is reflective of fundamental changes in the nature of urban family life related to advances in public and private transportation, communications systems, and increasing centralization of activities previously carried out in the home and community and is also closely related to the increase in the number of women and young children in the work force and/or involved in career mobility strategies; and (2) the differences in the types of goods, information and services transmitted through the social network systems of these mothers and the way these quantitatively and qualitatively influence the standard of living and life styles of these families. By focusing on the transition experience of these women, it is possible to see more clearly the "effective" members of their social network systems and the degree to which the exchanges transmitted through them conditioned their experience of transition to single-parent status. The four mothers are presented in the discussion in ascending order of their independence on the state for the essentials of life.

Barbara (Black Female Single Parent, Two Children, Ages Seven and Nine)

Unlike the other three women in this group, Barbara's children were of school age when she became a single-parent. Therefore, her child care needs were less extensive than those of the other women. In her case, the major change in the composition of her family gave rise to an intensification and expansion of previously developed relationships and

family patterns.

Things haven't changed a whole lot; that was the problem. My husband was into sports and youth activities and not very involved with family life. It was always me that worried about how we got here and there, did the shopping and all the things that still remained...I lacked companionship before. I still lack companionship. I'm still lonesome.

Barbara sees the most important difference between her prior status and that of a single parent in the area of financial arrangements and participation in the work force. Prior to their separation, her husband paid the bills. Now she is responsible for her own bills and works full time to meet additional responsibilities.

Before her separation, Barbara lived with her family in a two-story house across the street from an elementary school in Germantown. After the birth of her first child, she stopped working as an x-ray technician and spent the next eight years as a housewife and mother. She felt very isolated during that period until she became involved in a co-op nursery school, she occasionally took care of children of working parents who attended the school across from her house. She served as "lunch mother," providing lunch for these children and sometimes also provided after school care. Through her active involvement in the co-op nursery school she developed relationships with other mothers in the Germantown area and became close friends with four mothers whose children attended these schools. These women spent time with each other, exchanged child care services, and jointly planned and participated in child-related activities. They usually sent their children to the same summer camps and other programs.

Barbara describes herself as a "leader" and a "joiner." She is a very disciplined person and, as a result of effective time management, she is able to participate in a wide range of activities. While she was

marries, she maintained a busy schedule. She was an active member of her church, took exercise classes twice a week at the local Y.M.C.A., coached cheer leaders for one of her husband's teams and participated in sports. She and her husband also had an active non-child related social life which they carried out both separately and together. However, they rarely participated jointly in family-centered activities.

Although Barbara and most of her friends lived in the Germantown area, they took advantage of resources, programs and activities throughout the city. She and most of her friends had cars, and would arrange car pools to move the children from one part of the city to another, coordinating their time so that if one mother was unable to drive, another would. When her children started Catholic school, she returned to part-time work in a medical clinic during the hours her children were in school. The rest of the time she continued her previous pattern. Nine months before she separated from her husband she was laid off and returned to being a housewife and mother.

Another important person in Barbara's network system is her mother. Prior to the separation, she lived within walking distance of Barbara's house. Although she had been working for several years as a teacher's assistant in the public school system, she was willing to baby-sit and participate in activities involving her grandchildren.

Development of Social Network Systems

An examination of Barbara's life style prior to her separation illustrates the development of social network systems in contemporary complex societies. In carrying out many of the activities necessary for daily reproduction of the household and extended reproduction and income-generation in contemporary urban areas, people are brought

together in places that serve as nodal points for the development and expansion of social network systems. Such locations as work places, schools, day care centers, clubs, organizations, churches, cultural and service institutions often bring together people from various residential areas and diverse social, cultural and class backgrounds. As a result, people who would not ordinarily meet come together and, in many cases, form relationships that are the outgrowth of their involvement in a mutual activity.

Today, in urban areas, given the organization of households, residential communities and social and income generating activities, parents are increasingly utilizing pre-school facilities. Early childhood settings provide an environment where young children can be supervised and develop skills necessary to interact and cooperate productively with their peers and, thus, be better prepared for the initial contact with the formal educational system. These types of settings, which some children enter prior to two years of age, create environments where children begin to develop relationships with adults and other children outside the family. These settings also, in many cases, provide a place where mothers with children can meet. Increasing institutionalization of the key functions of family life, child care and child rearing is reflected in the shifting of the locus of these activities from the home to centralized locations.

The important point that emerges from the discussion of Barbara's experience is the way in which such locations act to influence the composition of contemporary social network systems and the content of information, services and other resources that are exchanged among people who meet to participate in the focal activity. The co-op nursery school that Barbara participated in was located in a branch of the Y.W.C.A. in a

central area of her residential community. The area it served was racially, ethnically and socioeconomically heterogeneous. The nursery was an outgrowth or a baby-sitting service offered by the "Y" that provided care for children from three months of age while their mothers took classes twice a week. It was later extended to include the "shoppers' special," a low-cost baby-sitting service where mothers could leave their children for a few hours while they went shopping. Barbara learned of the service through her mother who, at that time, worked in the center. Initially the nursery school was comprised of 10 to 14 Black and White mothers of various socioeconomic backgrounds, who lived throughout Germantown. It was through the co-op nursery school that Barbara met Claudia, a Black mother who lived within walking distance of her house and who became a core member of her social network system. Claudia describes the program as one in which several mothers rotated their services on the three days the center met; they also designed and implemented the program for the children. After a few months, the mothers collectively decided to contribute \$30 a month each to hire a teacher. Once they had a teacher, they continued to rotate their services, but the children now had one central adult to whom they could relate.

Shortly before their daughters became three years old, Claudia learned of another co-op nursery at a Unitarian church even closer to their homes. She told Barbara and they both decided to enroll their children when they were three and no longer eligible for the Y.W.C.A. school. The new co-op was larger than the one at the Y.W.C.A., yet similar in many ways. The cost was \$35 a month; mothers rotated their services, and the population was residentially and economical diverse.

Claudia pointed out that the mothers who joined these co-op situations individually or with one friend tended to be more open to establishing more extensive relationships with other mothers than those who joined with three or more friends. She attributes this to the fact that these women had already established child-centered relationships with other mothers and were less in need of people with whom they could exchange child care services and participate in child-related activities. She further stated that although their children have been out of these settings for several years, she still maintains contact with many of these women. They continue to exchange information about schools, children's programs and other child-related services. In addition, the children, as a result of the cooperation among their mothers, continue to have occasional contact with each other, despite the fact that they live throughout the Germantown area and attend schools all over the city.

A theme that emerges in the discussion of the development of social network systems is the distinction between heterogeneous and homogeneous network systems and the relationship of these to central locations. The degree of heterogeneity in these locations and the particular way in which the individual is integrated into the local activity of the "central location" act as mechanisms that condition the structuring of the types of goods, services and information exchanged among members.

In situations where individuals stand in an equal position in relationship to the service, resource or activity, they tend to relate to each other (in the context of the activity) horizontally. Often the exchange information that relates to the aspect of their lives that has brought them together. In heterogeneous groupings, differential pools of information and access to resources and services can act to expand the range of choices exercised by members of the group. In some instances,

people who meet in these situations may choose to expand their relationships to other spheres of their lives, despite diversity in their socioeconomic position or race.

In other situations, the "central location" serves a homogeneous population that has access to similar types of information, services and resources. The members of this type of grouping may be able to more effectively utilize the information, services and resources at their disposal, but the actual pool is not expanded. An example of this type of central location, in Barbara's experience, was the library within walking distance of her house. The grouping at the local branch of the public library was more homogeneous in terms of race and class than the groupings at the nursery schools, her church, or some of the playgrounds and other city and private resources she utilized. The area of Germantown where she lived was predominantly Black, and the socioeconomic position of people in the immediate community was similar. This homogeneity of race and economic position was reflected in the population that utilized this branch of the library.

The library had a pre-school story hour. Usually, while the children were participating in the story hour, the mothers waited for them in another part of the library. They usually talked to each other, exchanging information about doctors, places to find bargains, children's eating habits, schools, camps, playgrounds and, sometimes, places where they could find part-time jobs.

Barbara moved between central locations that serviced both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups in the process of carrying out her child care and child rearing activities. At the local library, she met and exchanged child-related information with other Black mothers from her residential community and planned and participated with them in

child-related activities. At both co-op nursery schools, the population was racially and economically heterogeneous. In these two situations it proves useful to examine the relationship between the Black and White mothers. Claudia describes this relationship as friendly, yet primarily instrumental. The women freely exchanged information about schools, children's activities, programs and job possibilities. They exchanged child care services and participated jointly in a wide range of child rearing activities external to the center. The mothers also took an active interest in each other's children and were extremely supportive of the three mothers whose children had medical and emotional problems.

Occasionally, all of the mothers got together without the children at one of their homes for a pot-luck supper. However, other than these specific activities, the Black and White mothers rarely got together socially. Some of the Black mothers, as a group, and some of the White women, as a group, did develop more extensive relationships with each other. Barbara, Claudia, Jean and Mary became core members of each other's network systems. Two of the Black mothers who met in the co-op nursery school later opened a lucrative hair-dressing business that specializes in hair braiding.

A few of the White mothers in the group were jointly involved in other cooperative ventures. They belonged to a co-op food market located in Germantown, of which the Black mothers were initially unaware. The White mothers encouraged the Black mothers to join; several did and were able to save money on food. The White mothers were also part of a co-op evening baby-sitting service which they invited other members in the group to join. One of these women later formed a co-op credit union which she encouraged the mothers she met through the Y.W.C.A. nursery to

join. This credit union ultimately developed into a small community bank.

Most of the mothers in both co-op nursery schools, although they did not hold full-time jobs during this period, had formal training and education beyond high school and some work experience. Most had cars and utilized a wide range of resources in the city. Meeting regularly to participate in the nursery school facilitated the pooling of information and the exchange of child-related services. This enabled all of the women to expand their use of available community and city services and resources.

Transition to Female Single Parent

Through school, prior work situations and other activities, Barbara, who is very active, outgoing and highly organized woman, built an extensive network system of family and friends with whom she shared a wide range of activities. She is a careful budgeter. She sews most of her clothing and "special occasion" clothes for her children and never buys on credit. Her motto is, "If I can't pay for it in cash, I can't afford it,"

When Barbara decided to separate from her husband she was embedded in an extensive kinship/friendship network system. She had work experience and was actively involved in her church where she served as secretary for the Board of Directors of the church credit union, chairperson of the lectures group, and member of the Liturgy Committee. She had developed a way of organizing and planning family finances and had no personal debts.

Several months before the separation, she began to make plans to leave. She informed one of her friends, Claudia, that she was looking

for a full-time job. Claudia's husband was a doctor who worked part-time in a private medical center. He spoke to the owner of the center about the possibility of hiring an x-ray technician and arranged for an interview. She was hired and started working full-time in September of 1980. At that time, the center offered no fringe benefits; however, the pay scale was about one dollar higher per hour than other places. Barbara's husband's job included health benefits which covered her and the children, so she felt she could afford to accept the job.

Her mother owned a duplex with a separate first-floor apartment and arranged for the tenant to move when his lease expired in September to make room for her daughter and grandchildren. She rented this one-bedroom apartment to Barbara at minimal rent. Barbara's hours at the center were 8:30 to 5, Monday through Thursday, and 8 to 1 on Friday. Since her mother was home from work by 3:30, she met and cared for the children until Barbara returned. Although the family had moved, the children were still within walking distance of their school. Despite that fact Barbara had made no formal financial arrangements with her husband, he continued to give her the same amount of house money every other week that he had when they were living together.

A review of the transition to single-parent head of household, in Barbara's case, demonstrates the degree to which the members of her friendship/kinship network system were able to expand direct and indirect financial assistance, services and information to meet the changing needs of her family resulting from the separation and return to full-time employment.

1. Her mother had income-generating property which she was willing and able to use to provide housing for her daughter and grandchildren at reduced cost. In addition, she was able, because of the time schedule of

her full-time job, to expand her child care services to care for her grandchildren after school and in the evening to allow Barbara to work full time and continue her involvement in church and other social activities without having to care for child care.

2. Barbara was able to find work, in a medical center close to her house at above-average take-home pay, with a doctor sensitive to her needs. This was made possible by the husband of a friend with whom she had exchanged child care and child rearing activities for many years.

3. Barbara's husband, with whom she had a pleasant relationship, continued to give her the same amount of "house money" and to include the family in his fringe benefit package. This allowed her to accept a job that offered no formal health benefits to employees. He took the girls for visits and participated in activities which he planned and implemented.

4. The cost of her backup baby sitting arrangements was reduced in response to her changed status.

5. Male cousins, who had not previously offered assistance, extended their help and reduced the cost and trouble of car repairs.

6. Her work situation accommodated the needs of a working mother and provided free medical care to her children.

The financial assistance of her kinship/friendship network system, her preparation for the job market and the expansion of the services provided by her network system made it possible for Barbara to make the transition to head-of-household without radically altering previously developed patterns of child care and child rearing. This was made possible through a closer integration, both spatially and functionally, with her mother's household.

Maureen: White Female Single Parent, One Child, Age 5

The role of central locations in the initiation of the relationships that form the foundation of social network systems is a theme that is reinforced in examining the social network system in which Maureen is embedded. She was able to generate the income necessary to provide child care and child rearing through the combination of government subsidies, reorganization of her relationship with her family and a change in the types of material resources, services and information transmitted through her social network system.

The government subsidies were in the form of unemployment compensation and Medicaid, both of which resulted from Maureen's being laid off from her job. Her network system, which was racially and socioeconomically heterogeneous, emerged as a result of her long-term involvement in political activities and organizations.

In both Barbara's and Maureen's cases, their network systems developed prior to their change in status to a female single-parent. Although the nature of the activities which led to their development of these relationships differed (Barbara's child care and child rearing activities, Maureen's political activities), in both instances the activity was one that necessitated long-term cooperation with other people, a record of dependability and mutual help in situations external to the focal activity. As a result of a history of this type of interaction and commitment, relationships with members of their network systems were solid enough to allow for the adjustments necessary to accommodate the different types of needs that emerged when they became single-parents.

Maureen separated from the father of her daughter a few weeks before the child's birth. Until then she had a distant relationship with her

parents; in fact, they learned from her sister that Maureen was pregnant. The birth of her daughter radically changed the relationship; she and her parents became closer than they had been in years.

However, the major source of support came from members of her political organization with whom she shared a semi-collective residence. From them she was able to get the material and emotional support she needed and to find a a part-time job that fit the needs of her new situation.

I used to live in this semi-collective house with different apartments, but with people who were friends. When I went into labor, someone else who actually worked in the building took me to the hospital.... I had medical assistance because I was on unemployment. That covered everything for having the baby. . . . Some friends gave me a baby shower, two people who were in the community house, but it was very large. I got all kinds of things, and some things from people who weren't there, so really lots of things. ...with a circle of people I know we are always trading things.

At the time I used to be a part of this sort of political organization. It was quite large, and it provided a sort of social support for me. I had a lot of close friends who were a part of that. I left under not so good circumstances about a year after Rita was born. A lot of those people were people I had been close to for many years, and I haven't felt that same kind of that sort of group support on the scale since, but at the time it was sort of a group thing.

Although Maureen had a B.A. in political science from an Ivy League university, and an interest and some formal training in art, she used her skills in her non-paid political activities and supported herself primarily by working part-time in supermarkets. She had done this kind of work since she was in high school. It paid well, offered fringe benefits, and allowed her the time to be involved in community and political work. It was through these activities that she met Richard, the father of her child, and developed her extensive network system.

She returned to the work force shortly after the birth of her baby, learning from a friend about a job at a non-profit organization that raised funds for seed money for community projects. She was able to arrange to share this full-time job half time with another mother.

I came back to work in two weeks. I brought the baby to work. . . . The reason I took the job in the first place was because I knew it was a job where I could bring a baby.

About six months after she had the baby, Maureen and Richard decided to live together again, however, shortly after he returned, he lost his job at a place where he had been for 10 to 12 years. He was unable to get another job for a year. Maureen decided to get another part-time job, and Richard began to take care of their daughter more.

So I had these two jobs; so he started taking care of her much more, so then I didn't bring her to work that much. When she was about six months, she stayed at someone's house, the same place where the other woman who worked with me sent her children part-time. When she was 11 months old she went to regular day care. Her father, during the first year, took care of her more than I did. He always gave her a bath and washed her hair. I didn't do it until she was over a year.

Although Maureen and Richard were able to share in child care and child rearing activities and participated in political activities together, their relationship was extremely difficult and stressful. Finally, when Rita was two years old they separated again. Despite their separation, he continued to be involved with his daughter, helping with child care and child rearing and giving some financial support when possible.

Maureen continued to work and live in the same semi-collective house. However, as the organization for which she worked began to grow and the other mother left, she decided to work full-time. She was the only staff person at that time; the organization was part of a national organization from which they got money. It was important for

Maureen to attend national meetings to ensure adequate funding. Her living arrangements and the help she received from her family and friends enabled her to keep this job and meet the requirements of the expanded responsibilities at the organization.

I lived on this block in West Philadelphia where there were two teenagers who lived next door and this other woman who was a single-parent. The teen-aged girls moved in when Rita was about one year. They took care of Rita a lot of the time until a year ago when they moved to Texas. So it was this other woman and her daughter, and these two teenagers. We were all sort of a close circle. In the house I lived in there were two other sets of people, and one set were very good friends of mine. They would take care of Rita. They didn't have any children, and Rita was real close to them. . . So if I would have to go away for work for like a week or something, I could go away. Mary across the street and Sharon next door, between them they would take care of Rita.

In other cases, when she had to travel, she was able to get help from her family and Richard in providing child care.

This job which started as part-time work in response to child care needs, has grown into a full-time position and has determined the course of her career development. An analysis of the work she does and the network system she has developed as a result of this involvement provides further insight into the crucial importance of network flows in determining the standard of living and life style of a family. In addition, it demonstrates the level of additional time, energy and stress involved in pursuing career ladder activities in a work situation.

Income-Generation: Wages, Fringe Benefits and Content of Social Network Flows

The actual wages Maureen earns, given her job title of director of an agency in Philadelphia and the range of her responsibilities, are low, \$13,000. However, the formal and informal fringe benefits allow Maureen

and her daughter to realize a standard of living and life style incongruent with her formal salary.

Although she has a lot of flexibility in time and choice of location for carrying out her job responsibilities, her career goals and the demands of the position require that she work long hours and travel to other parts of the country. This places severe limitations on her being able to engage in additional income-generating activities or personal social activities. Her current lifestyle revolves around work, child care and child rearing.

At the time Maureen became a participant in the study, she had been working in the organization for five years. During this period she had helped to build it from a small, struggling organization to an important non-profit, tax exempt charity able to give financial help to small community-based organizations. In 1982, the organization raised \$129,000. As director, Maureen had primary responsibility for designing and implementing all activities necessary for raising funds and coordinating the boards that made decisions about distribution.

Although the job is extremely time and energy intensive, Maureen has a great deal of time flexibility and location choice. She keeps a set schedule; however, she is able to arrange this to meet her child care and child rearing responsibilities. For example, before Rita started public school, Maureen started work at 10 so that she could take Rita to the day care center at 9 and avoid paying for morning child care services. Currently, she goes to work at 9:30 three days a week and 11 on one morning so that she can volunteer one morning at her daughter's school. In addition, she is scheduled to work on Tuesday evenings, but usually works one additional evening at the office to keep up with the work she is unable to bring home.

The office has provided her with a typewriter so that she can do some work at home on other evenings and weekends. She sometimes has meetings in the evenings at home and does fund-raising in the evenings and on the weekends whenever necessary. The responsibilities of the staff members are not interchangeable; therefore, if Maureen has to stay home because of illness, she has to work even harder when she returns to catch up with her accumulated work.

Maureen's office is in Center City. She lives in Germantown, which is a half-hour drive. She is in the process of buying a three-story house in a neighborhood that is undergoing gentrification. The distances between her home, her daughter's school, the office, and places she must go to carry out her work responsibilities make a car a necessity. An examination of how she got her present car and the way the formal and informal benefit package is structured gives additional insight into the heterogeneous social network system and formal and informal fringe benefits act to condition the standard of living of a family. It also demonstrates the inadequacy of the use of stated income, occupation and education as criteria for determining class location.

I couldn't work here without a car. Actually, somebody gave me a car, which is also an advantage of working here. They work for an organization in another city. They gave me their car because the car I had died, and it's very hard to work here without a car because there is a lot of running around to do. I can get free legal advice just because we have all these law offices in here and some of the people are old friends of mine. . . . Well here's a benefit of this job, I know a lot of people who have a lot of money. Although I don't like to mix those work relationships with personal friendships, but personal friendships develop out of some of them over time. That gets very touchy, but I know if I was desperate [for money] I could do that, but I don't like that. . . I have access to a lot of people, like I just had to borrow money. I'm totally broke and I know people I can borrow from, friends and work acquaintances. I borrowed \$1,000 from someone that I paid back monthly about a year

ago, and this time I borrowed \$200.... I don't borrow from a lot of people; there are two major people, close friends, but by virtue of my work and political things I know lots of people that make lots of money.

These statements fall into context when one considers that Maureen has absolutely no savings and rarely has time to do free-lance art work to earn extra money. This, combined with the reality that she carries the primary financial responsibility for her family, is buying a house, and is able to borrow only small amounts of money (about \$100) at a time from her parents, makes this avenue for obtaining money very important.

Even though Maureen doesn't like to borrow money, having access to large amounts of money through her friendship network system makes the critical difference in situations of financial crisis and allows her greater latitude in decision-making (like buying a house). She knows that in cases of real financial emergency she has access to money. This, combined with the way the formal benefit package from her job and other services she is able to get at reduced cost or free (free medical and legal services and inexpensive dental care) because of her affiliation with this organization, significantly expands the standard of living she is able to realize on her \$13,000 a year salary. Her formal benefits have changed over the years in response to her changing needs and the increasing stability of the organization. Now health benefits are included. Currently she receives child care and baby sitting costs for the evenings and weekends she has to work and evening parking costs.

In our personnel policy, pay is based on what your job is, level of responsibility, etc., prior experience, factor of dependents...here are some factors that people look at. If I had a husband who was a doctor and two kids I wouldn't get that (child care and baby sitting costs). There is a need factor; it's not just automatic. There is more here for people who are single-parents. Once a year they deal with money. . .this is a non-profit organization so you sort of have to ask, beg,

whatever for a raise, so that they decided to do was to cover child care, but it is not really a benefit through the personnel policies. It's a way of paying someone. That is a cheaper way for the organization because they don't pay taxes on it. It's cheaper for me because it keeps my income lower, so it's a better way to do it...everybody makes out better; that's the reason it's not really a benefit.

The organization's payment for these services represent a considerable savings for Maureen. The agency paid for the last nursery school Rita attended and currently pays for the after-school program. In addition, she is able to save money she would have to spend for baby-sitting and parking on evenings she works. Her access to free legal services was useful to her in buying her house. The combination of all these, which she considers part of her pay packet, not fringe benefits, she estimates as increasing her annual payment for work by about \$2,000 a year.

In addition, Maureen considers the travel she does for the agency another benefit. Through this she has been able to visit other parts of the country, expand her network system, and build the foundation necessary for upward mobility. She is also able to get advances on her salary when she has cash flow problems.

Maureen considers information to be a crucial asset and, because of the nature of her work and contact with many different kinds of people, she has access to a heterogeneous pool of information. These include legal information about how to get to get low interest home improvement loans, and strategies for dealing with public utility companies as well as free or minimal cost resources for children.

Cost of Maintaining the Job

Maureen's work requires that she spend money on clothes and lunches. She has to attend board meetings, sponsor fund-raising events,

and meet with people in a variety of settings. This presents somewhat of a problem for her.

Well, I should have them [clothes]; I don't have them but I try. I have a charge which I used once, but I should do more. Depending on whether I have a lunch meeting or board meeting, you will see me in different things depending on what is going on.

Another problem is lunch. She tries to take her lunch to work because her office is in Center City and restaurants are expensive. Often, though, she doesn't have time in the morning to make her lunch or she has to meet people in connection with her work responsibilities. She doesn't have to spend money out of her salary for child care, as most of the other women in the study must; she does have to meet the clothing expenses and cost of eating out in order to maintain her job.

Domestic Organization: Child Care and Child Rearing, Housework

My whole life is working, taking care of kids, taking care of my house, and not taking care of myself right.

Maureen sums up, in this statement, the way she was experiencing the life of a female single-parent at one point. She summarizes the three aspects of parenting that must be assumed to keep her family unit afloat. Her job is demanding and making ends meet is difficult. Her style of parenting is time and energy intensive because of the high value she placed on creativity and intellectual development. Her house is large and, because of her insistence on a least a semblance of order, requires time. Therefore, it is not just carrying the responsibilities of these three spheres, but how she has decided to do them that results in her feeling overworked.

Whenever I spent time at Maureen's house, there was a great deal of activity. Telephone conversations with her when she was at home were

rarely quiet, uninterrupted discussions. Usually when we talked, she would relate some activity in which she had recently participated with her daughter. Although Rita is an only child, Maureen's house (as was the house of her natal family) is a central place for many children on the block. There are usually two or three other children visiting Rita. Maureen actively encourages creative expression in her daughter by providing toys and materials for situational play. She keeps a good supply of art materials on hand and encourages Rita and her friends to use them. In addition, Maureen orders books regularly for the children's book club and takes Rita and some of the other children on the block to community and city programs and makes use of such community resources as the swimming pool and museums. Maureen is active in her daughter's school where she volunteers one morning a week.

Although Maureen's job requires that she spend at least one evening a week--usually two--in the office, she tries to organize her work so that she can work at home as much as possible. This allows her to fulfill her job responsibilities while providing child care. When she feels if appropriate, she takes Rita to her office. For Maureen housework includes not only a general cleaning of the house once a week, but keeping a flower garden in the summer and shopping and meal preparation. The degree of meal preparation is determined by the amount of time she and her daughter are actually at home, more on the weekends and vacation than during the working week.

Her street organized a children's work program as a way for the children on the block to earn money. This has proved to be a big help to Maureen. She sometimes pays some of the children to wash her car or sweep her porch and the sidewalk in front of her house. She also hires a teenage girl weekly, whom she pays \$5-10 a week, to help with housework.

As a result, she is able to finish her housework by early Saturday afternoon and spends the rest of the day with Rita and some of her friends. Clearly, Maureen has little time for purely social activity, a theme that ran through the lives of most of the women in this study. The time and energy they expend to take care of the three spheres of parenting, if they had no other adult to help on a regular basis or if the time required by their income-generating activities was extensive, left very little time or energy to do much else.

Career Mobility

Maureen has successfully used her current job situation for internal career mobility; however, in order to continue to advance she will have to leave Philadelphia. This presents problems. She is committed to the kind of work her organization does because it allows her to integrate her political orientation with her training, experience and skills. She feels that unless she moves into teaching or are (interests of hers) she would like to continue doing the kind of work she now does. She was offered a better position in the New York office, but decided, given her daughter's relationship with her father and other support in the Philadelphia area, that she could make the move. Her organization is continuing to grow. She is working to build and expand her skills in management and fund-raising and to extend her national professional network system. At a later point, she feels that she may be willing and able to move to another city.

What becomes apparent in reviewing Maureen's single-parenting and career development experience is the crucial part that her kinship/friendship network system has played. This combination of resources, services and information has resulted in her being able to

realize a quality of life that is incongruent with her \$13,000 yearly salary. It demonstrates the way a heterogeneous network system can operate to expand the range and types of choices, resources, services and information a family is able to utilize.

The discussion of Katie and Marcia demonstrates the importance of reviewing the work history of the mother in order to understand career mobility. Both of these women needed to rely on public assistance when they became single-parents. However, both had worked for several years before becoming mothers and saw public assistance as a temporary survival strategy. Once they were able to make arrangements for "suitable" child care, they returned to the work force. Their career mobility arose from their previous work experience and information about better work situations from members of their professional network systems.

Katie: White Female Single Parent; One Child, Age Four

When Katie made the decision to become a single parent, she knew that she could not rely on family or friends for financial support or daily child care. Thus, for her, this transition resulted in a radical change in life style, standard of living and employment status. Reflecting on her life style five or six years ago when she was 21 and had her daughter, she says,

I'm so different now. Then, I just let things happen. Now, I don't want to live for today like I was.... When you are single, you come and go as you please, and you don't worry about anything. You seem to have enough money and enough friends....then it's so different; all of sudden it's so different; you have a baby.

When she became pregnant, she had been living in her own apartment for a year. She was working in the Philadelphia office of an investment house as a wire person (the middle person between the floor of the

exchanges in New York, and the brokers in her office). By that time, Katie had a good deal of employment experience. She had been working nearly full-time since she was 16. Before she graduated from high school, she worked four evenings a week as a child care worker in a privately owned home for severely retarded children. After graduating she continued to work in the home; however, she moved out of direct child care into the office. A year later, her aunt, who worked as a bookkeeper for an investment house, helped Katie get a job in the business office of the firm.

Katie is a bright, personable young woman. Within a year she was able to move out of the office and switch to the firm's other Philadelphia office to be trained on the wire service. This position had higher pay and better career ladder possibilities. Through this move she was able to learn two things which have proved invaluable in her income-generating activities and career ladder strategy: (1) information about openings in this field passes through informal channels, and (2) movement between offices and firms even if the job title is the same, usually results in higher pay and the opportunity to learn different skills.

Transition to Female Single-Parent Status

Katie's kinship/friendship network system at the time of her daughter's birth was composed of her parents, one older and four younger brothers, maternal and paternal grandmothers, aunts and uncles. Although she had a large family, she had not been close to her parents for years and was only close to her grandmothers, a paternal aunt and uncle. Her friends were in her own age group. Most of them were working, unmarried and childless. Even though she had been living in her apartment in the

northeast section of Philadelphia for about a year, she had only a speaking acquaintance with her neighbors and no friends in the immediate neighborhood. Therefore, despite a large family and many friends, her effective kinship network was limited, and her friendship network was composed of people who were relatively new to the labor force and whose life styles were reflective of Katie's prior to her change of status. These friends were not able to adjust the relationship to meet Katie's needs for child care or child-related support.

She had been going out with the father of her child, off and on, for about three years. He had been previously married and had a child. When she became pregnant, he was not in a position to provide full financial support for Katie and their child. The situation was further complicated by the fact that he was Black. She knew this would create further problems with her parents and some relatives.

Given her relationship with friends and relatives and her financial resources and those of her family, she knew she would have to depend primarily on fringe benefits and government subsidies to provide financial support for herself and her child. These supports would have to be organized in such a way as to allow her to take care of her infant. The job fringe benefit package provided complete medical coverage for prenatal care and delivery. In addition, it provided one year of unpaid maternity leave which guaranteed reappointment at the end of the year to the same or equal position with no loss of pay or benefits. Katie decided to work until November, the seventh month of her pregnancy and to organize her leave so that she would receive her last pay check in December. In December she applied for public assistance and began to receive \$131 twice a month. She gave birth to her daughter in January at a maternity center that offered a wide range of services to mothers of

young children. Katie enrolled in their nursing mothers group and single-parents group, both of which were very helpful to her in adjusting to her new status. It also created an avenue for her to meet other mothers and make new friends.

In addition to financial assistance from the Department of Social Services, she received food stamps and Medicaid and learned that she was eligible for the Special Food Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). This program provides cheese, milk, eggs, cereal and juice for nursing mothers and nutritionally at-risk children through food vouchers that do not affect the amount of food stamps the family can receive.

Initially, the father of her child made a small contribution toward Kim's support, which was deducted from her financial assistance check. After a few months, it became clear to Katie and the Department of Social Services that he was unable to make regular child support payments. Therefore, Katie paid her \$135 monthly rent and took care of other household and child-related expenses primarily through subsidies she received from the state and limited but crucial help from family and friends.

The birth of her daughter totally restructured her relationship with her maternal and paternal relatives. Her maternal relatives excluded her from family gatherings by rejecting her daughter. As a result, she is no longer involved, even in a limited way, with that part of her family. Her father stopped speaking to her, but his sister and her husband responded by becoming closer to Katie than before.

Her sister and her family, I'm really close to them; they really helped me. They would baby-sit for me sometimes. They came and got my laundry and did my wash for me. It was really a bad winter, so that really helped. They also went to the store for me.

Her mother and grandmother were comfortable with the knowledge that she was receiving public assistance. They gave her small amounts of money and encouraged her to ask them if she needed help.

I tried to be careful with my money. I tried not to borrow, but if I really needed money, my mother and my grandmother told me to ask them if I ever ran short. I don't think I ever asked, but they gave me a few dollars every here and there, like \$3 very time I want down. . .I don't go to my mom's that much because it is uncomfortable; my father always leaves the room when I come.

In addition to the help she received from her mother and paternal relatives, Katie didn't have to buy any clothes for Kim for the first three years. These she received from a girlfriend's family and from her mother and paternal relatives.

Given the attitude and resources of Katie's natal family and the status of her friends and their place in the life cycle, the degree of financial support and help they were willing and able to give with child care was limited. In addition, the type and setting of work Katie did prior to the birth of her child didn't allow her to continue working by bringing her child to work. In order to provided economic support for her household and child care for her baby, she had to stop working and rely primarily on a range of government subsidies. These government supports included money, services and direct food subsidies in the form of Aid to Dependent Children, Medicaid, food stamps, and WIC. Although these provided the essentials of life, Katie would not have been able to provide for the full range of material resources and services she and her child enjoyed. These were expanded through the use of previous earning which enabled her to establish an apartment and pay for prenatal and child birth costs. The help she received from family and friends

provided needed items for her child and limited but essential help with child care, shopping, and laundry during the first few months she was home.

She selected a doctor sensitive to her particular needs and who was able to refer her to the type setting that could provide the kinds of support she needed for this difficult transition. It was a combination of all these that provided the structural underpinnings of the standard of living Katie and her child were able to realize.

Restructuring of Social Network System

The birth of Katie's daughter resulted in her effective kinship system being skewed in favor of her paternal relatives and the loss of her maternal relatives, with the exception of her mother and grandmother, who died a few years after the birth of her daughter. In addition, her friends lived a very different life style than she did, which, given her changed financial status and child-related responsibilities, she was unable to maintain.

A major element in the transition to her new status was the maternity center which provided a range of services for mothers of infants and young children and a setting which enabled these mothers to work together, helping each other deal with problems. Katie became active in the center after the birth of her child. She quickly made friends with the staff and other mothers through her participation in the nursing mothers and single-parents groups and began the process of developing relationships with women who shared some of her child-related concerns. The center encouraged mothers to bring their lunch and their babies to the center for these meetings, helped mothers to develop

support groups and provided a range of services and information. In addition to the support given by the staff of the center and the women Katie met there, she began to meet neighborhood women who had young children. As a result, she felt less isolated at home. During this period, she met Fred through his father who lived in her building. After about a year of seeing each other, they decided to share an apartment and later a house. Fred had been married before and had two school-aged children who spent most of the time with them.

Katie shared the rent and living expenses with Fred and continued to be primarily financially responsible for herself and Kim. She met these responsibilities through the grants she received from the Department of Social Services. Fred worked full-time and, although he took care of the financial responsibilities for his children when they were with him, Katie was responsible for their care and the domestic activities of the household. Financially things were easier for her, but emotionally, given the nature of their relationship, his children, who proved to be difficult, and the conflicts that arose from differences in child rearing patterns, Katie reconsidered her decision to marry him. These problems were compounded by the isolation she felt in their new neighborhood and her separation from some of the people and activities she had begun to develop after the birth of her daughter. She and Fred, as a couple, had no real friends and rarely went out.

I like to be treated as an equal in a relationship; he had trouble with that. . . .I met Fred; we lived together, and I got into the humdrum of staying home. Then, one February, I just started deciding to do something for myself. I signed up for school and started reading.

Kim was two years old when Katie started school. She applied for government student loans and financial aid to pay her tuition. She was able to get public assistance to pay for nursery school half-day at the

nursery school on campus. Through the combination of both of these sources, she was able to return to school. Going to college was an important step and marked a major departure from the goals her family had set for their children. They never encouraged education beyond high school for any of their sons, and especially not for their daughter. They had hoped that Katie would graduate from high school, get another job, get married and have children. Her mother had never completed high school and never worked after marriage. Her father completed high school, went to work, took a night course in drafting, and eventually was able to work in that field. Most of Katie's peers, until this point, had gone to work after graduating from high school. Katie had never before viewed college as an option. Another important influence was the nursery school on campus, which provided early childhood education through kindergarten. It actively involved parents in decision-making through participation on the board. The school was partially staffed by early childhood students who used the center for part of their training. The center made efforts to share educational material on childhood development with the staff and parents. It made a serious effort to have a racially and economically diverse student population. Through the board structure and parent participation, parents of various background came into contact with each other. As a result, Katie was able to develop relationships with other mothers, some of whom were also in school and others who were working or full-time housewives. Some were receiving public assistance and going to school full-time. Through these women she was able to gain further information about programs for which she was eligible and to discuss possible career goals. She made friends with other students with whom she could share school related information and study.

Katie decided to major in psychology and began by taking two course in the morning. She enrolled her daughter in school for the morning session. Katie was living in the Olney section of Philadelphia. The school was not far from her home. Many of the women she met in the school lived in this general area or in Germantown. She enjoyed going to school and became increasingly involved in both college and the nursery school program. However, as things became increasingly difficult in her living situation, she realized that she would have to make some major changes. She began to think seriously about returning to work and moving. She had been receiving public assistance for a little over two years and was dependent on it not only for basic subsistence for herself and her daughter, but for Kim's school fees. The financial aid and student loans were predicated upon this income. A return to work would require a total restructuring of the course of her education, the organization of child care, child rearing, and domestic activities. The turning point occurred through a chance meeting with one of her former co-workers who informed her that there was a position open for a wire service person at the suburban office of her former firm. He was sure they would be happy to have her back. Katie arranged to return to work at the end of the semester. She discussed this decision with her caseworker at the Department of Social Services who then told her about the Welfare Work Incentive Program. Under this program, women who decided to return to work continued to receive Medicaid, food stamps, a portion of their direct financial assistance payments and financial help with payment for child care. The purpose was to ease the transition for mothers returning to work and to provide support services and financial assistance to make it possible to afford, and find it financially worthwhile to return to work.

When Katie returned to work, she expected to receive these benefits for about two years. She arranged for her daughter to attend the same nursery school full-time and began to look for an apartment. She arranged, with some help from Fred, to buy a car to take her daughter to school in the morning and still get to work by 8 a.m.

The Transition to Full-Time Employment

Katie's salary, when she returned to work in 1981, was \$225 per week, plus fringe benefits. The fringe benefit package included full health coverage for herself and her daughter, a stock option plan through which she would buy a fraction of a share for \$20 per month, a discount on stocks that she purchased, a bonus of two weeks' salary at the end of the year, and a credit union to which she arranged to have money deposited directly from her pay check. An informal benefit was the stock information which she utilized. With these benefits and the \$85 per month she received from the Department of Social Services and child care costs, she thought that, despite the additional work related expenses, she would be able to make this transition without too much financial difficulty.

Unfortunately, due to cuts in social programs under the Reagan Administration, she learned not long after returning to work that the Work Incentive Program would be cut. She was given six weeks' notice and then was completely dropped except for medical benefits, which were extended for a few more months. This created serious financial problems. The nursery school cost \$226 per month, and Katie was dependent on full-time day care services in order to work. She was also responsible for her car and in the process of planning to move.

I felt like when they cut my check and weren't even going to help me with child care and they weren't

giving me \$85 a month, I thought, this is incredible. It's not even worth it for me to go back to work; it just wasn't worth it because by the time I finished paying child care it was, well, you know.

In addition, she had other expenses related to going back to work.

I couldn't go to work like this [jeans]. It's a business atmosphere, so they expect me to dress for business: skirts, dresses, nice pants. I was on welfare for a couple of years so I didn't have money for me, and I don't have a lot of clothes. I had to go out and buy myself clothes so that I could feel comfortable going to work. . . . I opened a charge. I found that I could get away dressing more casually at first where I was.

After working for about nine months, Katie learned about a jointly funded subsidized child care program. Funds were provided to families for child care on a sliding scale determined by the family's income. Katie was eligible for this program and applied. Her child care expenses were reduced to \$60 a month. With this reduction, she was able to make arrangements to share an apartment and later a two-story house with a friend about 20 minutes' drive from her daughter's school. She paid no rent the first month and then \$150 a month.

It was a big expense: \$1,100 down to get the house, one month escrow, one month rent, split with my housemate. There was more money, but the adjustment of working full-time and having Kim in day care full-time, emotionally it was a strain. That was the hardest part. I had a little more money than when I was on welfare, but because there was more time spent and such a big adjustment, there was just no organization. I just couldn't keep track of everything When I first went back to work, Sunday I would shop, wash, etc. Friday, when I came home, I was exhausted; Saturday I walked around like a zombie. I had to get up because of Kim, but I had no patience, no energy, no anything, so I left everything for Sunday, and then it was Monday. . . I felt disorganized; I felt guilty because I left Kim. I just couldn't keep track of money.

Even though she still had difficulty making ends meet, after awhile she was able to plan and organize her time and estimate the costs involved in maintaining her job, house and other personal and child

related expenses. She was able to work out the costs and spatial arrangements involved in sharing the house with her male housemate. They split the costs in half; each person bought his or her own food and cooked. Spatially, each person had a separate living area, except for kitchen and bathroom. Her relationship with her housemate was friendly and cooperative; however, he did not help her with child care and child rearing activities except in an emergency. Her new home was close to other mothers whose children attended Kim's nursery school. This allowed greater ease in exchanging child care services. She developed close relationships with women within walking distance of her house with whom she shared child rearing experiences.

Katie's return to full-time work demonstrates some of the difficulties that arise in making the transition from dependence on public assistance to full-time employment. Further, it shows the impact of cuts in government services on the lives of dependent people. We are also able to gain some insight into the changes required in the organization of time, domestic activities, child care and deployment of financial resources for this transition to be successful and permanent.

Career Mobility

Katie's decision to interrupt her education and return to work marked the beginning of a serious commitment to career mobility. Early in her work experience, she learned that a necessary part of mobility for a person with little formal training was frequent movement between offices of the same firm, to other companies to learn other aspects of the business, to increase pay and other benefits, and to make contacts.

She started at the suburban office of the firm she had worked for before the birth of her child. She was able to drive to work and dress less formally. Katie worked at this office for close to one year. During this period, a co-worker moved to another firm in Center City and informed Katie of an opening in the wire service. Shortly thereafter, she became part of this study. The major advantage of the new job was that she would be involved in over-the-counter-trading, a new experience³ for her. In addition, this firm paid \$25 more a week, and she was able to negotiate her health benefits so that she would not have to pay \$60 a month for health care during the first six months, but would immediately have the total cost paid by the company. Despite these advantages, this move meant that she would have more difficulty getting to and from work. However, Katie felt that the move was an important step.

There was no trader in the other office. Here there is a retailer, brokers and traders. I'm learning more here about the business.

After a year the company would pay for job-related courses, and she could return to school part-time.

The stress of this job was higher. Until I spent time with Katie at her job, it was difficult for me to understand the kind of work she did and why she was so exhausted at the end of the day.

I get up at 5:45. I need 45 minutes for myself in the morning. I sit down here having my coffee, reading the paper. It's the only time I read the paper; unfortunately it's usually a day old.

Then she gets Kim up and they both get dressed. She fixes a hot breakfast. After breakfast they leave, and she picks up a close friend and her son who attends Kim's school. She drives to nursery school and then parks as close as she can to the subway, walks to the train and continues to work.

Katie's office was in a large building in Center City. The

quiet-looking environment of the rooms with wall-to-wall carpeting, dark paneling and pictures gave no indication of the high activity level. Katie's office, shared with several others, was attractive and efficiently organized. It had a computer in the middle of the room, with a writing table next to the computer, rolling chairs, and phones on every desk and table. A board with stock information and a big clock outside the room was visible. She shared the office with three male brokers, a female ticket clerk, and a woman who handled bills. There was a lot of activity. Phones rang constantly, other brokers were coming in for account numbers, and stock information on the board was moving all the time.

Katie's job was to punch the information into the computer for the New York office, file stock information with the account number, and record sales. She has to be quick and accurate because she is dealing with people's money at a fast pace. For each transaction there were several pieces of paper that had to be put in the correct place and order. I was struck by the physical energy involved. Each broker has his own box. She moves between the computer in the middle of the room to the account book at the side of the room under the brokers' boxes, then back to the writing table next to the computer, with no break in rhythm. Although the distance is short and she could use the rolling chair, she prefers to stand. At one point in the morning when the activity is especially high, I decided to count the number of times she moved between these areas. I counted 15 times in a half-hour period. The relationships among the five workers in the office were friendly, relaxed, but very busy. Katie explained that the pace was uneven. Sometimes it was very rapid; other times there was little movement. At the end of the work day, she is usually very tired. The day I visited

was especially difficult because of the pace and because it was the day after Halloween. She had taken Kim to two parties the day before.

Katie leaves work between 4:40 and 5:15, depending on what the market is doing. She picks Kim up, fixes dinner, and spends some time with Kim before putting her to bed at 8:30.

By that time I'm ready to collapse, but I don't. I
iron or do something, but I don't watch T.V. because
I need time to just sit.

During the two and one-half years that she was part of this study, Katie moved twice. Her first move was to a larger company with a formal salary increase to \$275. She then moved to a smaller company. She was able to get this job through a female friend whom she met at her first job. This woman had worked her way up the career ladder with little formal education. Through the years she encouraged Katie and advised her on career moves. Katie's new position was with a firm that handled municipal bonds and her work was at the trading desk. Her major reason for moving was not the increase of salary to \$300 per week, but rather to learn another aspect of the field that could help her move up the career ladder. The fringe benefit package had the potential to increase her income. In addition to a bonus every year, she could buy stocks at a discount. Katie took full advantage of this and, at first, made a good deal of money. (Later she experienced a real loss when the market took a down-turn.) In addition to these benefits, she got full medical coverage, but only 80% payment of tuition for job-related courses. However, the firm included a scholarship fund for the children of employees.

Additional time and energy are involved in pursuing career mobility in a work situation. Unlike Maureen, Katie has had to move frequently to realize her career goals more quickly. At each point in this process, she

has had to demonstrate above-average proficiency and to learn new skills. Each position has been predicated on relationships she has been able to make with other members of the company. Through the years, they have taught her new aspects of the business and have served as references for new and better positions.

Given her child care responsibilities and the degree of energy expended at work, her social life is limited. She rarely goes out and doesn't often socialize after work. The time that she is able to devote to her hobby, photography, is practically non-existent. The demands of generating income to support her family and carrying out domestic and child care and child rearing responsibilities leave her very little time, energy or money for other activities. At each point of her child's development, Katie has had to adjust her financial arrangements, career and life style. The difference in the structure and content of both her social and professional network systems importantly influenced the choices she made in carrying out the various aspects of her parenting responsibilities.

Currently Katie is embedded in a social network system of other women who live in her general vicinity. They exchange child care services, participate in child related events, exchange children's clothing and child related information, as well as information about such community service as the credit union, which Katie joined (\$6 membership fee). In addition, she learned about the Community Development Corporation, which does free home repairs for low income people. As a result, Katie is seriously thinking about buying the house she is now renting.

Some of the people she has met at work are also part of her friendship network system, although most of the time they spend together

is work related. In addition to providing her with useful job and career development information and experiences, they are willing and able to make short-term loans to her.

Although Katie's relationship with her family is limited, she has been able to get the emotional support and help she has needed through the years from friends and neighbors. Through these relationships, most of which she developed after the birth of her daughter, she has been able to move through several major transitions and make the necessary personal and financial adjustments to get through difficult years.

Marcia: Black Female Single Parent; Two Children, Ages Two and Nine

Marcia is the mother of two daughters. She lives in a two-story house that she is in the process of buying in a fringe area of Philadelphia. The discussion of her transition to single-parent and career mobility will focus on the way she has generated the income necessary to support her family and has restructured the organization of child care and domestic activities in response to the various strategies she has had to to employ.

Marcia and her children are firmly embedded in an extensive social network system of family and friends. However, although she has many friends and is close to her family, she cannot depend on them to provide major economic assistance during periods of financial crisis. They provide generous help in areas of emotional support and child care.

Most of her close friendships were developed through her active involvement with her sorority during and after college, her various work situations and her child-related activities (school, PTA, Girl Scouts, etc.), and other social activities. She is responsive to her friends and family and always willing to extend herself just a little bit more to

meet their needs despite her busy schedule. They have tended to respond to her in a similar manner.

Marcia is verbal, down-to-earth, very expressive and extremely bright. She often laughs and makes jokes as she describes the ways in which she has dealt with work situations and very difficult periods in her life.

The key to Marcia's subsistence strategy is flexibility and her ability to respond creatively to challenges. She has a strong determination to move up professionally and to become more financially secure so that she can provide the best possible life for herself and her children. In response to these goals, she tends to focus on the amount of income she is able to generate through work situations rather than on job title and is willing to do as many extra things as necessary to provide the economic foundation for her family's standard of living. This is demonstrated by Marcia's approach to financing her education and preparing for the birth of her first daughter.

When Marcia started college, her father was unemployed and her mother had just quit her job at a candy factory to enroll in a two-year program at Temple University. Marcia took a job working at Gino's (a fast food restaurant) on the weekends during the school year and during the summer extended her hours. In addition, she took another full-time job during the summer. She was able to save the money to finance her education.

Early in 1972, Marcia moved into her own apartment. She graduated from college in 1973 and had her first child in the same year. When she became pregnant, her mother encouraged her to return home, but she decided to continue on her own. She supported herself for the next seven months before the birth of her daughter by working at Gino's and sewing

for other people. The following quotation illustrates not only her approach to earning a living during this period, but her attitude toward doing what was necessary to deal with this situation:

I majored in sociology and minored in history and anthropology. . . There I was with a college degree, flipping hamburgers for them, but I didn't care; it made money. I was carrying Karen. I worked at the store up to two weeks, not even two weeks, a week before she was born. My mother said come back, but I said no because I sort of liked the independence and the challenge because it was a challenge to make ends meet. They don't meet, but somehow or another you make it. . . . When I was carrying her to offset expenses, because I knew that I would be out of work of a while, I sewed clothes for White women. It was great because they were willing to pay the money. You gave them personalized service which they liked. I had people say, 'Well, I wouldn't do it.' Well, I would, because it paid good money, so I worked.

She got her customers from the people who came into Gino's, neighbors, and some of her neighbors' friends. In some cases, she had to travel to the suburbs to do work for some of her customers' friends.

Marcia knew that she would have to take primary financial responsibility for herself and her child. Further, she understood that she would be unable to work full-time for several months after the birth of her child, so she planned to for this period by making as much money as possible and saving. She understood that, despite the fact that she had had a close relationship with her daughter's father for several years, she could not depend on on him for financial support, given his values, priorities, unemployed status and life style.

Her daughter was born in August of 1972. Marcia applied for supplemental financial assistance from the Department of Social Services and received \$69 twice a month. She was able to continue working part-time at Gino's. She also continued to do some sewing; however, this was no longer regular income because she didn't have as much time to sew.

After a few months she registered with the Board of Education as a substitute teacher for secondary education and continued to work on Saturday and Sunday at Gino's. She was able to have her case closed at the Department of Social Services. As a result of a fire in her building at about the same time, she moved to an apartment around the corner from her family. This allowed her grandfather, who lived with her parents, to come on weekends to baby-sit while she worked. This was the beginning of a pattern of child care assistance provided by her grandfather through the years. As she changed jobs and living arrangements, he adjusted his schedule and living arrangements to meet her child care needs.

My grandfather was a great influence and help to me. I gave him the key since he lived around the corner with my mother. Dinner would be ready. I was really spoiled.

Later, when she worked full-time and moved to another apartment, her grandfather continued to come on the weekends to care for her daughter and cook dinner. When she moved into a house, the arrangement with her grandfather was adjusted.

My grandfather moved in with us because he had been taking the bus two or three times a week to baby-sit and cook dinner for me. He vacuumed and put the dishes into the dishwasher. He was retired at that time, and in his seventies, so this was good therapy for him. So when we moved to the house I gave him his own room.

While living in this house, Marcia experienced a period of unemployment, and her grandfather pooled his resources with hers to make ends meet.

Return to Full-Time Employment

Even though Marcia didn't have a permanent job with the Board of Education, she managed to work every day of the school year. She also transferred to another Gino's a little further from her home for an increase in pay. With these two jobs, plus some sewing, she was able to

make enough money to support herself and her child. She could occasionally get money from Karen's father if she made it clear she really needed it. However, she could not count on help and felt she was on her own financially.

She provided child care for her daughter on week days through a baby-sitter who lived 15 blocks away. In addition, her mother was willing to help when her schedule permitted. Therefore, by working seven days a week at formal jobs and doing extra work, plus full-time paid child care and free back-up baby-sitting services from her grandfather, she was able to return to full-time employment. At the end of the school year she returned full-time at Gino's because substitute teachers receive no summer pay or benefits. She pursued this pattern of substitute teaching and work at Gino's until January of 1975 when she transferred her papers to Get Set (an early childhood program). She got a position as a social worker at one of the centers and combined this job with weekend work at Gino's. She also changed baby sitters to a woman she met through her mother.

My mother introduced me to a woman who had a pick-up baby sitting service for \$23 per week. They would pick her up and bring her back. This was a big help because they became so attached that they used to pick her up first in the morning at 6:50 a.m. I never had to dress her. I would send a week's supply of clothes on Monday. She would be the last to come home. That gave me a little leeway, so I could get dinner and everything ready before she came home.

As a social worker, Marcia made about \$6,600 per year plus fringe benefits. She felt less financial pressure because she was making a little more money, had a more permanent position and was able to do more things. Marcia had this position for about two years. It was during this period that she decided to rent a house and have her grandfather live with her. Marcia had to pay to get the house painted and repaired.

In addition, she had to pay for fuel to heat the house, and the price of oil was increasing rapidly. Shortly after moving into the house, the Board of Education began to lay off workers.

The school board said they were cutting centers and laying off people. I didn't have any seniority, so a social work assistant who didn't have the credentials, but had the seniority got the job. So here I am unemployed. I had bought a new car and had car payments, rent and everything. So here I go back to sewing. I sold Avon; you would not believe the amount of Avon I sold. I called and walked everything. I went for job interviews; either I was too qualified or under-qualified. I even applied for a job in a hotel. I told them I would be a hotel clerk or make beds. They said that I was too qualified to make beds. I applied for anything I thought I could do. I have always been able to adjust. I was selling so that I could make the \$96 car payments and rent. The problem was, could I make the hearing bills?

Marcia was not eligible for employment benefits. She was able to get limited assistance from the Department of Social Services and food stamps. This, combined with a contribution from her grandfather's pension, enabled her to make it until she was called back to another Get Set center.

A month later a friend who worked as an employment counselor told her about a job as a sales representative for a cookie company. She took a half-day off from work and went to the interview. She stressed her selling experience at Gino's and with Avon. The next day she got a call offering her the job.

They were paying \$9,000, and I had never cleared \$8,000 working for the school board, so I took it. They wanted me to work right away, so I took Friday off and started the job that Monday.

The company had a dress code, so Marcia got busy making clothes for herself.

Current Generation of Income and Organization of Domestic Activities and Child Care

Marcia's job as a sales representative requires that she not only sell to stores with accounts, but that she work to "develop" territory. This means that the sales person must approach establishments that might be interested in carrying the line of products--mom and pop stores, independent grocery stores, and large supermarket chains. In addition, she had to push new types of cookies and other products such as pretzels, potato snacks and low sodium products. As the company decides on item specials, the sales people are expected to inform customers so that they can increase the volume of sales. In addition, the sales representatives must meet the company trucks, unpack the store's order, and put it on the shelves.

As the economy has gotten tighter and food costs have increased, people have been less likely to buy extra food items. In response, the company has tried to stimulate impulse buying by increasing the displays near the check-out counters. Sales people are encouraged to aggressively go after additional shelf space and large displays. Each sales representative has a certain percentage of items to sell every 12 weeks. The district manager keeps daily records on how each representative is doing in relationship to quota. Regular newsletters are sent out and sales representatives who are doing well or poorly are mentioned by name. If a sales person is doing extremely well, he or she will receive periodic bonuses, a congratulatory letter, or both.

The first six months of employment is considered to be a training period. The new employee has no set territory and is not given a company car. They ride with other representatives, learn the job and fill in for people who are out.

When I took this job it was a hard adjustment. My time was longer, almost 24 hours belonged to Shaws. You don't have an office or anything. You are on the street all day long. They call you in the morning and at night to let you know what they want you to do, because they know the numbers from day to day and how much you are selling. . . . Sometimes I would have to go to Jersey. Sometimes I had to get up to leave at 6 a.m. and would get home at 8 p.m. dead tired. When I got the job, they said it wasn't a 9-5 job, but I thought maybe 8 a.m. or so to 5:15, but I got fooled.

Marcia had such a difficult time adjusting during the first months that two of her co-workers informed her that the company was thinking of letting her go if she did not improve.

Now I thought about this. First of all I was making good money. They had given me a \$1,000 adjustment when I went on territory, and I was making better. I had never been fired before so I just got my head together and decided that I was going to stay ahead of this man. I saw how many Blacks they had working. They had a Black girl before me, and they fired her. In one year I saw six people get fired and two of them were Black. They were not doing their work; they were not producing for a lot of reasons. Their attitude was poor; you know you can't have a bad attitude with these people. So if that man sent me a stack of reports to do this high, I had those reports back in his hand before he even asked. . . . That year I stayed so far ahead of the man it used to drive him crazy. If he said I want you to sell 50 potato strips, I sold them and got my \$25 out of it, too. By this time, I was starting to understand the job a little more. . . my salary increased to \$11,000 in a year, then it went to \$12,000. I thought I was doing pretty good. Now I make close to \$19,000 and you have an option for a bonus; sometimes these bonuses can be as much as \$1,400.

We were able to get some understanding of the pressure Marcia was under to make her quotas and keep her job. All of the sales representatives were constantly made aware of both the positive and negative sanctions imposed by the company. The newsletter kept all of them aware of each other's performance. Employees regularly saw co-workers fired for poor performance and "bad attitudes." They were positively rewarded through money bonuses and the possibility of promotions.

At the time she participated in the study, Marcia was in the process of buying a house. She was pushed to work as hard as possible to exceed her sales quotas. Even though the company expected the sales representatives to present a professional image, including a dress code, Marcia had no illusions about the work.

It is not an easy job. It is a labor job. I pack out cookies like those guys in the supermarket pack our cases. I pack out cookies on shelves on displays and wherever else. . . . The truck brings the product; I do all the rest of the work. I order it, and come back in two days and put it up. Now that's the most important thing. Guys ask me, Marcia, how do you do it being female because it is really a male job. But I know how guys are. They joke with you and call you names, but they don't curse at you because I don't allow that. I put myself in that position. When I go to a guy and present a program to him, I may joke with him, but the program is written down, and his bottom line is the profit. The other thing is being there. If the order comes on Monday, you have to be there on Monday. If it comes too late, I come in the morning. It is dependability that's the most important thing with these people. They don't want anything in the back room because times are so tight. They can't make money if something is sitting in the back room.

During the period under study, the country was in the midst of a deep recession. In Philadelphia, several large chains of supermarkets had gone out of business. Workers lost their jobs; the sales representatives of all the products carried by stores saw a drop in sales percentage points, and the companies lost money. Working in this climate, particularly as a sales representative for a cookie company was very difficult. It is difficult to imagine all of the physical energy that goes into this job and how Marcia organized her time and household to meet the requirements. On a typical Friday, Marcia was up by 6 a.m. She gets dressed and wakes the children. Her oldest daughter gets dressed while Marcia fixes breakfast. While she is eating, Marcia calls the dispatcher to find out what time the truck with her orders will reach

her various stores. She then gets the baby up and carries her and any other things she might be dropping off that day to the car (she sometimes sells items for a friend and makes a small profit). She drives to the baby-sitter, about five minutes away, drops off the baby and picks up her baby-sitter's son. She drives to her daughter's school and drops off both children. She spends a few minutes talking to other mothers. She drives to West Philadelphia to pick up her mother and drive her to work. She drives to her first stop and arrives at about 9 a.m. She usually uses the delivery entrance and goes into the storage room. Marcia finds her order and begins loading the cartons on a truck. Once loaded, she pushes the truck to the area she is shelving and gets a shopping cart. She opens the cartons checks the price list, pulls out a ticketer and puts prices on all the packages. If she says she has a 19-piece order, this means that she has 29 packages with about 16 items in each. The cookies and other items must be arranged on the shelves in a particular way; on some items, dates must be checked. She has to "break down" the cartons and put them in the shopping cart as she goes along so that she does not block the aisles. She takes everything back to the storage area and puts the cartons in compressor. In many stores she also has to run the machine. She repeats the process until all her orders are placed throughout the store. As the company expands its products, she has to cover more departments in the store. If she has a display (these are 8, 10 and 14 feet), she has to set it up or fill it if it has been there for a few days. She also has to make the price signs. She sees the manager and finds out if he wants to place another order. She lets him know how things are moving. In some stores, she goes in to take orders and fix shelves even if there has not been a delivery. In addition, if she sees a new store in her territory or one she hasn't

visited, she goes in to try to encourage the owner to carry her line of cookies. She lets the owner know what items and quantities might move best. If the truck is late, she waits for up to 15 minutes. If there is no parking lot and no space in front of the store, she helps unload the truck. In a morning before 12:30 she can make four stops.

Marcia's job requires that she be on good terms with the manager or owner. She has to be pleasant. As she walks through the store, she often talks and jokes with the workers and sales representatives from other companies.

After making her rounds, she goes home to spend time with her children, attend school-related meetings, fix dinner and prepare the baby's lunch for the next day. When she has finished putting the children to bed, she takes a nap and gets up between 12:30 and 1 a.m. to plug her order into the company computer in her bedroom. All orders must be in by 2 a.m. She has to be very careful with the order numbers and account numbers so that her customers get the right order. Then she sets her hair and goes to sleep.

Marcia seems never to waste a minute. She organizes her time so that she can do two or more things concurrently. Phone time is also ironing or cooking time. A stop at her daughter's school in the morning serves as time to catch up on school business or dropping something off for a school fund-raising event. As she is making her rounds of the supermarkets, she is also getting the best buys on her family's groceries and picking up or dropping off sewing or other things she may be selling.

December of 1982 was the first month that Marcia didn't make her quota. She attributes this to several factors: (1) her territory is in a very depressed area that serves a population with high unemployment, (2) her territory has a high crime and robbery rate and truck drivers

don't want to carry her orders so her truck is always the last one out; this means that she cannot unload until late in the day; and (3) stores in her area are closing down and the ones that are able to stay are ordering less. As the economy tightens, she is put under more pressure.

This detailed description of Marcia's job and organization of child care and domestic activities has been given to show the degree to which some types of work penetrate the household and dictate the organization of these activities. Insight is given into the management techniques that allow workers to permit this degree of penetration. Marcia must not only do extensive physical labor, despite her "professional title," but must also use her outgoing, pleasant personality to push the company's products and increase their profits.

On the weekends she does her major housework, spends time with her children, family and friends and gets ready for the next week of work.

The fringe benefit package of her job includes the company car, health benefits for herself and her children, and yearly and periodic bonuses determined by her sales volume. The car has been particularly useful for Marcia because she is able to avoid the expense of buying and maintaining a car.

Another interesting aspect of this case study is the various strategies Marcia has used over time to provide economic support for her household. Although she is no longer working at Gino's on the weekend, she continues to sew and sell a variety of times to earn extra money.

Comparative Summary

The four case studies have provided detailed information about strategies used by these female single parents to provide child care and and child rearing activities for their children at different stages in

their developmental cycles. A relationship has been shown between the organization of these activities and various income-generating activities.

The composition of their kinship/friendship networks, as well as the range and types of resources, services and information transmitted through them, shows wide variation. When these resources are combined with the formal and informal fringe benefit packages of their respective jobs and their utilization of various types of subsidies provided by the government, we are able to gain further insights into the bases on which they make the choice relating to their standards of living and life styles.

Two of the women discussed in this segment saw and used the financial assistance provided by the Department of Social Services as temporary help during periods of extreme financial difficulty. Such aid would not have been sufficient to help them maintain the standard of living they realized without some assistance from family and friends and the resources generated and saved from previous employment. The assistance they were able to get during these crucial periods enabled them to return to full-time employment and to provide not only economic support but also experiences for their children that will have long-term effects on their preparation for future participation in the labor force. This will be further discussed in Chapter VI.

The attention given to the process of transition to female single parent status further demonstrates the ways in which some of the factors that determine class location (natal family, education, occupation and employment history, kinship/friendship network systems, and content of exchanges that pass through them, opportunity structure available to the

person as an individual and as a member of a particular racial or ethnic group) condition the experience of female single-parent families.

Barbara and Marcia are both Black women who are mothers of two daughters. They both have high aspirations for their daughters and are willing to spend time, money and energy to help them realize their goals. Both mothers sought and utilized pre-school programs and, through the years, have ensured that their daughters have participated in a wide range of child rearing activities after school, on weekends and during vacations. They are actively involved in their children's schools and give keen attention to their academic progress. Both women exhibit "middle-class" consumption patterns and, thus, provide a "middle-class" life style for their families. They are deeply embedded in extensive social network systems of family and friends.

However, the processes through which they have provided these similar patterns of living vary. The degree of vulnerability to economic changes in the society and the relationship of these changes to the economic stability of their families differ. To understand these differences we must look to factors other than their current occupations and incomes. Barbara earns \$16,000 a year; Marcia earns a base salary of \$19,000 which is expanded to varying degrees by bonuses. However, the time involved and the amount of physical energy and stress related to their respective jobs differ. Marcia works long hours and is constantly under pressure to make her quota of sales. Her sales volume is directly related to shifts in the economic climate and the territory she is assigned by the company. In addition, bonuses and promotions are related to her sales quota. Since she provides the primary economic support for her family, shifts in income resulting from reduction in sales mean increasing the time and energy she devotes to other income-generating

activities. Her employment history demonstrates that if she is laid-off or unable to work for an extended period, she must combine these strategies with public assistance until she is able to return to full-time employment. The possibility of her being unable to find full-time employment has become increasingly reduced over the last few years because career development. Once she left the Board of Education and moved into sales, she increased her range of employment options.

Barbara works in a low-key medical center, close to her residence. Although she is technically head of her household, she received regular child support from her ex-husband. Her mother is a widow and is able and willing to provide her with free child care. Unlike Marcia, she doesn't have to include child care costs in her regular budget. Fluctuations in the economic climate do not directly influence her employment status or income. Her hours are regular, less extensive and require less mobility, physical energy and stress. In addition, the work setting allows her to bring her daughters to work if they are ill, rather than pay for baby-sitting services.

As demonstrated by the ways these women made the transition to single-parent status, the degree of economic support, types of services and help extended to them differed. Because Barbara's mother owned income-generating property and was willing to allow Barbara to use this at minimal cost, she was able to move into her mother's building while maintaining her family as a residentially independent unit. Marcia chose not to accept her mother's invitation to return home because she wanted to live independently.

In both instances, another adult from the women's natal families became actively involved with child care and help with domestic activities. Marcia's grandfather spent weekends with her when she

initially returned to work, and ultimately lived with her to help with child care, domestic activities, and pooling financial resources during periods of extreme financial resources during periods of extreme financial pressure. Despite this help, she had to rely on public assistance during periods of unemployment.

Barbara's natal family was more financially secure during the years she was growing up. Her mother remained at home until her children were older and then worked as a teacher's assistant. Her father was permanently employed and able to support the family and provide a parochial education for his children. They were able to finance Barbara's two-year training program as an x-ray technician and to support her until she was able to enter the work force.

Marcia's mother always worked; for the few years prior to Marcia's graduation from high school she worked in a candy factory. When she was ready to continue her education, her father was unemployed and her mother had resigned from her job to return to school. As a result, she had to work her way through college. In addition, Barbara was able to travel extensively both inside and outside the country while in high school as a member of her school's baton twirling team. The importance of these experiences has resulted in her making efforts to travel with her daughters. As the detailed discussion of the development of Barbara's current social network system reveals, many of the core members of her friendship network system result from relationships developed in the process of carrying out child related activities and friendships from high school and church.

Unlike Barbara, Marcia has always lived in racially integrated, middle income neighborhoods. The relationships she built through the years with her neighbors, both currently and in the past, combine both

instrumental and expressive elements. For example, right after the birth of her first daughter, neighbors from her old neighborhood, in addition to being supportive of her in other ways, helped to expand her list of customers to include friends who lived in the suburbs. Currently, her next-door neighbor, an older White woman, is a good friend who is very close to her daughters. Another White woman whom she met through the PTA is a close friend with whom she cooperates to sell a variety of items for extra income. Her oldest daughter's Girl Scout troop is also integrated. Marcia has relationships with the families of some of these girls, which include exchange of child care services and joint participation in the troop activities.

Barbara, although she attended racially integrated Catholic schools and enrolled her children in a wide variety of integrated activities, has always lived in predominantly Black, middle-income neighborhoods. Her closest friends and the closest friends of her children are also Black. However, in terms of information flow, both women are involved in socioeconomically and racially heterogeneous communication network systems.

The differences in these women's natal families' socioeconomic positions and life styles have resulted in very different employment histories and income-generating strategies they have had to employ to reach their career goals and generate income to support their families. The economic position and employment status of the fathers of their children and the degree of financial support and participation in child rearing activities have resulted in qualitatively different experiences.

Marcia's ability to reach academic and professional goals has always involved a great deal of effort and ability to be goal-directed. From early in her life, through her mother's example, she developed confidence

in her ability to reach goals. She entered the work force earlier than Barbara. She must take full responsibility for the financial support of her household because she cannot depend on regular child support payments for her children. She has taken a more aggressive stance to career mobility and extra income-generating activities because the standard of living and quality of life that she and her children are able to realize is directly related to the amount of income she is able to generate.

Barbara, on the other hand, although she has less education, has been less professionally mobile and earns less money, her primary work situation is less economically vulnerable. She is under less pressure to generate income; therefore, she doesn't engage in other income-generating activities. She is under less pressure and stress because of the kind of work she does and the knowledge that her ex-husband and mother are in a position to provide a financial safety net.

Maureen and Katie are White female single parents who are involved in career mobility. Like Marcia, Katie also had to receive assistance from the Department of Social Services when she made the transition to single parent. Unlike Marcia, she received limited emotional support or help with child care from her family. This, compounded by her family's unwillingness and limited ability to provide financial assistance, made the transition more difficult for her. Upon becoming a single parent, she not only had to change the way she generated income by applying for public assistance, but had to enter the process of restructuring both her "effective" kinship system and the composition of her friendship network system.

Katie received public assistance and other services and subsidies for three years because she felt it was important to nurse her child and felt uncomfortable leaving her infant with an unknown baby-sitter. She

had no friends or family that could or would provide child care. She, like Marcia, could not depend on the father of her child for economic support. The kind of work she had previously done was not in the kind of setting that would allow her to bring her baby to work. Katie's return to full-time employment was more difficult than Marcia's despite the fact that both women had relatively long work histories. The difference in her transition seems to stem from two factors: (1) she had been out of the work force for a longer period and, thus, had more difficulty reorganizing her time in response to the requirements of her job, child care and domestic activities, and (2) the original plans she made in deciding to return to work included continued assistance from the Department of Social Services under the Work Incentive Program. When this program was discontinued, she was unable to move out of an extremely difficult living situation until she learned of her eligibility for subsidized child care provided through joint funding from the government and the Urban League. Marcia, on the other hand, was able to get inexpensive child care services, supplemented by her grandfather.

The comparison of these two women demonstrates the differences in the composition of their kinship/friendship network systems and the types of resources and services transmitted through them during their transition to single parent. This conditioned the length of time and the degree to which they were dependent on government subsidies to provide the primary financial support for their families.

Upon return to full-time employment, it was not the level of education or the length of time they had in the work force that determined the speed of their career mobility. The most important factors seemed to be the sector in the economy in which they worked, the job-related information and training they received through their

professional network systems, and the types of benefits they received from their fringe benefit packages.

In comparing Maureen's transition to female single parent status with that of the other three women, it becomes apparent that the most important elements for her were the state subsidies provided by unemployment compensation and the types of resources, services and information exchanged through her friendship network system. These enabled her to gain access to the health care needed for prenatal care and birth of her daughter. These also enabled her to return immediately to the work force. The detailed discussion of the composition of her network system and the various types of material goods, services and information transmitted through her social network system, combined with the way the fringe benefit package was organized, demonstrates the crucial importance of the integration of these factors in determining the standard of living and quality of life she and her child were able to realize.

In reviewing the career mobility of all four women, it is clear that, despite difficulties, they have been able to effectively utilize their job situations for career mobility. This would have been impossible in all of these cases without the various supports they were able to get from the social network systems in which they were embedded and the access they were able to gain to different types of government services.

Concluding Statement

Examination of the single-parent experiences of these four women and the standard of living realized by their respective families demonstrates the importance of giving attention to the role of the state in the

experience of the everyday life of families. Further, it shows the serious limitations of analysis of family life that does not include the wider social context of the United States. The contemporary economic, political and social context structures the ways in which families gain access to the gross national product. This is realized on the micro-family level by the types of subsidies and the ways through which families establish eligibility for the various types of subsidies provided by the state. The types of state-provided resources and the ways individuals gain access to them can provide useful insight into some of the factors that condition the range and types of choices that people make in their efforts to support a particular standard of living and life style for their families.

A paradigm that might prove useful for examination of families from this perspective might be one that examines the ways in which the resources of the state, in the form of various types of subsidies, are integrated with the resources of the social network system and job-related benefits of the family. These variables can then be studied by examining how they are conditioned by personal attributes of the household head (education, values, patterns of social interaction) to ensure economic support for the household and child care and child rearing experiences for their children.

Female Single Parents: Working Full-Time Using Formal Education for Career Mobility (Sandra, Edna--Black Female Single Parents; Beth--White Female Parent

The three women in this section were all enrolled in college at the start of their participation in this study. By the end of the period of data collection, they had completed their programs. It was possible to

see the extent to which strategy of career mobility had enabled them to realize their expected career goals.

In all cases, the women were working full-time while attending school. They received no formal release time from work to attend classes. In addition, the fringe benefits of their jobs did not include payment for work-related or other types of courses. All of the women financed their educational expenses through government student loans and personal earnings. At the completion of their degrees, all of them were in the position of having to start repaying their loans.

The children of these women, at the start of the study, ranged in age from two and a half to 11. All were attending either nursery schools or public schools close to their residences full-time. The mothers attended school after work and, in two cases, this was combined with one Saturday a month. As a result, they had to make various types of arrangements to provide care or supervision for their children while they were attending classes. They had to make time in their schedules to complete class assignments. In addition to carrying out their income-generating, domestic, child rearing activities, and providing care for their children, they had to devote time and energy to their academic work.

All of the women expected their efforts to complete these degrees would result in higher incomes and career mobility soon after graduation. This did not prove to be the case. What follows is a brief discussion of the ways these three women organized their child care and domestic activities in relationship to their jobs and academic work and their experiences after completing their degrees.

Sandra: Black Female Single Parent; One Child, Age Two

Sandra was the mother of a two year old son at the time she agreed to participate in the study. She was working full-time at the Board of Education as a computer assistant, earning \$9,396 per year. She lived in the Wynnewood section of Philadelphia in a one-bedroom apartment several blocks from her parents' house. She was enrolled full-time in a non-traditional B.A. program at the Philadelphia branch of a large university. Her son attended a full-time day care center within walking distance of her home.

When she became pregnant she was 23 years old and attending Temple University full-time. She lived at home and worked part-time for a temporary agency. Several months before, she had resigned from a position in the accounts department of a large department store in order to devote more time to her academic work. As a result, she had no health benefits or medical coverage to pay for prenatal care and delivery.

Sandra's parents were very upset by her pregnancy and her refusal to have an abortion. Both parents worked full-time and were willing and able to pay her medical expenses and support Sandra and her child until she was able to return to work. They were upset and embarrassed when they learned that she had applied for public assistance and planned to pay her medical costs and support herself and her child through these means. Her mother described their response as follows:

I wrote a note and put it in her room telling her that her father and I had accepted the fact that she was pregnant and that we would start saving for the hospital bill. That she was to go to the doctor and to do whatever she had to do to have a healthy baby, and we would prepare to take care of her. . . . I was very upset that she applied for welfare because I felt we had put a lot into both of our children. I felt that welfare was one of the best things that there was, but I didn't feel that we needed it or

should have it. I was embarrassed by her having to accept something like that. It was something that I never told anyone.

The father of Sandra's child was attending college full-time and financing his education and supporting himself primarily on veteran's benefits. He was not in a financial position to accept full responsibility (nor did Sandra expect him to) for Sandra and her child. Although he was not enthusiastic about her decision to have the baby, he was willing to provide emotional support and did help financially when possible.

Sandra has always had an active social life. She makes friends easily and maintains relationships over an extended period of time.

She regularly calls her friends and sends cards on special occasions. Her network of friends extends from relationships she developed growing up in a church that had an active youth program to relationships developed in high school and her first year of college in upstate Pennsylvania and at Temple. She also developed close relationships with women she worked with through the years. One of these women is the godmother of her son.

Sandra lived at home for the first year after the birth of her son. Her parents and brother helped out with child care, and her mother continued to take primary responsibility for the domestic activities of the household. Her parents fully supported Sandra's decision to return to work and school. They felt that she would be in a better position to take care of herself and her son if she were able to complete her education. They were less enthusiastic about her decision to move into her own apartment even though it was close by.

At the end of the first year, Sandra learned of a position at the Board of Education. She informed the Department of Social Services that

she planned to return to work and shortly after she began working her case was closed. Upon her return to work, her parents assisted her with child care by providing care themselves and by paying for the baby-sitter and later for nursery school. In addition, they helped her with some of the expenses of moving into her own apartment. Her mother described this period:

When he was an infant, I picked him up after work from the babysitter across the street and took care of him. This meant I had to come straight home from work. I took him in the morning, I got off at 3 p.m. Sandra's father and I paid for the sitter. When he went to nursery school, we paid for a while. I like to shop for him for school. I'm always buying something for him. . . . Her brother does a lot for her; he takes her shopping, loans her money. . . . She is in that apartment because we helped her to get there and we are still helping her. If she had to pay rent, pay for all the food they eat and all of the clothes that Paul wears, she would never make it. . . . She knows what we do for her and she appreciates it.

In addition to the help she received from her parents, James (the father of her child) gave increasing financial assistance as his economic position improved. He took an active interest in his son, visited him regularly, visited his nursery school, took him out and ensured that he was included in his family's important activities. He and Sandra have worked out a parenting relationship with their son that remains constant regardless of shifts in their relationship. This includes regular visits, exchange of information relating to Paul, financial assistance that varies according to his economic situation and the fluctuations in Sandra's financial situation. They also participate in a wide range of child rearing activities--from trips, picnics, birthday parties, joint participation in decisions on schools, school visits, and meeting to discuss his academic progress. Although James lives in another part of the city, he visits and talks with his son regularly on the telephone.

If Paul is ill, he assumes the responsibility of driving him to the hospital and will stay in the apartment to help with his care.

I have given attention to Sandra's transition to single parent in order to provide a further example of the way in which some women have used the range of services and financial assistance provided by the Department of Social Services as a temporary means of financial support at a stage in their children's lives and their work history. Further, this case illustrates another pattern of integration of resources and services provided by the government and the kinship/friendship system. In this instance, the absence of fringe benefits was the primary reason she applied for public assistance. She felt it unfair to place her parents in the position of meeting the high cost of medical care related to the birth of her son. The father of her child was also being primarily supported through government benefits related to his years of service in the armed forces. However, although he changed his status from single male to father, because he was unmarried these benefits could not be extended to meet the medical costs of the birth of his son.

The comparison of the attitudes of people toward different types of government subsidies that serve almost the same function is also illuminated by this example. In reality, the total package of financial assistance and services extended to families under the G.I. bill is similar to those provided by Aid to Dependent Children. In fact, the latter is more extensive because it includes educational costs. However, the basis of eligibility is different. In one instance, it is seen as an earned right. In the other, it is viewed as an example of failure of a family to provide for its members and reflects negatively on the character of the household head.

Another interesting point is illustrated by the difference in the attitude of Katie's grandmother towards her decision to apply for public assistance. Because of the generalized economic crisis experienced by families during the Great Depression, the inability of a household head to provide for its members was not viewed as a personal failure related to family pathology, but to wider social forces. Government intervention was welcome and seen as a right of citizens. Since Katie's grandmother saw federal Aid to Dependent Children from this perspective and placed it in the same category as Social Security, another non-stigmatized federal program, she felt no embarrassment about Katie's receiving public assistance.

The various attitudes people hold toward different types of government programs that provide financial support are related to the ideology of the "self-sufficient American family." The eligibility criteria of various programs act as a method of differentiating families in relationship to this "ideal" type. The range of Social Security benefits extended to families prior to eligibility because of age carries no stigma. This may be because they are viewed as a government response to family crises that are out of the control of the individual (death, illness). Programs in the category of Veteran's Assistance and unemployment compensation carry no stigma because they are seen as earned rights based on prior work. Once eligibility is established, the degree of government intervention in the everyday life of families receiving them is limited, and public response is not negative. However, programs of financial assistance and related services that fall under the category of public assistance carry with them the stigma of failure of the individual or family to function, as a result of a flaw in their character. Thus, the degree of government intervention in

the personal life of the family is extensive, and public response tends to be negative.

The three cases of mothers who received public assistance show that, despite the crucial assistance provided through this means, they would have been unable to move successfully back into full-time employment without the help provided in either services, financial help, or both by their families or friends. Once they returned to the work force, the fringe benefits, in addition to providing health benefits, made a qualitative difference in the standard of living that two of the three women were able to provide for their families.

Work, School, Child Care and Domestic Activities

After Sandra returned to work and moved to her own apartment, she enrolled in a full-time program to receive a B.A. in Human Services. Financially things were difficult for her. Although her parents were supportive and she received some financial help from James, she was primarily responsible for support of her household. Since this was her first apartment, she had to purchase furniture and other necessary items. To do this, she used a charge account that she had established when she was working. She gradually purchased other needed items through her earnings. Her parents continued to pay for the full-time child care she needed and her mother continued the pattern of picking up Paul after work and taking care of him until Sandra returned.

Sandra was able to pay tuition and other educational expenses through student loans, parental help and her earnings. Since she enrolled in a non-traditional B.A. program designed to meet the needs of people who worked full time, classes were held in the evenings from 5:30 to 8. Each course met once a week. The required Human Service seminar met one

Saturday a month and included periodic meetings with the instructor to discuss the student's research project. In this way, students were able to work full-time and maintain full-time student status. In addition to the credits earned at the University, students were able to receive life experience credit if these experiences were related to a career in human services. This enable them to finish the requirements for the degree more quickly.

Sandra attended classes two evenings a week. On these evenings her mother picked up Paul, gave him dinner and took care of him until Sandra returned. At first she did this at her own house, but later they agreed that it would be best if she brought him home so that she could get him ready for bed before Sandra returned. She also took care of him on the Saturdays Sandra had class.

Sandra studied and did course assignments in the evening after putting Paul to bed and on weekends. During the winter, often her brother or her father met her at the bus stop and walked her home. Her brother also picked her up after class whenever he was able.

Provisioning the Household and Domestic Activities

Sandra's domestic activities and household purchases are structured both by her time and financial constraints. Since she works and goes to school full-time during the week, she does most of her housework (cleaning, laundry, shopping) on the weekend. There is a laundry in the basement of her apartment house, and she usually spends Saturday morning doing the week's washing. She also does her shopping for the week on weekends by walking to the supermarket several blocks away with Paul. Her brother takes her in his car when he is available.

In Sandra's budget, food and rent take priority. She carefully

plans her meals and purchases for the week and buys in small quantities. She realizes that she pays more in the long-run, but she is unable to afford the large initial outlay of money to buy in larger quantities or to take advantage of sales at the local supermarket. In addition, because she doesn't have a car, she is unable to take advantage of specials offered at markets further away.

Both Sandra and Paul eat lunch away from home during the week. Except for weekends and vacations, she plans for two meals a day. Sandra cooks three times a week. She tries to cook enough on Sunday to last Monday and Tuesday. She makes a point of keeping eggs and butter in the house because they can serve as the basis of many meals. Another frequent item on their menu is chicken; it can go a long way for the two of them, can be fixed in a variety of ways, and is the least expensive meat.

To meet other household expenses such as electric and telephone bills, Sandra juggles her resources in relationship to her most pressing needs. She uses credit to take up the slack for needed purchases and very rarely for impulse buying. She also uses her charge for planned large purchases such as furniture.

Sandra is dependent on full-time child care services and is very selective about the setting. She says,

I have Paul from 6 until 7 a.m. Then I have him from 5:40 to 8. Therefore, child rearing takes place at nursery school. So it is important where he is during the day and what he is getting. . . . I see child rearing as the composition of home, school and family. When I have school, his waking hours with me may only be from 6 to 7 because it is my mother who receives him when he comes home from school.

When Paul started school, her parents took on the responsibility of paying the tuition. Each parent paid for two weeks. However, when they

had some financial difficulty and Sandra tried to meet the cost for a short while and found she was unable to afford the \$30 each week, she turned to James. For Sandra this was a very difficult step because it is very important to her to be as financially independent as possible. Even though she gets help from her parents and James, she tries to stretch her income to meet her living expenses. She can accept help when it is offered but finds it very difficult to ask for help.

Professional Mobility

Sandra was able to complete her B.A. in two years. This had made possible by her willingness and determination to extend herself beyond the requirements of her full-time job, other family responsibilities, and through the financial support she was able to get from her family and student loans. She had planned to continue working at the Board of Education while she looked for an entry level position in a company or agency where she could utilize her training in both business and human services. In addition, she planned to start exploring programs for an M.A. degree, with the goal of beginning this while working full-time. She was optimistic about finding this type of position because of her excellent communication skills in both writing and speaking, her employment history and her newly acquired B.A. degree.

About a month before she graduated she was informed that the Board of Education was going to lay off workers in her department and that she would be included in these cuts. She was concerned about this, but because she had planned to look for another job after graduation and because she would be eligible for unemployment compensation, she was not too upset. A few weeks after graduation she was unemployed, applying for food stamps and Medicaid, and looking for work.

Job Hunting

It is useful, given the differences in the realization of career mobility experienced by the women previous section, to give close attention to Sandra's experience in the job market. Although she is just one example, some of her experiences are germane to the problems that faced other female single-parents looking for professional employment in Philadelphia in 1981 and 1982 when the city was experiencing serious economic difficulty and the country had high levels of unemployment.

In discussing her experiences looking for work after one year of not being able to find "suitable" full-time employment, she stated,

They treat prospective job seekers with an attitude that reflects that it's a buyer's market for jobs.

She saw this as being related to the fact that there is high unemployment in Philadelphia. A year ago she was going to the unemployment office to open a claim, and a week prior to my visit she had just reopened her claim after a short period of employment. In addition, she planned to move to a larger apartment, but was still in the same place. She had thought that by this time she would be making concrete plans for graduate school, but this was not in the foreseeable future.

Sandra supported herself and her son through this period first through complete dependence for essentials on unemployment compensation and related benefits, with some assistance from James and her parents. Later, after having little success in finding the kind of position she was looking for, she was able to get a three-month temporary placement through a temporary agency in the customer service department of a retail company. This position ended a week before our discussion.

In looking for work, Sandra used the newspaper, the Urban League's employment office, two other employment agencies, and an employment/vocational service she saw advertised on television. She felt

that if she had been willing to accept any kind of employment she would probably have been able to find some type of full-time work. However, she was looking for an entry level position that had some job security and career mobility possibilities.

In discussing some of the reasons why she felt she was having difficulty, she explained why she didn't see her status as a single parent as being a factor. She said that she handles interviews in such a way that her status as a single parent doesn't arise. She has always done this because she doesn't want prospective employers to feel her single-parent status would interfere with her attendance at work or being able to devote extra time to the job. She is able to do this because her mother is willing to take time off from her job to take care of Paul. Her mother feels that, given her length of time at her present job and the security of her position there, she is in a better position to do this than is Sandra. Her mother is also willing to provide child care if Sandra has to work late. The two problems that might arise for other single-parents and that might influence employers' decisions to hire them have been addressed by her mother.

Sandra is being selective at this point in her career to address the problem of a "choppy" education and work history. She feels she needs an opportunity to prove herself over a period of time. In discussing her experience with the two employment agencies, she stated that she felt one of the problems was that they worked on commission. She felt they were less interested in placing her in a position that met her needs than in just getting her a job. Their strategy was to send applicants out as many times as possible, whether or not the position met the requirements of the applicant. When Sandra realized this, she became more selective.

All in all, Sandra found the process of looking for work an expensive one. In addition to buying appropriate clothes for interviews, she had to spend money for carfare and child care if the interview was at a time when her son was home and her mother was unable to care for him. When this happened, she had to spend about \$5 in carfare and other minor expenses for each interview. In addition to these problems, the general climate of the job market in Philadelphia was difficult. She pointed out that many of the people who graduated with her, who had been working were now unemployed.

The way Sandra eventually reentered the job market as a full-time worker was through the temporary job she had with the retail company. She was called back to this position part-time (25-28 hours per week). She earned \$480 per month. Three months later, using this and other work experience, she was able to get a job with an insurance company as an adjuster. This position had a three-month training period during which she earned \$150 per week. She was pleased to get this job and plans to use the training and the built-in professional mobility to realize her career goals. In all, it took her about two years to get the kind of job she was looking for to begin realizing her career goals. If she had not had financial help from her parents and James, she would not have been able to resist taking jobs that would not meet her long-term career goals. She also would not have been able to accept part-time work or to afford to take a job with a low-paying training period.

Clearly, several problems confront female single-parents on a tight budget and affect their viability in a tight job market: (1) In applying for jobs that might require extensive training or extended hours, they have to assure employers that their parenting responsibilities will not interfere with their performance on the job.

(2) Every interview they go to requires an expenditure of money, and if it is scheduled for a time when their children are at home, this includes costs for baby-sitting. If they are short of money, they tend to be more selective about interviews; this may limit their possibilities of finding work. (3) In response to financial pressure, they may accept jobs that are "not useful in building the experience they need to realize their career goals. As a result, it becomes increasingly difficult to obtain positions that provide entrance into the career tract they wish to pursue. (4) The more extensive the financial safety net for the family, the better able the applicant is to be selective in job choice. In all cases, the women expected to move into better positions as a result of obtaining bachelor's degrees. It was this expectation that served as the primary reason for returning to school. When they were able to make immediate professional movement, they felt frustrated and disappointed.

One of the most important factors determining the success of people in finding employment is the economic climate of the society and the unemployment level. The fewer jobs available and the greater number of qualified people seeking employment, the more difficult it becomes to find work.

The experiences of the seven women discussed in this chapter suggest that one of the most important variables for job mobility is the opportunity for advancement available either in or through the current job situation. For some types of employment, an advanced degree serves as an essential prerequisite for the position; however, the degree itself does not ensure professional mobility. Although this seems apparent, many people think a degree will automatically open doors. In some instances this may be the case; in a tight job market, when unemployment levels are high, this becomes less true.

In the following discussion, I will focus on the two other women who completed their course requirements and obtained their advanced degrees by the end of the data collection period. Primary attention is given to their experiences after completing their degrees. Less attention is given to their life styles, child care and domestic activities, and organization than in the previous segments.

Edna (Black Female Single Parent); Two Children, Ages Nine and Eleven

Edna worked full-time while pursuing a B.A. degree in a non-traditional program full time. She has three children, two of whom live with her. Her oldest son has lived with her aunt in Baltimore since he was an infant. She is primarily responsible for her daughter and son who live with her. She receives no child support from the father of her children or help with child rearing or child care. She has no family in Philadelphia but maintains a close relationship, through frequent telephone calls and visits, with her extensive kinship network in Baltimore. She can rely on her family for emergency financial help and help with child care and child rearing during periods of difficulty. For example, the children usually spend most of their summer vacations with her family and, during the extended school strike, she sent them to stay with her aunt. After the strike, they agreed that it was best for the children to stay in Baltimore to complete the school year. She is particularly close to her aunts because her mother is dead, and they were very supportive of her and her younger brothers and sisters after her mother's death. In addition to her family, Edna has an extensive network of friends in Philadelphia. Five of her closest friends live in the same apartment building as she. Three of these women also have children. They often exchange child care services, participate in child rearing

experiences and meals, and lend each other small amounts of money. They often spend unscheduled social time together and move freely through one another's apartments.

* Edna was working full-time at the Department of Social Services as a case worker when she decided to complete her B.A. degree. She selected a non-traditional program because the classes were in the evening and on Saturday and because she could get credit for her work experience. This would enable her to complete the program in a shorter period of time. She took student loans to pay the \$1,300 per semester tuition. She planned to use this degree either to move into an administrative position with another service agency or as a stepping stone toward becoming a therapist. She also saw it as a prerequisite for graduate school.

With a great deal of financial difficulty and time and energy expenditure, Edna completed her degree after two and a half years and began the process of looking for another job. She had many years of work experience in the social service area, including community organization and direct service delivery in Baltimore, Washington and Philadelphia. Shortly after completing her degree, she learned of a position through a friend at a large treatment center in Philadelphia. This was precisely the type of position she had hoped to obtain. The center offered extensive training in family therapy and did a lot of community outreach. It was also well known for its interdisciplinary approach to treatment. Because the institute was well known for its training of therapists, it offered low salaries for entry level positions. Edna had been working for over five years for the Department of Social Services and had a relatively secure position and fringe benefit package. She was earning \$16,000 per year and could expect regular increments. To accept the new

position, she would have to take a \$6,000 decrease in pay. Although Edna knew a person who had worked in this institute and received training there for three years, after which she was able to get a position at another agency with a starting salary of over \$20,000, she was able to accept this position because she could not manage to support her household and repay her student loans with such a drastic salary reduction. She decided to continue to work for the Department of Social Services and enroll in the M.A. program at the same university where she completed her undergraduate work. She also began to take state and city examinations for administrative positions. At the end of the data collection period, she was still working for the Department of Social Service as a case worker and feeling unhappy about her inability to make a job change. Her salary, however, had been increased to \$18,000 as a result of normal increments for all case workers under contract, not as a result of her obtaining a degree. She is hoping that after completing her M.A. degree, she will be able to move into an administrative position in this or another social agency, either by passing an exam or a job change.

Edna's experience provides another example of the types of factors that determine the female single-parent's ability to take risks in the job market. Despite the real luck she had in being able to find this position, she was unable to take the job because of financial constraints. Clearly, in her case, it was not "fear of success" or reluctance to change from a familiar job setting that determined her decision to remain in a job that was become increasingly stressful.

Beth (White Female Single Parent; Two Children, Ages Nine and Eleven)

Beth is the mother of two children, a daughter and a son. She lives in an attractive stone house in one of the fringe suburbs of

Philadelphia. At the time she became a participant in the study, she was in the process of completing an M.S. degree in early childhood education at a Catholic college near her home. She was also working full-time as a teacher in a Head Start program in Center City. She was earning \$10,000 per year, which was supplemented by regular child support payments from her children's father. Despite this extra income, Beth had a great deal of difficulty making ends meet and often had to turn to her parents or sister for financial help. Although her family was willing and able to help her, she found it difficult to find herself constantly in financial difficulty.

Beth was deeply involved in her family network, which included her parents, one older married sister and her family, and a younger sister and two brothers. She was particularly close to her youngest sister. They spent social time together, talked frequently on the phone and were generally very supportive. Her best friend, Georgia, lived next door. She was also divorced and the mother of four children. Her two youngest children, a boy and a girl, were close friends of Beth's children. Her two teenage daughters were readily available for baby-sitting. In addition, she had several other female friends with whom she maintained close relationships. They spoke to each other on the telephone and sometimes arranged to get together.

Beth is a highly organized, energetic, verbal woman. She carefully plans and organizes her time and pays close attention to details. She once described herself as a "compulsive planner." She is also determined to do whatever extra work is necessary and get as much training as she must in order to become more financially secure and professionally mobile. That was the motivating force in her decision to return to school.

Beth financed her education through student loans and her earnings. She did extremely well and was encouraged by her advisor to explore the possibility of a Ph.D. in child psychology. Beth was interested and did look into several programs, but decided to explore other possibilities. One of Beth's most difficult problems in making career choices is that she "really loves her work and is very good at it. However, the salaries paid to early childhood teachers in programs outside the Board of Education tend to be relatively low. It is difficult to get a full-time job at this level with the Board of Education because there are a limited number of position and competition is high.

Shortly after graduation, Beth left her job at Head Start to accept a position in a community-based, early childhood center jointly funded by Catholic Church funds and another social agency. She was able to use her years of experience as a teacher in a Catholic elementary school, plus her years of experience in Head Start to get this position. Her starting pay at this center was \$12,722; however, since she lost two weeks pay because she was hired late and was not paid on holidays when the center was closed during her six-month probation period, her actual pay was \$11,000. In addition, during the probation period she received no medical insurance. She was also docked in pay for any lateness regardless of the reason. Unlike her previous job, she had to work during the summer. This meant making different arrangements for the supervision of her children.

Shortly after taking this job, she realized that she had not really increased her earnings. Despite these difficulties, she enjoyed working at this center more than the previous one. It was a community-based center that invited parent in put, and the quality of the program was better. Despite these advantages, Beth decided to leave at the end of

the year to look for more lucrative employment. To this end, she explored job possibilities in the private sector and looked into a computer course which she ultimately took. She was also able, through a contact made through a friend, to make extra money as a consultant on early childhood education. During this period, she became deeply involved with a couple she met through one of her former male friends who was exploring the possibility of opening a child care center in Center City. They planned that the center would provide both infant and early childhood experiences for working parents or parents who wanted such a setting for their children on a part-time basis. The husband in this couple was a psychologist and his wife was a nurse. They had a house which they were converting into the center. Beth spent a great deal of time helping them plan the center, renovate the house, and prepare literature. It was agreed that once they opened she would work there full-time. The center would be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., but Beth would work only from 9:30 to 4:30. She would be paid \$13,000 to start, but would have no fringe benefits. Later, as the center grew and they were able to expand to other locations, her pay would increase and she would direct the early childhood education program in all of the centers.

She decided to take the risk. If the center was successful, she would be able to increase her earnings and do something she loved. If the center failed,

Push comes to shove my father will help me out or I
can get unemployment compensation.

This brief discussion of Beth's efforts for career mobility further demonstrates the difficulties many women face in realizing their goals for career mobility after completing an advanced degree. One of the major difficulties that Beth had in finding lucrative employment resulted from the type of work experience and training she had. While

early childhood education is recognized as important in helping children to better realize their academic potential, it is notorious for its low salaries. Interestingly, it is a growing field because of the rapid increase in the number of mothers with young children who are entering or reentering the job market. Many of these mothers are looking for a setting that not only provides full-time child care, but also educational activities and experiences.

Beth's efforts to enter other fields in the private sector at an entry level position were not successful because she was competing with people who already had education and training in these areas in a tight job market. She was, however, able to make some additional money as a consultant after completing her M.A. through referrals made by friends. In this way, her experience and advanced education were useful to her in generating income.

In the discussion of her experience in trying to set up a child care center with another couple, it is possible to see the importance of a financial safety net in risk-taking in the job market. Beth could rely on regular child support payments and the fringe benefit package of her children's father to provide supplemental income and to cover the health needs of her children during the period they were trying to establish the center. In addition, she knew that if the center failed, she could rely on her father and unemployment compensation until she was able to find another job.

The center opened in September 1982. It started with six-full-time children and one part-time child. Most of the children were under 18 months (several under 8 months). They were not old enough for the types of nursery school activities in which Beth had experience and training. Since she was the only working directly with the children, she found

herself spending most of the day changing diapers, feeding and holding babies. She felt overworked, isolated, boxed-in and frustrated as she tried to meet the needs of these infants. After several months, David resigned his job to assist her. However, instead of helping with direct care, he spent more time with administrative aspects of the center.

The couple and Beth were very disappointed with the progress the center was making. Margaret was also feeling overworked and frustrated because she took care of the babies before going to work in the morning and relieved Beth when she returned in the evening. They had all put a lot of work into planning and publicizing the center and had expected it to grow quickly because they were willing to provide care for children below the age of two, and they had a unique combination of training and skills for this type of early childhood care. To relieve the pressure on Margaret and Beth, they decided to hire a part-time worker to help Beth, and David agreed to help more with direct care.

Despite their efforts, the center never became financially viable. David and his wife decided to relocate to upstate Pennsylvania so that David could take another job, and Beth found herself unemployed. She felt discouraged and angry about the way David and Margaret handled the problems that emerged during the final months of the center's existence. After this experience, she decided to explore more traditional avenues of employment. She reactivated her application with the Board of Education as an early childhood teacher and applied for entry level positions in private companies in Philadelphia.

She was unemployed for about 6 months. Later she was able to get a job with the Board of Education as a kindergarten teacher. She started this job and enrolled in another computer course at Temple. She also explored the educational psychology program there and plans to apply for

their Ph.D. program.

A review of the work histories and career mobility of these seven mothers suggests that higher education, i.e., B.A. or M.A. degrees, serves only as a prerequisite for entrance to certain types of positions, but cannot bring about career mobility in and of itself.

Summary

The seven female single-parent families examined in this chapter further demonstrate the importance of expanding the variable beyond education, income and occupation to explain differences in the standard of living and career mobility of female single-parents. In each of the cases, there was a different pattern of integration of resources from the kinship/friendship network system of the mother from those emanating from the state and personal earnings. The combination of all these determined the standard of living realized by the family and the relative success of the mother in realizing her career goals.

Unlike the previous chapter, as a group the families in this chapter show a greater degree of dependence on the state and on the members of their social network systems for the essentials of life and child care. There is also a wider variation within racial groups in the content of the resources exchanged between the members of their social network systems.

Further, the work histories of these mothers reveals important differences in the degree of vulnerability of the family to shifts in the economic, social and political climate of the country. All of these factors coalesce to determine the experience of these women in the job market and the standard of living realized by their families. The following chart provides a closer examination of the differences between

the Black and White female single parents in three areas: (1) the degree to which the resources exchanged within the social network system acted to expand or maintain the standard of living realized by the family, (2) the degree of vulnerability to wider social, economic and political forces felt by the mother in her primary work situation, and (3) risk-taking in the job market.

The social network systems of the three White female single parents are socioeconomically and racially heterogeneous. In two of the three cases, the kinship/friendship social network systems acted to expand the standard of living and range of choices available to the family. In the third case the professional network system of the mother was a crucial variable in her career mobility. However, the types of resources exchanged through her kinship/friendship network system maintained, rather than expanded, the standard of living and options available to the family. Thus the family's standard of living was primarily determined by the mother's income-generating strategies.

Two of the three women, Katie and Maureen, employed job mobility strategies that did not involve risk-taking in the job market. Therefore, the high unemployment rates in the city during this period did not directly affect the stability of their work situations or their career mobility. For Katie, however, changes in the funding of social services directly affected her reentry into the full-time labor force.

Beth's (early childhood teacher) attempt to change fields and to realize career mobility through the establishment of a new child care service, was directly affected by the "tight job market" in Philadelphia. In her case, her family was in a position to provide an economic safety net for the family that allowed her to take a major risk in the job market.

Table
5-4
White Female Single Parents
Social Network System and Degree of Vulnerability to
Changes in the Social, Economic and
Political Climate

Name	Type of Social Network System	Function of Social Network System	Degree of Vulnerability to Social Forces	Risk-Taking in Job Market
Maureen	Heterogeneous	<u>Expanded</u> std. of living realized by the family	Stability of work situation not determined by changes in public policy	Risk-taking not necessary for mobility in her field
Katie	Heterogeneous	<u>Professional</u> network system <u>expanded</u> through career mobility. <u>Kinship/friendship</u> network system maintained standard of living	Stability of work situation not directly affected by changes in public policy. Reentry to work force directly affected by changes in public policy	Job changes did not involve risk-taking
Beth	Heterogeneous	<u>Expanded</u> standard of living realized by family	Stability of work situation not directly affected by changes in public policy. Changes in economic climate affected degree of success in career mobility.	Kinship/friendship network system allowed for risk-taking in job market.

The four Black female single-parent families show a wide range of variation in the four areas examined. Three of the mothers had heterogeneous social network systems. One mother had a homogeneous social network system. Three of the four mothers' (Barbara, Marcia and Edna) social network systems acted to maintain the standard of living realized by the family. One network system (Sandra's) was able to provide the financial support and child care services that enabled the mother to complete a B.A. degree. This kinship/friendship network system was also able to allow the mother to be selective in the type of employment she accepted after being laid-off from her job, and to accept a position that offered her a built-in career ladder, but a low starting salary.

In the area of vulnerability to shifts in the broader economic, political and social climate, two families were directly affected--one by loss of job, and the other by reduction in promotional opportunities and income.

Finally, with regard to risk-taking in the job market, two of the mothers' career mobility was not dependent on this type of strategy. In the case of the remaining single parents, one (Sandra) was able to successfully employ this mode of career mobility. The other mother (Edna) was forced to turn down a position that would have allowed for professional advancement because she could not adequately support her household on the reduced income.

In summary, a comparison of the social network systems of these Black and White female single-parents reveals that the social network systems of all the White female-single parents expanded the standard of living realized by the family, but to varying degrees. This variation was directly related to the socioeconomic position of the members of

Table
5-5

Black Female Single Parents

Social Network System and Degree of Vulnerability to
Changes in the Social, Economic and
Political Climate

Name	Type Social Network System	Function Social Network System	Degree Vulnerability to Social Forces	Risk-Taking in Job Market
Barbara	Hetero- geneous	Social network system <u>maintaining</u> standard of living realized by family	Work situation not determined by changes on social policy	Risk-taking not necessary for career mobility
Marcia	Hetero- geneous	Social network system <u>maintaining</u> standard of realized by family	1. Income reduced by changes in the economic stability of population served. 2. Career mobility determined by amount of sales, reduction in sales reduced chances of job mobility	Risk-taking not necessary for career mobility
Edna	Homo- geneous	Social network system <u>maintained</u> standard of living by family	1. Work situation stable. 2. Great increase in degree of stress related to job.	Unable to take risk job mobility

Table
5-5 (continued)

Name	Type of Social Network System	Function of Social Network System	Degree of Vulnerability to Social Forces	Risk-Taking in Job Market
Sandra	Hetero- geneous	Social network system expanded standard of living realized by family	1. Work situation unstable (became unemployed). 2. Difficult reentry to labor force	Kinship/ friendship network system and the state enabled risk-taking in job market.

their respective kinship/friendship network systems. A review of the Black female single-parent families shows that, in three of the four cases, the kinship/friendship network systems of the mother acted to maintain the standard of living of the family.

Further, the data show that, with respect to vulnerability to shifts in the wider economic, social and political system, when employed, the White mothers' work situations were less directly affected. In one instance (Beth), these changes were felt by the family at the point the mother elected to leave her job in an attempt to realize professional mobility.

In two of the four Black female single-parent families, these shifts in the wider social context directly affected the employment situations of the mothers. In one case, the result was unemployment; in the other, it resulted in a reduction of income. For a third mother, Edna, a caseworker for the Department of Social Services, it changed the nature of her job and created additional stress.

The differences in the function of social network systems in expanding or maintaining the standard of living realized by female single-parent families is similar to the pattern demonstrated in the previous chapter. However, for these families because they were in a lower socioeconomic position than the previous group, the impact of differences in the content of flows exchanged through the social network system had more far reaching consequences. For example, for the families presented in Chapter IV, these differences were reflected primarily in variations in the range of comfort and options available to the family for improving the quality of life. For the families presented in this chapter, the content of resources exchanged through the social network system determined the degree to which these families were dependent on

the state for the essentials of life, and the degree to which the mothers could reduce the economic vulnerability of their families through career mobility.

Differences in the content of resources held by the social network systems of these mothers are reflective of the differential placement of their natal families and friends in the class structure. Given the unequal distribution of Blacks and Whites on the social indices of income, occupation and education, it is not surprising that the types of resources shared by members of the Black and White families' social network systems as a whole show this type of variation.

CHAPTER VI
FOUR FAMILIES RECEIVING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Several of the themes introduced in the previous chapters are more sharply brought into view through examination of the four female single-parent families receiving public assistance. Through the review of their standards of living, life styles and relative success in realizing career goals, it is possible to see: (1) the extension of social network systems beyond the geographical boundaries of the neighborhood and city and the importance of contemporary communication and transportation systems in maintaining these relationships; (2) the pattern of increasing centralization of early childhood activities in day care centers and pre-schools as mothers become more actively involved in preparation and participation in the labor force, and the relationship of these to the development of heterogeneous social network systems; and (3) the importance of the types of material resources, services and information exchanged through the kinship/friendship network systems.

This chapter focuses on four families receiving public assistance in integrating state subsidies with the resources transmitted through their social network systems. Attention is given to the ways in which these sources of income are conditioned by the personal attributes of the mother (values, education, work history and patterns of social interaction) in determining the standard of living, life style and future opportunities of family members.

The category is composed of two White and two Black single-parent families. At the initiation of the data collection, the public assistance. All of the mothers were attending school and planning to return to the work force full-time. One mother was enrolled in a training program for key-punching and other office skills. The other three women were in the process of completing a B.A. degree. All four had had previous work experience. Despite the fact that all of the families were primarily dependent on public assistance, they showed important variations in their standards of living and life styles. An examination of their previous work histories, natal families and social network systems is useful in helping to understand the different experiences of these families.

All four women were the first members of their natal families to receive public assistance. In all four instances, the natal families of the women were economically stable homeowners. However, the source of this stability varied. In the cases of the White female single parents, the natal family of one owned a small company in New York State, and her mother was an interior decorator. The other family alternated between owning and managing small restaurants in New York State and her mother worked both in the restaurants and as a bookkeeper for other small businesses. In the cases of the Black female single parents, in one family the mother worked as a beautician and later as a housekeeper; her father was a blue collar worker. Her parents separated when she was three, but developed a pattern of cooperation around their daughter. During the study, he was living in Washington, D.C. and was the manager of a large supermarket. In the other case, the family was primarily supported through the father's work for the federal government and additional work as a plumber. Her mother was a college graduate but

TABLE
6-1Female Single-Parents Receiving Public Assistance
Household Composition

<u>Black Female Single Parents</u>			<u>White Female Single Parents</u>		
Name	Type of Residence Members of Household	Career Preparation	Name	Type of Residence Members of Household	Career Preparation
Mary, Age 30	House 5 children Mike, 12 Anthony, 9 Mark & Andrew, 7 (twins), Annie, 3. Her mother on weekends (job during week)	Training Program, Key punch & Office Skills	Linda Age 28	House Linda and 1 child Luke, 4	College, B.A. Program (com- pleting last 2 courses), Sociology
Sarah Age 31	House Sarah & 1 child, Nnandi, 3 Housemate, Marie	B.A. program, 3rd yr. Eng. major	Lena Age 27	Apartment in 2- family house. Lena & 1 child, Tammy, 6	Completed 3rd yr. in B.A. program, re- creation therapy and dance.

Position at Completion of Study

Mary: completed training, working full-time, receiving supplemental Pub. Asst.

Sarah: completed B.A., working full-time, no longer receiving public assistance.

Linda: completed B.A., working full-time, no longer receiving public assistance.

Lena: On leave of absence with plans to return to school part-time. No longer receiving public assistance.

worked in her field. Occasionally she worked in the dietetic department of a mental hospital to add to the family income. Currently her sisters live in New Jersey, her mother is dead, and her father lives in South Carolina. All of the women were closely involved with members of their natal families. The degree to which their natal families were willing and able to provide financial or other material assistance varied, as did the socioeconomic positions of their families.

In Philadelphia, the friendship network systems of the women differed. Two of the mothers, one Black and one White, were embedded in extensive network systems that exchanged services and goods such as clothes for children. The other two women had less extensive friendship network systems. In the case of the White mother, this was the result of her relatively recent move to Philadelphia. In the other case, the mother lived with her five children in the same low income neighborhood of West Philadelphia in which she grew up. Although she had known the people in her neighborhood for many years, her aspirations for herself and her children differed from those of her neighbors. Her relationship with them was warm, friendly and helpful; however, there was little social visiting or joint participation in neighborhood or child rearing activities.

The kinship/friendship network systems of these four families exchanged different types of material resources, services and information. This conditioned the range of choices available to them, and the integration of subsidized government and community services with other elements of their standard of living packages. All the women were embedded in socioeconomically heterogeneous network systems and, as a result, had access to an expanded range of information and services. The combination enabled them to realize a standard of living higher than would have been

possible if they were restricted to income and services provided by the Department of Social Services.

It is important to emphasize that these four families are particular cases. In no way is it suggested that the composition of their kinship/-friendship network systems or the content of exchanges made through them is typical of either welfare recipients or female single-parent families. The central point to be gleaned from this discussion is that the Department of Social Services and related forms of assistance do not provide a financial base or range of services sufficient for women with children to provide a moderately comfortable standard of living for their families. In addition, these supports alone do not enable women to prepare themselves for occupations that will allow them to realize long-term, middle income employment, essential if the children in these families are to live in financially stable households are are to be given the opportunity to develop their potential. The experiences of the three mothers attending college shows that the type of public assistance granted was not designed to encourage attendance at a four-year college. Changes in the eligibility criteria for full-time, subsidized child care changed during the first term of the Reagan Administration; under the new criteria, the mother was required to work at least part-time in order to have full-time child care. Further, money was not provided for college materials and books or transportation to and from school. Both of these items were covered for the mother attending a training program. The two women who were able to complete their degree programs were able to do so only through the help of their family and friends. In all these cases, the range of experiences and developmental opportunities for the children was greatly expanded by support from family and friends.

The central theme running through the discussions with these women was that the public assistance they received was not enough; yet, they were restricted by the eligibility requirements from engaging in activities that would either regularly expand their incomes or better prepare them for professional employment. All the women were looking forward to being in a position to support their families without public assistance through full-time employment. Although these women may be special cases in terms of the range of resources at their disposal, recent research states that they do not differ from other public assistance recipients in their desire to get off and remain off welfare (Harrison, 1979). They may, however, be special in the sense that three of the women were embedded in social network systems that enabled them to become self-supporting.

Mary: Black, Female Single Parent, Age 30; Five Children, Ages 12, 9, 7, 7, and 3

I want a job. I want to be on my own. I have gotten the impression from my mother and people around here that, since I am a mother on welfare with five children, I have no other life but to remain on welfare and to take care of these five children; but I always had the idea that I could have a better life...I have to be able to have another life, but this other life that I dream about also has my children included.

Mary and her children live in a two-story row house in a low income area of West Philadelphia. Her block is sandwiched on one side by a major street that has small businesses and a high incidence of crime and violence, and on the other sides by streets containing row houses in poor repair with transient populations. Her particular block, however, carries the distinction of being inhabited by a stable population of low-income homeowners. Mary has spent most of her life on this street. Her immediate neighbors are older people who have been friends of her mother for many years. Many of the other houses on the street contain

extended two or three-generation families; as a result, there are many children on the block.

Although Mary has known most of her neighbors for many years and maintains a cordial and helpful relationship with them, one quickly gets the sense that she and her family live on the block, but not in the block. For example, Mary takes care of neighbors' babies for short periods of time, but she never requests a similar service from them. She is fond of an older woman across the street who is ill as a result of alcoholism. She goes with this woman to the medical center around the corner, shops for small items and medicine for her and stops into see about her frequently. She knows many children who live on her street, but ensures that her children spend a limited time playing outside by purchasing items that are designed for indoor entertainment. She also enrolls them in programs and takes them to activities outside her immediate neighborhood. This pattern of structuring her relationships with her neighbors causes them to view her as someone they can ask for small favors. In turn, they inform her of community incidents and things relating to her children that are relevant to her life.

Mary is a verbal, warm and bright woman who has strong ideas about what she wants for herself and her children. She has had many ups and downs over the past 12 years in the process of trying to gain skills for full-time work.

I want them all to go to college. I don't want them to be like I was, to drop out of school and spend half of their lives sitting in their house with nothing to do. I can see where my mistakes are. Many times I will walk to-----Hall with them; they have free movies there on Thursdays. I'm always calling to get them into some kind of program. I go to movies with my children; I go to schools with them, ride bikes with them. I don't want them to hang around the house and do nothing.

When Mary became a participant in the study, all her children were attending school, and she was in the final stages of completing a key-punch and office skills training program at a private vocational school. Her mother was paying the tuition. Her eldest son attended public school, and her three other sons were going to Catholic school. Their tuition was being paid by their father and paternal grandmother. Her daughter was in a subsidized early childhood program for which Mary paid \$5.00 per week.

Mary and her children were living in her mother's house. Her mother was working as a live-in housekeeper for a female single-parent family approximately one-half hour away from home. Given her work schedule, she was only home three days a week and on vacations. However, she had a close relationship with her employer, who was also friendly with Mary; thus Mary and the children were free to visit during the week. On occasion, the three year old stayed over night with her grandmother. In reality, most of the time Mary lived alone with her children.

The primary source of financial support is the Department of Social services. Mary receives a grant for herself and her children, food stamps of approximately \$207 per month, and Medicaid, which covers medical and dental expenses. In addition, during the winters of 1981 and 1982, she received fuel grants of \$162. The children are eligible for the lunch program at school, and when she is in vocational training, she receives money for child care for her youngest child, as well as carfare and money for books. During the years she received public assistance, she has been able to work twice for relatively short periods of time. The first job she had was about two years after the birth of the twins. Their paternal grandmother cared for the three youngest children while she worked three days a week as a home health aid. During this period,

her public assistance grant was reduced. She left this job when the children's paternal aunt helped her find a full-time job as a receptionist and file clerk in a law office. During the six months she held this job, she continued her former pattern of child care and changed her status at the Department of Social Services to supplemental assistance. She was forced to stop working when her relationship with the children's father ended and she became pregnant with her fifth child.

Mary has maintained relationships with the grandparents of her first child and the father, grandmother and aunt of three of her children. In addition, she has continuously had the support of her mother and father. It is useful to see how these supports, over the period she has been receiving public assistance, have enabled her to prepare herself for employment and to provide experiences, opportunities and material resources for her children. It is also important to note how changes in these relationships directly affect the material quality of her family's life. The following statement explains how she sees the role her network system plays in supporting her family's standard of living.

I receive public assistance, but public assistance is not enough to allow me to live with any level of comfort. To make ends meet for me and the children requires somebody else on a regular basis.

Mary's organization of child care, child rearing and domestic activities is time and energy intensive. Through careful time management, close budgeting, planning and comparative shopping for all family and household needs, she is able to provide close supervision for her children, well-balanced meals, training for herself, a solid education, and a wide range of activities for the children. In addition, she provides a neat, well organized and attractive home environment.

Mary began receiving public assistance a year after the birth of her first child. At that time, she decided not to return to high school, but

to take an office skills training course at a vocational center. She was living at home with her mother; both of her parents cooperated to provide financial support for Mary and her son. The family of the child's father also gave gifts of clothing for the baby.

Initially, her mother paid for the training materials, baby-sitting, and carfare that allowed Mary to attend school. However, after a few months these expenses proved to be too much. Mary began to miss days at school because her mother couldn't pay the baby-sitter or carfare. Upon learning of the family's financial difficulties, the vocational counselor at the center advised her to apply for public assistance.

Support Provided by Mary's Social Network System while Receiving Public Assistance

What follows is a chronology of the ways in which Mary integrated resources from the Department of Social Services with those received through her social network system during the years she was primarily dependent on public assistance for economic support.

1. When Mary applied for Public Assistance, she lived in her mother's home. At that time, her mother was still paying the mortgage. Mary used financial grants to pay her mother room and board for herself and her child. Mother and father gave emotional support, gifts for the child, and financial help during periods of financial pressure. Paternal grandparents maintained a positive relationship with Mary and child, gave gifts of clothing and toys on special occasions.
2. When her son was almost two, Mary began a long-term relationship with Frank and later had her second son. In order to avoid friction in this relationship, she interrupted her

relationship with Mike's grandparents. After the birth of Anthony, she continued to live with her mother. Frank made child support payments directly to the Department of Social Services. Mary increased her room and board payments to her mother. She stayed at home to care for the children. Frank's mother and sister developed close relationships with Mary and Anthony. Her mother continued to give emotional support to Mary. Both sets of grandparents participated in child care and child rearing. Mary was responsible for most of the domestic activities in her mother's house (shopping, cooking, cleaning). Frank's mother and sister gave gifts of clothing and other items to Anthony. Mary's mother and father gave similar items to both children. Occasionally, Frank would give Mary small loans or gifts of money if she was having difficulty meeting her expenses.

3. When Mary became pregnant with the twins, she moved with both children into Frank's house. She continued to receive public assistance for herself and both children. She bought all the food for the family, did all the domestic work, and made the monthly payments on the washing machine and dryer that Frank was able to buy with his Sears charge account. In addition, she bought standard items for the house and took care of personal expenses for herself and the children. Frank paid gas and electric bills plus child support to the Department of Public Services. Both sets of grandparents continued the previous pattern.
4. Frank went into the service shortly after the birth of the

twins. Mary moved back into her mother's house with the four children for a short period. She paid rent to her mother, bought all of the food for the family. Again, paternal relatives and her parents continued the previous pattern.

5. Mary moved back into Frank's house, got a part-time job as a home health aid three days a week. Upon reporting this, her grant was reduced. Frank's mother cared for the three youngest children while she worked. Frank helped with expenses for the house. Mary met all of the other house expenses and needs of the children through her part-time job, public assistance and help from her family and Frank's mother and sister.
6. Frank returned home. Mary got a full-time job through Frank's sister. She changed her status to supplemental assistance for her oldest child. She worked for six months; Frank's mother cared for the children.
7. Relationship with Frank ended. Mary had a major rupture in the relationship with his mother and sister.
8. Mary returned to her mother's house. She had to stop working to care for the children and was expecting her fifth child. She had to re-apply for full financial assistance from the Department of Social Services.

The pattern until 1981 was as follows:

1. Frank paid child support payments regularly to the Department of Social Services.
2. The three youngest boys spent at least two weekends a month and several weeks in the summer with Frank and his family.
3. When the boys were ready for school, Frank and his mother paid for Catholic school.

4. During the summer, Mary's mother took Mary and the children on a short vacation (three to five days). Frank's mother took the three boys on a vacation (excluding the oldest and youngest children).
5. Mary's mother provided a good deal of help in purchasing clothes for the oldest and youngest children and for major extras for the children (she bought all of the bicycles) and most of their more expensive toys.
6. Mary's father moved to Washington, but stayed in regular contact with Mary and the children through phone calls and visits. He occasionally sent gifts for Mary and the children and gave major presents to the children at Christmas.
7. Mary returned to school to learn key-punching and office skills. Her mother paid the tuition.
8. In 1980, Frank and his mother attempted to gain legal custody of the three youngest boys. Mary's mother and father paid for private legal services to help fight the custody case and went to court with Mary. When she won the case in 1981, Frank and his mother stopped paying tuition for the children, but continued the established visitation pattern.
9. Mary, through careful budgeting and help from her mother, managed to continue to pay tuition for the boys until the end of the school year. However, she had to send the boys to public school after that.
10. Mary re-established her relationship with Mike's paternal grandparents during this period. As a result, during his brother's visits to their grandmother, he visited his

grandparents, and his grandfather has become an active participant in providing activities for him.

Although Mary is dependent for basic subsistence on the Department of Social Services, the standard of living realized by her family is made possible by regular assistance from the children's relatives, most of whom are stable wage earners. When there are changes in any of these relationships, this directly affects the family's living arrangements and the kinds of child rearing activities available.

Mary completed her training course at the end of the summer of 1981. She spent most of the next year and a half looking for full-time employment, practicing her typing to improve her speed and improving her reading and writing skills. Examination of the ways in which she approached these provides insight into her feelings about her preparation for the job market.

Although she had successfully completed her course and the school she attended had a placement service, Mary didn't feel very confident about being able to navigate the job market. She felt anxious when she filled out job applications, particularly in answering questions about her education and work experience. She had preparation for interviews as part of her course, but still felt nervous about this aspect of job hunting. In addition, she felt her reading and writing skills needed improvement. She addressed these problems in several ways. She set aside one day a week to fill out applications at large companies. She regularly called the placement office of her former school and looked through the want ads. She also practiced handling job interviews with me and shared responses from her applications to decide how best to follow up these possibilities. She addressed her concerns about reading and writing through regular weekly Bible study with a Jehovah's Witness

missionary. Mary made it clear that she had no intention of converting, but she did enjoy the discussion, and the weekly reading and writing out the answers to study questions.

As months passed without finding employment, Mary became very discouraged and depressed, but continued to try. Later, the school found her temporary full-time employment in the Xerox room of a large university. When the temporary period ended, she was offered a permanent position which she gladly accepted. During the time she worked, her status was changed to supplemental assistance, and she continued to receive food stamps and Medicaid. All of the children were attending public school. She depended on the older boys to take care of the twins and her daughter until she returned from work.*

* Several months after the data collection period, Mary was forced to stop working because of difficulties with her boys. They began to be truant from school and all of the children's grades began to decline. After several visits to their schools and careful consideration of the options in her neighborhood, she decided that, since there was no structured after-school program and no one she could rely on to supervise them after school, she had to find employment that had hours that would allow her to see the children off in the morning and meet them when they returned from school.

Lena: White Female Single Parent, Age 26; One Child, Age 6

"The welfare thing is really a source of discomfort for me. I feel I have been on for too long and I would like to get off. I would just like to find work."

These are the words of Lena, a female single parent who had used different degrees of public assistance as part of the income-generation strategies she has employed at particular points over the past five years. The discussion below illustrates the importance of the subjective dimension of child care, child rearing and life style in shaping the range of

choices employed to generate the income necessary for the economic support of a female single parent. The discussion also demonstrates the degree to which the personal attributes of the mother (values, education, work history and patterns of social interaction) can condition the standard of living, life style and future opportunities of family members.

Lena became a participant in this study about a year after moving to Philadelphia from a small town in Virginia. She was living on the second floor of a two-family, semi-detached house in a residential area of Germantown. Marie, the owner, lived on the first floor. During the period they shared the house, the women developed a very close friendship. Even though their apartments are separate, they move freely between them. Marie is single and has no children; however, despite the differences in their family status and responsibilities, the women provide emotional support for each other and participate in social activities together. Marie is very fond of Tammy and is willing to baby-sit and often participates in child rearing activities with the family.

Lena's and Tammy's present living situation represents the last in a series of alternative living arrangements Lena experimented with over the past six years. Lena met her husband while she was attending a state college in upstate New York. She was majoring in recreational therapy, and he was majoring in early childhood education. They were married during her second year of college, and Tammy was born in their first year of marriage. Lena took a leave of absence to stay home and care for the baby, and her husband continued to go to school full-time. His family supported them until he graduated.

While in upstate New York, the family lived in several communal houses organized around the principal of shared living expenses, domestic work and mutual support of house members. Although these arrangements

were not fully successful, both Lena and Jim were interested in continuing to explore this alternative life style. To this end, despite the difficulties they were having in their marriage, they arranged to visit six collective communities in other parts of the country. It was their intention to settle in the one they felt best fit their family's needs and style of collective living. While they were making these visits, the problems in their relationship intensified, and they decided to have a temporary separation. Jim decided to go to Oregon, and Lena was faced with three choices: (1) to return home and live with her parents, (2) to move to Massachusetts, and live close to her sister and apply for public assistance, or (3) to live in one of the communities they had visited. All were shaped by her feeling that it was important for her to care for her baby during this early period in her life. She decided that the community in a rural area of Virginia was the best alternative. She selected this particular community because, unlike the others, it had a family with children. Unfortunately, by the time she arrived, that family had moved.

The community was comprised of eight people. They supported themselves by collective farming, hammock-making and bee-keeping. In the warm months, they farmed and during the winter, they worked in the farm's collective hammock-making shop. Lena describes the community as one of very hard working, frugal people. It was not unusual for members to work 11 hours a day. They lived very simply and kept a shelf where members selected clothing. They shared community resources and work. No one received spending money. Since Lena was the only member with a child, they didn't share child care. Instead, they arranged her work in such a way as to allow for child care. She did less of the outside farm work and more of the work in or close to the house. She did all the cooking

and cleaning three days a week and the canning. She also did more of the wood cutting because this activity was close to the house. In the winter, the entire community shared equally in domestic work and hammock-making. The one domestic activity not carried out in the community was washing clothes. They decided it was more efficient to take clothing to the laundromat in town.

Lena remained in regular contact with Jim during the year and a half she lived in this community. They spoke frequently on the phone, and he visited several times. They agree that, since all their financial needs were met through the community, it wasn't necessary for him to send any money. Lena also maintained contact with her oldest sister in Massachusetts and with the rest of her family in New York.

Although Lena had a close and good relationship with members of the community, she decided that, with no other children on the farm and very few outlets for her other interests, it would be best if she and Tammy moved to the closest town. This required a total re-organization of her income

-generating and child care activities. The first nine months Lena lived in town, she shared an apartment with a nursing student and arranged for Jim to send \$50 per month to help with her daughter with several other mothers and began to develop relationships with other people in town. In this way, she was able to create a part-time job for herself as a gardener. She earned money by doing gardening for 10 to 15 people. This was supplemented by public assistance. The mothers in the play group and other friends took care of Tammy while Lena worked, in exchange for reciprocal child care. Through a combination of shared living expenses, part-time work, financial assistance from her husband and

public assistance, she was able to provide economic support for her family and the type of child care and child rearing experiences she felt important.

After nine months, Lena moved to a large house in the same town. The owners arranged to rent the house completely furnished for \$100 per month. Lena expanded her part-time work to include teaching a yoga class, management of co-op nursery school, and movement classes for children. She was able to utilize skills she had developed in college and dance classes.

This was the first time since the birth of her daughter that Lena lived alone. She describes this period as follows:

That was the first time I felt like a minority as a single-parent. I didn't have a whole lot of support. I couldn't afford a baby-sitter; I couldn't go out at night.

During that period, Lena and Jim decided to separate permanently. He moved back to the East Coast, and Tammy spent part of the summer with him and his family. Lena felt that, given this decision and Tammy's age, it was important for her to finish college and make long-term educational arrangements for Tammy. She applied to schools that offered a major in recreational therapy and selected a university in Philadelphia which offered a double major in recreational therapy and dance. She planned to finance her education through educational grants and loans and to support her family by part-time work, and if necessary, public assistance.

Lena moved to Philadelphia during the summer Tammy was five. The move was made possible in several ways: (1) she arranged to have Tammy spend most of the summer with her father; (2) she made arrangements through a friend of a friend to stay with her while she looked for an apartment because she knew no one in Philadelphia, and (3) through the combination of money saved from her part-time work and loans from her

sister and friends, she was able to buy a used car from a friend for \$250.00 (she still has this car) and to buy furniture for the house she was renting for \$150, and to rent a truck to move. The move was accomplished in two trips.

Once in Philadelphia, she found her apartment in Marie's house in several weeks. She began looking for a school for Tammy and work that would fit into her school schedule. During this time, she supported herself with the help of friends. Tammy was taken care of by her father.

This was the first time in many years that LEna had lived in a large city. Looking at the public schools in her area, she felt, given Tammy's previous experience, that they would be overwhelming for her. She found a private school in her area and was able to get a partial scholarship, paying the remainder of the tuition by working in the after-school program. Since it was not possible for her to arrange for the same kind of flexible part-time work she had created for herself in Virginia or to find work that would allow her to attend school and fulfill her commitment at Tammy's school and her child care responsibilities, she applied for public assistance. She describes her first year in Philadelphia as being one of the most difficult years of her life. "I had not time to form relationships, and I had no money." At one point she felt so isolated and overwhelmed by living in the city, going to school full-time and being responsible for every aspect of their lives without the support of an extensive network of friends that she thought of moving to Massachusetts to live with her sister. She had no friends except Marie upon whom she could depend or exchanged child care services.

The following September she registered for school under the assumption that her financial aid package and loans would be the same as the previous year. After the first month, she learned that her grant had been reduced

by \$1,000. Since the financial aid was based on her status as a full-time student and she had no way of paying the additional money, she had to stop attending school. In addition, she found it extremely difficult to be solely dependent on public assistance. She hated going to the office twice a month for her checks, and the questions and attitudes of the caseworkers; all-in-all, she says, "The whole thing was very humiliating."

At that point, she made the decision to arrange her life to return to school the following year part-time and to look for part-time work that would fit into her schedule at Tammy's school. She was finally able to find two other part-time jobs, one as a waitress and the other as a part-time gym teacher. With these jobs, plus regular child care payments from Tammy's father, she was able to stop receiving public assistance. She plans to complete her last year of school over a longer period by taking a few courses each semester.

Sarah, Black Female Single Parent, Age 31; One Child, Age 3

I always feel like it's up to me to keep everything going. I do get money from public assistance, but that's not enough to even cover it, so I get loans to help with tuition, and if I'm very careful in my budgeting I can meet my expenses.

Sarah is a petite, energetic, verbal mother of an equally energetic, verbal three-year-old son. When she became a participant in the study, she was sharing a three-story row house with Connie, a single, working professional woman. The house is located in an area of Germantown that is undergoing gentrification. The particular block where she lives is in the process of change. Some of the houses have been restored or totally renovated. Others are either well kept or in run-down conditions. The residents of the street range from marginally employed or low-income working families to stable, middle-income families. The residents are also racially and ethnically heterogeneous. There are many children

living on this narrow street. In the winter, their numbers are increased by the movement of other children to the public elementary school at the other end of the block.

The house Sarah lives in is partially renovated. It was rented to Connie with an option to buy. While considering this offer, she decided to rent part of the house to Sarah for \$162 per month with shared heating and utility expenses. Sarah has two bedrooms on the second floor, and Connie has the third-floor and an additional room on the second floor. They share the rest of the house. Although they occasionally share meals, they purchase their food separately. Each woman is responsible for the cleaning of designated shared space and for her own rooms.

The relationship between Sarah and Connie is friendly but not close. Connie is fond of Nnamdi and will occasionally baby-sit or take him with her to visit friends and relatives. However, the women rarely do social things together and do not have mutual friends.

The primary source of financial support for Sarah's family is public assistance. She receives \$260 per month, plus \$90-\$120 per month in food stamps and Medicaid. During the winter, she also receives a fuel grant through the Energy Assistance Program.

When Sarah agreed to participate in this study, she was a full-time student at a local college, and her son was attending the full-time early childhood program on the campus of her school. At the end of the data collection period, she had graduated from college with a B.A. in English, was working full-time at a bank, and her son was in elementary school.

This female single parent was able to move from primary dependence on public assistance to full-time employment to provide economic support for her family through a combination of several factors: (1) government subsidies (educational grants and guaranteed student loans), (2) subsidized

full-time child care (Title XX), (3) her prior work experience and her determination to complete her education and return to the work force full-time, and (4) the long-term support of her kinship/friendship social network system.

The following discussion will show the integration of all these factors in Sarah's transitional experience. She became pregnant when she was 27 years old. She had been working full-time since graduation from high school and had been living in her own apartment for approximately nine years. Although she had recently ended the relationship with her son's father, she decided to have the child because she felt she was in a stable economic position and was ready to be a mother.

At that point in time, she had been working for a federal agency for nine years. She had reached the top of the career ladder for high school graduates in the personnel department and had recently transferred to another department. She had also completed several courses at the community college to better prepare herself for this position. She knew that the extensive fringe benefits attached to her job would take care of her medical expenses and that the combination of vacation time, maternity leave and savings would allow her to stay home with the baby until she found appropriate child care.

In making her plans, Sarah knew that she would have to be responsible for financial support of her household. None of her relatives or friends was in a position to provide full-time care for the baby when she returned to work. However, she felt that by the end of her 10-month maternity leave, she would feel comfortable leaving him in a child care center.

During her pregnancy, Sarah received a great deal of emotional support from her friends and two sisters. Many of the things she needed for the baby were provided through the showers her friends gave for her.

Although her sisters lived in New Jersey, they were helpful. Her next-door neighbor, married with four children, was another important source of support and advice during this period, and after the birth of her child.

Several months after her son was born, Sarah learned about a continuing education program for women at a local college. This program was designed to help women over 25 return to school. They provided academic counseling and support services which included information about financial aid and child care. Sarah was very interested. She knew that without a B.A. she would not be able to move much further in her present job. Although she did her job well, she didn't enjoy it and wanted to make a career change. In addition, the longer she stayed home with her son, the more important she felt it was for her to be there. The advice of her family was mixed. Her father felt that she shouldn't leave a stable job. Her aunt and sisters, although unable to provide financial support or regular child care, were willing to help as much as they could if she decided to return to school. Her next-door neighbor encouraged her to return to school and offered to baby-sit. In discussing this situation and her decision, Sarah states:

I felt it was so important for me to be with him.
I was into the whole developmental process. I read
and did things to stimulate him. I liked that...then
I decided to go to school. I sat down and made a
goal for myself, that by the time he was ready for
kindergarten, I would be finished my B.A.

At that point, Sarah applied for public assistance. She arranged for a financial aid package that included educational grants, student loans and work-study to be applied to her academic costs. The final \$117 she needed to begin the program was given to her by a friend's mother. Her next-door neighbor kept her promise to provide child care.

The discussion of Sarah's transition to single-parent status and the process through which she decided to return to school show the importance

of her prior work history and social network system in making both of these decisions. It also demonstrates that Sarah is very goal-oriented and a careful planner.

Once she entered college, she organized her life to enable her to provide good child care for her son and adequate time for study. Both of these key elements of her life style were made possible through the utilization of government subsidies and the expansion of her social network system. For example, after she moved to share the house with Connie, the counselor in the continuing education program helped her get her son into the early childhood center on campus. His participation in this program was made possible through Title XX funds and her payment of \$7 per week. After enrolling her son in the center, Sarah became a member of the Board of Directors. Through her active participation in the center, she made friends with other mothers with whom she exchanged child care and child-related information. She also exchanged information about courses and services that proved useful to her academic program.

Sarah also developed relationships with other students through her work-study job and in classes. Some of these people became key members of her social network system. For example, a graduating senior she met in one of her classes during her first year gave her his typewriter when he was graduating. A friend she met at her work-study job invited her to join a Third World Women's literary group. Participation in this club helped her develop friendships with other female writers with whom she could share her work.

Finally, her move to share the house with Connie enabled her to extend her child care support in several ways. Connie was willing to help occasionally with child care, and Sarah became very friendly with the family that lived two doors away. They were willing to baby-sit for

her on short notice; the older children in the family were willing to watch and play with Nmandi when he was outside. This enabled Sarah to have more uninterrupted time for study and domestic activities.

The following is a list of some of the other ways members of her kinship/friendship network system helped her:

1. Sarah has never had to buy clothing for Nmandi. Two of her friends who have older sons have passed down clothing. As a result, clothing expenses are limited to shoes and underwear.
2. A friend she met at the day care center lives three blocks from her. She gave her a ride to campus almost every day during the last two years of school. Sarah and Margaret also exchange child care services.
3. Sarah's aunt lives several blocks away. She was willing to baby-sit occasionally and give small, short-term loans (\$20-\$50) during periods of financial pressure.
4. Her sister, who lives in New Jersey, was willing to give short-term, small loans (\$20-\$50) and sometimes provide child care.
5. A childhood friend from New Jersey made clothes for Sarah when needed.
6. Several other friends were willing to make small, short-term loans (\$10-\$20).
7. Her father, who lived in South Carolina, gave emotional support with phone calls and visits. He also occasionally sent money.
8. Sarah also had four other mothers with whom she regularly exchanged child care services.

Thus, through a combination of government subsidies, loans and various types of help from members of her kinship/friendship network

system, Sarah was able to complete her education by the time Nmandi was ready for kindergarten.

During her final semester, Sarah began looking for work. She was able to use her previous work experience and education to get a part-time job in a bank. This became full-time several months later, and she was able to withdraw completely from public assistance. Despite her success in completing her degree, Sarah was very disappointed when she was unable to find a job in her area of interest and training. She was also discouraged by the fact that her wages were no higher than before. Because she was determined to work full-time as soon as possible, she took this job and continued to look for other full-time work.

Linda: White Female Single Parent, Age 28; One Child, Age 4

There is always a double-edged sword from welfare agencies, in order for you to receive a certain amount of money, they tell you how you must live, that's implicit...The big one [message] was not being able to be in an academic, four-year program, but having to be in vocational training. That is discrimination.

This statement was made by Linda, a White, female single parent who had been receiving public assistance for about three years. It was made when she was completing the last two courses for her B.A. degree at a university in Philadelphia and working as a volunteer in an agency that provided legal information for women. Her son was enrolled in a full-time day care center. The family was embedded in an extensive social network system that exchanged a wide range of services and information. This single-parent family will be used to illustrate the ways in which the types of information and services exchanged through an extensive social network system can determine the standard of living and life style realized by a family receiving public assistance.

Linda provides financial support for herself and her son through public assistance and regular child support from her son's father. Her son is not included in her public assistance grant or on her Medicaid card; however, he is included in her food stamp allotment. His medical needs are met through a clinic that has a sliding scale based on the family's income. Since Linda is supported primarily through public assistance, his medical costs are low (roughly \$3 per visit).

Linda developed this strategy of income-generation when she separated from Luke's father. At that time, Luke was 18 months old, and she was attending college full-time and was already embedded in an extensive kinship/friendship network system. Immediately after leaving this relationship, her family and friends helped her move into an apartment close to the house in which she previously lived. She was able to make a smooth transition to living alone with her son while continuing her education with the help of her family and friends. The child care arrangements she made with her friend Brenda remained the same. Luke's father kept regular contact with Luke and arranged to have him spend two days a week with him. The pattern of exchanging child care services with two of her other friends remained constant. Her parents continued to make regular trips to visit her from New York (at least once a month) and they continued to telephone her (at least once a week). They also helped her through gifts of money and items for her house. A year later, through the help of her parents, she was able to move into a two-story row house in the same neighborhood. Her parents decided to buy this house, which she rents from them, and Linda pays the expenses for maintaining it.

A brief description of Linda's work history and a discussion of the types of exchanges that are transmitted through her social network system follows.

Linda is a very bright, verbal and active woman. She grew up in a politically active family which encouraged the children to discuss and critically examine national and international issues. After she graduated from high school, she decided to work in a voluntary international service agency instead of going directly to college. As part of this program, she lived and worked as a community social worker in a working-class neighborhood in Bristol, England for two years. She received 15 pounds in a week for living expenses and worked with the children in the neighborhood. She worked with another social worker teaching life skills (cooking and light carpentry) and organizing activities and trips for the children. At the end of this period she returned to New York and lived with her parents. She was able to get a job through one of their friends as a teacher's aid in a school for emotionally disturbed children. She was earning about \$8,000 per year. While she was living and working in New York, she developed a strong relationship with a group living in a community house in Philadelphia. Her initial contact was made through her cousin who was living there. After making regular and frequent visits, she decided she would continue to work, save some money, and move to Philadelphia at the end of the year. This marked the beginning of the development of her social network system in Philadelphia.

The house I was living in had a lot of connections in Philadelphia. It was a group of people who knew each other and had a large network, so by living in that house I got introduced to a lot of people living around Philadelphia. There were about two or three groups and those were connected to about two or three more groups of people. I am still connected to that same group of people in one way or another.

Many of the people in this network system were artists and were politically active. Through her involvement with this group, she was able to get a job managing a branch of a large bookstore, meet many artists and attend the openings of their shows. She was also able to meet Tom, her son's father, and develop the relationships that form the foundation of her current network system. It was during this period that Linda began to develop her skills as a potter.

Later, Linda moved out of the community house to live with Tom who owned a nearby. While they lived together, she set up a pottery workshop in his basement and worked in his leather store. They supported themselves through the proceeds from the store. This pattern continued through the birth of her son. When Luke was 15 months old, Linda decided to return to school. She arranged with her friend Brenda, who had a child about the same age, for child care. She financed her education through a combination of educational grants and loans. Later, when her son was ready for nursery school, she was able to enroll him in a good full-day program, the cost of which was subsidized by Title XX funds.

Current Standard of Living

While Linda was a participant in the study, she belonged to a friendship network system comprised of about 10 men and women and their children. Some of the members were married; others were single with children. In addition, she had other friends whom she met through school, her son's day care center and other activities. As a result of these relationships, many of which she has maintained for years, Linda has developed a life style based on cooperation and sharing. It is this strategy that has enabled her to support a standard of living that is higher than would be possible solely through public assistance, child

support and related government subsidies. Although this choice is financially less expensive, it is very expensive in terms of time, energy and emotions.

The core members of the group live in separate houses in relative proximity to each other (three to four block radius); however, they move freely with or without children through each other's houses. For example, they get together in the winter at least once or twice a week for meals and frequently call each other and visit. In the summer, Linda says, "It's constant every night or every other night somebody is here or I'm at somebody else's house." Sometimes these meals are planned and everyone brings something. Other times, they happen because they find themselves together at meal times. In other instances, if someone is short of food, they will call and ask to come over for dinner. The members of this group exchange child care, other services and information. For example, two of the men in the group are contractors. They use their business discounts to buy paint and other materials for work in their friends' houses. The group usually gets together to do large jobs such as painting, moving or breaking down walls. When Linda moved, they painted and broke down a wall to enlarge her living room. Another friend was helping her lay ceramic tiles on her kitchen counter top. Payment for large services is usually not money but other services. Often Linda exchanges pottery. In addition, they also keep each other informed about community and other resources and help each other take advantage of these, such as low interest home improvement loans through the community credit union. Finally, Linda shares a car with another female single parent in the group. They own the car jointly and share its use and maintenance costs.

While Linda was going to school full-time and involved in the women's legal center, emotional support, child care services and use of

the car were essential. She also would not have been able to afford to renovate her house without the services exchanged for pottery and the low interest home improvement loans she received from the community credit union.

Another important source of support for Linda has been her parents. They were financially able to provide her with short-term loans. They were also able to make it financially feasible for her to move from an apartment into a house. In addition to this type of material support, they have maintained a close relationship with Linda and her son through frequent visits and telephone calls. Shortly after the data collection period, Linda was able to find a full-time job in a senior citizens' agency and to stop receiving public assistance.

The experience of these four female, single parent families provide an alternative to the often discussed intergenerational cycle of welfare families. Further, they demonstrate the wide range of variation that is possible within the welfare population and the kinds of fluctuations that can take place in the degree to which the family is subsidized. These cases suggest that if resources are available to allow women with children to prepare themselves for stable occupations and good quality child care is provided, these mothers will be able to participate fully in the labor force. In all of the cases presented, it was the ability of the kinship/-friendship network systems of these families to provide these supports that made the critical difference in the relative success of these female single parents to return to full-time employment.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUDING SUMMARY

Prior research on the relationship between social stratification and family life has increased awareness that class location serves as a primary factor in determining the ways in which people experience their families (Frazier, 1939; Lewis, 1967; Komarovsky, 1967; Zaretsky, 1973; Howell, 1973; Rubin, 1976; Rapp, 1978; Bridenthal, 1981). This comparative study of Black and White female single-parent families contributes to this literature in several ways: (1) by delineating the distinguishing characteristics of contemporary American female single-parent families, (2) by further clarifying the variables that determine the class location of families in the contemporary class structure of the United States, and (3) by extending the discussion of the impact of contemporary race and class relations on the experience of female single-parent families.

Poverty and the Female-Headed Single-Parent Family

One of the central themes that emerges from this research is that there is a wide range of variation among female single-parent families. As a result, the terms "female single-parent household" and "female single-parent family" actually obscure more than they clarify. These terms, in and of themselves, neither describe the number or gender of other adults involved in the process of providing economic support, nor do they indicate how child care, child rearing and domestic activities

are organized. Further, these terms do not provide a sufficient basis for determining the socioeconomic position of the family. This research suggests that the most important distinguishing characteristic of female-headed single-parent families is that the mother has ultimate responsibility for ensuring economic support for the family and for determining the organization of child-related and domestic activities.

The central difference between this family type and the legally designated two-parent family is that in the two-parent family, the mother has a legal and moral claim on her husband's income on a regular basis, even if this claim is not realized. Her access to this income becomes tenuous if the husband leaves the household. Even if the husband continues to contribute to the household, there is no guarantee that this support will be reliable. As a result, it is voluntary de facto, no matter what civil statutes apply. This is demonstrated by the nationally high rates of non-payment of child support. As a result, the mother, as a single parent, must depend upon her own income-generating activities (Burnham, 1985, Hansen).*

A clear understanding of these points has important policy implications, given the rapid increase during the last two decades of female single-parent families and their concentration at the lower levels of the economic scale (Patterson, 1973; Epstein, 1979; Johnson, 1980; Burnham, 1985). This positive correlation between female single-parent families and poverty has been responsible for the focal attention that female single-parent families have received nationally.

However, although this discussion has been useful in illuminating the scope of the problem and in making it an important public issue, some

* Informal discussions and personal correspondence on the distinguishing features of female single-parent households.

researchers have repeated the fundamental error of the Moynihan report. In these instances, they have also wrongly asserted that the structure of the female single-parent family is responsible for their low economic position (Moynihan, 1965; Kilson, 1981; Cummings, 1983).

The problem of higher rates of poverty among female-headed single-parent families does not stem from family structure. The current poverty levels in the United States stem from the historical impact of class relations, racism and sexism. Thus, since this problem doesn't emanate from the family, it cannot be solved through family treatment strategies. The impact of sexism, racism and class relations are reflected in the disparity between the wages of men and women and Black and White workers and high poverty rates among particular segments of the female single-parent population. For example, Johnson, comparing economic positions of male and female-headed single-parent families, states,

The proportion of families below the poverty lines that were maintained by a mother was nearly three times that of families maintained by a father only (42 and 55 percent respectively) (Johnson, 1980:22).

Further, although there is a higher rate of poverty among female-headed single-parent families than among single and two-parent families headed by men, the distribution of poverty among Black and White female single-parents is also uneven. A report issued in 1980 stated that the rate of Black female single-parent families living in poverty was significantly higher than that of White female headed single-parent families, 58% and 34%, respectively (Community Institute Weekly Report, September 1980). The disparity in income between Black and White female-headed single-parent families is further demonstrated when their median incomes are compared. In 1980 the median income for Black female-headed households was \$7,425, while for White female-headed households it was \$11,908 (McGhee, 1984). This is related to the fact that although until recently

Black women had a higher rate of participation in the work force than White women, they were concentrated at the lower levels of the occupational scale and consequently had lower incomes.

The ability of families with two potential wage earners to have higher incomes, and the ability of males particularly White males, to realize higher incomes mediate against the effects of classism, sexism and racism in determining the higher standard of living of two-parent families; however, the fundamental problem is not eradicated, i.e., social inequality based on sex, race and class. These sets of social relations also manifest themselves in the disparities in income between Black and White two-parent families. For example, in 1982, the median income of two-parent Black families was \$13,598. During this same period, the median income for two-parent White families was \$24,593 (Vaughn-Cooke, 1984).

Thus, the problem of poverty is not restricted to any particular family form. It is a systemic problem and, therefore, needs a systemic solution. The focus in the literature on poor female single-parent families runs the risk of centering discussion of poverty on women, at the expense of other groups, and of masking important differences in socioeconomic position among female single-parents (Burnham, 1985; Norton, 1985).

This problem is partially addressed in this study. The data, buttressed by national statistics, show that (1) there are single-parents from all classes, all races and all ethnic groups, and (2) that the variations in the standards of living, lifestyles and future life chances of these families is a function of class, race, the ways in which these social relations are mediated through the family's kinship/friendship network system, and shifts in government, social and economic policies.

The Contemporary American Family Does Not Stand Alone: Discussion of the Data

Within the context of this study, the family is seen as the primary instrument of recruitment to both class and race relations. Further, for most people, it is within the context of both the natal family and the family of procreation that the sum total of these relations is realized. In this work, the family is not treated as a self-sufficient unit, but as a unit that is embedded in a complex kinship/friendship network system. Using this conceptualization of the family, I attempt to demonstrate the value of network analysis in understanding variations in the standard of living, lifestyle, and general quality of life of families headed by single-parents.

In carrying out this task, I point up the critical importance of the composition and content of material resources, services and information exchanged through the social network systems of these families. It is suggested that these exchanges importantly condition and, in some instances, determine the standard of living, lifestyle and range of career choices of members of these families. In this way, I have attempted to increase our understanding of the variables that act to determine the location of families in the contemporary class system and to sensitize researchers to the range of variation in contemporary female single-parent families.

The criterion used to divide these Black and White female single-parent families into the three designated categories is the occupational status of the mother. The major limitation of using occupational status as a means through which to categorize these families is that this variable did not prove to be the most important factor in conditioning the ways in which income and other resources were generated to provide

economic support for the families. Further, occupational status did not determine the organization of child care, child rearing and domestic activities. However, this system of classification is useful as a basis for comparison within categories and between categories and proves helpful in illuminating the wide range of variation in all three areas between these families.

To address the wide range of variation in these nineteen families, five factors are used: (1) natal family experiences and exchanges during various periods in the life of the mother, (2) education, (3) occupation and work history, (4) composition of the social network system and the material resources, services, and information exchanged among the members, and (5) opportunity structure available to the mother as an individual and as a member of a particular racial or ethnic group. The data gathered in each of these areas were examined comparatively in an effort to determine the degree to which they conditioned the observed standard of living, lifestyle, and range and types of choices made by these women in the areas of child care, child rearing and income-generation.

The discussion of the findings is presented in Chapters IV, V and VI. Chapter IV discusses the families of eight professional single female parents. The data presented in this chapter demonstrate the limitations inherent in using education, occupation and income-generated from the primary job situation as a means of determining the location of families in the class structure. This strategy of class location, in addition to being ahistorical, produces a distorted picture of families as isolated units of social organization. In addition, these variables tell little about the actual standard of living, lifestyle and life chances of family members.

The female single-parent families studied in this category had roughly the same range of education and income from their primary job situations. However, the four White professional working full-time mothers and their children enjoyed a quantitatively higher standard of living than the families of the four Black female single-parent families. The criteria used to determine this were (1) residential area, (2) household help, (3) organization of household activities, (4) household furnishings and appliances, and (5) organization and amount of money spent on social activities and experiences for themselves and their children.

Given the limited number of families studied in this category and the way they were selected, although this distinction was demonstrated along racial lines, race affiliation could not be used as the sole determining factor responsible for the difference in standard of living. In fact, given the selection process and the number of families studied, the same type of qualitative and quantitative differences might have arisen among families belonging to the same race. Therefore, in order to explain these differences in standards of living, I felt it would be useful to examine the various dimensions of these eight mothers' income-generating activities.

A major distinguishing factor that emerged in the comparison of these eight Black and White professional female single-parents was the role their social network system played in helping support the standard of living realized by these families. The types of resources, services and information that passed through the respective network systems of these two groups of women were qualitatively and quantitatively different. The exchanges made through the social network systems of the Black families seemed to be important in maintaining the quality of life

experienced by these families. The types of exchanges transmitted through the social network systems of the White families seemed to expand and elevate the standard of living and lifestyles of the families. Therefore, in addition to the Black female-parents' incomes being more closely restricted to the salaries they earned from their primary work situations, they also had to pay more often for professional services. Also, the types of information they obtained through their network systems, while useful in maintaining their current standard of living, rarely expanded it. As a result, although both these groups of women had professional status in the occupational structure and earned similar middle class incomes from their primary work situations, the actual range of resources to which they had access and which they utilized, was fundamentally different. Thus, the way they experienced being female single-parents, though categorized as "middle class," was fundamentally different.

In Chapter V, seven female single-parents in career ladder situations were examined from two perspectives: (1) their respective transition experiences to female single-parent status, and (2) the strategies they employed for career mobility. In examining their transition experience, special attention was given to the role that the exchanges transmitted through their social network system played in determining the range and types of government services and subsidies they utilized. In respect to this aspect of the single-parent experience. It is suggested that a useful approach through which to explore this process is one that examines the ways in which the resources of the state, in the form of various types of subsidies, are integrated with the resources, services and information exchanged through the kinship/friendship network systems of the family and also those generated by the fringe benefit packages and

income received from work. These can then be examined from the perspective of how they are conditioned by the personal attributes of the household head (values, education, patterns of social interaction). The increasing penetration of the market into the home and the increasing institutionalization of family (Braverman, 1974; Keniston, 1977) are especially apparent in the areas of child care and child rearing. Both these processes seem to stem from changes in the economic base of the society--specifically (1) increasing numbers of women are entering the work force, particularly in the service sector, and (2) fundamental changes in the level and types of preparation necessary for participation in the work force. The expanding use of pre-school centers is a response to both these demands. Mothers depend on child care services for their children in order to work. Pre-school is increasingly becoming the first step in the preparation of children for their later participation in the labor force.

With the increasing institutionalization of various aspects of family life, another dimension has been added to ways in which social network systems are developed. As these activities become more centralized, people travel to centralized locations to carry out activities that were formerly dispersed. In the process of doing this, they sometimes come in contact with people from other areas, of different ethnic or racial groups and different socioeconomic positions. In some cases, they develop relationships with the people they meet in these locations that extend beyond the focal activity in which they are jointly engaged. From this perspective, the process of network formation is studied in detail in order to illuminate the differences between homogeneous and heterogeneous network systems. Special attention is given to the differences in

the types of resources transmitted through these two types of social network systems and the impact of these on the various families.

The data suggest that close examination of the content of exchanges made through the social network systems of these families revealed a pattern similar to, although not as sharp or consistent as, that in Chapter IV. In the majority of cases the social network systems of the White female single-parent families acted to expand the standard of living realized by the family. In the cases of the Black female single parents, the social network system in three of the four cases acted to maintain the family's standard of living. Heterogeneous network systems (those that are composed of people with different socioeconomic positions and life experiences) tend to provide a wider range of types of resources, services and information. These act to expand the range of resources, services and information to which the members have access. Homogeneous network systems (those composed of people with similar socioeconomic positions and life experiences) may act to enable members to make more effective use of resources, services and information to which they have access, but do not expand the total pool.

A review of the data gained through the study of the families and the analyses presented provide useful insight into the organization of contemporary urban family life. One of the central points that emerged was the importance of looking beyond the stated income generated from the primary source to processes of income generation. This approach allows for the examination of the ways in which the income generated from the primary generating source, including formal and informal fringe benefits, is integrated with the resources, services and information transmitted through a family's social network system. These, in turn, are integrated with those emanating from the state. This approach is useful in

determining the range and types of material resources, services and information that families actually have access to and the means through which they gain access. In all nineteen cases, the families were embedded in a complex network system of kin and friends. A varied range of resources, services and information passed through the network system. These flows importantly conditioned the mother's personal income generating strategies (occupational choices, work histories, etc.) and the degree and types of subsidies which the families applied for and received from the state. All of these combined to determine the standard of living realized by the family and the condition and organization of child care, child rearing and domestic activities.

The range of variation between the women studied in each category and also within each category is representative of differences in the range and types of integration of the resources from each of these three spheres. To understand these different forms of integration, it is not enough to examine their contemporary expressions in each isolated context. For this we must view these families from an historical perspective and place them in the wider social context in which they live their experience of family life.

Class, Race and Family

It is important at this point to state clearly that the data yielded through these research methods focus on the ways in which these families experience race and class relations in a large urban center. In reality, I am looking at the range and volume of exchanges and consumption patterns, rather than the integration of these women into the productive processes of the society in varying positions, and the way this differential positioning in relationship to means of production and the state acts to

ultimately determine their actual objective class positions within the total social structure.

In the context of this study, it is suggested that the way in which families experience differential class location in the social structure is through: (1) differential perception of themselves in relation to other members of society (Sennet, Cobb, 1971; Rubin, 1976), and (2) differential access to the sum total of resources available in the society. This differential access is felt through the means by which they gain access to these resources and the actual range and types of resources to which they have access. Both of these dimensions of the experience of class relations act to determine the behavior of people.

However, race relations cannot be simply reduced to class relations even though both sets of relations are rooted in the economic base. Racism, in its essence, is an element of the superstructure. It is an ideology that allowed for the reduction of human status of a segment of the forced immigrant population based on pigmentation of skin, for tax and control of labor purposes (Elkin, 1959; DuBois, 1899, 1935; Cox, 1948). In this sense, during the slave period, racist ideology acted as both an element of the superstructure and the infrastructure (Godelier, 1977). After the slave period, racist ideology was used to maintain and sustain race as a mechanism through which to impede the participation of Black people from particular segments of the productive process. Racist ideology also acted to impede access to social resources, i.e., education, housing, medical attention, etc. This lack of access has had long-range effects that are reflected in the way the dual forces of race and class relations have impacted on both class formation and expression of class relations in the United States.

Unlike class relations, the changing expression of race relations has been codified through the judicial and legal systems. Examples of this are: the Emancipation Proclamation, Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction legislation, anti-lynching legislation and civil rights legislation. However, despite the movement away from access to the social product being impeded solely on the basis of skin pigmentation, in a real sense the effects of this prior exclusion are still reflected in the contemporary experience of the Black population. For example, the structure of the interaction of race and class relations during the Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction periods. These conditioned the experience of Blacks during the Great Depression. The long-range effects of these previous experiences have resulted in a disproportionate percentage of the Black population experiencing Depression level unemployment rates during the cyclical recession periods (Lieberson, 1980; Hersberg, 1981; Urban League, 1983). These experiences have also resulted in the contemporary disproportionate representation of Blacks among the growing underclass (Glasgow, 1981). They have also contributed to the fragile nature of the Black middle class.

The data gained from this study, analyzed through the framework discussed above, are useful in ethnographically confirming the qualitative differences in the ways people of different socioeconomic positions and races experience their families. It also provides valuable insight into the ways race and class relations are crystallized in the daily lives of urban American families.

What is demonstrated in reviewing these families is that it is not so much that less economically stable families share more (Stack, 1974), but that the kinship/friendship networks in which these families are embedded have different bundles of material resources, services and

information to share. These differences in the types of exchanges transmitted through the social network systems of these families are reflective of the class location of the respective natal families and the members of their "effective" kinship/friendship network system. All of these condition the types and the means through which they gain access in varying degrees to the range of resources available in the society, including the various types of subsidies provided by the state.

In a sense, the data are presented as a prism. The description and discussion of the experience of the three categories of female single-parent families are used to illuminate different facets of the ways in which race and class relations condition the experience of these families in regard to the generation of income, child care and child rearing. In its totality, the data demonstrate the multidimensional nature of race and class relations and the way they manifest themselves in everyday life. Further, they demonstrate the ways in which these forces condition the range and types of choices that these women make within the constraints imposed by the sum total of resources available to them to support their standard of living. In addition, it illuminates the various strategies employed by these women to expand the options available to them and their children.

The discussion of the eight professional female single-parent families focuses on the qualitative and quantitative differences in the standards of living between the Black and White families despite the similarity in the range of income generated from their primary work situations. In exploring this question further, it is necessary to view these families from an historical perspective and to attempt to put them in a wider social context. From this perspective, the experience of the Black female single-parent families is reflective of the greater

vulnerability of the "Black middle class." This stems from the sector of the economy in which they earn middle class incomes and the basis on which their middle class standing within the social structure is determined.

The kinship/friendship network of these families was less able to insulate them from shifts in the economic, social and political climate that could affect their employment status. The wages gained from these positions served as the primary source utilized to support their standard of living. The types of exchanges transmitted through their social network system were reflective of the historical integration of the majority of the Black population into the productive process.

However, as a group, a review of the socioeconomic position of the natal families of these eight women reveals that none of these women can serve as an example of true class mobility. They all came from economically stable families that had career aspirations and the resources to operationalize these for their daughters. As a result, these women were prepared to participate in the occupational structure at a particular level.

The families of the female single-parents who were working full-time in career ladder situations showed a greater degree of intergroup variation than the above category. This variation was demonstrated in the following areas: (1) both the current standard of living of these families and the socioeconomic positions of their natal families, (2) the composition of their kinship/friendship network system and the content of exchanges that were transmitted through them, (3) differing degrees of shifts in the standard of living and the lifestyle realized at different stages of their children's developmental cycle and their work histories, and (4) different degrees of vulnerability in relationship shifts in the

economic, political and social climate. In addition, they earned less as a group than the women in the previous category, and the income levels of their natal families during the period that they were growing up as a group were also lower.

There were important differences in the standard of living and lifestyle among the four families receiving public assistance. Each family represents a different pattern in the organization of child care, child rearing and domestic activities. The social network systems of each of the four women exchanged different types of services and information. These conditioned the range of choices available to the mothers and the integration of subsidized government and community services. The combination of all these was responsible for the differences in the standard of living of these families.

A review of the women's previous work histories, natal families and social network systems is useful to this discussion in several ways. First, their experiences demonstrate ethnographically the types of intergenerational shifts in socioeconomic position that can take place in both Black and White families. In all four cases, the women were the first members of their family to receive public assistance. Their natal families were economically stable homeowners. Second, they demonstrated the range of diversity among female single-parent families receiving public assistance.

All of these women viewed and utilized public assistance as a temporary strategy which they had to use during a period of economic stress. Three of the four women had previously worked full-time and they all had returned to the work force by the end of the data collection period. The combination of these factors acts to counteract the

stereotypical picture of the female single parent so frequently presented in the literature.

This exploratory study of nineteen selected female single-parent families in Philadelphia demonstrates the multiplicity of variables that combine to determine how people experience their families. The contemporary female single-parent family has become a numerically significant family form. There are female single-parent families at all levels of the social structure. The standard of living, lifestyle and life chances of these families are determined by more than the income, occupational status and education of the mother. The sum total of material and social resources that the family is able to mobilize through its kinship/ friendship network system and from the state proved to be a crucial variable in determining the experience of these families.

Thus, although female single-parent families are disproportionately represented at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale, this is not a result of family structure. This results instead from the structures of social inequality operating in American society, race, class and gender relations. These forms of inequality are reflected in the experience of all family types in the United States.

Conclusion

At this point it is useful to look back and ask: What does this study reveal about the impact of race and class relations on female single-parent families? Were the research methods employed and unit of analysis selected useful in illuminating the degree to which these sets of social relations conditioned the standard of living, quality of life, and life chances of these families? Finally, does this work prove useful

in furthering our understanding of the relationship between social stratification and family life?

What becomes apparent through the study of these families is the wide range of variation in the standard of living, life style and range of possible choices available to family members within and between occupational categories and racial groups.

Close examination within occupational status categories revealed that even though the income from the primary income-generating sources was roughly similar for the mothers in each category, there were important differences in the means through which, and the degree of access these families had to, various types of material resources, services and information. These differences acted to expand or constrain the range of choice available to the family and future life chances of family members.

A central point which emerged from this research was the difference in the role of social network systems in maintaining or expanding the standard of living realized by these families. This finding suggests the importance of investigating further the difference between the flow of resources through the social networks of Black and White families.

In the case of these particular nineteen families, the overwhelming majority of the Black female single-parents came from natal families that had lower socioeconomic positions than the White women in their respective categories. In addition, the types of material resources, services and information exchanged through their social network systems tended to maintain rather than expand the range of options available to the family.

Among the White female single parents there were important variations in the socioeconomic positions of their natal families. These differences were most pronounced in the working full-time, career mobility category. In most instances this importantly conditioned the standard of living and

range of options available to the family during the data collection period. However, although the content of the material resources, services and information exchanged through the kinship/friendship network systems varied both within and between categories, in the majority of instances these acted to elevate the standard of living available to the family.

In addition, the study of these families demonstrates that a conceptualization of the family as a socially or geographically bounded unit distorts the ways in which contemporary families are organized and function. In reality, families are embedded in a complex kinship/friendship network system that may expand, contract or change over time. These social network systems extend beyond the family's geographical community and importantly condition the range of material resources or information to which the family has access.

The examination of these families over an extended period of time showed the dynamic nature of family life. For example, they demonstrated that there can be major changes in the standard of living and organization of family life in response to changes in the status of the mother, developmental cycle of the children and shifts in the political, social and economic climate.

Further, the data suggest that differences in the contemporary experience of Black and White families cannot be solely attributed to race or class relations. Finally, the data clearly demonstrate that the use of income, occupation and education as the sole criteria for determining the class location of families in the contemporary American social structure is too limited.

In a sense this research represents a partial response to a fundamental question underlying some of the research on Black and White families' differential progress on indices of socioeconomic well-being.

The question, is to race or is it class, that is the determining factor in the quality of life that families experience has generated much discussion in contemporary literature (Wilson, 1978, 1980; Clark, 1980; Gershman, 1980; Pettigrew, 1980; Marrett, 1980; Pinkney, 1985). In some cases, researchers give race relations the primary determining role (Ogbu, 1978; Clark, 1980). Others give primary causal weight to class relations and virtually ignore race relations (Wright, 1977, 1978; Gershman, 1980). Still others shift the causal weight of race and class relations from one to the other during different historical periods and suggest that in contemporary American society the relative importance of race as a determining factor has diminished (Wilson, 1978).

In my view, the question posed in this way creates a false dichotomy between race and class relations and thus polarizes the debate in favor of one set of social relations at the expense of the other. In reality, given the particular historical development of the United States, race and class relations are inseparable. Race relations conditioned the specific character of class formation and class relations in the American context. Class relations have structured the nature of race relations during each historical epoch (DuBois, 1935; Mullings, 1978). Therefore, to understand the contemporary impact of these forces on contemporary family life it is important to understand their simultaneous development.

If we are to understand the range and types of differences in the quality of life of Black and White families, it is necessary to examine them comparatively. Unfortunately, not enough comparative research has been done on Black and White families. In particular, the study of female single-parent families has tended to focus on poor Black female-headed households. While useful insights have been generated by this approach, it is limited in two ways: (1) not enough attention is given

to variation within the group, and (2) because this work focuses only on Black families we don't have enough information to determine the degree to which their experience differs from the experience of White families in the same socioeconomic position.

Researchers who attempt to study families from the perspective of their respective class positions are confronted with the problem of selection of a useful definition of class that can serve as the basis for delineating classes within the context of the complex social structure of the United States. This problem is related to the problem of selection of appropriate criteria for the location of people within the class structure. These problems become crystalized when researchers attempt to do comparative studies of families belonging to different classes and for research purposes must locate actual families in the class structure.

Previously, I discussed two central theoretical streams that have influenced the ways in which social scientists in the United States have treated the concept of class, Weber and Marx. It was suggested that Weber's definition of class is fundamentally grounded in the sphere of exchange, while Marx sees class formation as emanating from the sphere of production. It was further suggested that much of American social science's treatment of the concept of class stems from Weber via Parsons and Warner, and that in some instances status has been used interchangeably with class (Warner, 1949). In this sense these approaches have made a major departure from Weber's clear delineation of class, status and party. Class, in his treatment, while in the sphere of exchange, is based on economic criteria. The status hierarchy is based on differing levels of esteem and thus belongs to the ideological realm. In some instances, this treatment of class leads to an approach that uses individually held attributes such as education, occupation and income as

the sole criteria for the delineation of classes in contemporary American society (Warner, 1949; Wilson, 1978).

The problems inherent in this approach become compounded in studies that attempt to address the impact of race and class relations on the standard of living, life style and life chances of contemporary families in the United States. For example, in Wilson's 1978 work, The Declining Significance of Race, class is defined as

...any group of people who have more or less similar goods, services or skills to offer for income in a given economic order and who therefore receive similar financial remuneration in the marketplace (Wilson, 1978:ix).

This definition firmly roots class affiliation in the sphere of exchange and necessarily leads to the use of individually held attributes, i.e., education, income and occupation, to determine class affiliation. In addition to being ahistorical, this conceptualization of class leads to an analysis that minimizes the long range effects of the interaction of race and class on the current experience of American families. Further, since the criteria he uses for class location are incomplete, the nature of the "Black middle class" is distorted. Middle class life style, in reality, is middle class consumption patterns. The underpinnings that support these life styles in many instances are: two family incomes, credit, access to various types of government subsidies. Failure to address the difference between middle class position and middle class life style ignores the vulnerability of these families to changes in the social, economic and political climates, and the long-range effects of economic instability on these families (Lieberson, 1980; Vaughn-Cooke, 1984).

The data clearly demonstrate that income, education and occupation cannot be used as the sole determinants of class location in the contem-

porary American social structure. Thus the approach used by Wright (1977, 1978), which focuses on occupation, and that of Wilson (1978), where primary attention is given to income level, are too limited to accurately locate individuals in the class structure. Both of these social scientists ignore the historical dimension of class affiliation in their attempt to operationalize their concept of class. In both cases, the researchers focus on individuals isolated from the families to which they belong, and the social relations through which their class positions are actualized. The distortions created by these omissions are compounded by the restriction of their examination to the current work situation or income levels of the individuals under study.

This study shows that when the variables for class location were expanded to include (1) natal family, (2) work history, and (3) exchanges made through the kinship/friendship network system, a different picture emerged of the families' actual class location. The class experience of these nineteen families suggests that at the most fundamental level differential class location is a reflection of differential access to the total social product, i.e., goods, services and information available within a given society. The careful examination of the resources utilized by these families revealed several avenues through which individuals gain access to social resources: (1) individual income-generating strategies (i.e., wages and related benefits and/or ownership of productive property, (2) from the state through various types of state subsidies, and (3) exchanges made through their kinship/friendship network system currently and in the past.

The means through which, and the degree to which, individuals and families gain access to the social product through these sources differ. Current differences are reflective of the historical interaction of race

and class relations. These sets of social relations have acted to channel the distribution of the White and Black populations of the United States differentially throughout the social structure. This has resulted in the fragile nature of the Black middle class, roughly one-third of the Black population living in poverty, and an expanding underclass in which Black people are disproportionately represented.

Seen from this perspective, the documented differences between and within racial and occupational status categories of the families presented in this study are contemporary expressions of the historical interaction of race and class relations in the United States.

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