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**Childfree by Choice
An Exploratory Study of the Determinants
of Voluntary Childlessness
in Canada**

Donna Barbagallo

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Sociology

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Québec, Canada**

November 1990



Donna Barbagallo, 1990



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Abstract

Childfree by Choice: An Exploratory Study of the Determinants of Voluntary Childlessness in Canada

Donna Barbagallo

This study examines a set of determinants which have been delineated in the literature as being paramount for describing those who voluntarily choose to remain childless. The Canadian Fertility Survey (T.R. Balakrishnan, K. Krotki and E. Lapi  rre-Adamcyk, 1984) is used as the data source for it contains one of the most complete fertility histories ever gathered on a national level in Canada.

Two models using demographic, socioeconomic and attitudinal variables were set up in order to differentiate the voluntarily childless women from the women with children. The findings from discriminant analysis indicate that Attitudes Toward Children, over and above the demographic and socioeconomic variables, play a key role in discriminating between both groups. Contrary to the literature, however, Place of Birth, Residence, Religiosity, Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother did not serve to differentiate the membership groups in either model. This leads one to question their effectiveness as determinants of voluntary childlessness.

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Introduction

The following study examines a set of determinants which serve to differentiate voluntarily childless women from women with children. The data utilized are drawn from the Canadian Fertility Survey (T.R. Balakrishnan, K. Krotki and E. Lapière-Adamcyk, 1984) which contains one of the most complete fertility histories ever gathered on a national level in Canada. By using such a large random sample of voluntarily childless women (N=320), this study attempts to build on past research which tended to use relatively small purposively selected samples for their analyses.

The first chapter introduces the research problem along with a rationale for its relevance in social demographic research.

The second chapter is a review of the literature on voluntary childlessness. The topics covered include:- trends in childlessness, becoming voluntarily childless and commitment to childlessness among others. A section outlining the various methods used for extrapolating voluntarily childless women from survey data is also included. Next two theoretical approaches, namely, a socio-psychological framework and a cost-reward framework are evaluated.

The third chapter specifies the empirical models to be tested. Two main models are specified with minor modifications, based upon the theoretical literature and previous empirical research.

The fourth chapter outlines the methodology employed, including a discussion of the data, variable measurement and the method of analysis.

The fifth chapter delineates the findings of both models, while the sixth, and last, chapter summarizes the results.

Chapter I

Research Problem

This exploratory study examines the determinants of voluntary childlessness for a random sample of women twenty-five years of age and over in Canada. Demographic, socioeconomic and attitudinal variables are tested for their discriminating power in differentiating women who choose to be childfree from women who have children.

The Canadian Fertility Survey is particularly useful as the data source, in that it contains the most complete fertility histories ever gathered on a national level in Canada. Detailed information on contraceptive use, sterilization procedures, fertility expectations, attitudes toward children and attitudes toward abortion were gathered for a sample of 5315 women between the ages of 18 to 49. In addition, the survey also provides information on a set of demographic and socioeconomic variables which have been highlighted in the literature as being essential for describing the voluntarily childless.

Rationale

Prior to the 1970's, there is little literature on voluntary childlessness. This scarcity is partly due to "pronatalist norms" which seemed to prevail at that time. This takes the form of two inherent expectations regarding

procreation. The first is that married people should have children; the second is that they should not only want to have them but that they should rejoice at the prospect of becoming parents (Veevers, 1973b:199). Any behaviour which deviated from this "parenthood prescription" was labelled deviant and, as such, the voluntarily childless virtually remained an invisible minority.

Deliberate childlessness in Canada and the United States has been estimated to characterize at least five to seven percent of all couples. Even though predicting the incidence of childlessness is hazardous in that current expectations of births may or may not be realized in actuality - given current fertility trends (circa 1980) Veevers proposed that perhaps one in ten couples would eventually reject the parenthood role and opt for a childfree lifestyle (1980:2). Grindstaff also projected that in Canada, by the year 2001, twenty percent of ever married women aged 30 to 34 would never bear a child (Veevers, 1980:2).

In light of these changes and projections, one cannot deny the relative importance of conducting a study on those who are deliberately childless. Although there is considerable consensus regarding the demographic, socioeconomic and attitudinal correlates of this atypical group - there are many intrinsic limitations to the

available data. First, the samples of most empirical studies tend to be very small - sometimes hardly more than case studies (refer to Goodbody (1977) with a sample of six wives). Second, respondents tend to be selected purposively from atypical groups such as those seeking sterilization (Gustavus and Henley, 1977; Magarick and Brown, 1981) or are members of N.O.N. - the National Organization for Non-Parents (Barnett and MacDonald, 1976; Marciano, 1978). Third, biases also exist in terms of the respondents purposively selected for the studies in question - Caucasians from middle to upper class backgrounds are over-represented. Fourth, many of the studies focus on solely married or ever-married women - neglecting those who are single or cohabiting. Fifth, the majority of studies on voluntary childlessness originate from the United States. Are the findings applicable to Canadians as well?

The present study will not only circumvent these shortcomings, but will break new ground with the use of the Canadian Fertility Survey, in that:

- a) the survey is relatively recent and was conducted in Canada;
- b) respondents were randomly selected - expunging the problems associated with purposively selected samples and/or the over-representation of certain groups/social classes;
- c) not only were married or ever-married women included

in the survey - but women who were cohabiting or were single as well;

d) Given that over 5300 women were surveyed, the voluntarily childless group is made up of close to 300 women. This is one of the largest voluntarily childless groups ever studied in a Canadian context.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Trends in Childlessness

A majority of earlier studies on childlessness have tended to treat the phenomenon as if it only occurred involuntarily. In many family texts for example, an estimate of the incidence of childlessness was usually followed by a discussion of factors contributing to subfecundity and sterility. The implicit assumption here, according to Poston (1976:199) was that fecundity problems were the only cause of childlessness and that something should be done to help the childless couple. This inherent bias was brought to the forefront by individuals who questioned the universality of involuntary childlessness. Kiser, in a study conducted in New York City in the 1930's, observed that although the major share of permanent childlessness appeared to be largely an "involuntary situation, some of the childlessness was likely not due to involuntary sterility and subfecundity" (1939:66-68). In fact, of all childless couples over the past forty years, it has been generally estimated that approximately half were childless by choice (Veevers, 1972b; Waller, Rao and Li, 1973; Rao, 1974, Veevers, 1979). Moreover, this rule of thumb estimate of a 50-50 split may have to be modified somewhat given an increased capacity for fertility control in terms of successfully preventing unwanted conceptions, and of

successfully treating infertility problems. Thus, it may be appropriate to adopt the working hypothesis that the higher the incidence of childlessness in a given population, the higher the proportion of all childlessness which can be expected to be deliberate (Veevers, 1979:8).

But what about the overall trends in childlessness? In making a distinction between voluntary and involuntary childlessness, Poston and Kramer using a myriad of data have identified three distinct phases (1983:291-293):-

Phase I (1920's to 1940)

- although more than half of the childlessness occurring was typically involuntary, a good percentage of couples were having no children by choice
- data from the Indianapolis Study permit the conclusion that during 1927-1941 more than 40 percent of the childless couples studied, reported that they chose to have no children and were regular users of contraception

Phase II (after WWII until the late 1950's)

- is characterized by an overall reduction in childlessness with little if any of the remaining childlessness due to voluntary factors
- by using the Growth of American Families (GAF) Studies it was noted that nearly all American couples in the childbearing ages had demonstrated a strong aversion to childlessness; it was estimated that only six to eight percent of young couples would remain childless and that the

major cause was the existence of fecundity impairments

Phase III (1960's to present)

- is characterized generally by increases in overall childlessness, as well as by increases in voluntary childlessness

- using the 1965 National Fertility Survey, Poston estimated that over 61 percent of white women with no children who were not anticipating having children were voluntarily childless

Both period and cohort analyses of childlessness seem to confirm the observations made with respect to Phase III. For example DeJong and Sell (1977:140) have noted that the increases in childlessness of the 1960's were not "attributable primarily to changes in involuntary factors (biological; disease)". By implication Veevers (1980:157) contends that since there is no reason to expect an increase in sterility among young populations, any acceleration in the rates of childlessness can be assumed to be almost entirely due to the deliberate avoidance of parenthood.

Becoming Voluntarily Childless

In becoming voluntarily childless, two characteristic paths, with minor modifications, have been delineated in the literature (Veevers, 1973c, 1979, 1980; Nason and Poloma, 1976; Cooper, Cumber and Hartner, 1978). The first Veevers

maintains is that the couple before they are even married, may formulate a definite and explicitly-stated intention never to become involved in parental roles. The second, which is a more common but less obvious route, is that childbearing is postponed until such time as it is no longer considered desirable at all (Veevers, 1980:17).

Specifically, of all childless couples interviewed, about one third explicitly agreed upon childlessness as a firm condition of marriage. That is, the individuals deliberately sought a future mate who would agree to this one condition regardless of his or her own desirable qualities. Such persons are known as "early articulators" for their negative decisions regarding the value of children were made during their early adolescence - before the possibility of marriage had ever been considered. It is salient to note that in some instances the association between marriage and parenthood is so "deeply ingrained" that the rejection of parenthood is perceived as possible only if marriage is also rejected. The two phenomena, according to Veevers, are considered to be "different aspects of the same thing and it is not until one's mid-twenties that the option of childless marriage occurs as an alternative" (Veevers, 1980:18-19).

About two-thirds of the couples interviewed remained childless as a result of a series of decisions to postpone

having children until some future time - a time which never came. Rather than explicitly rejecting parenthood prior to marriage, Veevers maintains that they repeatedly deferred procreation until a more convenient time. These temporary postponements are invaluable in that they provided time during which the evaluations of parenthood were reassessed relative to other goals and possibilities. Most couples who became postponers had devoted little serious thought to the question of having children and had no strong feelings either for or against parenthood. They simply made the conventional assumption that they would eventually have one or two children (Veevers, 1980:20).

Veevers posits that the transition from wanting to not wanting children typically evolves through a series of four separate stages (Veevers, 1980:21-27):-

1) The first stage involves deferring childbearing for a definite period of time. At this point, the voluntarily childless are difficult to distinguish from conventional/conforming couples who will eventually become parents. A couple may want to achieve certain goals before starting a family such as travelling, buying a house or simply getting adjusted to one another. The reasons for waiting vary but there remains a clear commitment to have children as soon as conditions are right. What seems to separate both groups is that the future voluntarily childless couples seem to practice birth control more

conscientiously and continuously within marriage than do the conventional couples. That is, even if the latter approve of birth control and have access to it - the majority do not seriously try to control their own fertility until they have had at least one child.

2) The second stage of the postponement route involves a shift from postponement for a definite period of time to an indefinite one. Even though they continue to remain committed to being parents, they become increasingly vague about when a birth is going to take place. These couples cite excuses such as when "things are going better"; "we can afford it"; "we feel more ready". Some of these couples postpone parenthood until they can give children all the things they think children should have. A common consequence of such reasoning is that the standards to be achieved before one is truly ready can escalate indefinitely - resulting in a series of temporary postponements.

3) The third stage involves a qualitative change in the thinking of childless couples in that, for the first time, there is an open acknowledgement of the possibility that in the end the couple may remain permanently childless. That is, at this stage they begin deliberating the pros and cons of parenthood.

4) The fourth stage involves the definite conclusion that childlessness is a permanent rather than a transitory state. According to Veevers, for most couples there is never a direct decision made to avoid having children. Rather,

after a number of years of postponing pregnancy until some future date, they become aware that an implicit decision has been made to forego parenthood. The process is one of recognizing an event which has already occurred, rather than of posing a question and then searching or negotiating for an answer.

Some couples who reach the fourth stage usually consider sterilization as an option to guarantee their childless status. Among the couples studied by Veevers, about one quarter had opted for sterilization and another quarter have seriously considered it (Veevers, 1980:26). Another factor which precipitated the decision to be sterilized was the dissatisfaction with previously acceptable forms of birth control. Contraceptive pills may be acceptable early in marriage but may be perceived as less so if taken over an extended period of time. Other methods do offer some protection - but in the eyes of the childfree couple this is a potential risk they are not willing to take. If conception did occur, an abortion may be sought barring any legal restrictions, but for some this may not be a viable option (Veevers, 1980:27).

In achieving consensus over the decision to remain childless, about half of the couples studied were considered "mutuals" in that they did so spontaneously with the gradual recognition of an emergent joint decision. Of the remaining

cases, there was no apparent pattern of the will of the husband or the will of the wife as being most likely to prevail (Veevers, 1980:28).

Nason and Poloma, unlike Veevers, identified three variant paths with respect to the decision to remain childless. The first which is similar to Veevers', involved making the decision not to parent before marriage. Thirteen percent of the thirty couples sampled took this route. The vast majority as in Veevers' study, made the decision to remain childfree after marriage. However, Nason and Poloma differ in that they identify each path on the basis of a specific time frame as to when the decision was made from the point of marriage. Specifically, the second path involved couples who had made the decision within two to three years after marriage. For these couples, the decision was a gradual one in which conversations might revolve around the problems associated with childbearing and the costs children might incur against their marital relationship. The third path incorporates those couples who made their decision to remain childless after more than three years of married life. According to Nason and Poloma, the decision in these cases was a result of a continued postponement of childbearing until some vague future point in time (Nason and Poloma, 1976:35-36). It is interesting to note that this second path is reflective of Veevers' third

stage while the third path is reminiscent of her second stage.

Cooper, Cumber and Hartner (1978) also describe two divergent paths by which the decision to remain childless is made. Couples labelled as "independents" were made up of spouses who had reached the decision to remain childfree before marriage. In their sample of 22 couples, six reported that they were confirmed in their decision to such a degree that "it colored all facets of their process of mate selection. They would not have married someone who was not equally committed to the childfree lifestyle." (Cooper et al., 1978:80).

The remaining couples were classified as "negotiators". These couples came to their decision via a process which differed from the postponement pattern described by Veevers. That is, while each member of the couple may have entered into marriage with a vague expectation of eventually having children, they did not report a commitment to childbearing after a given number of years as was suggested in Veevers' research. Childbearing and rearing were regarded as a possibility but one which must be discussed. Moreover, it was the childbearing decision itself which was to be postponed rather than the planned pregnancy. The negotiator couples reported a period ranging in length from months to years during which there were thoughtful discussions of the

relative pros and cons of the parent and childfree lifestyles - a period which was followed by an explicitly stated agreement between the spouses to remain childfree (Cooper et al., 1978:80-81).

Within this negotiator path, Cooper et al. were able to identify interesting variations in patterns of interaction between the spouses. That is, for some couples, the decision to remain childless may be regarded as a mutual one while for others, a certain degree of influence was exerted by one member upon the other. In terms of the mutuals, both partners showed an equal lack of interest in parenthood at every step of the decision-making process - neither had more influence in the decision making and neither had attempted to persuade the other. The authors were surprised to note a complete absence of "quarreling, incriminations and angry or heated emotional discussions. Once the decision was made, both partners reported similar levels of commitment and satisfaction with their choice." (Cooper et al., 1978:81).

The remaining negotiator couples were characterized by some degree of power differential in the decision-making process. Some were classified as "wife influential" while the others were classified as "husband influential" (Cooper et al., 1978:81-84). It is interesting to note that among the wife influential couples, influence was not synonymous with coercion for there was a complete absence of any

indication of heated argument and strong emotional conflict. This does not hold true, however, for the husband influential couples. Discussions among members of these couples were rather more heated and emotional, and subtle indications were present in interviews (with the wives particularly) that there remained some unresolved issues related to the decision (Cooper et al., 1978:83).

Unfortunately, Cooper et al. do not offer any explanations for this noted difference. One possible reason for this absence of coercion among the wife influential couples is that before the decision to marry is made, males generally do not feel strongly about having or not having children - they are ambivalent for the most part (Veevers, 1980:20). As such, they are more likely to be easily influenced by their spouse's decision.

Commitment to Childlessness

While conducting their respective studies, both Veevers (1980) and Nason and Poloma (1976) observed that the degree of certainty attached to the acceptance of permanent childlessness varied among the respondents interviewed. Not all couples were equally committed to remaining childless. In order to explicate the varying degrees of commitment observed, Nason and Poloma devised a four-fold typology based upon the responses to four critical items reflecting

contraceptive use; abortion in the event of an unwanted pregnancy; sterilization and the possibility of children in the future. As such, the couples interviewed were categorized as follows:- (1) the irrevocably committed; (2) the strongly committed; (3) the reasonably committed; and (4) the committed with reservations (Nason and Poloma, 1976:22-23).

In terms of the irrevocably committed, one or both partners in the marriage had been sterilized to avoid an unwanted pregnancy. Yet the sample of five couples was too small to observe any common or divergent background patterns among them. Even the strength of the wife's career commitment was not a constant for those in the category. It was also difficult, if not impossible, to determine which member was more instrumental in the decision-making process or whether it was truly a mutual, simultaneous decision as reported (Nason and Poloma, 1976:25).

The characteristics of the strongly committed may be summarized as follows (Nason and Poloma, 1976:26-27):-

1. they were all effective users of contraception (pill),
2. both the husband's and wife's discussion of sterilization revealed no fears about the irrevocability of the surgical procedure,
3. in the case of contraceptive failure, both expressed the belief that the wife would have an abortion rather than bear the child,
4. there were no signs in the interview that either

partner was ambivalent about their reported decision.

In all cases it was noted that it was the wife who was strongly committed to not having children, and that the husband was supportive of this decision for that particular relationship. In another relationship, Nason and Poloma believe that these men may have become fathers. They conclude that it is highly unlikely that these couples will have a child in the future.

The reasonably committed couples differed from those in the first two categories in that they either expressed some minor doubts about the permanency of their decision or expressed concern about what course of action they would follow in the event of a contraceptive failure. All were effective users of contraceptives and probably would have an abortion if an unwanted pregnancy would occur. According to Nason and Poloma, these couples appear to be working through the decision to remain permanently childless within the context of their marriages - with the inclination toward a permanent commitment. Their plans and visions are simply not as focussed as those in the first two categories (Nason and Poloma, 1976:27-29).

The committed with reservations were all effective users of contraception but were less enthusiastic about sterilization or abortion. Possibly due to their realization that pregnancy was a possibility, they expressed some doubt

about the permanency of their decision. Moreover, the issue of abortion separated these couples from the reasonably committed in that the majority would not even consider an abortion in the event of an unwanted pregnancy. If faced with a loss of income, freedom and career one could not predict whether these wives would change their minds and opt for an abortion - their attitude according to Nason and Poloma is one of virtual ambivalence (Nason and Poloma, 1976:29-30).

An exploratory study on fertility control and the voluntarily childless, gives credence to the grounds upon which this four-fold typology is based. Carlisle unearthed a direct relationship between an individual's commitment to childlessness and one's differential use of, and perspectives on, the various forms of control (ie) method (pill, diaphragm, condom, IUD), sterilization and abortion. Although the childless recognize the effectiveness of existing forms of control, they are not always prepared to use or contemplate using the most effective method available. Effectiveness features in any decision taken but practice and perspectives also depend upon a method's convenience, safety and availability, its permanence or reversibility, and to a greater degree upon the extent and basis of individual commitment (Carlisle, 1982:210).

The Childfree Lifestyle

One of the most striking features of the childfree lifestyle is that it is adult centered as opposed to being child centered (Veevers, 1980; Callan, 1986b). In a nutshell, the voluntarily childless have more latitude with respect to behaviour, language and hours. They are virtually free to pursue any activity which interests them. These childfree couples are not constrained, as childed couples are, in having to provide a suitable model for one's children or for having to include them in one's activities (Veevers, 1980:70).

For instance, the childfree are able to indulge in leisure time activities which are designated for "adults only". These may involve an element of calculated risk and may appropriately be of at least questionable morality—such as smoking, drinking, drug use and the pursuit of vicarious, as well as direct, sexual experiences (ie. experiments with swinging and threesomes). They may also be inclined to engage in activities involving physical risk such as racing, high-speed driving even skydiving. Great enthusiasm for travelling is often expressed by the childfree. One of the major perceived advantages of being childless is the ability to enjoy longer and more frequent trips than they could have managed otherwise (Veevers, 1980:70-78).

This does not imply, however, that all childless couples pursue such activities or that all childed couples do not - it is more a question of being able to pursue them if one wishes to do so. The absence of children is perceived as the key to a "plurality of opportunities which would otherwise be denied them - opportunities which are defined almost exclusively in terms of options and the maintenance of options." (Veevers, 1980:73). This point is buttressed by the fact that the desire to preserve freedom was one of the most frequently mentioned reasons for the decision to avoid the parenthood role (Movius, 1976:59; Baum and Cope, 1980:294; Callan, 1986a:267; Callan, 1986b:485).

The childfree lifestyle is not solely devoted to the pursuit of leisure time activities. The childfree, like the childed, have to earn a living and thus they spend the majority of their time working. It is interesting to note that freedom plays a salient role in this realm as well. Veevers discovered that for women, childlessness was often significantly associated with the right to be involved in or devoted to instrumental roles - as reflected in one's freedom to work. For men, childlessness was often associated with the right to be involved in or devoted to expressive roles, as reflected in one's freedom from work (Veevers, 1980:79).

In the majority of studies reviewed, a large proportion of the deliberately childless women interviewed were employed (ie) Baum and Cope (1980) at 82%; Nason and Poloma (1976) at 80%. Of more consequence, however, is the fact that many of these women were involved in careers. Veevers estimated that about 50% of her female sample had a career in the sense of being intrinsically committed to a demanding profession. For employed women who are not content with the relatively routine jobs traditionally assigned to them, and who "aspire instead to success in the kinds of absorbing careers usually reserved for men, childlessness is a critical factor in their professional achievements." (Veevers, 1980:79). Faux concurs by stating that "the lure of a career is probably the single most important factor drawing women toward childlessness." (Faux, 1984:9). In essence, being childfree meant being free from responsibilities and demands of time and energy which childfree women felt would detract from their careers.

The relationship between childlessness and career achievements is complex and probably reciprocal (Veevers, 1980:81). As childless women become successful in their careers and are increasingly rewarded for their achievements, they become more committed to remaining in their careers. Many childless wives are seriously concerned with the extent to which having children would disrupt

promising career prospects or one's professional development.

These concerns are justified for it has been estimated that the birth of the first child reduces the average number of years a woman works by ten years and each successive child reduces the average two to three years (Movius, 1976:60). Realistically, when a career is interrupted for an extended period of time for bearing and rearing children, a woman cannot hope to continue to compete with the men who continued to work one, two, three or more years while she stayed at home (Movius, 1976:60).

It would also seem that voluntarily childless women have very firm views about working mothers. Their opinions appear to be very traditional in that many feel that mothers should not work when they have young children (Callan, 1986a:269). That is, career and motherhood are viewed in either/or terms in that one cannot successfully combine both - for each require a full-time commitment (Veevers, 1980:67; Faux, 1984:18).

Paradoxically, for men voluntary childlessness is often associated with the freedom from having to pursue a career. In terms of contemporary definitions of masculinity, the role of family provider is pervasive especially when it is incorporated into the associated role of father. The

voluntarily childless men perceive themselves to be released from the sole responsibility of earning an income for a household. Veevers maintains that when they compare themselves with men who are fathers, childless men see themselves as being relatively free to take any kind of job they want, and to accept a trade off of relatively low pay for relatively pleasurable work. Should the work cease to be pleasurable, they see themselves as free to change jobs as often as they like - even to quit work entirely for as long as they have the resources to support themselves. Essentially, the childfree male does not feel trapped - the significant point is not that they will quit work... but that they could if they wanted to (Veevers, 1980:82-83).

The childfree lifestyle is also marked by relative affluence in that the couples have many times more resources for optimal spending than do most childed couples. This may be traced to three interrelated factors (Veevers, 1980:86). First, a childless wife is more likely to be career oriented than a mother - as such she is more likely to be successful earning a higher income. Secondly, the salary of a childless wife is almost all profit in the sense that only a small proportion of her income (if any) is needed to buy services which compensate for a lessening of her participation in housework and cooking tasks. Thirdly, even when total family incomes are comparable, the resources of parents are committed to the direct cost of children, and to other

essential expenses - leaving a relatively low proportion of their income for optimal spending. With the exception of the very rich, these factors operate at all class levels to produce substantial discrepancies in the standard of living of parental and childless couples.

In terms of the marital relationship itself, the absence of children was viewed as something positive. The presence of children was considered to be detrimental to an intimate husband-wife relationship. It seems as if the voluntarily childless want nothing to interfere with their marital relationships, and parenthood is seen as a potential threat to their satisfactory "dyadic" union. As long as the childfree lifestyle is rewarding, there appears to be serious hesitations about introducing any change in the marriage (Nason and Poloma, 1976:19-20). In order to ensure the sanctity of this childless dyadic union, the majority of couples spend most of their leisure time together - to the point where they begin to view each other as a reference group of one (Nason and Poloma, 1976:19; Veevers, 1980:95). The importance of preserving such a dyadic union among the deliberately childless may also be responsible for the high levels of communication witnessed between both partners (Veevers, 1980:95) as well as the fact that their relationships were found to be highly interactive (Feldman, 1981:599).

There is considerable debate as to whether a positive relationship exists between childlessness and marital instability/divorce. It is widely believed that children tend to hold marriages together. That is, couples who are unhappy and who are divorce prone may manifest that unhappiness by not having/wanting children. Second, childless couples presumably miss the benefits of the parenthood experience and are consequently more prone to divorce. Third, couples who are unhappy for whatever reason may feel more free to get a divorce if they are childless (Veevers, 1980:107-108; Gibson, 1980). Yet, Veevers and others maintain that this relationship may in fact be spurious (Veevers, 1980:108; Chester, 1972:443). The reason is that most of the relationship between childlessness and marital instability appears to stem from the fact that most divorces occur in the early years of marriage, before children are born in any case. Moreover, the association between childlessness and marital stability seems to depend upon other variables, such as the duration of marriage, race, family size and child density (Veevers, 1980:108).

In fact, Renne found that overall, childless couples enjoyed better health, morale and were happier with their marriages (Renne, 1976:190-193). Parenthood, she found, seems to detract from the physical and psychological health of husbands and wives - particularly among younger couples. Rates of joint marital satisfaction also were lower for

active parents than for former parents and childless couples, regardless of the duration of the marriage, the wife's age and employment status (Renne, 1976:183). Not only is the relationship between childlessness and marital instability tenuous at best, one may have to look at the other end of the spectrum - the relationship between childlessness and marital stability.

Stereotypes, Pressure and Coping Strategies

In reviewing the literature, it would seem that family size norms are extant since individuals are judged differently according to their fertility status. That is, parents with larger families were judged as more likely to hold positive personality traits, to be well adjusted, to be more competent and to be more socially desirable than those with fewer children (Callan, 1985; Ory, 1978; Calhoun, 1980; Polit, 1978). In the same vein, Blake discovered that the widespread tolerance for families with more than two children is not matched by tolerance for families with one or none. A certain amount of rigidity is present with respect to attitudes toward childlessness and the only child. It would appear that it is not only regarded as desirable to have a family, but, as well, to have a family of at least two children (Blake, 1974:37; Ory, 1978:537). This prevalent attitude is made blatantly clear in the following fertility norm which was expressed by the majority

of Rainwater's respondents (see Veevers, 1980:113): "one shouldn't have more children than one can support, but one should have as many children as one can afford."

Overall, the voluntarily childless and parents with one child were viewed most negatively. Relative to a person who wanted or had more than one child - they were found to be more independent, autonomous, rebellious, nonconventional, self centered, immature and less friendly, wholesome, good natured, fulfilled and feminine (Polit, 1978:111; Baum and Cope, 1980:295). As one would expect, the most positive attitudes towards voluntary childlessness were found among persons who were relatively young, who did not have a Catholic background, who were highly educated and who themselves had relatively few children (Polit, 1978:111).

Apart from the stereotyping, pronatalist pressure is prevalent as well. In Baum and Cope's study, 85% of the wives interviewed had experienced some form of pressure in that others were either encouraging them to have children or that they were concerned about the childless not having any (Baum and Cope, 1980:295). Veevers reports that the parents and in-laws of the voluntarily childless are a major and persistent source of social pressure to procreate. Such pressure typically continues unabated until the couple have been married for five or six years, or until a sibling produces a child and so relieves some of the direct

pressure. The most serious and unresolvable conflict seems to occur between the only child and his or her parents, where there are no alternative sources of grandchildren (Veevers, 1980:143).

Faced with the fact that the childfree are not only statistically unique but are considered somewhat deviant given the stereotypes and pressure which abound, they have a choice of various coping strategies - that of (1) rejection-of-difference, (2) acceptance-of-difference, and (3) differential association.

(1) Rejection of Difference/Deviance Disavowal (Veevers, 1980:117-121)

As noted throughout this treatise, the voluntarily childless are generally considered to be a deviant group implying that they are different from "normal" people - some childless persons systematically disavow the legitimacy of that deviant status. They insist that except for the "incidental" fact of happening not to have children, they are "really" just like everyone else. The psychology involved in denial-of-difference is such that the childless state is defined as being as normal as possible. This disavowal of deviance typically takes two forms:-

(a) One route is to deny that present childlessness is an indicator of permanent childlessness, and thereby they claim the more acceptable status of someone who is merely

postponing parenthood, rather than actually foregoing it. This route may be facilitated by discussing the possibility of eventually adopting a child. When questioned thoroughly, however, it was ascertained that these childless couples had no intentions of ever adopting - for the majority had not made any preliminary inquiries regarding the legal processes involved. For involuntarily childless couples, the significance of adoption appears not to lie in its feasibility as a pragmatic alternative but in its symbolic value (ie) the reaffirmation of normalcy (that they like children; are willing to assume the responsibilities of parenthood) and the avoidance of irreversible decisions (childbirth cannot be postponed indefinitely -the possibility of adoption is a satisfactory out should one be needed).

(b) A second form of deviance disavowal is the acknowledgement that one is indeed childless but to deny that being childless necessarily implies the negative stereotypes usually associated with it. But given that these stereotypes (such as their assumed selfishness and dislike of children) are pervasive - denying or discrediting them is usually ineffective.

(2) Acceptance of Difference/Rejecting the Rejecters (Veevers, 1980:121-126)

Those who follow this coping strategy, readily admit that being childless is different from being a parent.

However, these differences are defined as advantages. The childfree seem to adopt a worldview which defines having children in negative rather than positive terms. This worldview, according to Veevers, successfully protects the childless against a negative self-image and serves to neutralize/minimize the social pressures towards parenthood. A preliminary step in advocating the superiority of being childfree is to present deliberate childlessness as an alternative lifestyle.

(a) One of the means by which this may be achieved is through the selective perception of parenthood. Selective attention to the consequences of parenthood enables the childless to document numerous "negative sequelae" of childbearing (Veevers, 1980:122). Emphasis is placed upon the unfortunate repercussions of unplanned and unwanted pregnancies, and child abuse. The physical and psychological costs of children are enumerated to illustrate that children are emotionally and financially draining and generally constitute "bad investments" in the light of probable future returns (Veevers, 1980:123). It is interesting to note that studies conducted by Ory (1978:537) and Callan (1983c:94) both provide support for the use of selective perception among the deliberately childless.

(b) In defending the superiority of childlessness, the childfree tend to reinterpret these problematic aspects of pregnancy and parenthood in as negative a way as possible. Veevers argues that their expression of superiority consists

of three related themes (Veevers, 1980:125-126):-

(i) The idea that parenthood does not reflect any special talent is emphasized by excessive reference to the biological aspects of it. Pregnancy is referred to in degrading terms such as "folding", "whelping" or even having a "festering uterus".

(ii) The idea that parenthood precludes other activities is reinforced by reference to women who are "merely baby machines". Parenthood is also made less attractive when it is viewed as not involving choice. Many references were thus made to the accidental nature of pregnancies which occur to "planned parenthood flunk-outs".

(iii) The childfree maintain that parenthood is itself of minimal significance. The women who become special targets for disdain are those who elect to stay home as full-time mothers in that they are assumed to be concerned only with that which is directly related to the motherhood role.

(3) Differential Association (Veevers, 1980:141-142)

Veevers maintains that the pronatalist pressure experienced by the deliberately childless may be alleviated somewhat through differential associations. That is, by associating with other persons who are childless or with parents who opt to live as if they did not have children, seems to validate and/or accentuate their chosen lifestyle. Cooper, Cumber and Hartner's (1978) study of 22 deliberately

childless couples gives credence to the aforementioned strategies in that they were adopted in various combinations by most of the members of their sample (Cooper et al., 1978:87).

Orientations Towards Childlessness

In retrospect, it would seem that the voluntarily childless are not alike for they differ significantly with respect to a number of variables - whether they made the decision before or after marriage; whether they achieved it independently or through negotiation; or whether they have a high or low level of commitment to the decision made, etc.. In order to synthesize these differences in a comprehensive format, ideal type models of the voluntarily childless have been formulated by Veevers (1980) and Baum (1983).

Within the model forwarded by Veevers (1980), the voluntarily childless are dichotomized into rejecters and aficionados (see Table 1). The former are persons who have actively and vehemently rejected the parenthood role. They are primarily motivated by reaction against the disadvantages of having children. They tend to have made their decision independently before marriage, to have insisted upon a childless clause in their "marriage contract" and to be highly committed to never having children. The rejecters are the kind of childless persons

Table 1

Ideal Type Model of Kinds of Voluntary Childlessness

Timing of the Decision

Rejecters: Early articulators: decision to remain childless made clearly before marriage

Aficionados: Postponers: decision to remain childless made gradually after marriage

Consensus on the Decision

Rejecters: High consensus: both husband and the wife independently opted for childlessness

Aficionados: Low consensus: husband and wife negotiated decision; one "converted" the other to their view

Commitment to the Decision

Rejecters: High level of commitment: parenthood rejected independently of present marriage and circumstances

Aficionados: Low level of commitment: parenthood might be accepted in different marriage or circumstances

Motive Antecedents

Rejecters: Rejection of the negative aspects of a child-centered lifestyle

Aficionados: Attraction toward the positive aspects of an adult-centered lifestyle

Maintenance of Variant World View

Rejecters: Deviance avowal; acceptance of difference from parents; tend to dislike children

Aficionados: Deviance disavowal; rejection-of-difference from parents; tend to like children

Source: Veevers, 1980:159

who openly dislike children (Veevers, 1980:58).

The aficionados are ardent devotees of voluntary childlessness because they appreciate the advantages of being childfree rather than the disadvantages of parenthood. They are not so much against children as they have been intrigued by some other interest. Children would essentially be an impediment to the pursuit of their passions. Veevers affirms that they tend to negotiate their decision over the course of their marriage, in the context of the developing of other interests, and to be less definite in their commitment to it (Veevers, 1980:158).

In the model forwarded by Baum (1983), four main orientations towards childlessness have been delineated based on the decision-making processes that voluntarily childless couples go through. The four dimensions specified are hedonistic, idealistic, emotional and practical (Baum, 1983:156-161). It is more intricate than that forwarded by Veevers for it also includes their values and ideas about life in general. This is not the place to discuss each orientation in detail, thus Table 2 has been provided and is clearly illustrative of the main differences observed within each orientation (Baum, 1983:157). It is also useful for making a comparison of both typologies.

Table 2

Orientations Towards Childlessness

Basic Reason for not Having Children

Hedonistic: Desire to enjoy life and have minimal responsibility and worries.

Idealistic: Concern for social and environmental problems.

Emotional: Dislike of children.

Practical: Particular reason determining decision; career, age, health.

When Decision not to Have Children was Made

Hedonistic: After delay. At marriage vague intention to have children when money position secure.

Idealistic: Negotiated between the couple. Characterized by a great deal of discussion.

Emotional: Before marriage. Childlessness seen as an integral part of marriage contract.

Practical: Usually before marriage but possibly after.

Ideas About Children

Hedonistic: Children are seen as restricting and nuisances but enjoy playing with them for short periods.

Idealistic: Like children but feel it is not fair to bring them into the world. Consider adoption.

Emotional: Do not like children at all and feel irritated in their company.

Practical: Would like to have children but feel they would not make good parents.

Importance of Childlessness in their Lives

Hedonistic: A means to increase income and free time to spend on hedonistic pursuits.

Idealistic: Represents solid evidence of commitment to ideals.

Emotional: Childlessness important feature of lifestyle. Can become key ideology.

Practical: Regret about childlessness.

Reaction to Pronatalist Pressure

Hedonistic: Little reaction, unconcerned. Disregard it.

Idealistic: Hostility and anger because it represents an irresponsible attitude to global problems.

Emotional: Will react strongly and in positive way. Keen to tell others that childlessness is voluntary.

Practical: Susceptible to pressure on individual level.

Table 2

(continued)

Likely to feel deviant.

Images of Family Life

Hedonistic: Unable to understand why people have children because life seems more "fun" without them.

Idealistic: Believe people should think more carefully before they have children.

Emotional: Children are seen as a very disruptive influence on their parents' relationship.

Practical: Preferably other people should have children if possible, children enhance marriages.

Perceived Disadvantages of Childlessness

Hedonistic: Very few. Only in terms of not being able to play with children and take them out.

Idealistic: Not experiencing the intrinsic satisfaction of having one's own children.

Emotional: No identification of disadvantages of childlessness because having children has never been a very seriously considered option.

Practical: Perceive many disadvantages: loneliness in old age. Missing out on emotional satisfaction. Not passing on part of one's own self for the future.

Source: Baum, 1983:157

Separation Procedures

There is considerable debate as to whether one may successfully ferret out the voluntarily childless individuals. Rao maintains that it is "quite difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary childlessness in demographic type surveys" (1974:149). In earlier studies, Veevers also argues that in order to place individuals in the appropriate category, it is necessary to know details concerning not only their health but their innermost motivations and aspirations as well. Such data, she believes, can only be gleaned in intensive personal interviews and are not readily available from representative samples of large populations (1972b:266). The majority of studies conducted in the 1970's on voluntary childlessness seem to exemplify this view. That is, in depth interviews were generally conducted on relatively small samples purposively selected for the study in question (see Table 3; Source: Veevers, 1979:25-26). However, other researchers disagreed and have devised means of specifying this childless subpopulation using survey data.

Poston (1976) was able to isolate the voluntarily from the involuntarily childless with the use of questionnaire items concerning the ability to have children and intended family size included in the 1965 National Fertility Study.

Table 3

**Summary of Selected Empirical Research on Childlessness:
Voluntary Childlessness Only**

Strong; Eastern U.S.A.; 1967

- 65 couples known to be childless for minimum of 5 years
- Blacks; some voluntarily childless; some subfecund who refused to adopt; details not given

Gustavus and Henley; North Eastern U.S.A.; 1971

- 72 married couples; purposive sample from a vasectomy clinic; no control group; questionnaires
- urban; upper-middle class; husband's age 32; wife's age 29; married 5.2 years

Veevers; Eastern Canada; 1973

- 52 wives; purposive sample; no control group; in-depth interviews
- Caucasians; urban; upper middle class; average age 29; married 7 years

Marcks; North Eastern U.S.A.; 1976

- 21 couples; purposive sample from NON; mailed questionnaires
- Caucasians; urban; middle class; aged 23-48; married 6.9 years

Welds; U.S.A.; 1976

- 590 women in "Who's Who"; 72 who decided to be childless; 47 childless women who did not decide; control group of 471 mothers; mailed questionnaires
- physicians, lawyers and artists; aged 30-40; all women ever married

Houseknecht; U.S.A.; 1977

- 27 women preferring childlessness; control of 27 women preferring motherhood; purposive sample; in-depth interviews
- Caucasians; single undergraduate students

Mommsen and Lund; U.S.A.; 1977

- 24 voluntarily and 25 involuntarily childless from a national sample of Black doctorates; control group of 100 parents; mailed questionnaires
 - male and female; age 25 and older; all marital statuses
-

Source: Veevers, 1979:25-26

In order to define the two groups, Poston referred to the variable related to one's physical capacity to bear children. A woman was classified as involuntarily childless if she reported having no children, was biologically incapable of having children and was not voluntarily sterilized. However if a woman reported having no children, was biologically capable of having children but did not intend to have any children, she was classified as voluntarily childless (Poston, 1976:200).

Although this classification scheme is straightforward, problems do exist. Some women classified as voluntarily childless may, in fact, be biologically incapable of having children. Yet, since they have been contracepting so that they would not have children they never became aware of their biological sterility or subfecundity. These women would thus define themselves as voluntarily childless when in actuality they are involuntarily childless. Poston alleges that their definition of their childlessness as voluntary warrants to some extent his classifying them as such. His reasoning follows an observation made by Thomas in that if persons "define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Poston, 1976:200). In a similar context, the involuntarily childless may not define as problematic their biological incapability to produce children. That is, some women may well have intended in the first place to have no children and they discovered they

were biologically incapable of doing so anyway. Although they were not able to have children, they may not have been inclined to have them (Poston, 1976:201).

One may notice that Poston's classification scheme relies heavily on a woman's stated intentions of not having children in order to differentiate between the voluntarily and involuntarily childless. It would seem that Poston is justified in his reasoning given the results of a panel study of expressed intentions and reported fertility conducted by Pol (1983). By utilizing data from the 1970 and 1975 National Fertility Surveys (reinterviewed women), he ascertained that virtually all the women (95 percent) who in 1970 intended to remain childless, in fact, had no children and intended no children in 1975 (Pol, 1983:322). Therefore in terms of the voluntarily childless, intentions may be used as an accurate indicator of actual behaviour.

Poston and Kramer (1983) developed a more refined method for distinguishing between the voluntarily and involuntarily childless by using either a cognitive or a behavioral approach. These models dichotomize childlessness on the basis of either one's knowledge of fecundity or one's behaviour. Procedurally, one begins with a population of childless women who are not pregnant at the time of the survey and ascertains their future fertility intentions. Childless women who were pregnant at the time of the survey

are omitted because their categorization is ambiguous (are they childless or childed?). Moreover, those who had no children at the time of the interview but intended to have children in the future are set aside as temporarily childless (Poston and Kramer, 1983:294). One thus has available for analysis a population of childless women who were not pregnant and who did not plan to have children in the future.

Poston and Kramer allege that there are two ways to determine whether or not their childlessness can be designated as voluntary. One procedure involves examining their contraceptive behaviour (behavioral approach). If a childless woman who did not intend to have children in the future was contracepting then one could assume, according to Poston and Kramer, that she was choosing of her own volition not to have children in the future. As such, she was labelled voluntarily childless. If a childless woman was not contracepting but did not intend to have children in the future, one cannot immediately conclude that she was involuntarily childless. The reasoning behind this assertion is that she may not have been contracepting because she (or her husband) were sterilized for contraceptive reasons. If this is indeed the case, she was also designated to the voluntarily childless category. It follows that the noncontracepting woman who had not had an operation and one who was sterilized but not for contraceptive purposes were

both assumed to be involuntarily childless (Poston and Kramer, 1983:294).

The second procedure involves inquiring about the woman's knowledge of her fecundity (cognitive approach). If a woman with no children (who was not pregnant at interview time) knew that she was capable of having children yet planned to have none in the future - she was assumed to be voluntarily childless. On the other hand, if a woman with no children who was not pregnant knew that she was unable to have children in the future, she was assumed to be involuntarily childless as long as her inability to conceive did not stem from a "sterilizing operation" performed for contraceptive reasons (Poston and Kramer, 1983:294).

It is interesting to note that both approaches yielded different results. That is using the cognitive model, of the 257 women who intended to remain childless 136 or 53 percent were classified as voluntarily childless while 121 or 47 percent were classified as involuntarily childless. With the behavioral model on the other hand, 152 women or 59 percent were designated to the voluntarily childless category while 105 or 41 percent were involuntarily childless. Moreover, when both strategies were applied to four other national surveys (1955, 1960, 1965 and 1970) this discrepancy remained - for the cognitive approach always resulted in more childless women categorized as voluntary than did the

behavioral approach (Poston and Kramer, 1983:301). Although the differences are not large, they are consistent and the authors felt that the discrepancy is an important one. Unfortunately, Poston and Kramer did not offer any substantive reasons for this finding. They simply stated that additional studies would be in order before deciding which approach was preferable (Poston and Kramer, 1983:301). Yet, preferability is a moot point all one may conclude is that classifications based on knowledge of one's fecundity or one's practice/nonpractice of contraceptive behaviour are not at all identical. Invariably the choice of approach is left up to the individual researcher depending upon his/her interests, as well as any inherent limitations/restrictions that may be associated with the data employed.

In retrospect each separation procedure delineated above have their respective flaws. One must simply keep these in mind when conducting a study. Yet, one may argue that these flaws are quelled in light of the prospective advantages in using such separation procedures. That is, one for the first time has access to large subpopulations which are randomly selected in survey or census data as opposed to being limited to the relatively small purposive samples generally selected for study in the past. Moreover, any inherent biases (such as the over-representation of atypical groups; upper class backgrounds) may be circumvented with randomized data.

Theoretical Framework

Most of the studies on voluntary childlessness conducted thus far are exploratory in nature and have not delineated a specific theoretical framework. However, there are two exceptions in the works forwarded by Houseknecht (1978) and Cutright/Polonko (1977).

Houseknecht (1977) and Ory (1978) demonstrated previously that reference groups are a factor in the decision to remain childless. Within her social-psychological model, Houseknecht argues that the reference group concept can be integrated along with family history and current self-other attitudes to explain the childless decision (Houseknecht, 1978:380). This model is based on the "frame of reference" perspective developed by Sherif and Sherif (in Social Psychology New York: Harper and Row, 1969). According to this perspective, behaviour is jointly determined by external factors (stimuli outside the individual at a given time such as reference groups) and by internal factors (self-other attitudes, motives and desires, as well as the effects of past experience) whether consciously experienced or not (Houseknecht, 1978:393).

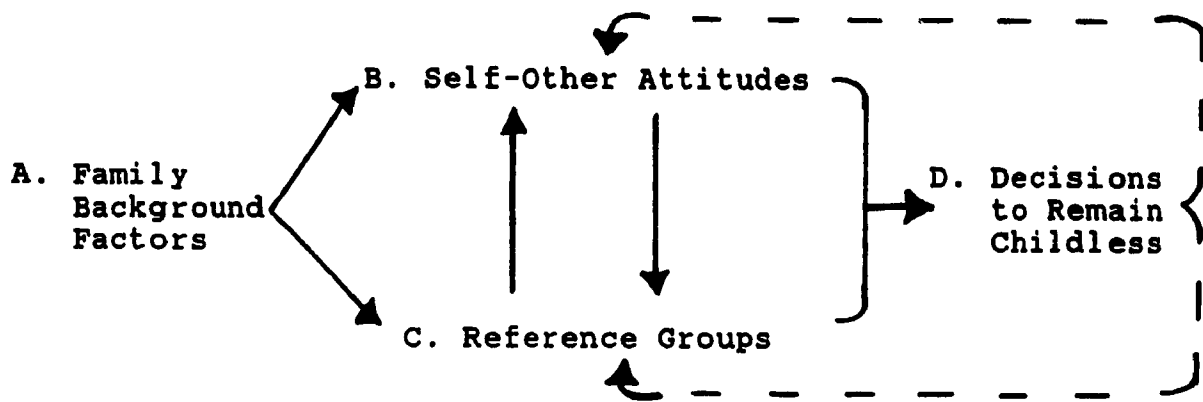
The following hypotheses were tested (Houseknecht, 1978:382-386):-

1. Females who desire no children will be more likely than those who desire children to come from family backgrounds that are characterized as mother dominant.
2. Females who desire no children will be more likely than those who desire children to report the development of a psychological distance between self and family during adolescence.
3. Females who desire no children will be more autonomous than females who desire children.
4. Attitudes toward parenthood and children of females who desire no children will differ from those who want children in that the former individuals will view with greater import the advantages of childlessness as opposed to the advantages associated with childbearing.
5. Females who desire no children will reveal greater awareness and acceptance of alternative roles to motherhood than females who desire children.
6. Females who desire no children will be more likely to identify positively with the women's movement than females who want children.
7. Females who desire no children are more likely than females who desire children to emphasize goals that attribute greatest import to success in vocational and other non familial roles for women rather than to success in the wife-mother roles.
8. There is no difference between females who desire no children and females who desire children on reference group support for their childbearing decision.

The model forwarded by Houseknecht is depicted in Figure 1. It was tested on a precision-matched sample of 27 female undergraduates wishing to remain childless and 27

Figure 1

**A Social Psychological Model - Voluntarily Childless
Females: A Schematic Representation of
Concepts and Variables**



A. Family Background Factors

1. Parental Dominance
2. Development of Psychological Distance from Family During Adolescence
3. Age Individual First Considered Becoming a Parent

B. Self-Other Attitudes

1. Autonomy
2. Attitude Toward Parenthood and Children
3. Awareness and Acceptance of Alternative Roles
4. Identification with the Women's Movement
5. Life Goals

C. Reference Groups (family, friends, groups and organizations)

Source: Houseknecht, 1978:394

female undergraduates desiring to have children. The findings indicated that the family background factors are seen as "instigative in the development of independence and achievement orientations" (Houseknecht, 1978:398). That is, these two factors accompanied by a belief that the disadvantages associated with childbearing outweigh the advantages, seems to predispose an individual to desire a childless lifestyle. This is particularly true when these various attitudes are sustained through reference group support.

Cutright and Polonko (1977) have adapted Scanzoni's cost reward fertility model to explain intentional childlessness among American wives in 1970. Scanzoni's framework (as developed in Sex Roles, Lifestyles and Childbearing: Changing Patterns in Marriage and Family New York: The Free Press, 1975) is similar to microeconomic models of differential fertility except for the fact that his emphasis on alternative and changing sex roles suggests that a reduction in fertility norms coupled with increasing opportunities for women may now be allowing previously suppressed variables to affect rates of childlessness (Cutright and Polonko, 1977:53). In an unpublished work, Scanzoni and Polonko have argued that intentional childlessness extends a process that begins when a couple postpones childbearing to pursue rewarding alternatives (such as higher education, career). Eventually, rewards from

the alternatives define childbearing as too costly an experience (Cutright and Polonko, 1977:53).

Based on these considerations, the authors have adopted the cost-reward framework to include the following variables (Cutright and Polonko, 1977:54-56):-

Dependent Variable:-

Rate of childlessness within subgroups classified by race, age and family income.

Independent Variables:-

Log Density: -the natural logarithm of total population in the counties making up the statistical areal unit (SAU) divided by square miles,
-increases in density should increase rates of childlessness because density is positively related to the cost of bearing and raising children and the roles for women that encourage childlessness.

Age at Marriage: -older age at marriage is related to higher participation by women in alternative roles before marriage (as students or members of the labour force),
-in areas with later marriage, women should experience higher costs of having children and less disapproval of childlessness.

Labour Force Participation: -should be positively related to the rate of childlessness; it is

expected that women in areas with more opportunities for work will have higher rates of childlessness.

Education: -low education will be negatively related to childlessness because wives with little education have fewer alternative role opportunities to substitute for childbearing than do wives with more education.

School Enrollment: -indicates the effective demand for advanced schooling by wives.

Migration: -high rates of migration may be related to economic opportunity for women and their husbands; childless couples may be more likely to migrate than those with larger families.

Enrollment in Family Planning Programs: -wives living in communities favourable to birth control should be more likely to remain childless than comparable wives in other communities.

Residence

Their model was operationalized and tested using data from the 1970 U.S. census and 1969 family planning programs. This model yielded a relatively high explained variance (R^2) for white women aged 15-44 years at .80. When applied to black women of the same ages, the explained variance dropped to .63 - an indication that the model does not yield as good a fit for this group. This variation may be the result of

the aforementioned black-white differences presumed to be at work by some researchers.

It would seem that the adoption of a cost-reward framework to explain deliberate childlessness is justified. Many have documented that the voluntarily childless are well aware of the costs and rewards/benefits associated with having or not having children. There is no doubt that the cost associated with having children far outweigh any benefits (Nason and Poloma, 1976:34; Veevers, 1980:115; Faux, 1984:63-65; Callan, 1986a:267-269). These costs are not necessarily associated with the direct maintenance costs of rearing children but rather with the opportunity costs involved. Unfortunately, these mostly apply to women since the wife is more likely to drop her career to care for the child than is the husband. Lost opportunity costs include the years spent by the woman outside the work force and the subsequent damage to her career; the loss of income associated with this etc..

There are some drawbacks, however, associated with the use of either framework. The social-psychological model forwarded by Houseknecht (1978) can only be applied to the "early articulators" - those for whom the decision to remain childless is made before marriage (Houseknecht, 1978:381). This virtually neglects about one-half to two-thirds of the deliberately childless population who make the decision to

remain childless after marriage (Nason and Poloma, 1976; Cooper, Cumber and Hartner, 1978; Veevers, 1980). In the same vein, the cost reward framework is relevant to those who arrive at a childless decision through a series of postponements during marriage (Cutright and Polonko, 1977:53), which only serves to overlook the early articulators.

Another drawback is related to the correlates used in either framework. Those included in the social-psychological model can only be gleaned from in-depth interviews as opposed to census/survey type data that is generally available, unless a study was conducted with these specific variables in mind. Moreover, although the cost-reward framework utilizes mainly demographic-type correlates which facilitates its applicability to census/survey type data - many of the determinants specified are not available in the Canadian Fertility Survey (ie. Log Density, School Enrollment, Migration and Enrollment in Family Planning Programs). Secondly, the cost-reward framework fails to take account of the attitudinal correlates (such as attitudes toward children and attitudes toward abortion) which may be essential for profiling those who are intentionally childless.

Throughout this section, one was made aware of a vast array of issues directly or indirectly related to the

voluntarily childless. Those directly related to this atypical group include - the trends which have been delineated over the past century; an account of the childfree lifestyle; how they tend to cope with the pronatalist pressure and the negative evaluations thrown their way by society at large. When delineating both the separation procedures and theoretical frameworks devised on behalf of the deliberately childless, one was not only alerted to the divergent methods/perspectives forwarded, but also to the drawbacks associated with each procedure/framework.

The task remains, however, of devising a model which overcomes the aforementioned drawbacks associated with the social-psychological and the cost reward frameworks. In reviewing the theoretical literature and previous empirical studies, the model specified should:-

- a) be made up of correlates which can be extracted from census/survey type data - in this particular study the Canadian Fertility Survey;

- b) may be used on or adapted to various populations (ie. not only currently married women but for single, cohabiting as well as ever-married women);

- c) may be applied to the "early articulators" and those who arrive at the decision to remain childless through a series of postponements;

- d) include attitudinal variables - the importance of a

respondent's attitudes toward children and attitudes toward abortion is well documented. The role of the following chapter, therefore, is to explicate such a model.

Chapter III

Model Specification

Veevers (1979:8-10), Nason and Poloma (1980), and Carlisle (1982) among others have facilitated the task of building such a comprehensive model. As a result of their work, a set of demographic, socioeconomic and attitudinal variables have been identified as being essential for describing the voluntarily childless. Taken together, they form one of the most comprehensive "frameworks" available to date. In addition, these determinants may be easily extracted from census/survey type data and are adaptable to various populations. As such, the "model" used in the present study is made up of the following determinants:-

1. Black - White Differences

Although in almost all instances the fertility of blacks exceeds that of whites, historically rates of black childlessness have been paradoxically high (Grabill and Glick, 1959). Sterility due to venereal disease contributed to, but did not account for, high rates of black childlessness. But for younger couples, childlessness is more common among whites than for blacks (Veevers, 1971b; 1971c). Among women under 25, childlessness is now more common for whites than for blacks (Ritchey and Stokes, 1974) and among older cohorts colour differences are practically non-existent (Grindstaff, 1976).

The connection between black/white differences and childlessness stems largely from American studies using American data. Since Canada is largely a multicultural society, differences in fertility/childlessness patterns may be gleaned with the use of ascribed characteristics such as ethnicity, mother tongue and place of birth (Romaniuc, 1984; Vaninadha Rao, 1987; Ram, 1990).

Unfortunately, the relationships along cultural lines are very difficult to ferret out for they may vary depending upon which cohort of women is being studied. Vaninadha Rao in an article entitled "Childlessness in Ontario and Quebec: Results from 1971 and 1981 Census Data", examined rates of childlessness (whether involuntary, voluntary and temporary) using these ascribed characteristics and found disconcerting results. For example, the effect of ethnicity (whether French, English, Other European or Other) was insignificant for all cohorts of women in Quebec in 1971. By 1981, the youngest French ethnic group (aged 15-24) had a forty percent higher probability of remaining childless compared to the reference category (English ethnic group). Ontario's French ethnic group had lower probabilities of remaining childless for all cohorts in contrast with higher probabilities in Quebec for the same ethnic group in 1981 (Vaninadha Rao, 1987:42). Place of birth, however, tended to be more stable in that foreign-born women were less

likely to be childless compared to women born in Canada in both provinces (Vaninadha Rao, 1987:42).

Although Vaninadha Rao's study was conducted on all types of childlessness, not simply the voluntarily childless, the volatile nature of these ascribed characteristics should be taken into account when hypotheses are made and they must be interpreted with caution. Through the literature reviewed for this study, the following relationships are hypothesized:-

a) Women born in Canada are more likely to be childless than foreign born women for the latter are more likely to be traditional in their outlook on marriage and the family and, as such, are less likely to accept and/or internalize an alternate lifestyle such as one without children.

b) Childlessness will be higher among French ethnic groups compared to English ethnic groups or "Other" ethnic groups; and

c) childlessness will be higher among women whose mother tongue is French compared to women whose mother tongue is English or "Other". French Canadian women tend to marry somewhat later than women of other ethnic/language backgrounds. Moreover, a higher proportion of them cohabit as well (Ram, 1990). These trends are likely to push forward the age at which French Canadian women start having children. This postponement process is crucial, for as the literature has inferred, it provides the time by which women

may evaluate the parental role and opt to forego parenthood altogether.

2. Urban Residence

All studies have indicated that childlessness is higher in urban areas than in rural nonfarm areas and higher there than in rural farm areas. Within urban areas, the larger the concentration of persons, the higher the incidence of childlessness (Grabill and Glick, 1959). Compared with rural areas, urban communities may be more conducive to voluntary childlessness because they are less traditional and offer women a wider variety of acceptable social roles.

3. Delayed First Marriage (Ever-Married Women)

In terms of marriage patterns, relatively high rates of childlessness are known to be associated with relatively late age at first marriage (Grabill and Glick, 1959; Ritchey and Stokes, 1974). Part of this association may be due to a selection factor; very young fecund women who become pregnant quite readily may be more likely than others to incur a nonmarital pregnancy and consequently be "forced" into an early marriage (DeJong and Sell, 1977:133). Part of the correlation is due simply to the fact that late marriage reduces the number of years before menopause when the woman is at risk of becoming pregnant. However, since fecundity is

known to decline with advancing years, this effect is further exaggerated. Although part of the correlation between childlessness and late age of marriage may be due to subfecundity, it seems more likely that the same social and psychological factors which predispose women to delay marriage may also predispose them to delay, and ultimately forgo, having children (Veevers, 1971a). Fluctuations in the ages of first marriage contribute to, but do not account for, fluctuations in the incidence of childlessness (Veevers, 1972a).

4. Marital Disruptions (Ever-Married Women)

Among ever-married women, rates of childlessness are lowest for those who are married only once and who are currently living with their husband. Among other ever-married women, rates are lower for widows than for separated women, and lower for the separated than for divorcees (Grabill and Glick, 1959). Women are more likely to desire and have children in stable ongoing marriages. Women in unstable marriages, where separation or divorce is imminent, are more likely to question the feasibility of raising children in such an environment and may postpone parenthood for an indefinite period of time - perhaps altogether.

4(a). "Civil Status" (All Women)

"Civil Status" is a substitute for "Marital Disruptions" used in the studies of ever-married women. An inherent bias seems to exist in the majority of studies conducted thus far in that only ever-married women have children and by implication only ever-married women can be voluntarily childless! But as Houseknecht (1978) has demonstrated using her social-psychological framework, single women, the so called "early articulators", may be voluntarily childless as well. Among a sample of all women, rates of childlessness are highest for those who are single/without a partner, followed by women who are single/cohabiting and women who have suffered a "broken marriage" - through separation, divorce or death of a spouse. Rates of childlessness are lowest for women who are currently living with their husband (as previously discussed). Single women (particularly those twenty-five years of age and over as in the sample used in this study) are engaged in roles other than marriage during which time they may assess the pros and cons of parenthood - perhaps eventually deciding to remain childless. Cohabiting women, already engaged in an "alternative" lifestyle, may be more open to the idea of being deliberately childless.

5. Advanced Education

Childlessness seems to be directly correlated with education. This relationship appears to hold for expected as

well as actual childlessness and to hold for husbands as well (Ritchey and Stokes, 1974). The interaction between childlessness and education is convoluted. Some subfecund or sterile persons may seek an advanced education in compensation for failure to fulfill maternal or paternal roles. Some fecund persons may be denied advanced education because an early pregnancy precluded staying in school--regardless of inclination. However, among groups known to be voluntarily childless, both men and women have high educational attainments (Gustavus and Henley, 1971:281; Veevers, 1973c; Nason and Poloma, 1976).

6. Low Religiosity

The connotation that procreation is a moral obligation appears to be more ingrained in Catholic dogma than in other religions. Although church membership apparently influences all persons in terms of their desire for children, the impact appears to be greater for Catholics (Toomey, 1977) than for Protestants or Jews. One of the striking findings of research on childlessness is that virtually all studies report a disproportionate number of persons who are atheistic or agnostic, or who at least report that they have "no religion" (Gustavus and Henley, 1971; Veevers, 1973c; Barnett and MacDonald, 1976; Ory, 1976; Thoen, 1977; Toomey, 1977). This strong and generally consistent association suggests that the questioning of traditional religious

beliefs is a relevant or a necessary predisposing factor leading to a corresponding questioning of beliefs concerning pronatalism. For the present analysis, religiosity is measured on the basis of mass attendance and not a respondent's religious affiliation. Balakrishnan and Chen (1990), using the Canadian Fertility Survey, demonstrated that religious affiliation is becoming less important in nuptuality and reproduction in Canada, yet, religiosity continues to be very significant. They found that religiosity, as measured by church attendance, is strongly related to premarital cohabitation, marital dissolution, fertility and contraceptive behaviour (Balakrishnan and Chen, 1990:316).

7. Gainful Employment

As would be expected, wives who are employed have substantially higher rates of childlessness than do housewives (Grabill and Glick, 1959; DeJong and Sell, 1977). This relationship holds for all ages, for both white and non-white women and for present and expected fertility (Ritchey and Stokes, 1974:353). It is unclear, however, whether career involvement is a cause or a consequence of childlessness. Low rates of childlessness among housewives have suggested to some that childlessness and unemployment are "incompatible" (Ritchey and Stokes, 1974:353). The limited data available do not indicate any noteworthy

association of childlessness with specific kinds of occupations. As would be expected in a group of women with relatively advanced education, childless women tend to be concentrated in white-collar rather than blue-collar positions (Rao, 1974).

8. High Income

Kunz, Brinkeroff and Hundley (1973) reported an inverse relationship between childlessness and income. Later data suggests that such is not always the case and that in many instances the relationship is in fact curvilinear (Ritchey and Stokes, 1974). Poston (1974) and Wolowyna (1977) provide evidence consistent with the hypothesis that although the relationship between income and involuntary childlessness may be inverse, the relationship between income and voluntary childlessness may be direct. As couples/women earn higher incomes, the opportunity costs of having children are that much greater. High incomes make relatively affluent lifestyles possible, which some couples/women may fear losing if they decide to have children. Crosstabulations of Child Status by Income (refer to Appendices A and B) reveal that the relationship between income and voluntary childlessness is direct for this particular study.

For the present analysis, income was measured with the

use of a respondent's current income. Given that women are generally in and out of the labour force during their childbearing years, the income reported in a respondent's last job would not be consistent for the whole sample. Current income was estimated for those respondents who did not report a current income at the time of the survey.

9. Attitudes Toward Children

Nason and Poloma (1976), Veevers (1980) and Ramu (1986) have documented that voluntarily childless couples tended to stress the drawbacks of having children. For many of these couples, children were perceived as impediments to self-actualization (educational and occupational success), as obstacles to the development of a couple-centered marital relationship and to the amount of freedom enjoyed by both partners.

10. Attitudes Toward Abortion

As previously noted (Nason and Poloma, 1976; Veevers, 1980; Carlisle, 1982) the voluntarily childless maintain relatively liberal attitudes toward abortion. This is true especially among those couples who are strongly committed to this alternative lifestyle. In the case of an accidental conception, some have resorted to an abortion in order to maintain their childfree status.

11. Contraceptive Use

It was discovered that a direct relationship exists between an individual's commitment to childlessness and one's differential use of various forms of control (Nason and Poloma, 1976; Carlisle, 1982). The highly committed tend to be the most effective users of contraception and are more likely to contemplate sterilization or abortion if needed.

Unfortunately, this correlate cannot be used as a in the present study. Contraceptive use was employed in the computation of the dependent variable "Child Status" (refer to the Variable Measurement Section) and was one of the determining factors for extrapolating the voluntarily childless women from the data.

12. Birth Order/Only Child

It was noted that childless respondents have atypical birth order patterns compared with the general population. Among the respondents studied by Veevers (1980) and Nason and Poloma (1976), nearly half or more than half were first-born as opposed to only one person in three in the general population. Secondly among these first-born respondents, a large proportion of them were also only children. In the general population about one person in twenty is an only

child, but among Veevers' (1980) respondents, about one person in five was an only child. First born individuals, particularly from large families, are likely to have played the parental role with their siblings. Perhaps, in disliking the experience, they may opt for a childfree lifestyle as adults. Individuals who are only children may feel that they have not acquired the skills necessary for raising a family and may also opt for a lifestyle without children.

In addition, the following determinants will be incorporated into the analysis:

13. Cohabitive History

Rates of childlessness will be higher among women who have cohabited compared to women who have not. A respondent who has cohabited in the past may be more "liberal" minded than those who have not and, thus, may be more open to an alternative lifestyle - one without children.

14. Labour Force Attachment

Rates of childlessness will be highest among women who are "most attached to the labour force" (women who did not stop work for more or less than one year and are presently working full time) compared to women who are least attached

to the labour force (those who never worked on a regular basis). Labour Force Attachment is included as one of the determinants in the model for it measures the degree to which women are devoted to instrumental roles - other than motherhood...and its constraints.

The hypothesized relationships may be summarized as follows:

Women who are born in Canada are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women who are born outside of Canada.

Women whose mother tongue is French are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women whose mother tongue is other than French.

Women who are from French ethnic groups are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women from other ethnic groups.

Women who live in urban areas are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women living in non-urban areas.

Women with high levels of education are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women with low levels of education.

Women with low levels of religiosity are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women with high levels of religiosity.

Women who are employed are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women who are unemployed.

Women who earn higher incomes are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women who earn lower incomes.

Women who are single/without a partner are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women who are currently married.

Women who have suffered a "broken" marriage (through separation, divorce or death of a spouse) are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women who are currently married.

Women who are first born are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women who are not first born.

Women who are only children are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women who are not only children.

Women with negative attitudes toward children are more

likely to be voluntarily childless than women with positive attitudes.

Women with liberal attitudes toward abortion are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women with conservative attitudes.

Women who have cohabited are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women who never cohabited.

Women who are "most attached to the labour force" are more likely to be voluntarily childless than women who are "least attached to the labour force".

Chapter IV

Methodology

Data

The data utilized in the present study are drawn from the Canadian Fertility Survey of 1984 (Balakrishnan, Krotki and Lapi  re-Adamcyk, 1984). It is the only survey of its kind conducted on a national level in Canada. The survey was carried out by means of in-depth telephone interviews. Its relative success is reflected in a very low withdrawal rate - once the interview had commenced, less than 2 percent refused to continue. Complete fertility histories of 5135 women between the ages of 18 and 49 (including single women) were gathered. Detailed information on a number of demographic, socioeconomic and attitudinal variables, as well as labour force histories, were also obtained.

In the present study, only women 25 years of age and over who were either voluntarily childless or who had given birth to at least one child (or were pregnant at the time of the survey) were selected. This excludes from the analysis women who were either involuntarily childless or temporarily childless (that is, women who did not have children at the time of the survey, but expected to have children in the future). As a result, the first model is based on a sample of 3515 women - whether married, widowed, separated, divorced, cohabiting or single. The second model is based

on a subsample of solely ever-married women (N=3284) drawn from the aforementioned sample of 3515 women.

Variable Measurement

Child Status

In order to isolate the voluntarily childless women, a behavioural approach similar to that forwarded by Poston and Kramer (1983) was used (refer to the section entitled "Separation Procedures"). This modified behavioural approach utilizes past contraceptive use for the following reasons:

a) Given that the sample covers all women (whether single, cohabiting, married, separated, divorced or widowed) one cannot use current contraceptive use as a means of separating the voluntarily from the involuntarily childless. That is, some women may not have been using contraceptives simply for the fact that they did not have a partner at the time of the survey. If these women did not have children and did not expect to have children in the future, they would inadvertently be placed in the involuntarily childless category. Even though Poston and Kramer (1983) used current contraceptive use in their behavioural approach, it is imperative to note that their sample was restricted to currently married women only.

b) Past contraceptive behaviour may, in fact, be a truer indication of one's commitment to childlessness as the literature has suggested.

Child Status was computed with the use of the following items:

Item 1: "How many live births have you had up to now including those who died after birth or who do not live with you?"

- 00 - none
- 01 - XX children

Item 2: Total Number of Children Expected (TOTPREV)
This item was categorized according to the total number of children a respondent had at the time of the survey and expected to have in the future (Complex Variable - University of Montreal).

- 00 - none
- 01 - XX children

Item 3: "Are you pregnant now?"

- 0 - no
- 1 - yes

Item 4: Past Contraceptive Use (DEJACONT)

If a respondent reported that they used at least one of the contraceptive methods listed below, they were given a code of 1 on "past contraceptive use". If they never used any of the methods listed, they were given a code of 2 on "past contraceptive use".

Contraceptive Methods

- a) the pill
- b) IUD (intrauterine device)
- c) foam, jelly or cream
- d) douching after intercourse
- e) condoms
- f) diaphragm
- g) withdrawal
- h) abstinence for a month or more
- i) rhythm methods such as temperature or calendar
- j) female sterilization (tubal ligation)
- k) male sterilization (vasectomy)
- l) abortion

Thus, past contraceptive use (DEJACONT) was coded in the following manner:

1 - respondents used at least one of the
contraceptive methods listed

2 - respondents never used any of the methods
listed

Given the aforementioned items, Child Status was
computed as follows:

Code	Label	Description
1	Involuntarily Childless	- respondents who reported not having children at the time of the survey and expected not to have any in the future - <u>never</u> used contraceptives
2	Voluntarily Childless	- respondents who did not have and expected not to have children in the future - <u>used</u> at least one of the contraceptive methods listed
3	Temporarily Childless	- respondents who did not have children at the time of the survey <u>but</u> expected to have children in the future
4	Women with Children/Pregnant	- respondents who had children at the time of the survey - respondents who were pregnant at the time of the survey were also included

For the purpose of the present study, the voluntarily
childless women and the women with children were selected
out as the two membership groups used in discriminant
analysis. As such, they were recoded as follows:

- 0 - the voluntarily childless group
- 1 - the group with children

Place of Birth (ORIGIN)

Place of birth (ORIGIN) was computed with the use of

the following items:

- a) "Have you always lived in (the respondent's municipality)?"
- b) If no, "Were you born in (the respondent's province)?"
- c) If no, "Were you born in Canada?"

All items were categorized as follows:

- 1 - yes
- 2 - no

If the respondent answered affirmatively to one of the three items listed, they were born in Canada and ORIGIN was given a value of 1. If a respondent answered negatively to the third item, they were born outside of Canada and ORIGIN was given a value of 0. As such, place of birth (ORIGIN) was coded in the following manner:

- 0 - respondents who were born outside of Canada
- 1 - respondents who were born in Canada

Ethnicity

Ethnicity was measured with the use of the following item: "To what ethnic or cultural group did you or your male ancestor belong on first coming to North America?" Seventy-four groups were listed in the survey. These were recoded into three categories in order to distinguish between those whose ethnicities were English, French or other. Since these groups are nominal in nature, dummy variables were created as follows:

English Ethnic Group (ETHENGL)

- 0 - all other ethnic groups
- 1 - English, Irish, Scottish

French Ethnic Group (ETHFREN)

- 0 - all other ethnic groups
- 1 - French

Other Ethnic Group (OTHETH)*

- 0 - English, Irish, Scottish, French
- 1 - all other ethnic groups
- * reference category

Mother Tongue

Mother tongue was measured with the use of the following item: "What is the language you first learned in childhood and still understand?" Seventy-two groups were listed in the survey. These were recoded into three categories in order to distinguish between those whose mother tongues were either English, French or other. Since these groups are nominal in nature, dummy variables were created as follows:

English Mother Tongue (MTENGL)

- 0 - all other mother tongues
- 1 - English

French Mother Tongue (MTFREN)

- 0 - all other mother tongues
- 1 - French

Other Mother Tongues (OTHERMT)*

- 0 - English, French
- 1 - all other mother tongues
- * reference category

Residence

Residence was measured with the use of the following item: "Do you currently live in a city, small town or on a farm?" This item was originally coded as follows:

- 1 - City, Town
- 2 - Small City
- 3 - Farm
- 4 - Reservation
- 5 - Suburb

These five categories were recoded to create dummy variables as follows:

City Residence (CITY)

- 0 - all other residence
- 1 - City or Town residence

Suburb Residence (SUBURB)

- 0 - all other residence
- 1 - Suburb or Small City residence

Farm Residence (FARM)*

- 0 - all other residence
- 1 - Farm or Reservation residence
- * reference category

Age at First Marriage (Complex Variable - University of Montreal)

Age at first marriage was calculated by subtracting the respondent's date of birth from the date of the first marriage.

"Civil Status" (All Women) (Complex Variable - University of Montreal)

- 1 - ongoing first marriage at the time of the survey
- 2 - respondents who had suffered a "broken" marriage - through separation, divorce or death of a spouse
- 3 - respondents who were single but cohabiting at the time of the survey
- 4 - respondents who were single and without a partner at the time of the survey

Given that these categories are nominal in nature, dummy variables were created as follows:

Ongoing First Marriage (MARIAGE)*

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - ongoing first marriage
- * reference category

Broken Marriage (BROKEN)

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - respondents who suffered a broken marriage through separation, divorce or death of a spouse

Single/Cohabiting (COHAB)

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - single respondents who were cohabiting at the time of the survey

Single/No Partner (SINGLE)

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - single respondents without a partner at the time of the survey

Marital Disruption (Ever-Married Women)

Based on the "civil status" variable previously discussed, however this measure included only ever-married women. Thus, marital disruption was categorized as follows:

- 0 - ongoing first marriage
- 1 - broken marriage

Education

The respondent's education was measured with the use of the following item: "In total, how many years of education did you complete?" The categories included in the survey are:

- 00 - none (no formal education)
- 01 - XX years

Religiosity

A respondent's religiosity was measured with the use of the following item: "How often do you attend religious services? Would you say...."

- 1 - every week
- 2 - every month
- 3 - a few times a year
- 4 - rarely
- 5 - never

These categories were recoded to reflect low, medium and high levels of religiosity. Given that these categories are ordinal in nature, dummy variables were created in the following manner:

Low Religiosity (LOWREL)

- 0 - all other religious service attendance
- 1 - rarely or never

Medium Religiosity (MEDREL)

- 0 - all other religious service attendance
- 1 - a few times a year or every month

High Religiosity (HIGHREL)*

- 0 - all other religious service attendance

- 1 - every week
- * reference category

Employment Status
(Complex Variable - University of Montreal)

- 0 - respondent was unemployed at the time of the survey
- 1 - respondent was employed at the time of the survey

Income (All Women)

"What is your gross annual salary now before taxes and deductions?"

Of the 5315 women surveyed, 45.2% failed to report their income. Due to the large proportion, income was estimated for all missing cases based on the knowledge of a respondent's age, education, occupation, mother tongue and place of residence. The variables used in estimating income were measured as follows:

Respondent's Age (AGERESP)

A respondent's age was measured on the basis of information on their year of birth.

Respondent's Education (EDUCRESP)

Education was measured with the use of the following item: "In total, how many years of education have you completed?"

- 00 - none (no formal education)
- 01 - XX years

Managerial Occupations (MANG)

- 0 - all other occupations
- 1 - all occupations classified as "Managerial,

Administrative and Related Occupations",
according to the Canadian Classification and
Dictionary of Occupations, (C.C.D.O.), Edition
1982, Employment and Immigration Canada, Ottawa.

City Residence (CITY)

- 0 - all other residence
- 1 - City or Town residence

Suburb Residence (SUBURB)

- 0 - all other residence
- 1 - Suburb or Small City residence

The structural form of the equation for calculating
income for all the missing cases is as follows:

$$\text{INCRESP} = a + b (\text{AGERESP}) + b (\text{EDUCRESP}) + b (\text{MANG}) + \\ b (\text{CITY}) + b (\text{SUBURB})$$

where: a = constant

b = unstandardized regression coefficient

On the basis of the above regression, a respondent's
income was estimated for all missing cases by using the
constant and the unstandardized regression coefficients. To
obtain this estimation, income (for all cases where income
was reported) was initially regressed on age, education,
occupation, mother tongue, and place of residence.
Occupation, mother tongue and place of residence were
measured through a series of dummy variables. From the
occupational categories included in this initial regression,
only one (managerial occupations) was statistically
significant and was used in the estimation of income. The
non-significant ones, that is professional, clerical, sales,
service, primary and secondary were used as reference
categories in the analysis. Mother tongue, whether English

or French, was not correlated with income at the predetermined level of statistical significance and was not included in the estimation of income.

Table 4 presents the results of the regression utilized in calculating a respondent's income for all cases where income was reported. The explained variance ($R^2 = .265$) along with statistically significant coefficients suggest that the estimates are likely to be accurate.

Table 4

Unstandardized Coefficients (B) of the
Regression Analysis of Respondent's
Income (INCRESPI) on Selected Variables
for All Women Reporting Their Income

Independent Variables	B
AGERESP	1.74 *
EDUCRESP	15.00 *
MANG	82.03 *
CITY	35.86 *
SUBURB	23.80 *
Constant	-129.90
R^2	.265
N	2909

Note: * significant at the .01 level

The structural form of the regression equation utilized in estimating income for the missing cases is as follows:

$$\text{INCOME} = -129.90 + 1.74 (\text{AGERESP}) + 15.00 (\text{EDUCRESP}) + 82.03 (\text{MANG}) + 35.86 (\text{CITY}) + 23.80 (\text{SUBURB})$$

The results of this regression equation indicate that the mean income for the full sample, after the estimation of income for the missing cases, was \$14,904 with a standard deviation of 83.79. These results are somewhat lower than those for the respondents who actually reported their income - with a mean of \$15,519 and a standard deviation of 99.02. Perhaps this discrepancy is due to the fact that close to 50% of the income had to be estimated for the sample.

Income (Ever-Married Women)

Of the 3884 ever-married women surveyed, 47.2% failed to report their income. As such, income was estimated for all missing cases of ever-married women identically as outlined above. The structural form of the equation in calculating income for all the reported cases of ever-married women is as follows:

$$\text{INCEMW} = a + b (\text{AGEMW}) + b (\text{EDUCEMW}) + b (\text{MANG}) + b (\text{CITY})$$

where: a = constant

b = unstandardized regression coefficient

note: AGEMW - age (ever-married women)

EDUCEMW - education (ever-married women)

Table 5 presents the results of the regression utilized in calculating income for ever-married women for all cases where income was reported. The explained variance (R^2 =

.270) along with statistically significant coefficients suggest that the estimates are likely to be accurate.

Table 5

Unstandardized Coefficients (B) of the
Regression Analysis of Income for
Ever-Married Women (INCEMW) on
Selected Variables for Ever-Married
Women Reporting Their Income

Independent Variables	B
AGEMW	0.96 *
EDUCEMW	15.77 *
MANG	90.57 *
CITY	17.59 *
Constant	-94.36
R ²	.270
N	2045

Note: * significant at the .01 level

The structural form of the regression equation utilized in estimating income (ever-married women) for the missing cases is as follows:

$$\text{INCOME} = -94.36 + 0.96 (\text{AGEMW}) + 15.77 (\text{EDUCEMW}) + 90.57 (\text{MANG}) + 17.59 (\text{CITY})$$

The results of this regression equation indicate that the mean income for the full sample of ever-married women, after the estimation of income for the missing cases, was \$14,915 with a standard deviation of 84.36. These results are somewhat lower than those for the subsample of ever-

married women who actually reported their income - with a mean of \$15,644 and a standard deviation of 102.48. This discrepancy may be due to the fact that close to 50% of the income had to be estimated for the ever-married sample.

Attitudes Toward Children

In order to determine whether a respondent's attitudes toward children (ATTCHIL) have a bearing in discriminating between the voluntarily childless and women with children, an index was constructed with the use of the following four items: "On the whole, would you say that you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements..."

Item 1: "Having a child provides a goal in life that nothing else can replace."

Item 2: "Having children tends to distance the spouses from one another."

Item 3: "Becoming parents means taking on heavy responsibilities."

Item 4: "Having a child provides an irreplaceable source of affection."

Each item was originally coded in the same manner where a code of 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree and 4 = strongly disagree. Due to the fact that some items measured favourable attitudes and others unfavourable attitudes, item 1 and item 4 were recoded so that high codes would reflect favourable attitudes. That is, 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree and 4 = strongly agree.

The four categories for each item were later collapsed whereby (0) denoted an unfavourable attitude (originally codes 1 and 2) and (1) a favourable attitude (originally codes 3 and 4). Given that the index is made up of four items, the possible range of values is between 0 and 4- with zero denoting highly negative attitudes toward children and four denoting highly positive attitudes toward children.

Attitudes Toward Abortion (ABORATT)

In order to determine whether a respondent's attitudes toward abortion (ABORATT) have a bearing in discriminating between the voluntarily childless and women with children, an index was constructed with the use of the following items: "Assuming abortion was legal, would you be for or against a woman having an abortion..."

Item 1: "...if the pregnancy is endangering the mother's life?"

Item 2: "...if the pregnancy puts the mother's health in danger?"

Item 3: "...if the woman had been raped?"

Item 4: "...if there were good reasons to believe that the child would be physically or mentally handicapped?"

Item 5: "...if the woman was not married?"

Item 6: "...if the household does not have the financial means to support a child?"

Each item was originally coded in the same manner where a code of 1 = for abortion and a code of 2 = against abortion. These items were recoded so that a low code would

reflect negative/conservative attitudes toward abortion and a higher code would reflect positive/liberal attitudes. That is, a code of 0 = against abortion and a code of 1 = for abortion. Given that the index is made up of six items, the possible range of values is between zero and six - with zero denoting highly negative/conservative attitudes while six denotes highly favourable/liberal attitudes toward abortion.

Initially a Guttman scale was computed with the aforementioned abortion items. However, the reliability of the Guttman scale was called into question for it yielded a coefficient of reproducibility of .69. This coefficient measures the extent to which a respondent's scale score is a predictor of one's response pattern. A coefficient of reproducibility higher than .90 is indicative of a valid scale. Based upon this outcome, an index measuring attitudes toward abortion was computed instead.

Number of Children by Mother and Birth Order

The number of children which the respondent's mother gave birth to and birth order were both measured by the following item: "Including yourself how many children did your mother have and which one were you, the oldest, the second oldest...?"

Number of children was originally coded in the following

manner:

01 - XX children

These were recoded to make a distinction between a respondent who was an only child vs a respondent who was not an only child. As such,

0 - not an only child
1 - an only child

Birth order was originally coded in the following manner:

01 - XX child

These were recoded to make a distinction between a respondent who was first born vs a respondent who was not first born. As such,

0 - not first born
1 - first born

Cohabitive History
(Complex Variable - University of Montreal)

0 - never cohabited
1 - cohabited

Labour Force Attachment

The degree to which a respondent was "attached" to the labour force was gleaned through a series of questions which detailed their respective work histories. When traced for every possible combination, twenty-four categories of "labour force attachment" were computed. These were then recoded into six distinct groups as follows:

Code	Description
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - most attached; - the respondent did not stop work for more than one year or did not stop work for less than one year; - the respondent was working full time (30 or more hours per week) at the time of the survey
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respondent was not in category (1) due to labour market reasons (eg) no work; dismissal; mediocre work environment; lack of competency etc.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respondent stopped for <u>less</u> than one year for family or other reasons
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respondent stopped for <u>more</u> than one year for family or other reasons but <u>was</u> working at the time of the survey
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respondent stopped for <u>more</u> than one year for family or other reasons but was <u>not</u> working at the time of the survey
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - least attached; - respondent never worked on a regular basis

It is assumed that women who were not working full time as described in the first category due to labour market conditions, are more "attached" to the labour force than women who stopped work or dropped out of the labour force for family or other reasons. Given that the six categories of labour force attachment are ordinal in nature, a series of dummy variables were created as follows:

Most Attached (MSTATCH)

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - respondents who never stopped work and were working 30 or more hours at the time of the survey

Labour Market (LABORMK)

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - respondents not most attached due to labour market reasons

Stopped Less Than One Year Family/Other Reasons (LTYRFM)

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - respondents who stopped for less than one year due to family or other reasons

Stopped Greater Than One Year Family/Other Reasons Working at the Time of the Survey (GTYRFMW)

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - respondents who stopped for more than one year due to family or other reasons but were working at the time of the survey

Stopped Greater Than One Year Family/Other Reasons Not Working at the Time of the Survey (GTYRFMN)

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - respondents who stopped for more than one year due to family or other reasons but were not working at the time of the survey

Least Attached (LSTATCH)

- 0 - all other respondents
- 1 - respondents who never worked on a regular basis

Method of Analysis

The method of analysis selected for the present study is stepwise discriminant function analysis. When presented with a set of predictor (independent) variables, stepwise discriminant function analysis will control which variables enter the analysis based on statistical criteria available to the researcher. Given that voluntarily childless women are perceived as being at one end of a continuum as compared to women with children, the stepping method chosen for the study is Rao's V - which is a generalized distance measure

that attains its largest value when the greatest overall separation of groups is achieved.

Hierarchical or sequential discriminant function analysis (whereby the researcher controls the order of entry) was not used - for the literature does not specify or allude to the order in which predictor variables should enter the analysis. One may argue, however, that the attitudinal variables (attitudes toward children; attitudes toward abortion) incorporated into the analysis are products of the demographic and socioeconomic variables used, and as such, they should be treated as "secondary" variables entering the analysis after the demographic and socioeconomic ones. Yet, with the advent of alarmingly low fertility rates in North America, the effects of the demographic and socioeconomic variables seem to have weakened somewhat while those of the attitudinal variables have increased in importance. In light of this, the attitudinal variables were treated as distinct predictors and entered the analysis along with the demographic and socioeconomic variables.

Two versions of the model (made up of the determinants delineated in Chapter III) were run. Model I was run on a sample of all women, while Model II was run on a sample of ever-married women only. Each model was later modified with the addition of a respondent's Cohabitive History and Labour

Force Attachment in order to add a retrospective dimension to the models. For clarity, the models and their respective versions are outlined below. The variables are listed in their order of entry.

Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status
(All Women)

<u>Model I Specification (a)</u>	<u>Model I Specification (b)</u>
Place of Birth	Place of Birth
Ethnic Group	Ethnic Group
Mother Tongue	Mother Tongue
Residence	Residence
Education	Education
Religiosity	Religiosity
Employment Status	Employment Status
Income	Income
Civil Status	Civil Status
Birth Order	Birth Order
No. of Children by Mother	No. of Children by Mother
Attitudes Toward Children	Attitudes Toward Children
Attitudes Toward Abortion	Attitudes Toward Abortion
	Cohabitive History
	Labour Force Attachment

Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status
(Ever-Married Women)

Model II Specification (a)

Place of Birth
Ethnic Group
Mother Tongue
Residence
Age at First Marriage
Education
Religiosity
Employment Status
Income
Marital Disruption
Birth Order
No. of Children by Mother
Attitudes Toward Children
Attitudes Toward Abortion

Model II Specification (b)

Place of Birth
Ethnic Group
Mother Tongue
Residence
Age at First Marriage
Education
Religiosity
Employment Status
Income
Marital Disruption
Birth Order
No. of Children by Mother
Attitudes Toward Children
Attitudes Toward Abortion
Cohabitive History
Labour Force Attachment

Note: For the identification of the variable categories used in the models, refer to Tables 6,13,20 and 27 in Chapter V.

Chapter V

Findings

Model I: Specification (a)

(All Women)

A stepwise discriminant function analysis was performed using eleven demographic and socioeconomic variables, and two attitudinal variables as predictors of membership in two groups for a sample of all women (see Table 6). The demographic and socioeconomic predictors were:- Place of Birth, Ethnicity, Mother Tongue, Residence, Education, Religiosity, Employment Status, Income, "Civil Status", Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother. Attitudinal predictors were Attitudes Toward Children and Attitudes Toward Abortion. The membership groups were Voluntarily Childless Women and Women with Children.

Of the original 3652 unweighted cases, 579 had at least one missing discriminating variable - these were excluded from the analysis. Of the remaining 3073 unweighted cases, 297 belong to the Voluntarily Childless Group while 2776 belong to the Group with Children. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (1989:511), discriminant analysis is typically a one-way analysis so no special problems were posed by unequal sample sizes in the groups. Problems of multicollinearity and singularity were also avoided by a tolerance test at each step in the stepwise procedure

Table 6

I(a): Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Presented for Entry Predicting
Child Status (All Women)

Place of Birth - In Canada, Outside Canada

Ethnicity - English, French, Other*

Mother Tongue - English, French, Other*

Residence - City, Suburb/Small City, Farm*

Education - coded in years

Religiosity - Low, Medium, High*

Employment Status - Unemployed, Employed

Income

Civil Status - Ongoing Marriage*, Broken Marriage,
Single/Cohabiting, Single/No Partner

Birth Order - First Born, Not First Born

Number of Children by Mother - Only Child, Not Only Child

Attitudes Toward Children - index (negative to positive)

Attitudes Toward Abortion - index (conservative to liberal)

Note: * reference category

chosen. As the sample size of the smallest group (the voluntarily childless women) far exceeds the number of predictor variables, "overfitting" (producing results so close to the sample they cannot be generalized to other samples) was also avoided.

With the use of discriminant analysis there is an assumption of multivariate normality whereby scores on predictors are independently and randomly sampled from a population, and that the sampling distribution of any linear combination of predictors is normally distributed. Discriminant analysis is robust to failures of normality if the sample sizes are equal. With unequal sample sizes robustness is expected with twenty cases in the smallest group if there are only a few predictors. Given that close to 300 cases belong to the smallest group and that a total of seven predictors were chosen at the last step of the analysis (see Table 7, below) failure of multivariate normality is unlikely.

Discriminant analysis also assumes a linear relationship among all pairs of predictors within each group. For the majority of demographic and socioeconomic predictors in the present analysis, the codes assigned to the categories were arbitrary (for example "Civil Status" was coded (1) Ongoing Marriage; (2) Broken Marriage; (3) Single/Cohabiting; (4) Single/No partner) therefore, there

is no reason to expect the numbers representing the codes to be linearly related to other predictors. As such, all nominal and ordinal predictors were transformed into dummy variables to render them dichotomous. Since discriminant analysis is highly sensitive to the inclusion of outliers- the distributions of all predictors were checked and failed to reveal the presence of outliers. Given that the sample sizes are unequal and that the Box's M test¹ is significant at $p < .001$, the homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices was assessed with the use of the covariance matrices for each group. Given that the cells of the larger sample (the group with children) produced equal or larger covariances than the smaller group (the voluntarily childless group) homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices is present.

Of the thirteen predictors presented for entry in Model I: Specification (a), it was found that no significant improvement in the differentiation between the Voluntarily Childless Group and the Group with Children occurred after the seventh step of the analysis as measured by a significant change in Rao's V. In descending order of their predictive power, the seven variables used were:-

- 1) Single/No Partner;
- 2) Attitudes Toward Children;
- 3) Single/Cohabiting;
- 4) Income;

¹ The Box's M test is a test of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, if significant robustness cannot be guaranteed.

- 5) Employment Status;
- 6) French Mother Tongue; and
- 7) Attitudes Toward Abortion.

As such, Place of Birth, Ethnicity, Residence, Education, Religiosity, Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother did not significantly improve the separation of groups beyond the seven variables that entered the analysis - and were not included.

Table 7 provides a summary of the stepwise discriminant analysis performed with the seven predictor variables entered. At each successive step, the changes in Rao's V that were attained were significant at $p < .001$.

The maximum possible number of discriminant functions is limited by the number of groups or the number of predictors. That is, it is either the number of predictors or the degrees of freedom for the groups - whichever is smaller. With respect to the present analysis (Model I: Specification (a)), the number of groups is smaller than the number of predictor variables, therefore, only one discriminant function is possible. The seven predictor variables yielded one significant discriminant function ($X^2(7) = 1048.0$ $p < .001$; eigenvalue = .42; canonical correlation = .54) which served to differentiate the Voluntarily Childless Group from the Group with Children.

Discriminant analysis provides two measures for judging

Table 7

I(a): Discriminant Function Analysis of Demographic,
Socioeconomic and Attitudinal Variables
Predicting Child Status (All Women)

Step Entered	Wilks' Lambda	Rao's V	Change in V	Significance of Change in V
1. Single/No Partner	0.795	765.0	765.0	.000
2. Attitudes Toward Children	0.755	961.8	196.8	.000
3. Single/ Cohabiting	0.733	1081.	118.9	.000
4. Income	0.715	1183.	102.6	.000
5. Employment Status	0.709	1215.	31.68	.000
6. French Mother Tongue	0.705	1239.	24.36	.000
7. Attitudes Toward Abortion	0.702	1259.	19.54	.000

$X^2(7) = 1048.0$ $p < .001$

eigenvalue = .42

canonical correlation = .54

the importance of the discriminant function. The eigenvalue is a special measure computed in the process of deriving the discriminant function - it is a measure of the relative importance of the function. For the present analysis, conducted on a sample of women aged 25 years and over, an eigenvalue of .42 was derived. The canonical correlation is a measure of association between the single discriminant function and the set of predictor variables which define the group memberships. In essence, it tells us how closely the function and the "group variable" are related - which is simply another measure of the function's ability to discriminate between the groups. In the present analysis a canonical correlation of .54 was procured. The canonical correlation squared indicates the proportion of variance shared between membership groups and predictors on a particular function. In this particular specification, a value of .29 was obtained.

Groups are spaced along the various discriminant functions according to their group centroids. Centroids are the mean discriminant function scores for each group on a function. Discriminant functions form axes and the centroids of the groups are plotted along the axes. If there is a "big" difference between the centroid of one group and the centroid of another along a discriminant function axis, the discriminant function separates the two groups. Plots of the group centroids, see Table 8 and

Figure 2, indicate that the derived discriminant does separate the two groups.

The loading matrix of correlations between predictors and the discriminant function (Table 9) suggests that the best predictors for distinguishing between Voluntarily Childless Women and Women with Children are:- Single/No Partner, followed by Attitudes Toward Children, Income, Attitudes Toward Abortion, Employment Status and Single/Cohabiting (based on correlations in excess of .20).

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (1989), consensus is lacking regarding how high correlations in a loading matrix must be to be interpreted. By convention correlations of or in excess of .30 may be considered eligible while lower ones are not. However, the size of loadings depends both on the value of the correlation in the population and on the homogeneity of scores in the sample taken from it. If the sample is unusually homogeneous with respect to a predictor, the loadings for the predictor are lower and it may be wise to lower the criterion for determining whether or not to interpret the predictor as part of a discriminant function.

When comparing the means for the two groups (Table 10) one may deduce the following: a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women are single and without a partner compared with women who have children (34% vs 2%); a higher

Table 8

**I(a): Discriminant Function Evaluated
at the Group Centroids - Demographic,
Socioeconomic and Attitudinal Variables
Predicting Child Status (All Women)**

Function	Child Status	
	Voluntarily Childless Group	Group With Children
1	2.02	-0.21

Figure 2

**I(a): Plots of Group Centroids of
Two Child Status Groups for
the Derived Discriminant Function
(All Women)**

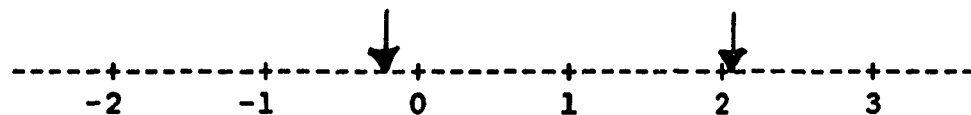


Table 9

**I(a): Pooled Within-Groups Correlations
Between Canonical Discriminant
Functions and Discriminating
Variables - Loading Matrix
(All Women)**

	Function 1
Single/No Partner	.78
Attitudes Toward Children	-.40
Income	.34
Attitudes Toward Abortion	.23
Employment Status	.22
Single/Cohabiting	.22
French Mother Tongue	.06

Table 10

**I(a): Group Means for Predictor Variables -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status (All Women)**

Demographic, Socioeconomic, Attitudinal Variables	Child Status		
	Voluntarily Childless Women	Women with Children	Total
Single/No Partner	0.34	0.02	0.05
Attitudes Toward Children	1.71	2.43	2.37
Single/Cohabiting	0.08	0.01	0.02
Income	212.43	148.24	154.31
Employment Status	0.83	0.59	0.61
French Mother Tongue	0.31	0.25	0.26
Attitudes Toward Abortion	4.79	3.94	4.02

proportion of voluntarily childless women are single but cohabiting compared to women with children (8% vs 1%); voluntarily childless women earn a proportionally higher mean income than women with children (\$21,243 vs \$14,824); a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women are employed as compared to women with children (83% vs 59%); a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women indicate that French is their mother tongue (31% vs 25%); and voluntarily childless women hold more liberal attitudes toward abortion than women with children (mean score on ABORATT index 4.79 vs 3.94). It is not surprising, however, that voluntarily childless women hold less favourable attitudes toward children compared to women with children (mean score on ATTCHIL index 1.71 vs 2.43). As one may observe from the group means/proportions, all hypothesized relationships have been substantiated - for the seven predictor variables that entered the analysis.

Using the seven variables as predictors, the function was able to place 90.89% of the women into their correct child status group. When this correct classification was broken down by child status group, the analysis was able to correctly classify 53.8% of the Voluntarily Childless Women and 94.8% of the Women with Children (Table 11).

It is salient to note that this classification scheme is most appropriate when relatively equal group sizes are

expected in the population. Given that the present study is based on such unequal group sizes, a random sample of women with children was drawn for each model to balance both groups (refer to Tables 12,19,26 and 33). When the classification analysis was run with the same sized groups for Model I: Specification (a), Table 12, the function was able to place 77.9% of the women into their correct child status group - a rate that exceeds chance levels of fifty percent. Broken down by group, the analysis was able to correctly classify 72.6% of the Voluntarily Childless Women (an improvement over the previous classification) and 83.1% of the Women with Children.

Model I: Specification (b)

(All Women)

In Specification (b), a modified version of Specification (a) with the addition of a respondent's Cohabitive History and Labour Force Attachment, the demographic and socioeconomic predictors were:- Place of Birth, Ethnicity, Mother Tongue, Residence, Education, Religiosity, Employment Status, Income, Civil Status, Birth Order, Number of Children by Mother, Cohabitive History, and Labour Force Attachment. The attitudinal predictors were Attitudes Toward Children and Attitudes Toward Abortion (see Table 13). As before, the membership groups were Voluntarily Childless Women and Women with Children.

Table 11

**I(a): Discriminant Function Classification Results -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status (All Women)**

Actual Group	n	Predicted Group Membership	
		Voluntarily Childless	Women with Children
Voluntarily Childless	312	n=168 53.8%	n=145 46.2%
Women with Children	2972	n=155 5.2%	n=2817 94.8%

Percentage of Grouped Cases Correctly Classified: 90.89%

Table 12

**I(a): Discriminant Function Classification Results -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status (All Women)
For a Random Sample of Women with Children**

Actual Group	n	Predicted Group Membership	
		Voluntarily Childless	Women with Children
Voluntarily Childless	312	n=227 72.6%	n=85 27.4%
Women with Children	325	n=55 16.9%	n=270 83.1%

Percent of Grouped Cases Correctly Classified: 77.99%

Table 13

I(b): Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Presented for Entry Predicting
Child Status (All Women)

Place of Birth - In Canada, Outside Canada

Ethnicity - English, French, Other*

Mother Tongue - English, French, Other*

Residence - City, Suburb/Small City, Farm*

Education - coded in years

Religiosity - Low, Medium, High*

Employment Status - Unemployed, Employed

Income

Civil Status - Ongoing Marriage*, Broken Marriage,
Single/Cohabiting, Single/No Partner

Birth Order - First Born, Not First Born

Number of Children by Mother - Only Child, Not Only Child

Attitudes Toward Children - index (negative to positive)

Attitudes Toward Abortion - index (conservative to liberal)

Cohabitive History - Cohabited, Never Cohabited

Labour Force Attachment - Most Attached, Not Most Attached
Due to Labour Market Reasons, Stopped Work for
Less than One Year for Family Reasons, Stopped
Work for More than One Year for Family Reasons
but are Presently Working, Stopped Work for More
than One Year for Family Reasons but are not
Presently Working, Least Attached*

Note: * reference category

Of the original 3652 unweighted cases, 605 had at least one missing discriminating variable - these were excluded from the analysis. Of the remaining 3047 unweighted cases, 290 belong to the Voluntarily Childless Group while 2757 belong to the Group with Children. Evaluation of assumptions of linearity, normality, multicollinearity or singularity, and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices revealed no threat to this multivariate analysis.

Of the fifteen predictors presented for entry, it was found that no significant improvement in the differentiation between the Voluntarily Childless Group and the Group with Children (as measured by a significant change in Rao's V) occurred after the eleventh step of the analysis. In descending order of their predictive power, the eleven variables used were:

- 1) Single/No Partner;
- 2) Attitudes Toward Children;
- 3) Single/Cohabiting;
- 4) Most Attached to the Labour Force (MSTATCH);
- 5) Income;
- 6) French Mother Tongue;
- 7) Attitudes Toward Abortion;
- 8) Not Most Attached for Labour Market Reasons (LABORMK);
- 9) Education;
- 10) Cohabitive History; and
- 11) Out of Labour Force for Greater than One Year for Family Reasons and is not Working Now (GTYRFMN);

Hence, Place of Birth, Ethnicity, Residence, Religiosity, Employment Status, Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother did not significantly improve the separation of both

groups beyond the eleven predictors that entered the analysis - and were not included. Table 14 provides a summary of the stepwise discriminant function analysis performed with the eleven predictor variables entered. All observed changes in Rao's V were significant (from step 1 to step 8 $p < .001$; step 9 to step 11 $p < .05$).

Model 1: Specification (b) yielded one significant discriminant function, with $X^2(11) = 1080.4$ $p < .001$; eigenvalue = .44; canonical correlation = .55, which served to differentiate the Voluntarily Childless Group from the Group with Children. When the canonical correlation was squared, a value of .31 was obtained. Plots of the group centroids, see Table 15 and Figure 3, indicate that the derived discriminant function adequately separates the two membership groups.

The loading matrix of correlations between predictors and the discriminant function (Table 16) suggests that the best predictors for distinguishing between Voluntarily Childless Women and Women with Children are: Single/No Partner, followed by Attitudes Toward Children, Income, MSTATCH, Education, Cohabitive History, Attitudes Toward Abortion and Single/Cohabiting (based on correlations in excess of .20).

When the group means are compared (Table 17), the

Table 14

**I(b): Discriminant Function Analysis of Demographic,
Socioeconomic and Attitudinal Variables
Predicting Child Status (All Women)**

Step Entered	Wilks' Lambda	Rao's V	Change in V	Significance of Change in V
1. Single/No Partner	0.799	741.8	741.8	.000
2. Attitudes Toward Children	0.761	925.5	183.7	.000
3. Single/ Cohabiting	0.738	1045.	119.4	.000
4. MSTATCH	0.718	1155.	109.9	.000
5. Income	0.706	1225.	70.27	.000
6. French Mother Tongue	0.702	1250.	24.74	.000
7. Attitudes Toward Abortion	0.699	1268.	18.38	.000
8. LABORMK	0.696	1284.	15.39	.000
9. Education	0.694	1295.	10.94	.001
10. Cohabitive History	0.693	1303.	8.413	.004
11. GTYRFMN	0.692	1309.	5.576	.018

X²(11) = 1080.4 p<.001
eigenvalue = .44
canonical correlation = .55

Table 15

I(b): Discriminant Function Evaluated
at the Group Centroids - Demographic,
Socioeconomic and Attitudinal Variables
Predicting Child Status (All Women)

Function	Child Status	
	Voluntarily Childless Group	Group with Children
1	2.08	-0.21

Figure 3

I(b): Plots of Group Centroids of
Two Child Status Groups for
the Derived Discriminant Function
(All Women)

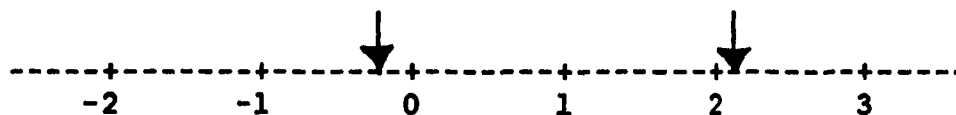


Table 16

I(b): Pooled Within-Groups Correlations
Between Canonical Discriminant
Functions and Discriminating
Variables - Loading Matrix
(All Women)

	Function 1
Single/No Partner	.75
Attitudes Toward Children	-.38
Income	.33
MSTATCH	.31
Education	.26
Cohabitive History	.23
Attitudes Toward Abortion	.22
Single/Cohabiting	.22
GTYRFMN	-.17
French Mother Tongue	.06
LABORMK	.06

Table 17

**I(b): Group Means for Predictor Variables -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status (All Women)**

Demographic, Socioeconomic, Attitudinal Variables	Child Status		
	Voluntarily Childless Women	Women with Children	Total
Single/No Partner	0.34	0.02	0.05
Attitudes Toward Children	1.73	2.43	2.37
Single/Cohabiting	0.08	0.01	0.02
MSTATCH	0.43	0.16	0.19
Income	213.38	148.04	154.13
French Mother Tongue	0.31	0.25	0.26
Attitudes Toward Abortion	4.78	3.95	4.02
LABORMK	0.17	0.13	0.13
Education	14.05	12.34	12.50
Cohabitive History	0.48	0.25	0.27
GTYRFMN	0.04	0.18	0.16

following differences are extant: a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women are single/without a partner compared to women who have children (34% vs 2%); a higher proportion are single/cohabiting compared to women with children (8% vs 1%); voluntarily childless women earn a proportionally higher mean income than women with children (\$21,338 vs \$14,804); a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women indicate that French is their mother tongue (31% vs 25%); a higher proportion of childfree women are "most attached to the labour force" (MSTATCH - as previously defined) compared to women with children (43% vs 16%); a slightly higher proportion of voluntarily childless women are not "attached to the labour force due to labour market reasons" compared to women with children (17% vs 13%); voluntarily childless women complete more years of education compared to women with children (mean 14.05 years vs 12.34 years); a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women have cohabited compared to women with children (48% vs 25%); and voluntarily childless women hold more liberal attitudes toward abortion as compared to women with children (mean score on ABORATT index 4.78 vs 3.95). Conversely, mothers hold more positive attitudes towards children compared to voluntarily childless women (mean score on ATTCHIL index 2.43 vs 1.73) and a higher proportion of mothers have been out of the labour force for greater than one year due to family/other reasons (GTYRFMN) compared to voluntarily childless women (18% vs 4%). As one may gather from the

group means/proportions, all hypothesized relationships have been substantiated - for the eleven predictor variables that entered the analysis (based on a significant change in Rao's V).

Using the eleven variables as predictors, the function was able to place 91.21% of the women into their correct child status group (Table 18). When broken down by child status group, the analysis was able to correctly classify 58.4% of the Voluntarily Childless Women and 94.6% of the Women with Children.

When the classification analysis was run with relatively same sized groups (Table 19), the function was able to place 78.56% of the women into their correct child status group - a rate that exceeds chance levels of fifty percent. Broken down by group, the analysis was able to correctly classify 72.8% of the Voluntarily Childless Women (an improvement over the previous classification) and 84.0% of the Women with Children.

When both specifications for a sample of all women are compared, one cannot argue that the "model" proposed in Specification (b) - which includes a respondent's Cohabitive History and Labour Force Attachment - is an overall improvement over the "model" proposed in Specification (a) for the observed changes in coefficients are negligible -

Table 18

**I(b): Discriminant Function Classification Results -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status (All Women)**

Actual Group	n	Predicted Group Membership	
		Voluntarily Childless	Women with Children
Voluntarily Childless	306	n=179 58.4%	n=127 41.6%
Women with Children	2948	n=159 5.4%	n=2789 94.6%

Percentage of Grouped Cases Correctly Classified: 91.21%

Table 19

**I(b): Discriminant Function Classification Results -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status (All Women)
For a Random Sample of Women with Children**

Actual Group	n	Predicted Group Membership	
		Voluntarily Childless	Women with Children
Voluntarily Childless	306	n=223 72.8%	n=83 27.2%
Women with Children	324	n=52 16.0%	n=272 84.0%

Percentage of Grouped Cases Correctly Classified: 78.56%

canonical correlation squared (.31 vs .29); canonical correlation (.55 vs .54); and eigenvalues (.44 vs .42). As such, it is not surprising that the discriminant function classification results for both models did not change appreciably as well. Although the two additional predictor variables (Cohabitive History and Labour Force Attachment) entered the analysis - what is interesting to note is the changes in the order in which the predictor variables entered (Table 7 and Table 14). In both specifications, Single/No Partner, Attitudes Toward Children and Single/Cohabiting were the first three to enter. While Employment Status is dropped in Specification (b), Education is added and MSTATCH precedes Income in terms of predictive power. Lastly, Place of Birth, Ethnicity, Residence, Religiosity, Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother did not enter the discriminant function analysis in either Specification (a or b). This leads one to question their usefulness as predictors/determinants of voluntary childlessness.

Model II: Specification (a)

(Ever-Married Women)

A stepwise discriminant function analysis was performed using twelve demographic and socioeconomic variables, and

two attitudinal variables as predictors of membership in two child status groups - for a sample of ever-married women (see Table 20). The demographic and socioeconomic predictors were: Place of Birth, Ethnicity, Mother Tongue, Residence, Education, Age at First Marriage, Religiosity, Employment Status, Income, Marital Disruption, Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother. The attitudinal predictors were Attitudes Toward Children and Attitudes Toward Abortion. The child status groups were Voluntarily Childless Women and Women with Children.

Of the original 3410 unweighted cases, 541 had at least one missing discriminating variable. These were excluded from the analysis. Of the remaining 2869 unweighted cases, 178 belong to the Voluntarily Childless Group while 2691 belong to the Group with Children. Evaluation of assumptions of linearity, normality, multicollinearity or singularity, and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices revealed no threat to this multivariate analysis.

Of the fourteen predictors presented for entry, it was found that no significant improvement in the differentiation between the Voluntarily Childless Group and the Group with Children occurred after the seventh step of the analysis. In descending order of their predictive power, the seven variables chosen were:

- 1) Attitudes Toward Children;
- 2) Age at First Marriage;

Table 20

**II(a): Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Presented for Entry Predicting
Child Status (Ever-Married Women)**

Place of Birth - In Canada, Outside Canada
Ethnicity - English, French, Other*
Mother Tongue - English, French, Other*
Residence - City, Suburb/Small City, Farm*
Education - coded in years
Age at First Marriage - coded in years
Religiosity - Low, Medium, High*
Employment Status - Unemployed, Employed
Income
Marital Disruption - Ongoing Marriage, Broken Marriage
Birth Order - First Born, Not First Born
Number of Children by Mother - Only Child, Not Only Child
Attitudes Toward Children - index (negative to positive)
Attitudes Toward Abortion - index (conservative to liberal)

Note: * reference category

- 3) Income;
- 4) Employment Status;
- 5) Marital Disruption;
- 6) Attitudes Toward Abortion; and
- 7) French Ethnic Group.

Hence, Place of Birth, Mother Tongue, Residence, Education, Religiosity, Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother did not significantly improve the separation of both groups beyond the seven predictors that entered the analysis - and were not included. Table 21 provides a summary of the stepwise discriminant function analysis performed with the seven predictor variables entered. All observed changes in Rao's V were significant at $p < .01$.

Model II: Specification (a) yielded one significant discriminant function, with $X^2(7) = 274.22$ $p < .001$; eigenvalue = .10; canonical correlation = .30, which served to differentiate the Voluntarily Childless Group from the Group with Children. When the canonical correlation was squared, a value of .09 (9%) was obtained - indicating the proportion of variance shared between the child status groups and the seven predictors on this particular function. Plots of the group centroids, see Table 22 and Figure 4, indicate that the derived discriminant function was unable to significantly differentiate the Voluntarily Childless Group from the Group with Children.

The loading matrix of correlations between predictors and the discriminant function (Table 23) suggests that the

Table 21

II(a): Discriminant Function Analysis of Demographic,
Socioeconomic and Attitudinal Variables
Predicting Child Status (Ever-Married Women)

Step Entered	Wilks' Lambda	Rao's V	Change in V	Significance of Change in V
1. Attitudes Toward Children	0.961	112.6	112.6	.000
2. Age at 1st Marriage	0.933	198.4	85.79	.000
3. Income	0.922	233.8	35.47	.000
4. Employment Status	0.915	255.6	21.75	.000
5. Marital Disruption	0.911	269.3	13.76	.000
6. Attitudes Toward Abortion	0.908	280.5	11.22	.001
7. French Ethnic Group	0.906	288.6	8.093	.004

$X^2(7) = 274.22$ $p < .001$
eigenvalue = .10
canonical correlation = .30

Table 22

II(a): Discriminant Function Evaluated
at the Group Centroids - Demographic,
Socioeconomic and Attitudinal Variables
Predicting Child Status (Ever-Married Women)

Function	Child Status	
	Voluntarily Childless Group	Group with Children
1	1.29	-0.08

Figure 4

II(a): Plots of Group Centroids of
Two Child Status Groups for
the Derived Discriminant Function
(Ever-Married Women)

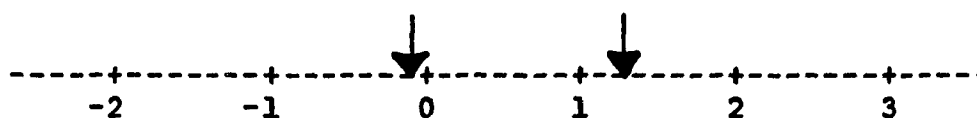


Table 23

**II(a): Pooled Within-Groups Correlations
Between Canonical Discriminant
Functions and Discriminating
Variables - Loading Matrix
(Ever-Married Women)**

	Function 1
Attitudes Toward Children	-.62
Age at First Marriage	.56
Income	.50
Employment Status	.31
Attitudes Toward Abortion	.29
Marital Disruption	.21
French Ethnic Group	.04

best predictors for distinguishing between Voluntarily Childless Women and Women with Children - for a sample of ever-married women are: Attitudes Toward Children, followed by Age at First Marriage, Income, Employment Status, Attitudes Toward Abortion and Marital Disruption (based on correlations in excess of .20).

When the group means were compared (Table 24), the following differences were unearthed: voluntarily childless women tended to marry later than women with children (mean age 24 years vs 21 years); voluntarily childless women earned a proportionally higher mean income (\$20,685 vs \$14,764); a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women were employed at the time of the survey compared to women with children (80% vs 59%); a slightly higher proportion of voluntarily childless women experienced a "marital disruption" as compared to women with children (34% vs 28%); a slightly higher proportion of voluntarily childless women indicated that their ethnic background was French compared to women with children (27% vs 24%); and a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women hold more liberal attitudes toward abortion as compared to women with children (mean score on ABORATT index 4.60 vs 3.94). On the other hand, a higher proportion of women with children hold more positive attitudes towards children as compared to the childfree group (mean score on ATTCHIL index 2.43 vs 1.74). As one may observe from the group means/proportions, all

Table 24

**II(a): Group Means for Predictor Variables -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status
(Ever-Married Women)**

Demographic, Socioeconomic, Attitudinal Variables	Child Status		
	Voluntarily Childless Women	Women with Children	Total
Attitudes Toward Children	1.74	2.43	2.39
Age at First Marriage	23.74	21.17	21.32
Income	206.85	147.64	151.14
Employment Status	0.80	0.59	0.60
Marital Disruption	0.34	0.28	0.22
Attitudes Toward Abortion	4.60	3.94	3.98
French Ethnic Group	0.27	0.24	0.25

hypothesized relationships have been substantiated - for the seven predictor variables that entered the analysis.

Using the seven variables as predictors, the function was able to place 77.07% of the ever-married women into their correct child status group (Table 25). When broken down by child status group, the analysis was able to correctly classify 70.0% of the Voluntarily Childless Women and 77.5% of the Women with Children.

When the classification analysis was run with relatively same sized groups (Table 26), the function was able to place 71.57% of the women into their correct child status group - a rate that exceeds chance levels of fifty percent. Broken down by group, the analysis was able to correctly classify 68.4% of the Voluntarily Childless Women and 74.8% of the Women with Children. Although an improvement over the previous classification (skewed sample) was expected with the same sized sample, the percentage of correct classifications dropped somewhat - an occurrence which cannot be readily explained. Yet it is salient to note that these classifications are sensitive to the size of the membership groups and the outcome of these classifications should be interpreted with caution - they are provided for illustrative purposes only.

Table 25

**II(a): Discriminant Function Classification Results -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status
(Ever-Married Women)**

Actual Group	n	Predicted Group Membership	
		Voluntarily Childless	Women with Children
Voluntarily Childless	164	n=115 70.0%	n=49 30.0%
Women with Children	2619	n=589 22.5%	n=2030 77.5%

Percentage of Grouped Cases Correctly Classified: 77.07%

Table 26

**II(a): Discriminant Function Classification Results -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status
(Ever-Married Women)
For a Random Sample of Women with Children**

Actual Group	n	Predicted Group Membership	
		Voluntarily Childless	Women with Children
Voluntarily Childless	164	n=112 68.4%	n=52 31.6%
Women with Children	162	n=41 25.2%	n=121 74.8%

Percentage of Grouped Cases Correctly Classified: 71.57%

Model II: Specification (b)
(Ever-Married Women)

Specification (b) is a modified version of Specification (a) forwarded for ever-married women with the addition of a respondent's Cohabitive History and Labour Force Attachment. As such the fourteen demographic and socioeconomic predictors were: Place of Birth, Ethnicity, Mother Tongue, Residence, Education, Age at First Marriage, Religiosity, Employment Status, Income, Marital Disruption, Birth Order, Number of Children by Mother, Cohabitive History, and Labour Force Attachment. The two attitudinal predictors were: Attitudes Toward Children and Attitudes Toward Abortion (see Table 27). As previously, the membership groups were Voluntarily Childless Women and Women with Children.

Of the 3410 unweighted cases, 563 had at least one missing discriminating variable - these were excluded from the analysis. Of the remaining 2847 unweighted cases, 174 belong to the Voluntarily Childless Group while 2673 belong to the Group with Children. Evaluation of assumptions of linearity, normality, multicollinearity or singularity, and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices revealed no threat to this multivariate analysis.

Of the sixteen predictors presented for entry, it was

Table 27

**II(b): Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Presented for Entry Predicting
Child Status (Ever-Married Women)**

Place of Birth - In Canada, Outside Canada
Ethnicity - English, French, Other*
Mother Tongue - English, French, Other*
Residence - City, Suburb/Small City, Farm*
Education - coded in years
Age at First Marriage - coded in years
Religiosity - Low, Medium, High*
Employment Status - Unemployed, Employed
Income
Marital Disruption - Ongoing Marriage, Broken Marriage
Birth Order - First Born, Not First Born
Number of Children by Mother - Only Child, Not Only Child
Attitudes Toward Children - index (negative to positive)
Attitudes Toward Abortion - index (conservative to liberal)
Cohabitive History - Cohabited, Never Cohabited
Labour Force Attachment - Most Attached, Not Most Attached Due to Labour Market Reasons, Stopped Work for Less than One Year for Family Reasons, Stopped Work for More than One Year for Family Reasons but are Presently Working, Stopped Work for More than One Year but are not Presently Working, Least Attached*

Note: * reference category

found that no significant improvement in the differentiation between the Voluntarily Childless Group and the Group with Children (as measured by a significant change in Rao's V) occurred after the eighth step of the analysis. In descending order of their predictive power, the eight variables chosen were:

- 1) Attitudes Toward Children;
- 2) Age
- 3) Most Attached to the Labour Force (MSTATCH);
- 4) Cohabitive History;
- 5) Income;
- 6) Not Most Attached for Labour Market Reasons (LABORMK);
- 7) Attitudes Toward Abortion; and
- 8) French Ethnic Group.

Thus, Place of Birth, Mother Tongue, Residence, Education, Religiosity, Employment Status, Marital Disruption, Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother did not significantly improve the separation of both groups beyond the eight predictors that entered the analysis - and were not included. Table 28 provides a summary of the stepwise discriminant analysis performed with the eight predictor variables entered. All observed changes in Rao's V were significant at $p < .01$.

Model II: Specification (b) yielded one significant discriminant function, with $X^2(8) = 311.34$ $p < .001$; eigenvalue = .12; canonical correlation = .33, which served to differentiate the voluntarily childless group from the group with children. When the canonical correlation was squared, a value of .11 (11%) was obtained - indicating the

Table 28

**II(b): Discriminant Function Analysis of Demographic,
Socioeconomic and Attitudinal Variables
Predicting Child Status (Ever-Married Women)**

Step Entered	Wilks' Lambda	Rao's V	Change in V	Significance of Change in V
1. Attitudes Toward Children	0.964	102.8	102.8	.000
2. Age at 1st Marriage	0.935	190.2	87.35	.000
3. MSTATCH	0.912	266.5	76.36	.000
4. Cohabitive History	0.906	286.2	19.67	.000
5. Income	0.900	304.6	18.37	.000
6. LABORMK	0.897	314.2	9.615	.002
7. Attitudes Toward Abortion	0.895	323.0	8.757	.003
8. French Ethnic Group	0.893	330.2	7.214	.007

$X^2(8) = 311.34$ $p < .001$
eigenvalue = .12
canonical correlation = .33

proportion of variance shared between the child status groups and the eight predictors on this particular function. Plots of the group centroids, see Table 29 and Figure 5, indicate that the derived discriminant function was unable to significantly differentiate the Voluntarily Childless Group from the Group with Children.

The loading matrix of correlations between predictors and the discriminant function (Table 30) suggests that the best predictors for distinguishing between the Voluntarily Childless Women and Women with Children for a sample of ever-married women are: Attitudes Toward Children, followed by Age at First Marriage, Income, MSTATCH, Cohabitive History and Attitudes Toward Abortion (based on correlations in excess of .20).

When the group means are compared (Table 31), one may ferret out the following differences: voluntarily childless women tend to marry at a later age than women with children (mean age 24 years vs 21 years); a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women are "most attached to the labour force" (as defined) compared to women with children (43% vs 16%); a higher proportion of voluntarily childless women have cohabited as opposed to women with children (41% vs 23%); voluntarily childless women earn a proportionally higher income than women with children (\$20,902 vs \$14,753); a slightly higher proportion of voluntarily childless women

Table 29

**II(b): Discriminant Function Evaluated
at the Group Centroids - Demographic,
Socioeconomic and Attitudinal Variables
Predicting Child Status (Ever-Married Women)**

Function	Child Status	
	Voluntarily Childless Group	Group with Children
1	1.39	-0.09

Figure 5

**II(b): Plots of Group Centroids of
Two Child Status Groups for
the Derived Discriminant Function
(Ever-Married Women)**

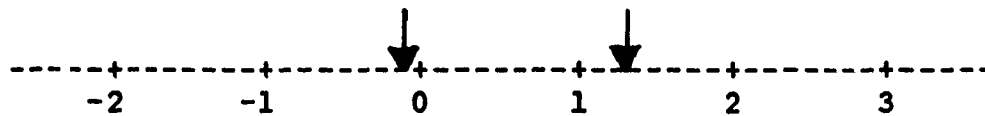


Table 30

**II(b): Pooled Within-Groups Correlations
Between Canonical Discriminant
Functions and Discriminating
Variables - Loading Matrix
(Ever-Married Women)**

	Function 1
Attitudes Toward Children	-.56
Age at First Marriage	.53
Income	.48
MSTATCH	.48
Cohabitive History	.29
Attitudes Toward Abortion	.26
LABORMK	.04
French Ethnic Group	.04

Table 31

**II(b): Group Means for Predictor Variables -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status
(Ever-Married Women)**

Demographic, Socioeconomic, Attitudinal Variables	Child Status		
	Voluntarily Childless Women	Women with Children	Total
Attitudes Toward Children	1.77	2.43	2.39
Age at First Marriage	23.78	21.17	21.32
MSTATCH	0.43	0.16	0.18
Cohabitive History	0.41	0.23	0.24
Income	209.02	147.53	151.11
LABORMK	0.15	0.13	0.13
Attitudes Toward Abortion	4.57	3.94	3.98
French Ethnic Group	0.27	0.24	0.25

are "not attached to the labour force due to labour market reasons" (LABORMK) compared to women with children (15% vs 13%); a slightly higher proportion of voluntarily childlesswomen indicated that their ethnic background was French as compared to women with children (27% vs 24%); and voluntarily childless women hold more liberal attitudes toward abortion compared to women with children (mean score on ABORATT index 4.57 vs 3.94). As seen previously, women with children hold more favourable attitudes toward children compared to voluntarily childless women (mean score on ATTCHIL index 2.43 vs 1.77). As one may notice from the group means/proportions, all hypothesized relationships have been substantiated - for the eight predictor variables that entered the analysis.

Using the eight variables as predictors, the function was able to place 77.27% of the ever-married women into their correct child status group (Table 32). When broken down by child status group, the analysis was able to correctly classify 70.3% of the Voluntarily Childless Women and 77.7% of the Women with Children.

When the classification analysis was run with same sized groups (Table 33), the function was able to place 72.29% of the women into their correct child status group - a rate that exceeds chance levels of fifty percent but is not an improvement over the classification rate computed for

Table 32

**II(b): Discriminant Function Classification Results -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status
(Ever-Married Women)**

Actual Group	n	Predicted Group Membership	
		Voluntarily Childless	Women with Children
Voluntarily Childless	161	n=113 70.3%	n=48 29.7%
Women with Children	2602	n=580 22.3%	n=2022 77.7%

Percentage of Grouped Cases Correctly Classified: 77.27%

Table 33

**II(b): Discriminant Function Classification Results -
Demographic, Socioeconomic and Attitudinal
Variables Predicting Child Status
(Ever-Married Women)
For a Random Sample of Women with Children**

Actual Group	n	Predicted Group Membership	
		Voluntarily Childless	Women with Children
Voluntarily Childless	161	n=113 70.0%	n=48 30.0%
Women with Children	162	n=41 25.4%	n=121 74.6%

Percentage of Grouped Cases Correctly Classified: 72.9%

the skewed sample. Broken down by group, the analysis was able to correctly classify 70.0% of the Voluntarily Childless Women and 74.6% of the Women with Children.

When both specifications are compared for a sample of ever-married women, one cannot contend that the "model" forwarded in Specification (b) - which includes a respondent's Cohabitive History and Labour Force Attachment - is an overall improvement over that forwarded in Specification (a) for the observed changes in coefficients are minimal - canonical correlation squared (.11 vs .09); canonical correlation (.33 vs .30); and eigenvalues (.12 vs .10). As with the previous model (Model I), improvement in the discriminant classification results are non-existent. Again, as with the previous model, the additional predictor variables (Cohabitive History and Labour Force Attachment) entered the analysis. What is interesting, however, is the changes observed in the order in which the predictor variables entered the discriminant function analysis (Table 21 and Table 28). In both specifications, Attitudes Toward Children and Age at First Marriage were the first two to enter. Both Employment Status and Marital Disruption were dropped in Specification (b) while MSTATCH and Cohabitive History preceded Income in terms of predictive power. Lastly, Place of Birth, Mother Tongue, Residence, Education, Religiosity, Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother did not enter the discriminant function analysis in either

specification (a or b). This reaffirms my skepticism of whether these predictor variables may realistically be used as distinct determinants of voluntary childlessness.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

This exploratory study examined a set of determinants presumed to be at work for distinguishing between voluntarily childless women and women with children. This was an arduous task in that many researchers have argued that it was quite impossible to extrapolate voluntarily childless women from survey/census type data. As a result, purposively selected samples were mainly used with the drawback that the number of cases were relatively low or that certain groups were over-represented. Canadian studies using census/survey type data would not distinguish between different types of childlessness (whether involuntary, voluntary or temporary) - any rise in the childless rates from one period to the next were assumed to be due to voluntary factors (Rao, 1974; Grindstaff et al., 1981; Tomes, 1985). With the data drawn from the Canadian Fertility Survey, however, one is able to extrapolate for the first time, a relatively large random sample of voluntarily childless women on which to base this study.

Only two theoretical approaches were devised to describe the deliberately childless. The social-psychological model is mainly applicable to the early articulators, those for whom the decision to remain childless is made before marriage. The cost-reward framework, on the other hand, is mainly applicable to those

who arrive at the decision through a series of postponements after marriage. Either approach could not be used as devised, for they failed to incorporate all voluntarily childless women regardless of how the decision to remain childless was made. More important, many of the variables used in either approach could not be gleaned from survey data. Thus, the model to be used in the present analysis was comprised of a set of determinants which the theoretical literature and past empirical research have designated as being essential for profiling those who are childless by choice.

Given that a relatively large number of studies base their research strictly on samples of married women, virtually ignoring the early articulators, two models were run:- the first based on a sample of women from all civil statuses; the second, on a sample of ever-married women only. The models were later modified to include a respondent's cohabitive history and the extent to which a respondent was "attached" to the labour force. Rates of cohabitation have increased over the last few decades (Ram, 1990) - denoting the acceptance of what is considered by some to be an "alternative" lifestyle. It would be interesting to see if a respondent's cohabitive history influences their decision to become voluntarily childless. Access to detailed work histories enabled the construction of a variable which measured the degree to which a

respondent was attached to the labour force. It was assumed that the higher the degree of labour force attachment, the higher the likelihood that a respondent would consider a childfree lifestyle. This variable is an improvement over the sole use of employment status, for it measures an overall tendency spanning a number of years - not simply whether one was "in" or "out" of the labour force at the time of the survey.

The results of the analysis highlight the importance of attitudinal variables for predicting child status. In both models and their respective specifications, the attitudinal variables were chosen among a set of given predictors. Of particular interest is the relative strength of the index measuring Attitudes Toward Children in terms of predictive power. That is for ever-married women (Model II), Attitudes Toward Children exhibit the greatest predictive power in that the index was selected first among a set of demographic, socioeconomic and attitudinal determinants. Moreover, the loading matrix of correlations between predictors and the discriminant function, suggests that the best predictor for distinguishing between voluntarily childless women and women with children are Attitudes Toward Children. These findings are buttressed by the fact that for a sample of all women, whether single, cohabiting, ever-married or presently married (Model I), Attitudes Toward Children play a key role as well - second only to civil

status (ie. Single/No Partner). In retrospect, these results give credence to the decision of treating the attitudinal variables as separate and distinct from the demographic and socioeconomic determinants presented for entry into the analysis. One is left to question whether the importance of attitudinal variables as observed here is simply due to this particular analysis or is it a precursor to a more general trend in differential fertility?

At the other extreme, the non-significance of certain determinants was also surprising. That is in both models and their respective specifications, Place of Birth, Residence, Religiosity, Birth Order and Number of Children by Mother do not appreciably increase the separation of the membership groups as measured by a significant change in Rao's V - and, thus, were not included in the analysis. This calls into question the hypothesized relationships presumed to be at work with respect to these demographic correlates. Again, is this illustrative of a general trend in fertility research?

The ascribed characteristics of mother tongue and ethnicity also play a role in the analysis. French Mother Tongue was chosen as one of the predictors in the first model, while French Ethnic Group was chosen as one of the predictors in the second model. Although the hypothesized relationships with respect to mother tongue and ethnicity

were cautiously made, the results seem to add a degree of credibility to the hypotheses. One can only speculate that this outcome is an adjunct to the alarmingly low fertility rates in Québec, particularly among the francophones (Romaniuc, 1984).

The fact that a respondent's cohabitive history and labour force attachment were selected as predictors of Child Status in Specification (b) of both models, is indicative that their use in socio-demographic inquiry is plausible. What is certain, however, is that the number of determinants required to maximize the "separation" between voluntarily childless women and women with children are far less than the theoretical literature and past empirical research would lead one to believe.

As delineated in the previous chapter, Specification (b) of either model (with the addition of Cohabitive History and Labour Force Attachment) do not significantly improve the variance shared between membership groups and their predictors (the canonical correlation squared). As such, one cannot state that Specification (b) is an overall improvement over Specification (a). However, the results do suggest that the model run on a sample of women from all civil status backgrounds explains a higher proportion of the variance than the model run on a sample of ever-married women only (Specification (a) - 29% vs 9%; Specification (b)

- 31% vs 11%). If these marked differences are not solely the result of the statistical method employed, the inclusion of single and cohabiting women (the "early articulators") is justified in research conducted on behalf of the deliberately childless.

The aforementioned observations are the product of an exploratory study and should be interpreted with care. Other studies would have to be conducted in order to reaffirm the relationships observed or negate them-whatever the case may be. However, if anything, this study clearly exemplifies the need for socio-demographic inquiry in this area.

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Appendix A

Crosstabulations of Child Status by All Determinants
(All Women)

	Place of Birth	
	Canada	Outside Canada
Voluntarily Childless	9.3	8.1
Women with Children	<u>90.7</u> 83.9 (2947)	<u>91.9</u> 16.1 (566)

$\chi^2(1) = .66$ $p = .4168$
Somers' D = .01

	Ethnicity		
	English	French	Other
Voluntarily Childless	9.3	10.6	7.6
Women with Children	<u>90.7</u> 41.5 (1316)	<u>89.4</u> 25.3 (803)	<u>92.4</u> 33.2 (1055)

$\chi^2(2) = 5.16$ $p = .0758$
Uncertainty Coefficient = .00

	Mother Tongue		
	English	French	Other
Voluntarily Childless	9.5	10.0	5.8
Women with Children	<u>90.5</u> 58.1 (2041)	<u>90.0</u> 28.1 (988)	<u>94.2</u> 13.8 (485)

$\chi^2(2) = 7.51$ $p = .0234$
Uncertainty Coefficient = .00

	Residence		
	Farm	Suburb	City
Voluntarily Childless	5.3	5.7	11.4
Women with Children	<u>94.7</u> 7.7 (270)	<u>94.3</u> 31.4 (1102)	<u>88.6</u> 60.9 (2138)

$\chi^2(2) = 33.68$ $p = .0000$
Uncertainty Coefficient = .02

Civil Status				
	Ongoing Marriage	Broken Marriage	Single/ Cohab	Single/ No Part
Voluntarily Childless	4.7	8.8	38.7	68.1
Women with Children	<u>95.3</u> 72.6 (2553)	<u>91.2</u> 20.8 (731)	<u>61.3</u> 2.0 (70)	<u>31.9</u> 4.6 (161)
$X^2(3)=810.97$ $p=.0000$ Uncertainty Coefficient=.21				

Education				
	0-8yrs	9-11yrs	12-13yrs	14-30yrs
Voluntarily Childless	2.5	5.5	8.4	15.4
Women with Children	<u>97.5</u> 9.9 (349)	<u>94.5</u> 25.9 (911)	<u>91.6</u> 35.0 (1229)	<u>84.6</u> 29.2 (1035)
$X^2(3)=83.42$ $p=.0000$ Somers' D=-.07				

Religiosity			
	Low	Medium	High
Voluntarily Childless	15.5	7.1	4.8
Women with Children	<u>85.0</u> 34.2 (1002)	<u>92.9</u> 36.9 (1297)	<u>95.2</u> 28.8 (1012)
$X^2(2)=79.27$ $p=.0000$ Somers' D=.07			

Employment Status		
	Unemployed	Employed
Voluntarily Childless	4.0	13.0
Women with Children	<u>96.0</u> 42.9 (1509)	<u>87.0</u> 57.1 (2006)
$X^2(1)=83.53$ $p=.0000$ Somers' D=-.09		

	Income		
	lowest- 11,700	11,700- 17,000	17,000- highest
Voluntarily Childless	4.1	6.8	17.9
Women with Children	<u>95.9</u> 33.2 (1091)	<u>93.2</u> 34.2 (1123)	<u>82.1</u> 32.6 (1072)

$X^2(2)=135.05$ $p=.0000$
Somers' D=-.09

	Attitudes Toward Children				
	negative 0	1	to 2	positive 3	4
Voluntarily Childless	38.7	22.3	9.8	4.2	3.7
Women with Children	<u>61.3</u> 2.4 (86)	<u>77.7</u> 12.7 (446)	<u>90.2</u> 32.1 (1128)	<u>95.8</u> 49.4 (1736)	<u>96.3</u> 3.4 (120)

$X^2(4)=239.24$ $p=.0000$
Somers' D=.11

	Attitudes Toward Abortion						
	0	conservative 1	2	3	to 4	liberal 5	6
Voluntarily Childless	3.6	3.3	5.4	5.8	7.0	7.5	18.3
Women with Children	<u>96.4</u> 4.9 (172)	<u>96.7</u> 4.5 (159)	<u>94.6</u> 8.0 (282)	<u>94.2</u> 13.7 (481)	<u>93.0</u> 29.5 (1037)	<u>92.5</u> 15.9 (560)	<u>81.7</u> 23.2 (824)

$X^2(6)=115.68$ $p=.0000$
Somers' D=-.06

	Number of Children by Mother			
	Only Child	2-3	4-6	7-25
Voluntarily Childless	13.0	10.5	9.1	7.0
Women with Children	<u>87.0</u> 4.9 (173)	<u>89.5</u> 30.5 (1072)	<u>90.9</u> 37.2 (1306)	<u>93.0</u> 27.3 (960)

$X^2(3)=10.71$ $p=.0134$
Somers' D=.02

	Birth Order		
	First Born	2nd-3rd	4th-23rd
Voluntarily Childless	9.4	9.3	8.5
Women with Children	<u>90.6</u> 31.8 (1117)	<u>90.7</u> 39.8 (1397)	<u>91.5</u> 28.3 (994)
$X^2(2) = .54$ $p = .7641$ Somers' D = .01			

	Cohabitive History	
	Never Cohabited	Cohabited
Voluntarily Childless	6.5	16.1
Women with Children	<u>93.5</u> 73.2 (2569)	<u>83.9</u> 26.8 (939)
$X^2(1) = 75.22$ $p = .0000$ Somers' D = -.10		

	Labour Force Attachment					
	Most Attached to Least Attached					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Voluntarily Childless	21.6	11.7	7.2	6.2	2.2	5.1
Women with Children	<u>78.4</u> 17.9 (624)	<u>88.3</u> 12.8 (445)	<u>92.8</u> 4.6 (160)	<u>93.8</u> 41.0 (1424)	<u>97.8</u> 15.7 (546)	<u>94.9</u> 8.0 (278)
$X^2(5) = 175.96$ $p = .0000$ Uncertainty Coefficient = .08						

Appendix B

**Crosstabulations of Child Status by All Determinants
(Ever-Married Women)**

	Place of Birth	
	Canada	Outside Canada
Voluntarily Childless	5.6	5.7
Women with Children	<u>94.4</u> 83.4 (2735)	<u>94.3</u> 16.6 (546)
$\chi^2(1) = .001$ $p = .9747$ Somers' D = -.00		

	Ethnicity		
	English	French	Other
Voluntarily Childless	6.0	6.1	4.8
Women with Children	<u>94.0</u> 41.6 (1238)	<u>93.9</u> 24.7 (735)	<u>95.2</u> 33.7 (1001)
$\chi^2(2) = 2.00$ $p = .3672$ Uncertainty Coefficient = .01			

	Mother Tongue		
	English	French	Other
Voluntarily Childless	6.0	5.5	4.1
Women with Children	<u>94.0</u> 58.2 (1910)	<u>94.5</u> 27.4 (901)	<u>95.9</u> 14.4 (473)
$\chi^2(2) = 2.44$ $p = .2956$ Uncertainty Coefficient = .00			

	Residence		
	Farm	Suburb	City
Voluntarily Childless	4.7	4.2	6.5
Women with Children	<u>95.3</u> 8.0 (264)	<u>95.8</u> 32.3 (1059)	<u>93.5</u> 59.7 (1956)
$\chi^2(2) = 6.95$ $p = .0309$ Uncertainty Coefficient = .01			

	Age at First Marriage				
	12-17	18-19	20-24	25-29	30-41
Voluntarily Childless	0.9	3.1	5.3	11.6	23.2
Women with Children	<u>99.1</u> 8.9 (290)	<u>96.9</u> 22.7 (743)	<u>94.7</u> 54.3 (1778)	<u>88.4</u> 11.6 (379)	<u>76.8</u> 2.6 (86)
X ² (4)=97.90 p=.0000 Somers' D=.06					

	Marital Disruption	
	Ongoing Marriage	Broken Marriage
Voluntarily Childless	4.7	8.8
Women with Children	<u>95.3</u> 77.7 (2553)	<u>91.2</u> 22.3 (731)
X ² (1)=17.71 p=.0000 Somers' D=-.04		

	Education			
	0-8yrs	9-11yrs	12-13yrs	14-30yrs
Voluntarily Childless	2.3	3.8	5.3	8.9
Women with Children	<u>97.7</u> 10.3 (337)	<u>96.2</u> 26.3 (863)	<u>94.7</u> 35.1 (1152)	<u>91.9</u> 28.4 (931)
X ² (3)=31.74 p=.0000 Somers' D=-.03				

	Religiosity		
	Low	Medium	High
Voluntarily Childless	8.4	4.4	4.0
Women with Children	<u>91.6</u> 32.6 (1068)	<u>95.6</u> 37.1 (1216)	<u>96.0</u> 30.4 (997)
X ² (2)=24.43 p=.0000 Somers' D=.03			

	Employment Status	
	Unemployed	Employed
Voluntarily Childless	2.8	7.8
Women with Children	<u>97.2</u> 44.0 (1445)	<u>92.2</u> 56.0 (1838)
X ² (1)=38.54 p=.0000 Somers' D=-.05		

	Income		
	lowest- 11,500	11,500- 16,500	16,500- highest
Voluntarily Childless	2.8	4.7	10.2
Women with Children	<u>97.2</u> 33.4 (1026)	<u>95.3</u> 33.1 (1016)	<u>89.8</u> 33.4 (1026)
X ² (2)=55.02 p=.0000 Somers' D=-.05			

	Attitudes Toward Children				
	negative 0	1	to 2	positive 3	4
Voluntarily Childless	28.4	13.2	6.2	2.6	2.6
Women with Children	<u>71.6</u> 2.2 (73)	<u>86.8</u> 11.8 (389)	<u>93.8</u> 32.0 (1050)	<u>97.4</u> 50.6 (1661)	<u>97.4</u> 3.4 (111)
X ² (4)=146.22 p=.0000 Somers' D=.07					

	Attitudes Toward Abortion						
	0	conservative 1	2	to 3	4	liberal 5	6
Voluntarily Childless	3.2	2.8	3.7	3.8	4.8	3.7	11.0
Women with Children	<u>96.8</u> 5.1 (167)	<u>97.2</u> 4.8 (158)	<u>96.3</u> 8.2 (269)	<u>96.2</u> 13.8 (452)	<u>95.2</u> 30.0 (984)	<u>96.3</u> 16.0 (526)	<u>89.0</u> 22.2 (729)
X ² (6)=53.91 p=.0000 Somers' D=-.03							

Number of Children by Mother

	Only Child	2-3	4-6	7-25
Voluntarily Childless	9.5	6.9	4.8	4.5
Women with Children	<u>90.5</u> 4.9 (161)	<u>93.1</u> 30.8 (1011)	<u>95.2</u> 36.9 (1209)	<u>95.5</u> 27.4 (898)

$X^2(3)=11.36$ $p=.0099$
Somers' $D=.02$

Birth Order

	First Born	2nd-3rd	4th-23rd
Voluntarily Childless	5.9	5.8	4.9
Women with Children	<u>94.1</u> 32.1 (1051)	<u>94.2</u> 39.7 (1302)	<u>95.1</u> 28.2 (924)

$X^2(2)=1.12$ $p=.5713$
Somers' $D=.01$

Cohabitive History

	Never Cohabited	Cohabited
Voluntarily Childless	4.4	9.4
Women with Children	<u>95.6</u> 76.1 (2495)	<u>90.6</u> 23.9 (782)

$X^2(1)=28.01$ $p=.0000$
Somers' $D=-.05$

Labour Force Attachment

	Most Attached to Least Attached					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Voluntarily Childless	13.7	6.6	4.7	4.0	2.2	2.2
Women with Children	<u>86.3</u> 16.7 (543)	<u>93.4</u> 12.6 (410)	<u>95.3</u> 4.7 (152)	<u>96.0</u> 41.8 (1357)	<u>97.8</u> 16.3 (530)	<u>97.8</u> 8.0 (258)

$X^2(5)=92.05$ $p=.0000$
Uncertainty Coefficient=.06