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**WOMEN'S ROLES WITHIN THE FAMILY,
EDUCATION AND WORK**

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in

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by

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INTRODUCTION

During this dissertation I will be exploring the main title,

WOMEN'S ROLES WITHIN THE FAMILY, EDUCATION AND WORK

Over the centuries we saw everchanging views and attitudes towards women. These changes coincide with the changes made in society, as society is the main source of for these attitudes and views. Women are seen by some members of society, mainly men and sadly some women themselves (still thinking very traditionally) as second class citizens. Certain areas are designated for women, these areas I will be discussing under the headings of family, work and education.

In each area/heading women are again sub-divided into smaller areas that are given to women due to as some say, their physical weakness, appearance or again emotional state of mind. Society feels that because of all these, that women have certain roles and also expectations to live up to.

To understand how far we (women) have excelled in this present day, I will move back in time in Chapter 1, discussing how times may have changed, but the traditional roles may have not. These traditional roles cause great disturbances within the modern woman's life and mind. These roles are present in every part of her, especially in the family and home where the woman is seen as traditionally belonging to and part of. These roles are present in education where subject choice and level expectations are moulded on traditional roles assigned to women. They are finally present in the work force. Perhaps these roles and in some cases prejudices are most apparent in this area.

To discuss these previous points I will research the three designated areas using information from the literature I have chosen. I will support and include this literature with tables and charts, which will indicate and express sex selectiveness and differences. A questionnaire too, will be used to support my research, which was distributed to young school going females. I will end my dissertation with a conclusion conducted from my research and findings.

CHAPTER 1

WOMEN'S ROLES WITHIN THE FAMILY

The Nuclear Family

During the 1950's Ireland opened up her economy to the world market, and due to this a number of things happened. Ireland was introduced to a national television service, which made the Irish aware of the culture of a western industrialized society. Together with a growing contact with Europe and America, we were introduced to the twentieth century, which challenged the Irish nation socially and culturally. This also, as Patricia Redlich observed, caused changes within the family. (1)

The average family size declined and the nuclear family emerged. The nuclear family was laden with the traditional demands which were made on women, and also the traditional roles which were assigned to her. These roles required the woman to learn the techniques of home management. The man worked in the fields with his sons, while the girls stayed with their mother. The ownership of the land and also the dependence on it, restricted any individual mobility or growth. This reinforced the

patriarchal structures and sexual divisions. This associated the family with the religious beliefs (most importantly the Constitution) of having a good fruitful religious family life, as discussed by Redlich (2)

The nuclear family had to perform these roles and cater for these demands. This family consisted of a husband, wife and their children. It differs from the traditional family in its familiar structure. The nuclear family is removed from the parental home, whereas the traditional family was compiled of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, parents, brothers and sisters, all living as one family unit. The parents within the nuclear family were required by law to feed, clothe, shelter and educate their children. As written in the World Book Encyclopedia the father is required to support his wife and children. The mother is then expected to run the home and care for the children. (3) This last sentence falls in the way of thinking with the Constitution. In many of these families, the father alone makes the major decisions and is considered the head of the family.

These role expectations and beliefs still linger on, the woman is seen as housewife and mother. They are very strongly implanted with the Roman Catholic doctrine. The Irish Constitution in Article 41 states,

The state recognizes that by her life in the home, the woman gives to the state a support without which the common good cannot be achieved. The state shall therefore endeavour to ensure that mothers will not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of her duties in the home. (4)

"Duties in the home" - is very much in line with some of the ways of thinking in the Catholic Church. We can see the Church's very strong influence within the education sector and also how its traditional definitions of sex roles have wielded such a powerful influence over society.

It is these traditional roles and views which are combined with the structure and roles of the nuclear family that are causing problems for women. The woman is placed within a situation where she has accommodation, but not within easy access of the parental home. This new nuclear family must perform all the traditional roles assigned. The young wife does so, without the support and company of other adult members. In many cases women become frustrated with a realisation that their skills and abilities are not being used to their fullest advantage. As Redlich discusses this problem, she sees women who are then confronted with feelings of personal inadequacy or depression. (5)

The woman because of this is striving to develop a sense of identity and self-worth, to discover her self-concept.

Part of her identity is influenced greatly by society. One example of this is the woman's femininity. Society places femininity at the top of the list, as the main asset in a woman's identity. To be feminine one must take the blame for her troubles all of the time. This becomes quite tiring and also can decrease the woman's feelings of self-worth. The woman's response to this, is one of anger definitely unfeminine.

Paula J. Caplan writes in support of this, that a real woman according to society never stops giving and a real woman again does not get angry (except sometimes when put in defence of her children or her man). Finally a real woman does not blame others for her problems. (6) These expectations together with the traditional roles as Redlich supports, have caused a great deal of stress within women and their family life, unfortunately sometimes creating symptoms which cause marital breakdowns. (7)

WOMEN AND WORK

(Relating to family life)

With the ever increasing demands in industrial economy, with a need for more production for financial purposes, women were needed in the work force. Formerly a woman had been designated the role of mother and housekeeper as argued previously, now a larger economy needs a larger

labour force. So women joined the labour force out of industrial economic necessity for the country.

Redlich points out that the women who work see their roles as one which supplements the family income. They see it as a necessity to work, on order to make ends meet and to afford extras, and also educational facilities for their families. They work therefore so that their family can enjoy the full opportunities afforded by our modern society. We see the modern industrial society requiring the woman to be a worker, wage earner, housewife and mother. (8)

For those women who do not have a job outside of the home, their work within the home is seen as an occupation itself. Modern society has now met with the demands for a re-definition of the woman's role within the family. It has created a restructuring of her role as housewife. They were doing this by making products of industry which are created solely for housework. Products are being produced to cater for a woman's job within the home. This job as housewife is becoming more diversified as it was in previous years. With the introduction of gas and electricity the woman's chores shortened and became quick and efficient. Society and the industrial process as Redlich says, has provided for the role of housewife and mother as a career. (9)

WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Equally as Redlich says, the woman's role as mother has changed. With the abundance of family planning information which is widely available and practised in Ireland, Irish women are controlling their fertility. For both economic and social reasons these couples are now determining the timing and number of children they will have. (10)

All too often is the woman seen by some as a childbearer, wife and cook. Juliet Mitchells argues that society views the woman's biological destiny as a mother, and this becomes her cultural vocation in her role as socialiser of her children. Therefore, in bringing up her children a woman achieves her main social definition. Mitchell argues again that in society's view, a woman's ability to produce milk and her occasional inability to undertake strenuous work-loads has made her suitable for the role of socialiser of her children. (11) As Margaret Mead supports this comment she states;

We have assumed that because it is convenient for a mother to wish to care for her child, this is a trait with which women have been more generously endowed by a careful telecolgical process of evolution. We have assumed that because men have hunted, an activity requiring enterprise, bravery and initiative, they have been endowed with these useful aptitudes as part of their sex temperaments. (12)

The mother's importance is indisputable when the child is within the infant state, and close physical bonds are stressed, as Bowlby states;

Essential for mental health is that the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate and continuous relationship with his mother. (13)

Attitudes like this reflect a trend which has spread widely throughout society, defining the woman's role as mother to her children.

As the nuclear family has now become smaller within Ireland and other countries, each child becomes more important. With the process of reproduction occupying less and less time, the socialization and nurturing process of the child has increased. All of the responsibility is placed upon the mother, for the physical, moral and sexual problems of her children and their adolescent years. During these adolescent years her maternal role is decreased while her socialising role has increased. With this new emphasis on certain roles, the socialization of the child has taken on a much greater significance than it had in the past. As the child moves into society (school) at an average early age of four, he spends a minimum of ten years of his life in school. The child is learning through the school, the rules and regulations of her society in her most vulnerable and receptive years.

The child is educated both socially and culturally, through the school's system of education and from the other children with whom she interacts with. This then gives the mother less and less opportunity to play the role of educator, as the child is being educated within the school. It gives the woman more time to work, and participate in the social production. With these changes made in her traditional functions, a change is seen in her status within the family, which will also make a change in relationships within the family particularly between man and wife.

WOMEN AND MARRIAGE

During the sixties and seventies the number of marriages greatly increased. By the late seventies the rate of marriages in Ireland had almost reached the average European level, about 90 per cent of all women were married. As Hannan et al show in the table overleaf, the percentage of Irish women who married increased over the eighteen years.

Table:1 Percentage of females 'ever married' in four age groups in 1961, 1966, 1971 and 1979

| Age Groups | 1961 | 1966 | 1971 | 1979 |
|------------|------|------|------|------|
| 20-24 | 21.8 | 25.2 | 31.1 | 33.7 |
| 25-29 | 54.9 | 62.2 | 68.8 | 72.1 |
| 30-34 | 70.4 | 75.9 | 80.6 | 85.5 |
| 35-44 | 77.3 | 79.6 | 82.5 | 87.7 |

Source: Census of Population in Ireland, Volume II: 1961, 1966, 1971, 1979. Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles, p.50.

By the seventies about 10 per cent of the female population remained unmarried. There appears to be a shift in the financial status of young women which occurred within these two decades. The percentage of young people marrying was increasing while the age of marriage was decreasing. (14)

Up to the past ten years married women conventionally retired from their jobs when they got married or when they had their first child. Due to this the percentage of working mothers in Ireland was very low. Table 2 taken from Hannan et, al shows an unusually low and very stable participation rate of married women in the labour force up to the seventies. However from then on the participation rate doubled up to the late seventies.

Table:2 Percentage of all married women, aged 15 and over, who were "gainfully occupied" in Ireland: 1961, 1966, 1971, 1977, and 1979

| | 1961 | 1966 | 1971 | 1977 | 1979 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| <i>Married women in the Irish Labour force as percentage of all married women:</i> | 5.2 | 5.3 | 7.5 | 14.2 | 15.2 |

Source: Census Population of Ireland 1961, 1966, 1971.

Also taken from the Labour Force Survey 1977, 1979

Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles, p.50.

Given the rapid increase in the marriage rate and the decline in age, an increase in the cost of establishing a household has developed. Industry has seen the need, to gain financially from this increase in marriage. As stated previously many women find themselves having to go to work to support themselves and the family. Married working mothers are on the increase. The married mother is taking her rightful place participating in society as a whole person. She is no longer as the Constitution states, seen as being economically productive by staying at home, but can now emerge and meet her husband as an equal and partner. (16)

This need for a woman to work and also live up to the contradiction between the traditional roles and values expected of women in Ireland, has been the cause of many serious problems.

It is creating a source of stress for women, trying to act out both roles assigned, that of traditional woman and the new working mother.

Supported in Women in Irish Society these traditional values and norms have not catered for the modern demands on her as a housewife and mother, and now to a smaller extent worker. due to this, many women experience emotional, and self-concept problems. They are quite confused as to who they are supposed to be, and end up presenting themselves for psychological help. This shows the need for change within society and not within women's mind's. (17)

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FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 1

1. Patricia Redlich, "Women and the Family", in Women in Irish Society, ed. Margaret McCurtain, and Donncha O'Corrain (Baldoyle, Dublin : The Women's Press, 1978) p. 86.
2. Ibid.
3. Volume 7 in "The World Book Encyclopedia" ed. World Book, (U.S.A: World Book, 1990) p. 24.
4. Redlich, "Women and the Family", in Women in Irish Society, ed. MacCurtain and O'Corrain p. 86.
5. Ibid. p. 88.
6. Paula J. Caplan, "Feminism and the Question of Women" in Women: The Longest Revolution ed Mitchells p.39.
7. Redlich, "Women and the Family", p. 88.
8. Ibid pp. 88-89.
9. Ibid p. 90.
10. Ibid.
11. Mitchells, Women: The Longest Revolution p. 39.
12. Margaret Mead, "Feminism and the Question of Women", in Women: The Longest Revolution ed Mitchells p. 39.
13. Bowlby, "Feminism and the Question of Women" in Women: The Longest Revolution ed Mitchells p. 41.
14. Damien Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles, six differences in subject

provisions and student choice in Irish Post-Primary Schools. (Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute 1983) p. 50.

15. Ibid.

16. Redlich, "Women and the Family", in Women in Irish Society ed. MacCurtain and O'Corrain, p. 86.

17. Ibid. p. 83.

CHAPTER 2

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF EDUCATION

Sex Differences in Levels of Participation

The amount of married women working, which was discussed previously is highly related to education. The participation rate for married women with university or professional qualifications who gave up work when they were married or on their first born, is over three times greater than those with a primary education only. Hannan et al. points out that one would think, that increasing levels of education would lead to an increase in women remaining in the workforce after marriage. (1) In discussing this point we must move back to the educational sector and its students.

We can see from Hannan et al, that the educational participation rate of teenagers has increased and compares favourably with other E.C. and O.E.C.D. countries. During the late sixties the participation rate of girls finishing the Senior Cycle increased rapidly. This then became even more noticeable when two

thirds of the female group continued, and only half of the original male group continued to the Leaving Certificate after the introduction of the Free Education Scheme. (2)

TABLE 3

| | Left School at Age 17 | Continued to further Training |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Boys</i> | 59% | 8% |
| <i>Girls</i> | 43% | 16% |

TABLE 4

| | Left School at Age 18 (including those who left at 17) | (Including the above) Continued to further training |
|--------------|---|--|
| <i>Boys</i> | 80% | 15% |
| <i>Girls</i> | 70% | 23% |

Source: Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles pp.57,58.

These tables show a sex selectiveness within the drop out rate from schools, and also entry into further training or education. In Table 3 we can see that the boys drop out rate is higher in percentage than girls. In Table 4 we see them at the age of eighteen, (and including the above table/and the under eighteens there is less of a gap between the girls and boys in percentage levels. A majority of girls continued to further training or education. These courses were held primarily in vocational schools, or instead they (the girls) continued on into nursing or teacher training. The boys in

comparison continued their education and training in universities or technical training colleges. This last point shows a sex selectiveness also in career choices.

(3)

We can see as stated previously that from these numbers the drop-out levels of pupils from the successive levels of education is quite selective. Their consequent paths in the labour market are quite different and specific to each sex. A higher percentage of girls stay on longer in second level education compared to boys. The girls, when they are finished their formal education are less likely to continue to third level education, and opt for short pre-employment courses. These courses give them skills and knowledge more appropriate for clerical positions.(4)

A higher percentage of boys enter the labour market at a much earlier stage. The jobs they choose are on average mostly manual jobs or apprenticeships. Of the boys who complete second level, a greater proportion continue to third level courses, which again are quite sex differentiated. But these different patterns of education and labour market entry appear to be strongly class related, as is discussed below.

SOCIAL CLASS WITHIN EDUCATION

The drop-out level at Junior Cycle level is quite class orientated, with 62 per cent of boys and 82 per cent of girls who leave, from a working class or small farm background. In a survey compiled by Hannan et al, the drop-out level was slightly less working class in origin, with 58 per cent of the 2,658 boys and 72 per cent of the 2,343 girls from a working class or small farm background. This shows a drop in the percentage levels. At the Leaving Certificate level all pupils were dominantly middle class. Of the ones who intended going on to university, they were less likely to come from working class background, in comparison to those who were satisfied with a second level qualification. (5)

In conclusion this shows that as one moves up the educational ladder one encounters a more middle class environment. By the time a student reaches university one is almost seven times more likely if a boy, or nine times more likely if a girl, to be from an upper middle class or large farm background. This point is clearly demonstrated in the following table; based on a special tabulation from the NMS School Leavers Survey 1981 by Hannan et al. (6)

TABLE 5: Percentage distribution by social class of boys and girls who intend to leave school at Group Cert. Inter. Cert. and Leaving Cert. levels.

| Social Class Characteristics of Pupils | Group Cert Pupils: | | Inter Cert. Pupils: | | Those intending to | |
|--|---------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| | of the 75 per cent | | of the 24 per cent | | complete second | |
| | who intend to drop | | who intend to drop | | level <i>only</i> | |
| | out of school after | | out of school after | | | |
| | Group Cert. Stage. | | Inter Cert. Stage | | | |
| | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls |
| | % | | % | | % | |
| Upper Middle Class | 7.1 | 3.9 | 12.0 | 6.7 | 26.7 | 17.5 |
| Lower Middle Class | 24.3 | 17.6 | 29.7 | 21.0 | 29.3 | 22.8 |
| Upper Working Class | 36.0 | 37.3 | 29.6 | 39.0 | 31.4 | 41.5 |
| Lower Working Class | 32.6 | 45.1 | 28.7 | 33.3 | 12.7 | 18.2 |
| Percentage: | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Total: | | | | | | |
| Number: | 267 | 51 | 764 | 372 | 574 | 779 |

TABLE 5 CONTINUED

| | Leaving Cert Pupils' Sample | | | |
|---------------------|---|-------|---|-------|
| | Those intending to proceed to 3rd level college or nursing | | Those intending to go to University. | |
| | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls |
| | % | | % | |
| Upper middle class | 32.4 | 21.7 | 48.7 | 38.2 |
| Lower middle class | 33.6 | 28.9 | 27.0 | 26.5 |
| Upper working class | 25.3 | 34.7 | 19.9 | 25.3 |
| Lower working class | 8.8 | 14.7 | 4.4 | 10.0 |
| Percentage: | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Total | | | | |
| Number | 411 | 651 | 793 | 558 |

Source: Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles, p. 62.

The above table shows the social class origin of pupils who left school at various stages of their post primary education, and those with intentions to continue to university or college.

In order to consider the reliability of these findings, I distributed a questionnaire, which was designed by myself, and distributed to second level schoolgoing

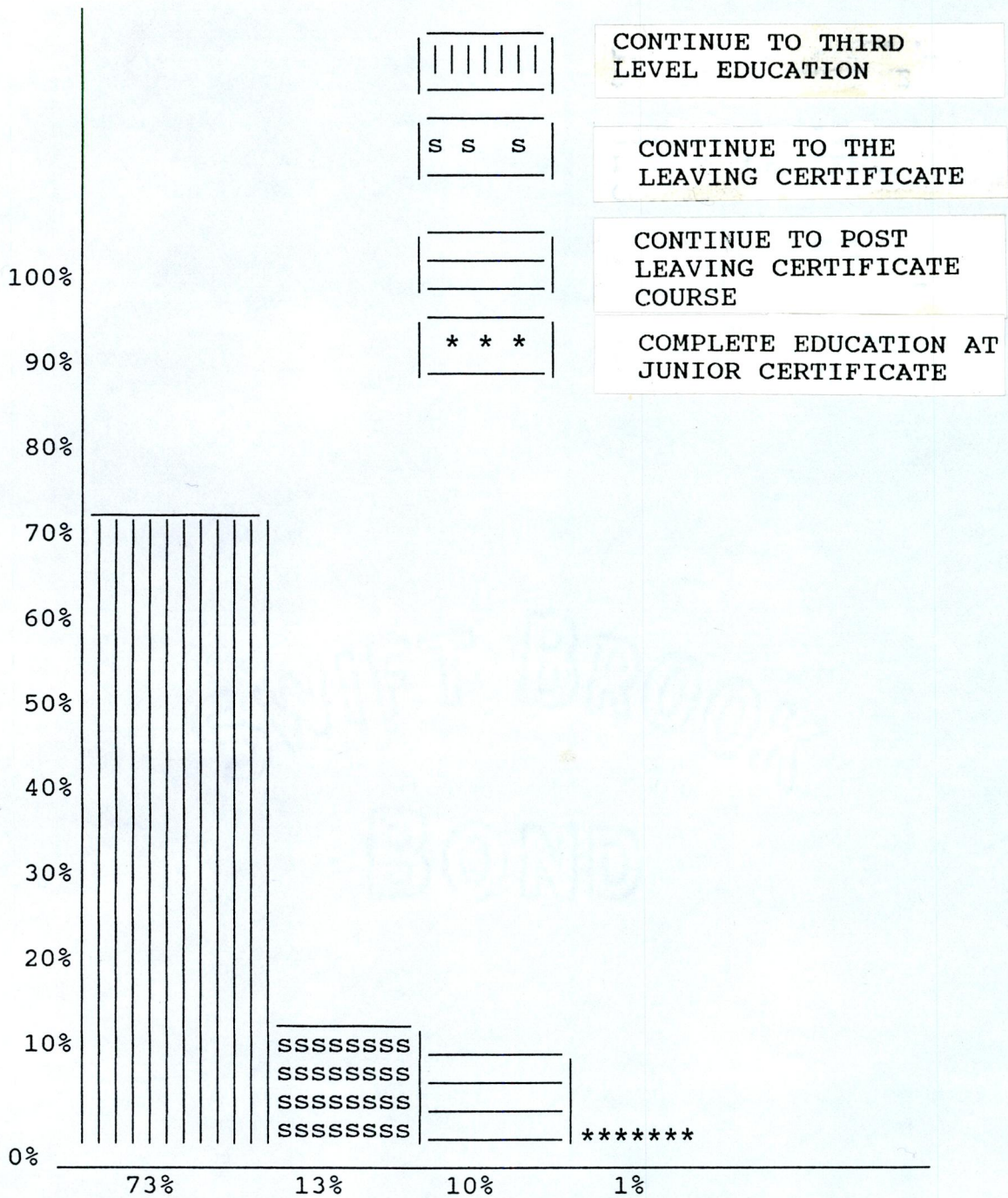
females, from a well renowned Dublin School. A copy of this questionnaire follows see Appendix 1.

The questionnaire was distributed to discover some of the opinions and attitudes school going females hold in relation to education, society and work. Question two on the questionnaire (see Appendix 1). Supports my expectations concerning women's attitudes towards education. Chart 1 as shown below, shows the results of question two, by a group of first years.

In question two, 96 per cent of the first year group answered the question, and from that percentage, as seen in Chart 1. 73 per cent boxed their intentions on third level education. In regard to a group of fifth years who also answered the questionnaire, a slight drop was seen, and perhaps a slightly more realistic answer with 68 per cent aspiring to third level education. These figures support my findings and research stated previously in reference to Hannan et al.

These young females, come from middle class homes and attend a middle class school. More than half of these

CHART 1



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY
WASHINGTON, D. C.
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF, BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY
WASHINGTON, D. C.
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF, BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY
WASHINGTON, D. C.

STANTON BROS.
INC.

young pupils, both first and fifth years, aspire to continue their education until third level college or university. This then leaves less than half who intend to drop out after the Leaving Certificate. My results are higher than those found in Hannan's table.

SUBJECT CHOICE AND SEX ROLES

When the second level schools are compared to the curriculum of the primary schools the sex differences are highly marked. Take for example within the Junior Cycle, which has a choice of nine subjects. Four to five of these are obligatory, Irish, English, Maths, History/Geography. Within this group a marked difference is seen within the percentage of girls and boys who take the Higher course in Maths, the higher percentage being that of the boys. This bias is also seen in science as significantly more boys take science than girls although the amount of girls is increasing steadily.

Art as a subject is seen as being typically feminine. It was historically seen as being the sign of a young well educated lady. It was regarded as an upper middle class female trait. Often in mini serials on television one would see the young lady painting within the lush green fields. It is no longer taken as an upper middle class trait, as the class system is quite mixed within it. Yet it is still seen as a female subject. This too is also

true when one reaches third level, yet not as pronounced as within the second level sector.

Parents also influence the student into making decisions on whether to pursue a career in Art. It is one of the career areas which is most influenced by attitudes. This parental influence is most apparent in the Leaving Certificate years. It is again typical of sex differences of subject choice within the Leaving Certificate.

Boys dominate the Maths and Physical Science areas while girls are concentrated within the Arts, Music, Art, Home Economics and to some extent language areas. But moving into Biology which is perceived as relatively a softer scientific subject than Physics or Chemistry and is predominantly female. The sex bias and differentiation is most widely seen in Home Economics. Home Economics is designed to a larger extent for the home making and maternal roles. Students will learn how to cook and bake, to feed, clothe and look after others. It is within this subject that sex differentiation is most obvious.

One other subject also designed towards general house keeping and child rearing tasks or roles is Home Economics Social and Scientific. This contains all the elements of house keeping and child rearing, but also

some elements of Biology. It is because of this touch of science in relation to everyday life that an increase has developed in participation levels.

The basis of curricular decision making varies widely across the schools. It depends on what subjects are available for the student to choose. The principals of secondary schools, as Hannan explains, are much freer in curricular decision making. But the educational objectives of the religious order concerned, and the character of the main body of social groups being catered for, also plays a role. (7)

In the third level sector we have seen previously that the amount of boys who enter third level education is higher than girls. In the next few paragraphs I will concentrate on the courses each sex chooses.

Females are disproportionately concentrated in teacher training. In many teacher training colleges the ratios women to men is extremely high, with females comprising the majority of numbers within these colleges. In one Dublin teacher training college there is an average of two males to every twelve females. The college holds roughly sixty students, considering this number and the average ratio this comparison is quite staggering. Other courses such as nursing and secretarial courses also show this sex bias.

Within University and Technical Colleges women are far more likely to enter the Arts or professional type courses, whereas boys are more likely to enter Engineering or, Applied Science. The following figures show this sex bias clearly.

TABLE 6:
Ratio of male to female first year entrants and primary and post-graduate holders in 1979-80 (No. of males per female)

| | First Year Entrants 1980 | Primary Degrees 1979 | Post graduate Degrees 1979 |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Arts | .588 (1618) | .663 (1137) | 1.352 (88) |
| Social Science | .432 (95) | .114 (88) | 1.000 (4) |
| Commerce (incl. Econ, and Soc. Studies) | 1.958 (269) | 2.371 (210) | 19.500 (4) |
| Law | 1.392 (112) | 2.033 (90) | 2.800 (5) |
| Science | 1.058 (462) | 1.357 (300) | 2.655 (29) |
| Engineering | 8.935 (62) | 18.233 (30) | 27.667 (3) |
| Medicine/ Dentistry | 1.095 (241) | 2.163 (166) | 2.750 (4) |
| Vet./Agr./ Forestry | 4.239 (46) | 6.522 (23) | 41.000 (1) |

Source: HEA. Accounts and Student statistics, 1979-80

quoted in Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles p.66. (8)

However it is clear that the extent of sex differences has declined over the years and we are moving steadily towards a more equalized cohort.

This quite clear sex bias in choice whether by faculty or training course or employment (as we shall investigate in the following Chapter), is unlikely to be due totally to second level school channelling effects on subject

choice. It is also unlikely to be due to examination performance and therefore is not necessarily due to the educational or curricular constraints. The lack of provision by schools may perhaps reflect the biased historical patterns of choices made by girls. The student's individual perceived needs and choices create this sex bias. As Hannan et al explain the reasoning behind subject choice and occupational choices, appear to be found in -

both the behaviour of educational institutions and in the attitudes, aspirations and expectations of individuals.
(9)

EXTRA BROAD
BOND

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 2

1. Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles p. 51.
2. Ibid p. 53.
3. Ibid pp. 57- 58.
4. Ibid p. 59.
5. Ibid p. 60.
6. Ibid p. 62.
7. Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles p. 165.
8. Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles p. 66.
9. Ibid p. 67.

CHAPTER 3

WOMEN'S ROLES IN THE WORKFORCE

Participation levels in Work

All of the statistics regarding post school or college occupations do not at all reflect the high female enrolment rates at both second level as well as third level. The number of women working and the job levels at which they are employed, are not necessarily linked with the formal level of education received by girls. The occupations held by young females are dependent on society's perception of women's roles.

The extent of labour market segmentation among young workers who left school is indicated in the following table, taken from the Census of Population of Ireland, 1971, Volume V. Table 6 and Table 1B from Hannan et al.

TABLE 7 Some selected characteristics of the occupations held by gainfully occupied young (aged 20-24) and middle aged (40-44) female and male workers in 1971. Percentage in selected socio-economic groups.

| By Socio-Economic Group | Aged 20-24 | | Aged 40-44 | |
|--|-----------------|--------|-----------------|---------------|
| | Females | Males | Females | Males |
| | <i>per cent</i> | | <i>per cent</i> | |
| Higher Professionals | 2 | 2 | 8 | 4 |
| Lower Professionals | 14* | 4 | 15* | 3 |
| Employers, Managers, Salaried Employees | 0.4 | 3 | 4 | 9 |
| Intermediate non-manual | 46 | 17 | 29 | 9 |
| Other non-manual (Service workers etc) | 15 | 9 | 17 | 11 |
| Skilled Manual | 5 | 27 | 4 | 18 |
| Other Manual | 16 | 19 | 15 | 15 |
| Agricultural | 2 | 18 | 8 | 32 |
| Total | % | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| | No. | 68,408 | 97,800 | 14,693 74,507 |

Source: Census of Population of Ireland 1971, Volume V. Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles p. 69.

Almost two thirds of the young female workers aged twenty to twenty four in the table are employed in non-manual or white collar occupations. (1) The majority of these are engaged in clerical capacities, according to Hannan et al, and;

in ones that do not have extended
career possibilities (2)

Others are employed as service workers, shop or counter assistants etc. As Hannan et al explain, three out of four young female workers are employed, therefore in non-manual or service employment, compared to the male group where only one in three is employed in non-manual or service employment. (3)

Younger men are concentrated more in manual or farm employment. 63 per cent of males occupying jobs in these two areas. Manual work that is specialized has a lower percentage, with only 27 per cent of young men employed. If young men are not employed in manual labour, they are then more likely to be employed in professional, technical or trained managerial positions.

A very high proportion of young women are therefore employed, as Hannan et al explain,

in non-career line junior non-manual positions, or as professionals - such as teachers and nurses, they have limited career opportunities. (4)

71 per cent of all young working women aged twenty to twenty four are in occupations where over two thirds of their age peers are women. Which shows quite a clear female segmentation in the labour force in Ireland according to Kreckel cited by Hannan et al. (5)

Through this we see a high degree of sex differentiation similar to that found in other western societies.

Although as shown in the previous chapter (Chapter II) we can see a clear advantage to females at the point of leaving school, this is eroded when we see the males complete their apprenticeships. The males enter or are promoted to positions that are much better rewarded. They also after school follow on to university or technical colleges and are prepared for entry to

professional, technical or managerial positions in the economy. The girls disproportionately enter and as I stated above are trained for teaching, or nursing or other careers that have as Hannan et al state, "limited career opportunities". (5)

Given that the average level of female education is higher, with almost 70 per cent of females completing second level education compared to the 50 per cent of males - this clear cut advantage has been nullified. This problem raises the question of role expectations. These young females are influenced by society and its attitudes towards women which create these expected roles which influence young women so much today. Part of this question was answered in Chapter I, when I dealt with role expectations within the family which were again determined by society. I will now continue to answer this question, concentrating on society's influence on women in the labour force.

SOCIETY'S INFLUENCE ON WOMEN AND WORK

The stereotype of woman as wife and mother that society teaches us can in some women stand in the way of a good education and adequate training employment. In relation to this Caplan decided to examine why there was a drop in achievement levels from girls who entered second level,

compared to the regular achievement attained by the boys from the beginning to end of school (6) Some put it down to the female hormones and puberty, but Caplan and her co-worker Case set out to prove otherwise. Both Case and Caplan concluded that according to some girls, Caplan states,

as puberty arrives and you become
interested in boys - that you don't
show your intelligence - (7)

Caplan then continues to prove this point further in stating;

I had a very bright friend a few years ahead of me, in high school who wanted desperately to be home coming queen. When she entered high school she made sure to score poorly on several tests each grading period, because the names of honor role students were posted every six weeks; she feared that if her name went up on that list she would be considered unfeminine and would never be elected queen. She succeeded. She was elected home coming queen and graduated with a much lower grade average than she might have had. (8)

The story above clearly points out society's influence on women's or young girl's attitudes towards themselves and their working capabilities. As girls let their marks slip it does not mean that they have a need to fail: it seems more attributable to stereotypes imposed by society and what is acceptable for females and to impose social punishments upon those who do succeed. As Caplan states the type of verbal punishment one may hear;

you're not a real woman,
you're not feminine,
no man will ever want you. (9)

Another example of punishment that males may impose on women, is explained in a small tale by Caplan;

Judith, for example, began to underachieve after she learned from her best friend, Melissa that the reason Tom had never asked her out on a date during the two years that she had a crush on him, was that she always scored higher than he did on their maths tests. (10)

It seems that either women can drop or minimize their intellectual abilities and their competence in order to be accepted socially or to have the socially acceptable experience of "getting a man". (11)

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN AT WORK

Sometimes women at work can be seen as unthreatening and supportive. In other cases they are sometimes regarded as being overly emotional and perhaps seen therefore as incompetent. Or perhaps they are viewed as capable workers, in which case they can be seen as a danger in threatening their male co-workers need for achievement. Caplan holds some quite strong views on women within the work force. Similar views are expressed by Eunice McCarthy who states;

women are characterised at work, (this) emphasises images of women that are

incongruent with the demands of the work situations, eg. women are perceived as lacking in ambition and drive, lacking in assertiveness, lacking in egotism, lacking persistence and displaying high emotionalism. (12)

The opposites of such characteristics as these are ascribed to the executives, administrators and managers. These characteristics would be aggression, persistence and drive, competitiveness, personal dedication, emotional detachment, risk taking and decision making abilities. As McCarthy states these also correspond to the core characteristics of the stereotyped male role. (13)

These female attributes and characteristics have given and placed many women within occupations such as the service industries such as teaching, nursing, food processing, tobacco, textiles, clothing and main-stream electronics. They have been virtually excluded from skilled manual crafts. They are seen as under represented in the higher professional occupation, in top management in industry and in government.

There is a widely held view that compared with women men excel in jobs that are difficult in terms of intelligence and intellectual ability, which involve responsibility and decision making. In addition to this, men were seen, as stated by McCarthy, as more suited than women in jobs that require contact with customers eg. in sales or marketing. Often women are given the typing, and

shorthand work to do, and kept away from the more difficult clerical and executive work. (14)

Another assumption accounting for the allocation of employment between the sexes is perhaps that female staff tend to have a shorter working life, and regard it as McCarthy suggests as "stop-gap", between school and marriage. (15) Because of this some females are recruited to jobs where it is felt that the type of work suffers less if it was to be interrupted. Therefore as McCarthy points out, due to this assumption female staff are;

not encouraged to prolong the working life in any organisation. (16)

This stop gap was also seen by young women themselves, perhaps described as a lack of career orientation. In the past some young girls did not consider a career and perceived work as a stop gap between school and marriage. This is reinforced by Hannan et al who point out that;

In addition to this labour market segregation, up to 70% of young women retire from the labour force on marriage or on birth of the first child. This pattern of generally segregated schooling, segregated occupational induction, and early withdrawal from paid employment on marriage has become highly institutionalised in Irish educational and occupational placement practice, as well as in the anticipating socialisation of girls into this pattern. (17)

The general picture which emerged is that work organisations have tended to place and select well-educated girls and assign them to undemanding and low-responsibility jobs. The organisations are slow and cautious in utilising the female resources that they are recruiting.

Apart from these views women workers clearly indicate an involvement in their jobs. Interviewing a group of women workers McCarthy discovered that, according to these women, that they put more effort into their work, did better, and worked harder than their male counterparts. They also stressed a preference for work that would give them recognition in their own right. Rather than being seen as a group of women workers, they expressed a dissatisfaction with their jobs, stating they required a low degree of skills and no forward learning skills since this work was all repetitive. (18)

Many of these women workers and others with similar occupations blame their present positions on their formal education; this included a minimal post primary education. They saw this as a wall which stopped them from learning new skills and trades. This prevented them moving upwards and progressing within the organisation or company they worked in. The majority of these women who stated these facts also said they would like to play a greater part in more responsible jobs and also, as

McCarthy found out, to be in a position to aspire to promotion. (19)

A proportion of males are also likely to enter unskilled or semi-skilled manual jobs, but are also far more likely to become qualified as skilled manual workers and to take up jobs leading to careers in management, professional, technical and senior administrative positions. Although women, as Hannan et al point out, are less likely to become unemployed or to enter a low paid manual job, they are absent from any skilled manual or craft jobs as well as any senior positions. This is due to their different entry points to the labour market, to their previous educational history and to the very high degree of sex segregation within the labour market itself. (20)

As McCarthy states there is a need for a drive towards a better understanding within the work force. Paying attention to particular needs and individual differences of women, she concludes;

What is needed at this stage at work, is an understanding of the human traits that are desirable for both sexes, whether these traits are part of the traditional ideal male or ideal female models. (21)

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 3

1. Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles p. 69.
2. Ibid., p. 70.
- 3.. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Caplan in Women: The Longest Revolution
ed Mitchells, p. 171.
7. Ibid., 9. 172.
8. Ibid., p. 173.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 174.
12. Eunice McCarthy, "Women and Work in Ireland"
in Women in Irish Society, eds MacCurtain
and O'Corrain, p. 115.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p. 108.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Hannan et al, Schooling and Sex Roles p. 77.

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18. McCarthy, "Women and Work in Ireland",
Women in Irish Society, eds, McCurtain
and O'Corrain p. 108

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., p. 116.

21. Ibid.

CONCLUSION

We have seen from the previous data and stated facts that there is a clear cut bias where women are concerned within the three areas: Family, Education and Work. Let me not state that each one is the cause of the other. The cause of these views and attitudes which create womens roles is society. This is the area where the change will have to take place. Society at large will have to be more aware of women's needs and potential as well as their real aptitudes. Society will have to learn that women are not only created to;

...give to the state a support without which the common good cannot be achieved. The state shall therefore endeavour to ensure that mothers will not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of her duties in the home. (1)

The first sentence of the Constitution as stated above is true enough, all are equal and help towards the common good. Yet the words which cut the most are "neglect of her duties in the home". Unfortunately some of today's society thinks this way. It is driven into some who have not forgotton the traditional roles assigned to women. Young women are recognising where the problem is coming from. This is proven further, with the answer I received from the questionnaire. A majority of female students recognised that society was the main cause of problems

with women. This shows an awareness of the problem, at least, which perhaps by the time these young females leave school may have improved.

Living within a Catholic country does not help the situation. The Church has a great influence on society especially in terms of views of women. Some examples are the Divorce Referendum, the Abortion problem etc. As stated in Chapter I, we are held within its traditional definitions of sex roles which have wielded such a powerful influence over society and perhaps women themselves.

What is needed is not a battle of wills, but rather a more realistic and knowledgeable set of actions to change these views and attitudes. It will undoubtedly take a long time, but longer if it is not begun now.

FOOTNOTES CONCLUSION

1. Redlich, "Women and the Family", in Women in Irish Society, ed. MacCurtain and O'Corrain p.86.

APPENDIX I
(Questionnaire)

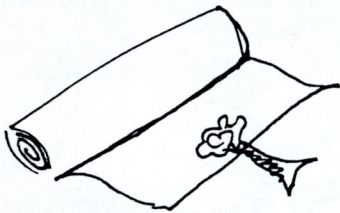
① Please state your age _____ YRS



② When do you intend to complete your education please box ☐ your answer

- Junior Certificate
- Leaving Certificate
- Post Leaving cert course
- 3rd level

③ What is the highest standard of education your parents have received? Please box ☐



- Intermediate Certificate
- Leaving Certificate
- Group Certificate
- 3rd level

④ What career do you intend to follow when you finish your education?

⑤a Would this be your first choice for a career?

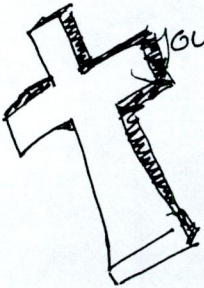
(b) Why?

⑥ Please tick[✓] the three most important influences that have influenced you into making your choice in career.

Parents
Peers (friends)
Religion
Society
Grandparents

one particular individual
school
yourself

⑦ How important was religion to you in making your decision? Tick[✓] one:



1. very important
2. important
3. quite important
4. not at all important

⑧ If you tick[✓] 1, 2 or 3 answer this question "Why do you think this?"

⑨ Please tick the words or phrases which in your opinion describes society's view of women today.

Slave drivers
Slave driven
Money orientated
Caring, Soft and lovable
Upwardly mobile
Nagging
Domesticated

Tiring
Confined
Hard Working
Motherly
Child bearing
Saintly
Confident
Patient

⑩ Box the influences which have given society these views of women today:

Government
Catholic Church
Other countries
Advertising

Past traditions
Women
Men
T.V

⑪ How have they done this?

iv

(12) (a) Please tick[✓] the women (or woman) which you advise.



(b) Which one would you like to be?

(c) Why?

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BOND

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