

TWO PERSON CAREER: THE PASTOR AND HIS WIFE

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INTRODUCTION

The participation of wives in their husband's careers has been neglected by sociologists studying occupations and professions. This study will show how the clergyman and his wife share a two person career. Three sets of related questions will be examined. 1) What are the expectations of the congregation of the pastor's wife? Are there any specific tasks that she is expected to perform? Are there any behaviors that she is expected to display? 2) How well does the clergyman's wife manage the obligations thrust upon her? Is she able to fulfill these expectations? 3) Is she able to reconcile this role with other roles that she performs or desires? How compatible does she find the role? Is she able to satisfy or fulfill herself in this role?

THE MINISTRY AS A PROFESSION

Parsons (1949) describes a profession as "a cluster of 'occupational' roles, that is, roles in which the incumbants perform certain functions valued in the society in general, and by these activities, typically 'earn a living' at a 'full time job'." He goes on to point out that "among occupational role-types, the professional is distinguished largely by the independent trusteeship exercised by the incumbants of a class of such roles of an important part of the major cultural tradition of that society." All societies have had occupational specialists whose responsibilities include an explanation of man's existence. In modern society, this specialist is the clergyman.

Greenwood (1957) found five elements that constitute the distinguishing attributes of a profession: 1) a systematic body of theory; 2) authority; 3) community sanction; ethical codes and 5) the professional culture. Goode (1957) argues that a professional group has a subculture into which one enters after an extended *rite de passage*. Among the characteristics of this "community" of professionals are 1) a shared sense of identity where 2) values are held in common and the 3) members communicate with each other through a common language often not understood by laymen. Moore (1970) identifies the professional by the following characteristics. 1) The professional practices a full time occupation. 2) A distinctively professional qualification is that of commitment to a calling. 3) Professionals are set

apart from the laity often by formalized organization. This organization includes the recognition of common occupational interests, some mechanism of control exercised by the organization to maintain standards, and the control of access to the profession. 4) The professional possesses esoteric but useful knowledge and skills which are based on specialized training or education. 5) The professional is expected to exhibit a service orientation. 6) The professional proceeds by his own judgment and authority enjoying autonomy restrained by responsibility.

The specific training of clergymen varies by denomination but in general, the more liberal the denomination, the more likely a college background. The seminary experience of clergy is one of extreme indoctrination similar to that of the law or medical school experience (Wagoner, 1963). In 1960, the median number of school years completed by clergymen was 17.1 with 83.6% having at least one year of college and 70.9% having four or more years (Moore, 1970).

One of the distinct features of professions is a service orientation. The clergy is a primary example of a vocation (Krause 1971). Commitment to a calling involves the acceptance of appropriate norms and standards, and identification with the profession as a collectivity (Moore, 1970). The calling goes beyond the mere acceptance of a religious doctrine to include a particular world view, self-perception and life style.

The professional attempts to perform his occupational role based on his own interpretation of his work or in terms of exercising autonomy. It is expected then that the clergyman would be able to conduct the responsibilities of the pastorate with little interference from the laity. Often this is not the case with Protestant clergy.

THE ROLE OF THE CLERGYMAN

In many ways, the Protestant minister deviates from the ideal type of the professional. First, Protestantism permits every man to serve as his own priest. This means that the minister is not the sole interpreter of religion although his command of Biblical interpretation exceeds that of the laity. The consequence is the undermining of the minister's authority and autonomy. In comparison with the Catholic

priest, the minister operates without the guarantee of religious authority. Most religious organizations have developed a centralized authority system whose ecclesiastical body adopts policy. The clergyman may find himself in a position of having to implement the policy where the laity is in disagreement with the decisions made by the governing body. Here the minister finds himself "the man in the middle". As religion has come to address social and moral issues as well as sacred concerns the minister is often asked to fill a wider range of social needs, some only remotely related to religion in a traditional sense. This client-practitioner relationship is structured such that many of the demands of the laity he is unable to meet are because they are at variance with his identity as a preacher and teacher. Most of the time of the minister is spent at administrative work, another area of which his training has been limited (Blizzard (1956). The minister and his family as extensions of himself are often expected to serve as role models for the membership of the church. Since the minister serves at the pleasure of the congregation, if he does not fulfill their expectations and needs, he is likely to be discharged.

THE ROLE OF THE CLERGYMAN'S WIFE

With the exception of hired professionals, religious participation is voluntary. Because the minister is thought to have made a commitment to a religious way of life, he is expected to set an example for the congregation. His family, especially his wife, is assumed to share this commitment. There is then, a special role of the pastor's wife. For many congregations, it is clear that they have a set of expectations as to how this role will be carried out.

METHODS

In gathering the data semi-structured interviews were recorded with the wives of Protestant clergymen concerning the role of the wife of the church pastor, the expectations of the congregation of their involvement in the ministerial role, self appraisal of their meeting these expectations, participation in church matters, and their perception of their importance to their husbands in his managing of his career.

The women interviewed were extremely cooperative and candid. Interviews ranged from 75 minutes to 3 hours. The sample of women was drawn from respondents to a written request of 65 women asking for a personal interview drawn from ten telephone books of a middle Atlantic state, eight of which repre-

sented the largest metropolitan areas. These telephone books included surrounding suburbs. The other two telephone books were randomly chosen representing two rural areas. The selection of the sample was taken from the yellow page listing of "Churches".

A total of 46 women agreed to participate and the first thirty-five women responding actually being interviewed. The women ranged in age from twenty-six to sixty-one with a mean age of 46.8. The women were married to ministers of which seven were Baptist, five Presbyterian, five Methodist, three Episcopalian, six United Church of Christ, three Lutheran, one Pentecostal, one Reformed Church of America, one Evangelic, one Unitarian and two other Protestant.

The wives reported their husbands work on the average of slightly more than 60 hours per week, ranging from 25 to 80 hours. Duties varied from congregation to congregation. In general, the ministers were reported to take part in a wide variety of activities including worship services and preaching, pastoral work such as calling, weddings, funerals, counselling, directing various church programs, administration, teaching, community relations and fund raising among others.

Using education and occupations of parents to form an index of social class, twenty-eight women came from middle-class homes, five from lower class homes, and two from upper class homes. The range of the life styles among the middle class women included small farmer in the midwest to the families of a physician and an attorney.

CONGREGATIONAL EXPECTATION

The role of the clergyman's wife begins with the expectations of the congregation and how the wife perceives these expectations. To some extent, these expectations of the congregation are based on how her predecessor filled the role. One initial expectation is that the woman would be religious. One described herself as not religious, 17 as somewhat religious, and 13 as very religious. But four of the women described themselves differently. They insisted that they were "Christians". As one woman put it, "I'd rather say I'm striving to live in the Christian life style. One can be religious and not be Christian", while another insisted, "I don't like your word religious. I am a Christian, not religious". The other two women voiced similar sentiments.

The wives were asked if they had found that they were expected to participate directly or indirectly in the running of the church. Five

(14.3%) maintained that there were no special expectations made on them because they were the minister's wife. Here the perceived assumption that one will participate and maintain a particular life style suggests an internalization of the role expectations. Upon further questioning, this respondent claimed that these were personal characteristics that the congregation desired of all of its members and not only of the pastor's wife, but acknowledged that she should "set an example and encourage others".

The proceeding is a minority impression. Most women believed that there were expectations although the explanations of the women differed as to why there were expectations. Among this group ambiguity exists. Of the women 19, or more than half, felt that the congregation did have expectations of her *because* she was married to the pastor of the church. "They expect me to attend services regularly, participate in special programs occasionally, attend all dinners, business meetings and special events held in the church, visit the shut-ins and entertain visiting missionaries and other church guests." Eleven of the women say that there are certain obligations but attributed these expectations to those of "any good Christian".

These were perceived expectations and it is possible that they do not necessarily reflect the expectations of the congregation: Note that 27 of 33 wives were invited to the interview when the husband was being considered for the job. Two married their husbands while the pastors were in their present positions. Of the women invited many were not invited on the first interview but were to the second interview where the competition for the position had narrowed. When one compares other professions this must be seen as somewhat uncommon and indeed suggests that the congregation feels it is important to meet the wife. As one wife commented, "We sort of checked each other out. They wanted to see if we could work together." There are many reasons for "checking each other out", one which is that often the minister and his family will be living in the parsonage. Unlike many other professions where the client-practitioner interaction is carried out in a neutral setting, the minister often interacts with members of the congregation in their homes or in his. When the congregation owns the parsonage, they often feel that they should be allowed access to the minister especially in times of crisis. This is often a source of conflict, because living in a parsonage is like living in a glass house.

The perceived expectations of the role of minister's wife by the congregation are non-specific. These are informally negotiated by the minister, his wife, and the congregation. Of those women who felt that there were no expectations of them, they averaged 12.3 hours per week of church related work exclusive of worship. Those perceiving expectations based on their position as minister's wife worked 10.1 hours per week, and 15.2 of those women who felt the expectations made of them were those made of "any good Christian" said they worked 15 hours per week. The more dogmatic the individual's definition of faith, the more time devoted to practicing and facilitating the practicing of faith for others, and the less perceived expectations of others to fill a special role. Among the activities that the wives participated in were the teaching of Sunday school, directing youth groups, participating in adult religious activities, running the church nursery school, calling on the membership, especially shut-ins, working on church sponsored projects and planning for the entertainment of church guests. It does not include the time spent at worship services where many of the women participate by singing in the choir or playing the piano or organ. In addition, the women often spend additional time at social functions such as weddings and baptisms. In all cases actual participation of the wives was in activities chosen by themselves although many reported pressure by the congregation influenced these decisions.

The women were also questioned as to whether they had to modify certain behaviors in order to satisfy the behavioral expectations of the congregation. On the issue of raising of children, smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, style of clothing, working, involvement in political affairs and the management of the home most were in agreement with their husband's congregation. They shared similar values so that there was no conflict. One woman reported that she and her husband usually had cocktails privately but felt this was a personal issue. Two of the women were involved in political affairs to which some of the members of the church regarded as less than desirable, and both were involved with moderate feminist groups.

FULFILLING THE OBLIGATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

The wives were asked two questions designed to measure how well they fulfilled the expectations of the flock. First, how well do you feel you meet the expectations? Second, how

important do you feel you are to your husband's career?

Of the women who indicated that there were some expectations of them, all but one indicated that they felt they had met most if not all of them. Other remarks that while they live up to the expectations of the parish, they often do not meet their own expectations. The one wife not meeting their expectations had in fact made a conscious effort to disentangle herself from her husband's career. She was developing her outside career patterns. "At first I worked very hard, sat on boards, did some of the calling. I even stayed the summer at Bible Camp one year. But when my husband finished his education, except for the dissertation, I decided to go back to school. I think that some of the members resented this. I found I just did not have the time to be involved in so many activities. The members seemed to feel that I should give up school and my job. Now I don't do anything. Sometimes I don't even have time to attend services."

The expectations placed on the minister's wife were of two types, role and behavioral. The former refers to the relationship the wife was to have with the church. It includes the activities she would engage in. Behavioral expectations were concerned with the life style that she followed. In general the latter type of expectations was easier to fulfill since a shared workview prevailed.

Most of the women felt that they were important to the career success of their husbands although two of the women indicated that they had married their husbands after their husbands were ordained. Other wives expressed their importance by sharing a mission with their husbands. "His 'success' is his through God's help and his own dedication and hard work. I only contribute because I believe." While most of the women did see their role as being important, not all were happy about their importance, as one wife remarked, "They hired him to fill a position and did not hire me. I don't feel that they should expect me to do certain things if I don't have the initiative myself. But they do, and to help my husband I do most of what they want."

VICARIOUS ACHIEVEMENT

Many of the women hold jobs. But these jobs in most cases cannot be described as careers. While many find fulfillment in their work, they negotiate their jobs to fit in with their church activities, not only for vicarious achievement but because they share a sense of mission. Four types of work patterns exist: 1) traditionalists

or nonworkers, those women who do not work outside of the home, 2) role integrators, those women who work but manage to integrate individual work roles with church work roles and where church role is priority, 3) role transformers, those women who take their work roles and transform them into the church setting, and 4) rebels, those women who have careers outside of the home and do not integrate this with their church role.

The education ranged from of this group less than a high school diploma to an expectant doctorate in Social Work. Twenty of the women had bachelor's degrees, four had master's degrees and two had associate degrees. As a group, these women had skills that would make them employable if they desired to work outside church and home.

TRADITIONALISTS

Traditionalists were women who devoted full time to their families and to their husband's careers. Eighteen women (51.4%) could be defined this way. All but one of the women were involved in activities outside of the church ranging from attending classes to hobbies and volunteer work. Only three of the women had pre-school children while nine of the women no longer had children in the home.

Of these eighteen women who did not work outside of the home, seven were college graduates. As a group they indicated that they were very satisfied with their lives without working and that not working allowed them to do other things. Although the church and their activities were important, all the women stated that their lives were not completely identified in the church. When asked if they felt their husbands should stay in the ministry, leave the ministry or whether it made any difference, all agreed that he should stay, some very strongly. When asked if their lives would be different if they had not married a minister all agreed that "not greatly so".

ROLE INTEGRATORS

Role integrators are women who work outside of the home where both the job and the responsibilities of the ministers' wife roles are important but not equally important. To insure that role conflict does not develop they have taken jobs with responsibilities that can be integrated with their church related responsibilities. Eight women (22.9%) balanced the occupation and marital roles in this way. Seven of the eight women held bachelor's degrees, three in education, two in nursing, one in sociology and one in mathematics and

economics. One of the education graduates worked part time in a nursery school as did the wife with the degree in sociology. Both indicated that part time employment enabled them to engage in the church activities that a full time job would not permit. The nurse worked as a private duty nurse for the same reasons, so that she could take cases when there was spare time from church activities. It also permitted her to turn down work during the church's busy seasons — Christmas and Easter. The most interesting example of integration was the bachelor's degree in mathematics and economics who also had some graduate study. She worked as a statistician for two trade associations and had an office in the parsonage so that she could be there. It is clear though that the commitment is to the marital role primarily and that the occupational role cannot be considered a career but rather a supplementary role. In terms of role priorities, their wife role dominates. All of the women agreed that if the job they presently held was incompatible with other obligations they would probably look for another job or quit.

ROLE TRANSFORMERS

Role transformers are women who took their professional skills and allowed the church to make use of them. Only three (8.6%) women were able to do this. Two had bachelor's degrees, one in education and one in music. One woman with a BA in early childhood education set up a nursery school in the church and serves as its director. Another began teaching music to children of the congregation as part of the activities offered by the church and giving private lessons on the side. Both had problems regarding compensation for their work. In both cases the congregations balked at giving salaries and in both instances compromises were reached. In the first, the husband received a very nice increase in salary the following year while in the latter the lessons for the church members children were free but she was allowed to give private lessons. The third, a teacher, taught Christian education and ran self-improvement courses.

For these women the career was equally important and in the cases of the music instructor and the nursery school operator both insisted that if the church could not utilize their skills they would seek opportunities elsewhere. It is quite possible that at some future date these women will become rebels.

REBELS

Among ministers wives, rebels were women

whose careers were more important than their obligations as the minister's wife.

Seven of the women (20.0%) were classified as rebels although the extent of their rebellion varied. All felt that the congregation made demands on them but only one was resentful. This woman, a junior college counselor, was very hostile to their demands. She explained that "she, too, was entitled to an independent career". Another of this group of rebels was a clergywoman. The demands made on her, she felt, were much different from the demands made on other pastors wives. They were those made of a colleague of her husband's rather than those of a wife. The demands of her congregation on her husband were not reciprocal. If her husband could not meet an obligation she was expected to cover for him but if she could not meet a similar responsibility, no such demands were made of her husband. That none of the husbands were involved in their wives' careers suggests that the "two person career" applies to female involvement in the careers of males at this time.

CONCLUSIONS

The vicarious achievement described by Papanek (1973) existed in only one case although most women did express satisfaction through their involvement in their husbands' church. Most women negotiated roles for themselves within their churches that allowed them to develop many interests of their own. Wives of ministers may be unique in that while sharing a set of religious beliefs they also share a career and hence are unable to separate religious and marital obligations and interests. This may change because many of these women were moving toward careers that could greatly effect their ability to fulfill the varied expectations.

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the Africaner cultural heritage. A pervasive ideology of the Nationalist Party and the Africaner people has been the threat posed to that heritage from nonwhites. However, the heightened articulation of that cultural heritage during the present century was perhaps as much if not more a result of conflict with English-speaking South Africans, who were politically dominant from unionization in 1910 until 1948, were regarded as a threat to Africaner culture as represented by the English dominance of such institutions as language, economics, politics, and education. Thus, it was the Africaner response to the threat posed by English domination that led to the increased affirmation of that symbolism. Its retention thereby became a major political objective once Africaner political ascendance was attained.

The liberals typically associated with the English South African ethnics and the Nationalists have been in disagreement not over the principle of segregation but the means of its achievement. In contrast to the Nationalists, liberal policies, proposals, and criticisms have been based on the need to develop ideals of democratic universalism (Robertson, 1971).

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