

HIS JOB, HER LIFE:  
A Survey of Pastors' Wives

A Masters Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School of  
Marquette University

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
(Sociology)

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May 1991

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables.....	iii
Abstract.....	1
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	2
Chapter 2: Methodology.....	4
Subjects.....	4
Instrumentation.....	6
Procedure.....	7
Representativeness and Generalizability.....	8
Statistical Analysis.....	10
Chapter 3: Concerns and Criticisms.....	15
Finances.....	17
Housing.....	26
Impoverishment.....	33
Expectations.....	43
Triangulation.....	58
Intrusion.....	63
Division of Household Tasks.....	67
Spirituality.....	70
Chapter 4: Joys and Opportunities.....	71
Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusions.....	75
Chapter 6: Implications.....	83
Implications for Clergy Families and the Church.....	83

Implications for Further Research..... 96

References..... 98

Appendices..... 102

    A. Pastors' Wives' Survey..... 102

    B. Cover Letter for Survey..... 113

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Age of Pastor's Wives.....	9
Table 2: Number of Years Married of Pastor's Wives.....	9
Table 3: Highest Educational Level .....	11
Table 4: Comparison of Highest Educational Level.....	11
Table 5: Size of Church Membership.....	12
Table 6: Number of Years Husbands Have Been Ordained.....	12
Table 7: Number of Dependent Children.....	13
Table 8: Problems/Concerns of Pastor's Wives.....	16
Table 9: Comparison of Financial Guidelines and Actual Incomes of UCC Pastors.....	23
Table 10: Comparison of Employment of Pastors' Wives.....	24
Table 11: Comparison of Housing Location .....	29
Table 12: Bivariate Analysis of Location of House and Housing Arrangement.....	30
Table 13: Comparison of Housing Type.....	30
Table 14: Frequency of Repairs to Parsonage .....	31
Table 15: Frequency of Redecorating the Parsonage .....	32
Table 16: Comparison of Type of Housing Preferred .....	33
Table 17: Reasons for Preference of Housing Type.....	33
Table 18: Bivariate Analysis of Similarity of Interests and Educational Level.....	38
Table 19: Friendship Concerns of Pastors' Wives.....	39
Table 20: Alienation Responses by Pastors' Wives.....	40

Table 21: Responses to Issues of Time Together.....	43
Table 22: Type of Involvement by UCC Pastors' Wives.....	49
Table 23: Bivariate Analysis of Type of Involvement and Educational Level.....	50
Table 24: Primary Motivations for Involvement.....	51
Table 25: Single Best Motivation for Involvement.....	51
Table 26: Comparison of Role Responsibilities.....	52
Table 27: Expectations Reported by Pastors' Wives.....	53
Table 28: Bivariate Analysis of "Hard to Be Yourself" and Age.....	53
Table 29: Ways Pastors' Wives Handle Complaints About Themselves.....	54
Table 30: Actual Involvement in Church.....	55
Table 31: Number of Church Tasks Performed By Pastors' Wives.....	55
Table 32: Bivariate Analysis of Church Tasks and Type of Involvement.....	56
Table 33: Bivariate Analysis of Church Tasks and Type of Responsibility.....	56
Table 34: Ways Pastors Handle Complaints About Their Wives.	58
Table 35: Ways Pastors' Wives Handle Complaints About Their Husbands.....	61
Table 36: Bivariate Analysis of Intrusion and Church Size.	66
Table 37: Household Tasks Performed Regularly by Husband...	68
Table 38: Disagreements over Household Division of Labor...	69
Table 39: Joys and Opportunities of Pastors' Wives.....	73

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer of this study wishes to express my sincere gratitude for the guidance and assistance given by the members of my Thesis Committee during the preparation of this study. I would also like to express special appreciation to Dr. David Moberg, my advisor, for his counsel and support throughout my Graduate School experience.

## PREFACE

The purpose of this study was twofold: 1) to investigate the ways in which the lives of pastors' wives are affected by their husbands' jobs and 2) to discover how the wives are adapting to their expected role, i.e. are they continuing to play the traditional role of the pastor's wife or have they written new scripts. Questionnaire data from 105 pastors' wives from the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ were utilized. Although this study showed that "his" job continues to set limits on "her" lifestyle, this study also found that many of these pastors' wives have made significant strides toward personal realization.

CHAPTER 1  
INTRODUCTION

In all marriages, the type of employment of one partner affects the life of the other. The impact of "his" job on "her" life is similar, for example, for most professional couples, including clergy couples. Traditionally, however, the situation for the pastor's wife has been distinctive in several ways. First, although the pastor has been considered a professional, he traditionally has not been paid as well as other professionals; the inability to live a lifestyle enjoyed by other professionals may present his family, especially his wife, with many strains and tensions.

A second distinction has involved "tied accommodation," i.e. living in employer provided housing. Parsonage living historically has been the source of much tension between the pastor, his wife, and the people. The most difficult issues have involved the incumbent dependence on the church it engendered and the structure and limits it set on her life.

Third, because of her marriage to "the pastor," the clergy wife has traditionally found it difficult to find friends and support networks, leaving her frustrated and lonely. Moreover, the clergy wife has traditionally had little time with her husband. In addition to the excessively long hours many professionals ordinarily work, clergy often work when most others do not: evenings and weekends. Although this situation might be difficult for many types of marital relationships, families with children are placed in an especially trying predicament



that produces even greater loneliness.

The most unique distinction for the clergy wife, however, has been the extent of her involvement with her husband's employer. In fact, there is probably no other occupation where there have been so many expectations of the wife's involvement in her husband's job. These "requirements," moreover, may or may not have been congruent with her individual interests.

Finally, there has been a minimization of the private sphere of living, of Goffman's (1959) idea of "backstage." Because of this intrusion on private time and into private space, the inability of clergy wives to relax and renew has been further restricted.

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the unique social context of women married to Protestant pastors in order: 1) to determine the extent to which his job is affecting her life in 1990 and 2) to discern how these women are adapting to this unique social context. That is, are they continuing to play the traditional role of the pastor's wife, or have they developed new adaptations?

This report is divided into five major sections. The first chapter presents a summary of the methodology used in the study. Chapters two and three discuss the extent to which his job is affecting her life. The first of these elucidates the problems and concerns shared by the women, while the latter deals with the joys and opportunities that being married to the pastor may provide her. Chapter 4 consists of a summary and conclusion to this research, and it considers how pastors' wives are adapting to their unique social status.

Finally, Chapter five discusses some implications of the results of this study for clergy wives and for the United Church of Christ in Wisconsin, as well as implications for further research.

CHAPTER 2  
METHODOLOGY

SUBJECTS

The subjects for this study consisted of the 147 women married to Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ (UCC) pastors. UCC pastors' wives were selected for three primary reasons. First, they represented a convenience sample. As a wife of one of the pastors, I had access to the names and addresses of all of the others. Second, the United Church of Christ represents a denomination with which this researcher was familiar as an insider. This afforded me valuable information that might otherwise have taken months to collect. Third, the United Church of Christ has been classified as a liberal mainline denomination in American Protestantism (Campbell, 1980, p. 487). It was believed that this group would be especially interesting as a comparison sample to that explored in a recent survey for the National Association of Evangelicals (Crow, 1990).

In addition, this study was confined to wives of "pastors," in order to promote greater homogeneity between the respondents. A "pastor" was defined as an ordained clergyperson, serving a local congregation, licensed by the appropriate Association of the Wisconsin Conference of the UCC. Furthermore, the study was restricted to pastors' "wives"; although a study of clergy husbands would also prove informative, the traditional model of a male minister and his spouse still predominates. Because a comparison with the past was essential to the investigation,

the traditional model was necessarily employed.

Finally, efforts were made to examine the situation for clergy wives within the historical context of the United Church of Christ's traditions. The UCC represents a merger of four former denominations. The first of these, the Congregationalist churches began in 1640 in New England. The second denomination, the Christian Churches, began in America in the late 1790's in North Carolina, Kentucky and Vermont. In 1929 the Congregational Churches merged with the Christian Churches to become the Congregational and Christian Churches.

Meanwhile, the Reformed Church in the United States had begun in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia in the late 1600's, and the Evangelical Synod of North America was started in the 1830's in Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana. In 1934 the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America joined together to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Finally, in 1957, the Congregational and Christian Churches merged with the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the United Church of Christ. The early Congregationalist traditions, therefore, are very important to this denomination, as is the Evangelical spirit which was so prominent in nineteenth century American culture.

#### INSTRUMENTATION

A 58 item questionnaire was developed by the researcher through a literature review and the researcher's inside knowledge of the issues. A few questionnaire items were directly taken from Douglas' (1965) study

of ministers' wives and Crow's (1990) study for the National Association of Evangelicals; a direct comparison was planned with the results from the 1990 UCC sample. In addition, the Crow study was thought to be especially interesting because the United Church of Christ constitutes a liberal denomination, while the NAE study primarily represented the conservative wing in American Protestantism.

Each major area of concern was addressed in the questionnaire by a series of questions. Internal validity of these questions later appeared rather high, for answers to questions in the same series correlated significantly with each other and the total.

#### PROCEDURE

As a final safeguard against error, the surveys were pretested by three clergy wives from other denominations. They were then prepared for final printing and mailing following the principles outlined in Dillman's (1978) Mail and Telephone Surveys.

Although the questionnaires were scheduled to be mailed in October 1990, the publication of a new set of Wisconsin Conference guidelines on pastors' compensation forced the mailing date to be advanced. As the new guidelines differed markedly from those previously published, it was thought that knowledge of these new guidelines might have biased the respondents' answers. The initial mailing was thus accomplished in late September.

Each of the women on the mailing list was mailed a questionnaire (see Appendix A). An introductory cover letter (Appendix B) was also included which explained the general purpose of the project and the

confidential nature of the responses in accordance with Marquette University's guidelines on conducting research involving human subjects. Because the researcher is the wife of a Wisconsin Conference UCC pastor, no mention was made of the researcher's name. It was believed that this would limit fears of a breach of confidentiality. Also, all correspondence came from and was returned to Marquette University in a further effort to keep the identity of the researcher confidential.

Sixty-one percent (90) of the surveys were initially returned. Following a second mailing, again to all of the wives, the final response rate rose to 71%, or 105, respondents. In addition, 71 women, i.e. 67.6% of the respondents requested summaries of the findings; this shows a great deal of interest on the part of many of the women.

#### REPRESENTATIVENESS AND GENERALIZABILITY

Table 1 displays the ages of the respondents; Table 2 illustrates the number of years they have been married. These tables emphasize the representativeness of this sample. Table 1 shows that most age groups are evenly represented. There are fewer women than would be expected in the "30 and under" category, however. It is not known if persons aged 30 and under did not return the survey or if this Wisconsin sample of UCC pastors' wives is simply older than 30. Alleman (1987) obtained similar results in his interdenominational study in California. It may be that pastors' wives, in general, are older than 30 years of age. There are also fewer women in the "61-70" category; this was somewhat expected, however, due to clergy retirement at 65 years of age and given that American women tend to marry slightly older men.

TABLE 1  
AGES OF PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Age Category</u>	<u>UCC-1990</u>	<u>Alleman*</u>
30 or Under	3.8%	5.3%
31-40	26.9%	30.0%
41-50	31.7%	23.3%
51-60	31.7%	29.1%
61-70	3.8%	11.9%
Over 70	<u>1.0%</u>	<u>.4%</u>
TOTAL	98.9%	100.0%

\* Source: Alleman, 1987, p. 63

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF YEARS MARRIED - UCC PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Number of Years</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than 10	22	21.0
10-19	27	25.7
20-29	25	23.8
30-39	28	26.7
40-49	<u>2</u>	<u>1.9</u>
TOTAL	104	99.0



Table 2, likewise, shows that the women represented a wide variety of marriage experience; again, all categories were represented, and the distribution appears very equitable.

Table 3 shows the highest educational levels of the wives. Apparently, these women constitute a very highly educated group, far beyond the national averages; 75.5% of this group have at least a four year college degree, while nationally only about 17% of women were similarly trained (Hoffman, 1990, p. 207).

Table 5 illustrates that wives from churches of all sizes responded, while Table 6 illustrates the number of years the clergy husbands have been ordained. As can be seen, again, there is an equitable representation of each category.

Finally, Table 7 depicts the number of dependent children the couples have living at home. The high percentage of "no answer" responses may reflect poor wording of the question, which may have made the question somewhat ambiguous.

While the sample appears quite evenly balanced by age and length of marriage, size of membership, years since ordination, and number of children, there are clear limitations as to the generalizability of the findings to the entire U.S. population of clergy wives. First, since these women all come from the same denominational group, it cannot be determined if theological differences between denominations would affect the responses provided. Likewise, because all of the women come from the same state, regional differences could not be considered. Third, because of the high level of education, this sample is clearly not



TABLE 3  
HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Educational Level</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	14	14.3
BACHELORS DEGREE	48	49.0
MASTERS DEGREE	17	17.3
MORE THAN MASTERS	9	9.2
OTHER	<u>17</u>	<u>17.3</u>
TOTAL	105	100.0

TABLE 4  
COMPARISON OF HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Educational Level</u>	<u>UCC</u>	<u>PRES<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>METH<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>EPIS<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>AOG<sup>1</sup></u>
		(percentages)			
High School Graduate	14.3	7.5	7.5	13.2	53.8
Bachelors Degree	49.0	41.8	41.5	34.2	16.9
Masters Degree	17.3	32.8	30.2	26.3	1.5
Doctorate	9.2*	1.5	3.8	0.0	0.0

\* The category in the UCC survey was "more than a masters."

<sup>1</sup> Source: Alleman, 1987

TABLE 5  
SIZE OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Under 200	18	17
200 - 599	61	59
600 or more	<u>24</u>	<u>23</u>
TOTAL	103	100

TABLE 6  
NUMBER OF YEARS HUSBANDS HAVE BEEN ORDAINED

<u>Number of years</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Under 5 years	4	3.8
5 - 9 years	12	11.4
10 - 14 years	15	14.3
15 - 19 years	18	17.1
20 - 24 years	11	10.5
25 - 29 years	14	13.3
30 - 34 years	18	17.1
35 or more years	<u>12</u>	<u>11.4</u>
TOTAL	104	98.9

TABLE 7  
NUMBER OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN

<u>Number of children</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	16	15.2
1 or 2	47	44.8
3 or 4	14	13.3
No answer	<u>28</u>	<u>26.7</u>
TOTAL	105	100.0

representative of American women overall. Alleman (1987) did find similarly high education levels for Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Methodist clergy wives, but not for Assembly of God clergy wives (see Table 4). This sample of UCC wives, then, may be somewhat more educationally representative of clergy wives in mainline denominations.

Regardless of generalizability, however, these results are useful for comparison with findings from previous studies effected in different places and times and with additional samples.

#### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Most of the data were coded and sent to Marquette University Computer Services for analysis through SPSS<sup>x</sup>. Since almost all of the data are measured at the nominal level, the measures of association utilized were chi-square based, e.g. phi, Cramers V, Contingency Coefficient, as well as the PRE measure, Lambda and Tau.

Many of the answers to the open ended questions were coded later by topic for use as qualitative data; included in this were the extra written responses added by over half of the respondents.

CHAPTER 3  
CONCERNS AND CRITICISMS

To be married to the minister could be historically seen as both the greatest goal for one's life and the heaviest of weights to bear. For years after the Reformation, for example, the pastor's wife was a figure of both ridicule and disdain; marriage to a clergyman was simply not tolerated by many. During the Marian persecutions in seventeenth century England, the situation became so intense that marriage to a clergyman meant almost certain exile or death ((Watt, 1943).

Through the centuries, however, the role of the pastor's wife gradually changed. By the nineteenth century in America, it had become an acceptable means of public involvement and service for women. Young clergymen were sought as prospective bridegrooms, and "the most common vocational fantasies of Evangelical women involved becoming a minister's or a missionary's wife" (Sweet, 1983, p. 91).

There is no doubt that there have been great joys and many opportunities that the role of "minister's wife" has afforded women, especially in times when most other avenues of achievement were blocked. At the same time, however, there have been problems, tensions, and stresses that may or may not be unique to her life, but have taken an onerous toll on her health, life satisfaction, and overall well-being.

Research throughout the years has identified five major areas of concern for pastors' wives: finances, housing, loneliness, role expectations, and lack of privacy (Crow, 1990; Alleman, 1987; Lee &

expectations, and lack of privacy (Crow, 1990; Alleman, 1987; Lee & Balswick, 1989; Noller, 1984; Valeriano, 1981; Mace and Mace, 1980; Hartley, 1978; Douglas, 1965; and Denton, 1962). This study identified the same problems today. A comparison of the main difficulties/conflicts mentioned by the women is shown in Table 8. Basically, the three principal problems mentioned were lack of time together, inadequate finances, and lack of personal friends. Because housing was discussed in a different section of the survey, it was not listed as an option in this question. Housing clearly continues to pose problems, however, as will be seen in the section on "housing."

Each of the five primary concerns will be briefly reviewed historically, and each has been examined in 1990. While it may be true that other persons also experience some of the same difficulties that clergy wives encounter, e.g. wives of other public figures, it is believed that the blending and interweaving of these and several other factors make the situation of clergy wives unique.

TABLE 8  
PROBLEMS/CONCERNS OF PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Issue</u>	<u>(#)</u>	<u>(%)</u>
Husband's work schedule	43	43.9%
Inadequate finances	39	39.8%
Lack of family time	34	34.7%
Few personal friends	32	32.7%
Lack of time for self	17	17.3%
Little privacy	5	5.1%
Congregational demands	4	4.1%
Husband's demands	2	2.0%
Other	11	11.2%

## FINANCES

### INTRODUCTION

From the fragmentary evidence that is available to us, it appears that salaries have historically been considered a major source of discord between ministers and their congregations. As early as the sixteenth century "many of the troubles and vices to which ministers became subject were undoubtedly caused by the poor economic conditions under which they had to live" (Pauck, 1983, p. 145). Luther himself stated in 1531, that the new Protestant clergy "are now poorer than before, and if they have wife and children they are beggars indeed'" (Pauck, pp. 145-6). The financial situation for clergy was much better two centuries later. In eighteenth century Congregationalist New England, for example, many of the clergy were supported by public taxation. An average contract for even the rural ministers was about twice that of a schoolteacher, plus use of a house (parsonage), an allotment of firewood (utilities), and a plot of farmland (Botein, 1980, p.399). Clergy, at that time, lived moderately well off.

This situation did not last however. When inflation hit the colonies, some parishes adjusted their clergyman's salary, but more than half of the known contracts of ministers had no provision for inflation (Schmötter, 1979, p. 160). Many of the clergy were thus forced to live at about half of their previous standard of living (Sweet, 1983, p. 400).

The clergy complained; some left their churches. With the Great

Awakening, however, popular opinion moved against the clergy, aided by the voices of itinerants who declared that "hireling clergy were incapable of spiritual enlightenment" (Sweet, 1983, p. 406). This debate brought into question the Congregationalist clergy's integrity and placed these ministers in a very trying situation. "The more pastors argued for salary and deference, the more worldly they appeared, and the more indifferent parishioners became to their demands" (Schmotter, 1979, p. 161). Eventually, these clergy were compelled to change their views on material circumstances. They accepted the role of the "Servant of All," "Stewards of God," whose glory was never to be on this earth, but in the next life. This theological shift on material welfare helped to establish the justification for more limited ministerial compensation for the next two hundred years.

By the nineteenth century, it is known that salaries varied by denomination with the Episcopal and Congregational ministers being paid higher salaries than were Methodists and Baptists. Salaries also varied by region of the country, churches in the South paying more than those in the North, and urban churches customarily paying more than rural ones. The most common complaint of ministers of all denominations, however, was "insufficient salaries" (Mead, 1983, p. 234).

Nineteenth century ministerial salaries compared favorably to some occupations, but were notably lower than those of other professionals (Sweet, 1983, p. 70). Furthermore, promised salaries were not always paid in full and much of a pastor's salary might have been paid in "goods," not cash. This made circumstances even more vexatious, since



the commercialization of the American economy was already well under way and since the "goods" received were often in the form of materials the clergy family could not use or did not need. Nevertheless, it is thought that most pastors of the nineteenth century lived in comfortable moderation, thanks to the ingenuity and generosity of women, especially their wives, who found ways to cut corners and to raise extra monies to provide for the welfare of these families. It needs to be mentioned, however, that clergy wives frequently resented their husbands' congregations for the hardships meager salaries conferred upon them (Sweet, 1983, p. 70).

#### CURRENT LITERATURE REVIEW

Little changed in the twentieth century. A survey of position, based on income alone in the early part of the century, would probably have shown that the minister was now earning *less* than a public school teacher or for that matter, a semi-skilled wage earner. In 1928, for example, the average salary for all ministers was \$1407; teachers were paid \$1788, on the average, while the average pay for iron and steel workers was \$1619 (Michaelsen, 1983, p. 280). More recently, the Department of Labor Statistics showed that "out of 432 occupations ..., clergy ranked 317, i.e. they ranked with unskilled labor, while their educational level ranks them with the top earning occupations" (Bailey & Bailey, 1976, p. 41). The issue for the clergy family is clearly "not a problem of money management, rather it is needing more money to manage" (Mace and Mace, 1980, p. 40). Other studies performed in the latter part of this century also show that money continues to be a major concern

(Douglas, 1965; Lavender, 1976; Noller, 1984; Alleman, 1987).

Insufficient finances are especially problematic for clergy wives for several reasons. First, because wives in general, continue to remain financially dependent on their husbands, the range of lifestyle open to wives is basically determined by their husbands' earnings and benefits (Finch, 1983, p. 21). This has been especially true for clergy wives. Douglas (1965, p. 231), for example, reported that in 1961 only 29% of clergy wives were employed outside of the home: 10% of clergy wives were working full-time; another 19% were working part-time. The vast majority, 71%, were full-time homemakers, wholly dependent on their husbands' incomes. In 1987, 65% of clergy wives reported being employed outside the home: 30% of clergy wives were now reporting full-time employment, while another 35% reported working part-time (Alleman, 1987, p. 78).

Second, Alleman's (1987) respondents were especially concerned with the adequacy of the pension program for clergy. Since pension is linked with salary, the pastor's job income significantly affects his wife's long term financial security, especially her standard of living in old age (Finch, 1983, p. 21). Alleman (1987) found that about 52% of clergymen and their wives considered the pensions to be inadequate.

A third problem involves the "car allowance." Many church members have the mistaken impression that a car allowance provides a pastor with additional income. In fact, however, a car allowance is an employee reimbursement, not part of a pastor's compensation package. Other persons, notably travelling salesmen, also receive such a reimbursement

for the miles they drive their car on business; this includes the cost of gas, oil, tires, etc., as well as a percentage of depreciation on the car and the insurance costs of driving the car. Pastors should receive a similar reimbursement. The current suggested figure, according to the IRS and AAA is \$.28/mile. Most pastors receive nowhere near that figure, so car allowances typically amount to a substantial net loss to clergy (Jud, Mills, & Burch, 1970, p. 79).

A fourth problem appears as a lifestyle problem, i.e. it must be remembered that ministers are professionals; their friends are probably also professionals who make much more money than they, even with similar educational requirements (Stout, 1982, p. 22). The 1987 World Almanac ranked male ministers last in earnings out of a list of 20 professional occupations, with an average weekly salary of \$341.00 (Alleman, 1987, p. 41). Ministers' families simply cannot afford a life-style similar to that of many of their friends. This is especially hard on the pastor's wife, who may have the primary responsibility for setting up social engagements and for entertaining on a small budget.

Finally, Marzofka (1987, p. 41) found that pastors' wives reported more financial stress than other wives, particularly in the areas of "regular medical, dental, and counseling care."

## FINDINGS

The responses provided in this study in 1990 also indicate that finances continue to be problematic for pastor's wives. First, when directly asked about their satisfaction with their financial situation,

only 47.5% reported being satisfied. Moreover, about two-thirds, 67%, reported needing to work in order to support a lifestyle appropriate for a minister's family, as they saw it. Additional factors, e.g. her age, her educational level, having children living at home and church size, were found to be unrelated to financial satisfaction or to feeling a need to work.

The scale of pastoral support in 1990 for the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ is shown in Table 9. The range of salaries was from \$12,750 for a full-time pastor with a church of less than 200 people to \$47,637 for a full-time pastor of a church with over 800 members (Commission on Church & Ministry, 1990). These figures include Social Security reimbursements and utilities. Considering a 65 hour work week, this amounts to a range of from \$4.09 per hour to \$15.27 per hour. Comparing these figures with the new financial guidelines published in Fall 1990 (see Table 9), it can be seen that many of these clergy would be considered very underpaid even by their own Conference.

As expected, it was also found that these wives continue to be quite dependent on their husbands for financial support. Although 70% of the wives reported regularly working outside the home, only about one-third of the wives were employed full time; the vast majority of clergy wives continue to be partially or wholly dependent on their husbands for financial support (see Table 10).

TABLE 9  
COMPARISON OF FINANCIAL GUIDELINES AND ACTUAL SALARY, 1991

<u>CHURCH SIZE</u>	<u>CURRENT SALARY*<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>RECOMMENDED SALARY*<sup>1</sup></u>
UNDER 200		
LOW	12,000	16,700-21,625
AVERAGE	17,505	20,040-26,710
HIGH	24,697	23,848-32,051
201-300 MEMBERS		
LOW	14,733	16,700-21,952
AVERAGE	18,771	20,641-27,475
HIGH	25,986	24,562-32,808
301-500 MEMBERS		
LOW	14,000	17,134-23,187
AVERAGE	22,264	21,520-28,851
HIGH	34,170	25,738-34,569
501-800 MEMBERS		
LOW	18,946	17,614-23,531
AVERAGE	27,405	22,017-29,461
HIGH	40,406	26,354-35,293
801 + MEMBERS		
LOW	22,900	19,200-27,134
AVERAGE	31,157	24,000-34,122
HIGH	44,137	28,728-40,844

\* Indicates a range of salaries, based on experience in ministry. The low figure represents the recommended salary for a minister with 0-5 years experience.

<sup>1</sup> Salary is defined here as *only* cash salary, exclusive of utilities allowance, housing allowance, auto allowance, social security reimbursements, etc.

TABLE 10  
COMPARISON OF EMPLOYMENT OF PASTORS' WIVES

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT</u>	<u>PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT</u>	<u>TOTAL EMPLOYED</u>	<u>NOT EMPLOYED</u>
1965 <sup>1</sup>	10%	19%	29%	71%
1987 <sup>2</sup>	30%	35%	65%	35%
1990	34%	36%	70%	30%*

\* includes 8% who report periodic employment

Sources: <sup>1</sup> Douglas, p. 230 <sup>2</sup> Alleman, p. 78

As health insurance was also identified as problematic for clergy wives, the UCC wives were also asked whether their husbands received health insurance coverage as a job benefit. While 93.3% of the congregations did provide health insurance as part of his compensation package, the plan provided was considered by some to be inadequate. The greatest concern evolved around the deductible that must be paid by the clergy couple. The deductible consists of \$300/person per year or \$1000/family per year. Although congregations are asked to pay \$400 of this, families are still left with a potential \$600 expense every year just to meet the deductible. Moreover, the deductible includes all medications, lab work, immunizations, hospitalizations, and emergency room care. Previously, the Conference health plan consisted of \$100/person deductible, and lab work and x-rays were exempted. Several of the wives complained about these new deductibles and the inclusion of lab work and x-rays. Some reported not getting medical care until they



were experiencing serious symptoms. One respondent commented on the poor health insurance plan and inadequate salary when she wrote:

I realize that some of our problems are caused by the demands of his job, others by the marriage relationship itself....Every month we scrounge to make ends meet. I have tried working part-time, which hasn't worked out. My children are plagued by frequent illness (too sick for Day Care and no relatives to help out)....I get burned out quickly when I try to do it all alone. I feel that, for the amount of education he has, and for the number of hours he puts in, he's being very underpaid. (#504)

In addition to inadequate medical insurance for physical ailments, the insurance coverage provided for emotional care and counseling, amounts to the legal state minimum, i.e. \$1000/family member per year. In addition, the coverage stipulates only individual counseling; marital and family counseling are not paid for at all, yet as will be seen later, there is an earnest need for these types of services.

To make matters more trying, only 31% of these women reported that their husbands received dental insurance as a benefit paid by the church.

Finally, while questions about the adequacy of the pension were not asked directly in this study, several women stated that because the pension was linked to a small salary, they were concerned about their ability to survive economically upon retirement. The amount of money the congregation pays toward the pension for their UCC pastor is figured as 12-14% of 130% of cash salary. Again, referring to Table 9, this can mean that as little as \$1872 a year is paid toward a pension.

## HOUSING

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In his book Ministers' Wives, Sweet (1983, p. 12) states that the main importance of Martin Luther's marriage was not the challenge to clerical celibacy, but rather the creation of the "Protestant parsonage, which would have so great an influence upon western attitudes toward family life". In addition, from its inception, the parsonage has been a place of refuge for travellers, a hospital for the sick, a bed and breakfast for visiting clergy and other academics, an orphanage, etc. This model changed little through time; well into the 20th century, the parsonage has continued to be seen as an extension of the church building, e.g., church meetings have been held in it, visitors were expected to be welcomed at all hours, etc. Obviously, the expectations accompanying the "free use of the house" have presented clergy wives with several difficulties.

First, because the parsonage is an example of "tied accommodation," i.e., the pastor must take whatever residence is given, many fundamental lifestyle decisions are taken away from the pastor and his wife (Finch, 1983, p. 61). For example, they may have little or nothing to say about the size of the house, the color of the rooms, the location of the house, or even the school district in which their children will be educated.

Second, a parsonage can be especially problematic because the employer/employee relationship can become entangled with the



landlord/tenant relationship (Finch, 1983, p. 59-60). The pastor and his wife become dependent on his employer for the very roof over their heads. The employer, then, can exercise a great deal of control over both the pastor and his spouse, even over issues that may not be directly related to their roles or jobs.

Third, the church may be reluctant to make necessary repairs or to redecorate. If they do, *they*, not the clergy couple, may choose the wallpaper, the color of the carpeting, the size of the water heater. In addition, the work may get done slowly, if at all. This is especially likely because "...laymen often put an exorbitant value on the free housing, equating it with their own..." (Jud, Mills, & Burch, 1970, p. 79). In these instances, less gets done, because they don't believe it needs doing.

Fourth, "her" housekeeping is visible to his employer, and is noticed, especially by "busy-bodies." Of course, this problem is exacerbated if the parsonage is located next door or across the street from the church. Traditionally, most parsonages were located very near the church buildings. For example, Douglas (1965, p. 230) reported that 38% of his respondents lived next to the church, with another 32% living less than 1/2 mile away.

Fifth, because the parsonage is often used for church meetings and other gatherings, her life is structured around his needs and the church's needs. Her home is always semi-public. Moreover, this creates more work for her because the house always must be clean and yet is constantly being messed up by unscheduled visits. This is especially

hard for women with young children and/or women who are employed outside the home. Some politicians have meetings at official residences, but their wives are not expected to have cleaned ahead of time.

Sixth, she is seen as "the wife" of the man living in that house. She loses her identity and takes on only the public role of the "pastor's wife."

Seventh, she loses her home if he dies or they separate (Goodling & Smith, 1983, p. 285).

Lastly, many pastors and their wives have found themselves homeless upon retirement; often the result has been that clergy couples have had to leave a community in which they may have a few friends and grown children. As religious organizations began to realize this, some churches have begun to offer a "housing allowance" in lieu of a parsonage. This allowance has usually been a cash benefit to be used toward the rental or purchase of a home. The parsonage has continued to be the predominant model for clergy housing, however, even as more clergy have come to prefer a housing allowance. In 1965, for example, Douglas (p. 230) reported that while 37% of clergy in his study preferred a housing allowance, only ten percent had one.

#### FINDINGS

Today, the housing situation for clergy wives appears very different. According to the results of this survey, the percentage of respondents living less than 1/2 mile from the church, but not next to it, has been halved; at the same time, the percentage of respondents living more than 1/2 mile from the church has almost doubled (see Table

11). These changes reflect the fact that many more clergy couples are now receiving a housing allowance and purchasing their own homes. When a clergy couple does purchase their own home, they are not likely to buy near the church building (see Table 12). Moreover, the move to a housing allowance has significantly increased. As can be seen in Table 13, this survey found that half of the respondents now have housing allowances.

TABLE 11  
COMPARISON OF HOUSING LOCATION

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NEXT TO CHURCH</u>	<u>LESS THAN 1/2 MILE AWAY</u>	<u>MORE THAN 1/2 MILEAWAY</u>
1965* Interdenominational	38.0%	32.0%	30.0%
1990 Wisconsin UCC	30.5%	16.2%	53.5%

\* Source: Douglas, p. 230

TABLE 12  
BIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF LOCATION OF HOME AND  
HOUSING ARRANGEMENT

<u>Location</u>	<u>Parsonage</u>	<u>Housing Allowance</u> (persons)	<u>Total</u>
Adjacent/Connected to church	32	0	32
Less than 1/2 mile away	8	9	17
1/2 to 2 miles away	7	20	27
More than 2 miles away	3	23	26
Total	50	52	102

$\alpha = >.001$

TABLE 13  
COMPARISON OF HOUSING TYPE

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>HAVE PARSONAGE</u>	<u>HAVE ALLOWANCE</u>
1965* Interdenominational	85%	10%
1990 Wisconsin UCC	49%	51%

\* Source: Douglas, p. 229

Respondents with housing allowances were also asked if the housing allowance was adequate; 63.6% of the respondents believed that the housing allowance their husband received was large enough to pay for all housing costs. In addition, 66% said they did not *need* to work to pay

for housing costs.

The respondents who continue to live in parsonages were also queried about their situations; many still seem to be experiencing difficulties. These wives were asked if repairs to the parsonage were completed promptly. In this study, as in the past, only 40% of those living in parsonages reported that repairs were *usually* prompt (see Table 14). In addition, the respondents were asked if redecorating was completed promptly and respectfully; just 34.8% (see Table 15) reported that redecorating was usually done in this manner. Several women shared additional comments. One, for example, wrote:

Being in a tenant/landlord relationship with the church is difficult when they don't maintain the property. The neighbors complain and we can't do anything before the church wants to. (#125)

Even when experiences are not negative, they may be difficult.

I prefer owning my own home and doing with it as I please even though the churches my husband has served that had a parsonage were considerate of our wishes. It's difficult to decorate by committee. (#304)

TABLE 14  
FREQUENCY OF REPAIRS TO PARSONAGE

<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Usually	20	40
Sometimes	25	50
Never	5	10

TABLE 16  
COMPARISON OF TYPE OF HOUSING PREFERRED

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PREFER PARSONAGE</u>	<u>PREFER ALLOWANCE</u>
1965* Interdenominational	63.0%	37.0%
1990 Wisconsin UCC	16.8%	78.5%

\* Source: Douglas, p. 230

TABLE 17  
REASONS FOR PREFERENCE OF HOUSING ALLOWANCE - 1990

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
EQUITY	51	60.0
CHOICE	31	36.5
INDEPENDENT FROM CHURCH	27	31.8
SECURITY FOR FUTURE	13	15.3
PRIVACY	12	14.1
KNOWING JOYS OF OWNERSHIP	8	9.4
OTHER	4	4.8

## IMPOVERISHMENT

### INTRODUCTION

By impoverishment is meant the inability of clergy wives and their husbands to find friends/support networks either inside or outside of the church. Much of this has to do with expectations on the part of others, e.g., that clergy couples do not need to have close friends (Warner & Carter, 1984, p. 126). An additional cause is grounded in a lack of consideration, on the part of parishioners, for the needs of the clergy family to spend time together. The result is intense loneliness for the pastor and his wife. In fact, no single type of issue elicited such emotionally charged remarks as those involving the lack of time together as husband and wife or as a family. No other issue appeared to be as painful.

Peplau & Perlman (1982, p. 8) have defined loneliness as: "1) resulting from deficiencies in a person's social relationships, 2) as a subjective experience, i.e., not synonymous with objective social isolation, and 3) as being unpleasant and distressing." Loneliness manifests itself in a number of ways. Affectively, it can be painful and frightening; it has been linked to depression, as well as a decreasing sense of happiness and satisfaction, and an increasing sense of pessimism and depression. Cognitively, lonely people are less able to focus their attention effectively, and they may be highly self-conscious. In addition, there are social and medical issues correlated with loneliness, e.g., eating and sleeping pattern disturbances, headaches, nausea,

alcohol consumption, and an increased vulnerability to physical illness, among others (Peplau & Perlman, 1982, p. 8).

Most people do not seek professional mental health or other human services for loneliness, however. Although there remains some stigma associated with getting professional emotional help, the primary reason that people do not break down is that "they routinely receive help from their social networks" (D'Augelli, 1983, p. 74). Numerous studies have shown the importance of companionship and social support in countering stress and improving life satisfaction (e.g. Rook, 1987; Klein, Tatone & Lindsey, 1989). Unfortunately, clergy wives have very limited opportunities to find social support and/or companionship networks and so are at a considerable risk not only to experience loneliness, but also to feel "stressed out" and less satisfied with their lives.

In addition, Rubenstein & Shaver (1982, p. 213) identified several different *types* of loneliness. The two types most applicable to clergy wives were alienation and dislocation. Alienation was defined as a feeling of being different, being misunderstood, not being needed, and having no close friends. Dislocation was defined as moving to a new geographic place. Both of these forms of loneliness were specifically addressed in this 1990 study.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW: FRIENDSHIPS

From the beginning of clergy marriages, clergy wives have been lonely. It is said, for example, that Archbishop Cramden's wife, one of the first clergy wives, lived locked and hidden away in her home and travelled in a trunk with airholes; a marriage to a clergyman was not to



be flaunted in public (Watt, 1943, pp. 8-16).

Likewise, in nineteenth century America, clergy wives were very lonely; the church *always* came first. "There was no doubt in the minds of most minister's wives about whom their husbands were beholden and betrothed to" (Sweet, 1983, p. 58). It was common, for example, for frontier preachers to leave for long periods of time to establish churches in new territories; itinerants, also, were almost never home. While the men were away doing the Lord's work, the women were left home alone, to take care of a store, or farm, or school, as well as numerous children (Denton, 1962, p. 25).

In the twentieth century, one of the common areas of conflict and struggle for clergy wives has also been having few close friends, especially in the church (Marzofka, 1987, pp. 40-41; Denton, 1962, pp. 63-5). In fact, Valeriano (1983, p. 67) found that 56% had no close friends in the church, 28% intentionally. Moreover, forming friendships outside the church has been difficult and has been correlated with working outside the home (Mace & Mace, 1980, p. 40).

These problems are common for wives of public figures, in general. One explanation lies in the concept Papanek (1973, p. 862) calls "vicarious contamination," that is, wives of public figures are treated with the same hostility or deference as their husbands. The clergy wife, like her husband, becomes a personification of the community conscience, and her presence reminds people of their imperfections (Denton, 1962, p. 64). Consequently, people are uncomfortable in her presence and she perceives that others keep her away. For the clergy wife, this

distancing from others can be devastating; not only does she feel alone, but she is driven further into mutual dependence on her husband, thereby hindering her development of other possible reference and support systems.

Wives of public figures also realize, however, that forming close friendships in the community can be problematic for them and their husbands. Fears of jealousy, resentments, manipulations, leadership problems, or the breaking of personal confidences are all issues wives of public figures have raised. These same issues hold for the clergy wife as well (Finch, 1983, p. 39).

A third factor in the inability of clergy wives to find meaningful friendships might involve her educational level. As has been noted previously, clergy wives are highly educated relative to the average American woman or man. Although these educational experiences have been helpful to these women in developing confidence and self-assurance, the same experiences can be seen as threatening to others (Denton, 1962, p. 133). In addition, their educational experiences may have altered their interests, so that they share little in common with the average church member (Denton, 1962, p. 55). They may also find that no one shares the experiences and convictions that they perceive to be significant (Denton, 1962, p. 63).

Finally, it might be thought that clergy wives could provide friendships for each other; this does not frequently happen, however. Denton (1962, p. 66) believes that competitiveness and doctrinal problems are complicating factors to building these friendships. One respondent

in this study wrote that the fear of breach of confidentiality was a problem in confiding even in other clergy wives; a sense of competitiveness between their husbands seems to be one reason for this problem (Steele, 1988, p. 16). The distance between churches of the same denomination also may contribute to it.

#### FINDINGS

A number of these issues were examined in this study. First, a possible relationship between her educational level and the similarity of her interests to those of other church women was examined. Each respondent was asked if her interests were the same as the interests of the other women in the church; slightly more than half, 58%, said that their interests were similar. When, however, these results were crosstabulated by education, no significant relationship was found (see Table 18); educational level did not significantly affect the similarity of interests with other church women.

TABLE 18  
BIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF SIMILARITY OF INTERESTS OF  
PASTORS' WIVES AND OTHER CHURCH WOMEN BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

<u>Type of Interests</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>Bachelors Degree</u>	<u>Masters Degree</u>	<u>More than Masters</u>	<u>Total</u>
Similar Interests	9	23	7	6	42
NOT similar interests	5	25	10	2	45
Total	14	48	17	8	87

Second, the issue of social support networks and friendships was analyzed. The answers to four questions are summarized in Table 19. Consistent with previous studies, about half of the wives in this study continue to report having few friends, especially in the church, even though feeling a need to have a trusted friend. In addition, it was found that such factors as the woman's age, her educational level, the size of the church, her participation in non-church activities, and her employment did not significantly affect these responses.

TABLE 19  
FRIENDSHIP CONCERNS OF UCC PASTORS' WIVES - 1990

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Need a trusted friend	52	51
Many acquaintances, few friends	75	73
Closest friends are in church	35	35
Few friends for support	49	47

Third, alienation explored by asking questions about having friends, about whether the wives felt understood by church people, and about whether their interests were the same as the interests of other women in their churches. The responses are shown in Table 20. This form of loneliness was present for a sizable minority of the wives. As seen previously, 73% of the wives reported having few friends; just over half, 51%, reported that needing a trusted friend was a concern for them. Furthermore, 41% believed that church people did not understand them and 42% believed that their interests were NOT the same as those of the other women in the church. For about half of the wives, therefore, alienation, seems to be a problem.

TABLE 20  
ALIENATION RESPONSES BY PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Many acquaintances, but few friends	75	73
Few friends for support	49	47
Church people do NOT understand me	42	41
Need a trusted friend	52	51
My interests are the same as women in the church	50	58

Fourth, dislocation was addressed by asking if moving was a concern; 35.9% of the respondents reported that moving was indeed a concern. One respondent wrote:

We no longer have the time, energy, or the opportunity for any social life beyond the 2 of us together. I miss having family close (they all reside in another state) and I miss having friends. (#215)

Finally, when queried about their relationship to other clergy wives, less than one fourth, 22.9%, replied that they most often socialized with other clergy and their families. This is consistent with Denton's (1962) findings that clergy wives do not often form friendships with other clergy wives.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW: TIME TOGETHER

In addition to having few friends or no friendship network readily available, pastors' wives rarely have family members available to help out or just to listen. First, clergy husbands are seldom home. A minister has many roles: administrator-organizer, pastor, preacher-

priest, teacher. A 60 to 70 hour work week can usually be assumed. A survey of pastor's wives showed that the mean waking hours that ministers spent at home was 26 hours per week, or less than 4 hrs. per waking day, including dressing, bathing, eating, and even sermon preparation, telephone calling, etc. (Mace & Mace, 1980, pp. 63-64).

Moreover, pastors infrequently take time off. Worse yet, they work evenings and almost every weekend; in addition, they must be constantly available and can be called away at any time. Not having enough time together is a major cause of complaint and concern among most clergy wives (Finch, 1983, p. 30-1; Mace and Mace, 1980, p. 40; Bailey & Bailey, 1979, p. 60). In fact, in a fairly recent cross-denominational survey, interviewers found that over half of the clergy wives they spoke with had not had even one day alone with their husbands in the last month; only 2% had as many as one a week (Stout, 1982, p. 23).

In addition, much of the pastor's job is stressful. He deals frequently with human suffering and tragedy; he undergoes a great deal of frustration from having much more to do than can ever be accomplished (Mace & Mace, 1980, p. 65). Consequently, even when clergymen are home bodily, they are often not home mentally and emotionally. "Seeing families and friends together and being left out because of unfair expectations, produces lonely and sometimes resentful wives" (Valeriano, 1981, p. 68). In addition, the clergy wife is left with no one to blow off steam with and tries to work this all out for herself, reading, writing, crying, and getting away alone (Douglas, 1965, p. 41). The end result for many women is simply profound loneliness.



Warner & Carter (1984, p. 126) not only agree that pastors' wives experience significantly more loneliness and emotional exhaustion (burnout) than other females, but they offer three possible factors that may affect this situation. First, it may be that the pastor becomes heavily committed and involved with his work, so the clergy wife assumes additional responsibilities resulting in emotional exhaustion for her. Because they each are so overly involved, they spend less and less time together; eventually they may begin to withdraw psychologically from each other and from friendships; burnout, therefore, subsequently leads to loneliness and less marital satisfaction.

A second possible factor may be congregational expectations that emphasize the couple's lack of need for friendships and/or demands concerning the degree to which they should be involved in church duties. Yet a third possible consideration may be that the individuals themselves (e.g., the pastor's wife and/or the pastor) may have personality dynamics which steer them to vocations that are characterized by over-involvement. This, in turn, leads to isolation. Regardless of the cause or causes, however, the consequence is clear: the clergy couple experiences a diminished quality of life (Warner & Carter, 1984, p. 130).

#### FINDINGS

The issue of time with their husbands and as families was examined in this study by asking several questions involving clergy wife concerns and needs. The results are shown in Table 21.

TABLE 21  
RESPONSES TO ISSUES OF TIME TOGETHER

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Evenings/Weekends especially hard	89	86.0
<u>Concerns:</u>		
Competing with congregational demand on husband	64	62.1
Lack of communication with husband	42	40.8
Emotional needs not met by husband	37	35.9
<u>Needs:</u>		
More time with husband	74	74.3
More time as a family	70	72.0

From these responses, it is clear that the time problems identified in earlier research continue to be problematic in 1990; moreover, it was found that these problems existed regardless of such independent factors as wife's age, having children, age of children, etc. From Table 21, it can be seen that the evening and weekend work was reported as being especially burdensome by the vast majority of the women. There is also considerable concern about having to compete with congregational demands on one's husband, however. In addition, 41% are experiencing communication problems with their husbands and over 1/3 have emotional needs that are not being met by their husbands. Finally, about three-fourths of these wives reported that they needed more time both with their husbands and as a family.



## EXPECTATIONS

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The wives of many professionals must deal with some of the same constraints as clergy wives encounter, such as long hours and constant work availability. However, one of the distinctions of the clergy wife's experience is the expectations by her husband, church, community, and herself with reference to filling a stereotyped idealized role involving participation in his work. In fact, there is probably no other occupation where there have been so many expectations of the wife's involvement (Noller, 1984, p. 196).

First, she has been idealized, i.e., an extensive, saintly list of personal characteristics has been ascribed to her, e.g. always neat and conservative in appearance, gracious, tactful, righteous, pleasant, friendly, possessing the finesse of a diplomat, always understanding, etc. She has been expected to be the ideal wife and mother, as well as a paraprofessional with specialized knowledge. She has been expected to be more spiritual than anyone else, except her husband, and somehow has been thought to have acquired superior knowledge of the Bible. This expectation has been especially precarious because it may have led to deception on her part, in an effort to avoid conflict with certain members of the congregation (Bailey & Bailey, 1979, p. 55). Additionally, her marriage has been expected to be a model of perfection (Noller, 1984, p. 189).

Further expectations have involved what she *should* do in her life

and for the church. Some have seen her as a co-pastor; others believe she should stay in the background, supporting him by transforming their home into a refuge for him; still others have seen her as an assistant to him, performing the jobs in the church that no one else is willing to do or is skilled in doing.

Historically, Sweet (1983) has identified four models of clergy wife involvement and has traced their development through the centuries. The first of these models is the "Companion" model, a pattern set by the first ministers' wives, e.g. Katie Luther and Idelette Calvin. This role required no public responsibility; the women assisted their husbands almost solely at home, supporting them psychologically, raising their children, managing the family finances, as well as offering hospitality to all who came to visit, nursing the sick and providing for orphans.

With the formation of the modern family and especially with the development of the "doctrine of spheres," however, an emerging notion of a distinct exceptional female identity began to emerge in the eighteenth century. Motherhood became a specialty; women's place was expanded to include the public arena; women's authority in many areas of life increased and was justified by the understanding that women were the custodians of morality (Sweet, 1983, p. 6). As the Great Awakening progressed, women became ever more involved with evangelism and conversions; pastors' wives, as well, left their role of "companion" and took on the more public, active role of "Assistant". These women, e.g. Lydia Finney, became the very "heart and soul of religious organizations in churches and towns" (Sweet, 1983, p. 6). Marrying a minister became

an avenue leading to authority, respect and power, because the church provided her advanced opportunities for leadership that were denied to her elsewhere.

Regrettably, the sphere doctrine also produced the third model for clergy wives: the "Sacrificer." These women, e.g. Peggy Dow, gave up their personal aspirations, and immersed themselves in their husbands' ministry. They asked little from him, either financially or economically, allowing him to work unimpeded by wife or children. Some did this willingly; many were forced into this circumstance due to economic and social conditions.

By the Second Great Awakening, women had become the foundation of religious groups, and "with remarkable strength and resourcefulness, they grappled with constraints and contradictions" in our social order (Sweet, 1983, p. 10). At the height of their involvement, the "Partner" model developed, with the clergy wife ministering *on her own*, e.g. Elizabeth Finney.

This remained the most common model until the late 19th and early 20th century when, for a number of reasons, e.g., sociosexual developments of the time, the professionalization of ministry, the secularization of the women's movement, the reassertion of male authority with the ending of itinerancy, etc. (Sweet, 1983, p. 10), a revised version of the "Companion" model reappeared and ministers' wives increasingly expected to remain in the background. This revised model continued through the 1950's.

By the late twentieth century, the "binding address" (Hunter, 1987,

pp. 210-213) of Evangelical Protestantism on American society had decisively eroded, and societal values were changing rapidly due to cultural pluralism. As the role of the wife in the American family was changing, so the role of the pastor's wife began to change, also. Douglas begins to notice this change in his 1965 study. He observed that ministers' wives no longer saw themselves as acting from a script. They wanted to be seen as persons, not extensions of their husbands; they wanted freedom from expectations (1965, pp. 182-183). Other studies support Douglas' findings (c.f., Hartley, 1978; Alleman, 1987). In fact, Hartley & Taylor (1977, p. 20) stated that "ministers' wives, acting as individuals rather than as an organized group have begun to replace the usual pattern of the ministry, i.e. the 2 person career, with the newer pattern of the 2 career marriage." So the role of the minister's wife became increasingly less germane to the profession of ministry and more women often married ministers "in spite of or in indifference to their calling" (Sweet, 1983, p. 11). Furthermore, the position began to be seen as potentially hazardous by women who aspired to advanced opportunities.

A second typology of clergy wife involvement has been devised by Finch (1983, p. 95-102). She illustrates three major ways that pastors' wives have provided free services to the church. First, they may have provided back-up services, e.g., answering the phone, taking messages, filing, typing, dealing with parishioners, unlocking the church, etc. These types of functions were placed on her primarily because she was available.

A second way they may have served the church is through "proxy-work," i.e., working instead of their husbands when their husbands were sick or unavailable. Examples of this type of involvement might include leading prayers at a meeting or even preaching in his absence. The third way she may have been involved is through directly working with her husband, under his direction. This wife has seen her role as being a "helpmeet," working actively alongside of him in "our" ministry.

Finch also provides several explanations as to why clergy wives have become incorporated into their husbands' work. First, she believes it has appeared natural for clergy wives to get involved as there has been choice about whether to opt in.

If a woman can envisage that it COULD be otherwise, but that she has chosen this pattern of her own volition, it makes it possible to believe that IN HER CASE it is quite 'natural' for her to be the junior partner....she can believe that she does it because her talents and inclinations are suited to these arrangements -- the fact that they also are the conventional arrangements is purely incidental (Finch, 1980, pp. 153-4).

Second, the clergy wife may have wanted to become involved in a vicarious career and may truly have enjoyed being "the wife of someone" (Finch, 1983, p. 163).

Third, there have been structural limitations on her ability to refuse to get involved in his job. The fact that he has worked at home, for example, has allowed for all sorts of possibilities for her involvement that would not have existed if he had worked in a separate office. If she was at home, could she have refused to answer the door, take messages, etc.? (Finch, 1980, p. 867).

Fourth, there have been ideological limitations on her ability to refuse to get involved in his job. The most obvious of these stems from the fact that most clergy wives have been Christians themselves. Because of their Christian beliefs, they probably have believed strongly in the importance of their husband's work; consequently they may have felt compelled to assist him.

#### FINDINGS

This study addressed the issue of "her" involvement in "his" job. First, the wives were asked how they would describe their involvement in their husbands' work. Table 22 shows that the largest group of wives consider their involvement to be more supportive than active. It was also found that their type of involvement was correlated with their educational level; almost all of those with Masters' degrees were "background" workers and no "teamworkers" were found with educational levels beyond the Masters (see Table 23).

TABLE 22  
TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT - UCC PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
More a Team worker	27	27
Between the models	26	26
More in the background	45	45



TABLE 23  
BIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT BY EDUCATION

<u>Type of Involvement</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>Bachelors Degree</u>	<u>Masters Degree</u>	<u>More than Masters</u>	<u>Totals</u>
	(number of persons)				
Background Worker	4	20	11	3	38
Between the Groups	5	7	4	4	20
Teamworker	5	19	1	0	25
Total	14	46	16	7	83

$\alpha = .02$

Second, the women were asked what motivates them to be involved in their husbands' ministry. The results are shown in Table 24; the three top motivations were contributing through useful work, belief in church's purposes, and call to Christian service. Table 25 illustrates the responses as to which motivation was the *single best* motivation for their involvement. The answers remain the same, although the order of their importance changes slightly.

TABLE 24  
PRIMARY MOTIVATIONS FOR INVOLVEMENT

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Contribute through useful work	87	83.7
Belief in church's purpose	86	82.7
Called to Christian service	73	70.2
Congregation expects it	27	26.0
Husband expects it	21	20.2
No one else is willing/trained	19	18.3
Called to be a pastor's wife	18	17.3
Other	17	16.3

TABLE 25  
SINGLE BEST MOTIVATION FOR INVOLVEMENT

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Belief in church's purpose	29	27.9
Called to Christian service	25	24.0
Contribute through useful work	22	21.2
Called to be a pastor's wife	7	6.7
Husband expects it	4	3.8
Congregation expects it	3	2.9
No one else is willing/trained	3	2.9
Other/No answer	<u>11</u>	<u>10.6</u>
TOTAL	105	100.0

Third, the women were asked about the extent to which they believe they should be involved in their husbands' work. Table 26 reflects these responses and compares them, where applicable, with findings from other studies; there were no significant relationships found with such independent variables as extent of involvement in his job, outside



employment, having preschool children, etc.

TABLE 26  
COMPARISON OF ROLE RESPONSIBILITY

<u>Issue</u>	<u>UCC</u>	<u>NAE</u>	<u>DOUGLAS</u>
Pastor's wife has same responsibilities as other laywomen	53%		65%
Pastor's wife's role is no different than that of most wives	26%	23%	

Sources: Crow, 1990, p. 7; Douglas, 1965, p. 236

Fourth, the wives were asked about certain expectations they may have been feeling. The results are in Table 27, which also offers a comparison, where applicable, with previous studies. Most (68.7%) agreed that their marriages were expected to be ideal. In addition, although few women (19%) felt they were being treated as an assistant pastor, almost half of them said that it was hard to be oneself as the "pastor's wife." This is a much higher figure than was found in the 1990 NAE survey; it is also a substantially higher percentage than found in either Alleman's (1987) study or Douglas' (1965). This may, in part, be due to the fact that only one denomination, the UCC, was studied and in only one state, Wisconsin.

In addition, an interesting correlation was found between the women's ages and whether they found it hard to be themselves as pastors' wives (see Table 28). The women in their 40's, more often than any other age group, reported having difficulty being themselves as the pastor's wife; those in their 50's were the least likely to report this problem.

This finding might be due to an age effect, related somehow to the life cycle, or to a cohort effect, in that these women might be the most likely to find it hard to be themselves in any context, or it might be due to a period effect from sociocultural and historical events that influenced their experiences and attitudes.

TABLE 27  
EXPECTATIONS REPORTED BY PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Issues</u>	<u>UCC</u>	<u>NAE</u>	<u>1965</u>
Treated as assistant pastor	19%	21%	
Hard to be yourself	49%	23%	39%
Expected to have ideal marriage	69%		

Sources: Crow, 1990, p. 7; Douglas, 1965, p. 236

TABLE 28  
BIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF "HARD TO BE YOURSELF" BY AGE

<u>Category</u>	<u>31-40</u>	<u>41-50</u>	<u>51-60</u>	<u>Total</u>
Hard to be Yourself	15	20	10	45
NOT hard to be Yourself	13	12	23	48
Total	28	32	33	93

$\alpha = .03$

Fifth, the women were asked how they handle complaints about themselves. Table 29 illustrates how pastors' wives reported handling complaints from parishioners. As can be seen, the largest group of them have never had a complaint shared directly with them. Those who have

heard complaints, ignore them or talk it out. A few become angry or hurt.

TABLE 29  
WAYS PASTORS' WIVES HANDLE COMPLAINTS ABOUT THEMSELVES

<u>Option</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Have not heard any	47	44.8
Ignores the complaint	17	16.2
Talks to complainant	14	13.3
Get mad/ defend self	9	8.6
Feel hurt/withdraw	9	8.6
Other/no answer	18	17.1

Sixth, the women were asked about their actual involvement in the church. It was found that the degree of involvement for pastors' wives may have dramatically changed since Douglas' study. In Douglas' interdenominational study in 1965, 87% of the wives reported performing more than five church-related activities regularly, while in this study of the Wisconsin UCC in 1990, 84.2% reported performing five or less. Tables 30 and 31 illustrate the responses the wives gave. These answers do not reflect any major over-involvement with their husbands' jobs; active laywomen would probably be willing to be involved to the same extent and in the same ways as are the majority of the pastors' wives. The number of actual tasks performed by each of the women was crosstabulated with their type of involvement in their husbands' jobs. As would be expected, those who thought of themselves as "teamworkers"

actually did more for the church than did those with alternative images of their involvement (see Table 32). They also were more likely to believe that their responsibilities were different from those of other laywomen (see Table 33).

TABLE 30  
ACTUAL INVOLVEMENT IN CHURCH

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Attend women's groups	77	73.3
Help in church kitchen	61	58.1
Sing in choir	60	57.1
Teach Sunday School	51	48.6
Call on sick/shut-ins	25	23.8
Direct choir	20	19.0
Officer of woman's group	20	19.0
Play piano/organ	19	18.1
Officer of other committee	17	16.2
Lead devotional services	13	12.4
Lead adult Bible study	12	11.4
Counseling	11	10.5
Paid staff of church	8	7.6
Sunday School superintendent	7	6.7
Christian Ed director	2	1.9
Preach	1	1.0
Other	33	31.4

TABLE 31  
NUMBER OF CHURCH TASKS PERFORMED BY PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Number of Tasks</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0 - 1	10	9.5
2 - 3	37	35.2
4 - 5	31	29.5
More than 5	27	25.7

TABLE 32  
BIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF CHURCH TASKS AND TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT

<u>Number of Tasks</u>	<u>Involvement Model</u>			<u>Total</u>
	<u>Background</u>	<u>Between</u>	<u>Teamworker</u>	
0 - 1	6	3	0	9
2 - 3	22	8	8	38
4 - 5	11	9	9	29
More than 5	6	6	14	26
Total	45	26	31	102

$\alpha = < .01$

TABLE 33  
BIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF CHURCH TASKS AND  
TYPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

<u>Number of Tasks</u>	<u>Same Responsibility</u>	<u>Different</u>	<u>Total</u>
0 - 1	2	8	10
2 - 3	12	25	37
4 - 5	16	15	31
More than 5	19	8	27
Total	49	56	105

$\alpha = .015$

Finally, additional written comments were primarily positive. For example:

I feel the pastor and spouse set the tone themselves. My husband supports my own career and individuality and so we don't allow the congregation to apply pressure. (#103)

My mother-in-law is also a pastor's wife. Things are much better for me than they were for her in terms of expectations - from the congregation. (#105)

It appears from these results that the wives are very aware of congregational expectations, but are not exceptionally affected by them. This is congruent with Alleman's (1987, p. 131) findings that the pressure to conform to the traditional role was seen as quite extensive, yet the wives felt they had considerable freedom to be themselves. Alleman surmised that these women have a very fundamental understanding of themselves as individuals. One alternative explanation may be that they feel freedom from most church members, but pressures come from a very vocal minority. One woman wrote:

Overall I feel that by & large the most vocal & persuasive church members haven't any knowledge about what a church is & vent their misguided concern toward the minister -- whether he/she has any control or not -- It's frustrating being at the whim of 200 individuals. (#315)

A second alternative answer may be that many of the women receive a great deal of support from their husbands. This is not without historical precedent. In the late nineteenth century, for example, several pastors informed their congregations that their wives were not part of a two-for-the-price-of-one deal (Sweet, 1983, pp. 223-4). Denton

(1962, p. 45) also noted that some husbands were leading a movement against the "wife-as-assistant-pastor" model.

In this study the wives were asked how their husbands handled complaints about the "the pastor's wife"; the largest group, 46% of the respondents, had received no complaints (see Table 34). Of those who do get complaints, 43% would defend their wives; another 14% ignore the complaint.

TABLE 34  
WAYS PASTORS HANDLE COMPLAINTS ABOUT THEIR WIVES

<u>Option</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
HAVE NOT HAD ANY	44	46
DEFENDS HER	22	23
IGNORES THE COMPLAINT	7	7
SENDS THEM TO HER	6	6
OTHER	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>
TOTAL	95	99

TRIANGULATION

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Another issue that may confront clergy wives is what Whybrew has called "triangulation" (Whybrew, 1984). The usage of this term should not be confused with the more common sociological usage of the same term as used by Denzin, etc. Triangulation, as defined by Whybrew, is a process whereby a third party is brought into a dyadic relationship, thus forming a triad. Sometimes the presence of a third party helps to bring balance back to the original dyad; on the other hand, the presence of a third party may mask or aggravate the problems of the original dyad.

There are several ways triangulation can be a problem for the pastor's wife. First, if the congregation and the pastor are experiencing stress, there are ways both the church and the pastor attempt to pull the clergy wife in between them. For example, he may attempt to get her to take his side against the congregation, or church members may approach her with his shortcomings. The worst effect of this form of triangulation "is the way it masks the problems which need to be addressed and confuses them when they do surface" (Whybrew, 1984 p. 22).

Second, when the clergy couple is experiencing stress, there are ways both of them may try to pull the congregation in between them. This may happen if the clergy couple is not taking the time to actively work at their marriage, or it may happen if the church does not allow the pastor and his wife to have personal shortcomings and expects them to have an ideal marriage. Either way the result may be that either or both members of the clergy couple may become over-involved in the work



of the church in an attempt to avoid facing the marital problems at home.

Third, there are ways both the pastor's wife and the congregation pull the pastor in between them when they are experiencing stress. As was discussed earlier in the section on "expectations," a very common complaint of clergy wives is that they are treated as a role, not a person. In this role she may find many congregational expectations of what she should do and how she should behave. She may have trouble finding close friendships for support, she may not be accepted in the policy making areas of the church, and she may be kept from being a full member so as not to allow too much power in one family. The clergy wife may want to express herself as an individual, yet the congregation may have trouble accepting her individuality. The result is stress for everyone. Refusal to accept the pastor's wife for who she is may encourage her to attempt to get her husband to side with her against the church. Unfortunately, this makes him more of a power *against* the church than *with* the church. In addition, there is less integrity in the clergy couple's marriage because they will not be working at their relationship.

#### FINDINGS

A limited triadic analysis was utilized in this study in an attempt to ascertain if triangulation was a problem for clergy wives. First, although it was deemed that a questionnaire could not adequately discern whether the clergy wife was being triangulated by her husband, a questionnaire could discover if members of the congregation were attempting to do so by complaining to her about him. Consequently, each

respondent was asked how she handled complaints about her husband (see Table 35). One third of the wives reported not receiving any complaints about their husbands; thus it appears as if congregations may be attempting to triangulate the other two-thirds. However, another 20% either ignore the complaint or send the complainant to their husband; another 3% did not answer. Just under 1/2 of the clergy wives, 43%, do actually get triangulated in between their husbands and some members of the congregation.

TABLE 35  
WAYS PASTORS' WIVES HANDLE COMPLAINTS ABOUT THEIR HUSBANDS

<u>Option</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
HAVE NOT HAD ANY	35	33.3
IGNORE THE COMPLAINT	11	10.5
SEND THEM TO HIM	9	8.6
NO ANSWER	3	<u>2.9</u>
		55.3
TALK TO THE COMPLAINANT	14	13.3*
TALK TO HUSBAND	14	13.3*
GET MAD AND DEFEND HIM	12	11.4*
FEEL HURT/WITHDRAW	6	5.7*
OTHER	9	10.5*

\* Some of these respondents gave more than one answer

Second, questions were asked in an effort to test for triangulation of the church between the clergy couple. The respondents were asked concerned the congregation's expectations of their marriage. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents reported that they felt that their marriages were expected to be ideal. This is a very dangerous situation for clergy couples, who disagree and argue as much as any other couple. If the

congregation expects saints instead of sinners, the clergy couple may begin to mask their problems or pretend their problems do not exist, in order to avoid church conflict. Another method of dealing with this has been to become over-involved with children or to have extra-marital affairs. These are all ways of avoiding strong feelings in the marriage because of the congregation's refusal to allow strong feelings to exist. Given this dilemma, the clergy couple do not work on the real marital concerns they are experiencing. Furthermore, if congregational expectations are very strong, the clergy couple may feel that they cannot seek or use professional help/support because they are afraid the congregation might find out.

Third, the questionnaire tried to discern if the minister was being triangulated between his wife and the church. The women were asked if it was hard for them to be themselves as pastors' wives and if they had the support of their husbands to be themselves. Although these responses already have been discussed in the section on "expectations," a brief summary will be provided here. Basically, about half of the respondents felt that it was hard for them to be themselves (see Table 27). In addition, most of them reported having the support of their husbands to be themselves in the face of congregational expectations; only about a third of the husbands have not sided with their wives on this issue.

## INTRUSION

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Goffman (1959) has emphasized the importance of maintaining at least two separate regions of behavior: frontstage and backstage. The value of conserving a backstage area lies primarily in its benefit for relaxation and renewal. The backstage is the place where "the performer can relax; he can drop his front, forgo speaking his lines, and step out of character" (p. 112). It serves as a buffer between a person's self and the demands that surround her/him (p. 114).

This differentiation of front and backstage, i.e., of work roles from family roles, was a major feature of industrialization. There are instances, however, such as some family firms and executives of large companies, for whom work and family life are still associated "to a degree reminiscent of pre-industrial revolution times" (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1965, p. 388). The clergy family conceivably represents the most extreme example. Many parish ministers and their wives are encountering enormous strains at this intersection between their private identities and their public roles (Arnott, 1971, p. 155). Lee & Balswick (1989, p. 60) have used the term "intrusion" to refer to this lack of privacy arising from problems of role expectations.

One reason for the lack of privacy clergy families experience may be that clergymen and their wives are understood as occupying a "total, exemplary status" (Mills, 1969) in which they cannot effectually move beyond their church-defined roles at any time. Some people may have

difficulty allowing "exalted persons," including clergy and their wives, to appear in any informal context (Goffman, 1959, p. 114). They do not expect their minister or his wife to be dressed like ordinary people, to behave like ordinary people, to speak like ordinary people. This makes relaxing very difficult for the clergy couple. It may even force clergy and their wives to keep up a false front. This can be especially dangerous as "one can become so habituated to one's front region activity (and character) that ...One may feel obligated when backstage, to act out of character in a familiar fashion and this can come to be more of a pose than the performance from which it was meant to provide relaxation" (Goffman, 1959, p.134). The same high expectations may be placed on the pastor's children, as well.

A second possibility involves the pastor's home. His home is semi-public, since his work is performed there. Because of this, the home basically becomes part of the public domain, both structurally and experientially. For clergy the distinction between home and work becomes obfuscated, as "the character of the relationship between work and non-work, between work space and non-work space, between work activities and non-work activities are changed" (Finch, 1983, p.53). The clergy wife experiences similar pressures to those of her husband: is the house her home, or is the house the church?

A third complication also involves the pastor's house, but becomes especially problematic if the clergy house is a parsonage. The parsonage is the church's property; meetings may be held there, visits by parishioners may be frequent. In this way, parsonage living structurally

denies a backstage area to pastors and their families. This complicates much for the clergy family. One woman commented:

One of my main concerns is privacy, both for me and my family. The ministers' family is very public -- not unlike a politician. (#314)

Finally, because some parishioners insist on visiting the pastor's family frequently, especially when the clergy family has time off together, many clergy families feel a need to leave town in order to relax; living on a meager budget, however, may prohibit them from doing so. The result is that they get no real vacation or free time together at all.

Few empirical studies have addressed this issue in detail. Douglas (1965) found that most clergy wives believed that family privacy was respected. Noller (1984, p. 189), on the other hand, found that the lack of privacy was a significant issue for clergy wives.

#### FINDINGS

In this study, respondents were asked if parishioners intrude on their vacation/free time; 64.4% said they do. In addition, the size of the church's membership was found to be related to this tendency to intrude (see Table 3<sup>6</sup>8). Specifically, clergy wives from medium sized churches were most likely to report intrusion on their vacation and free time, while wives from large churches were the most likely NOT to report intrusion. ??

Furthermore, when asked about their preference in housing, 14.1% of the respondents reported preferring a housing allowance because they

wanted privacy (the sample was too small to crosstabulate this housing preference with reported intrusion, however).

Finally, when asked about the relationship between the congregation and the clergy children, about one third (35.9%) of the clergy wives with children reported having to act as a buffer between the congregation and their children.

TABLE 36  
BIVARIATE ANALYSIS BETWEEN INTUSION AND CHURCH SIZE

<u>Category</u>	<u>Under 200</u>	<u>200-599</u>	<u>600 +</u>	<u>Total</u>
People intrude	6	43	16	65
People do NOT	12	17	8	37
Total	18	60	24	102

$\alpha = .015$



## DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD TASKS

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Hartley (1978) identified one additional problematic area in the clergy marriage, i.e. the sharing of household tasks. In fact, she found that only 18% of the couples were enthusiastic about their sharing of housework. This is not surprising, since most studies regarding the division of labor in the home show that couples rate this area of their marriages very low (Hartley, 1978, p. 182).

Finch (1983), however, has stated that because clergy work is based at home and the clergy husbands could do their work anytime, it becomes easier for them to help out with domestic tasks. She found, however, that the women would not ask the men to help, and the men did not volunteer. In addition, because the men were working at home, the wives felt obligated to provide a quiet, clean environment in which they could work. The result was that flexible hours and home-based work actually led to a more rigid sexual division of labor (Finch, 1983, p. 29).

### FINDINGS

This study also confronted the issue of the household division of labor in the clergy marriage. Three questions were related to the household division of labor. The first asked which of a series of household jobs the husbands frequently perform. The results can be seen in Table 39. While most of the men regularly performed traditional male tasks, like mowing the lawn, over one-third of them regularly cared



for and transported their children. In addition, about a third of the clergy husbands regularly do the grocery shopping and help with cooking and vacuuming or other floor care.

TABLE 37  
HOUSEHOLD TASKS PERFORMED REGULARLY BY HUSBAND

<u>Task</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Take out garbage	79	79
Mow lawn	75	75
Care for children	36	36
Transport children	36	36
Grocery shop	34	34
Cook	34	34
Vacuum/floor care	31	31
Laundry	28	28
Dust/straighten up	21	21
Clean bathroom	20	20

Second, the wives were asked if they were satisfied with the division of labor in their households between their husbands and themselves; 91% answered that they were satisfied. Finally, they were asked about how often they and their husbands had argued/disagreed over the household division of labor in the past month. The results are shown in Table 40. Whether she asks him to help or he volunteers, it appears that in this sample, there exists a much more relaxed sexual division of labor than has previously been noted, even considering the effects of other variables, such as age, wife's employment, etc.

TABLE 38  
DISAGREEMENTS OVER HOUSEHOLD DIVISION OF LABOR

<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Never	61	58.7
Once or twice	38	36.5
Often	<u>5</u>	<u>4.8</u>
TOTAL	104	100.0

### SPIRITUALITY

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

One final issue raised by a few of the women concerned their spirituality, or the degree to which their husbands could fill their personal needs for a pastor. I found little research in this area. Morgan & Morgan (1980) stated that about half of the priests' wives in their sample reported that their husbands could not minister to their spiritual needs. Troost (1978) also referred to the pastors' family as "a people without a pastor."

#### FINDINGS

This was not an issue that was anticipated to be problematic for these women during the planning of this survey, so no questions about it were asked. However, several women did state that their needs were not met by their husband/pastor. One respondent wrote:

One issue you didn't raise concerns how a clergy wife gets her primary spiritual direction (in the form of sermons) from her husband. My husband and I talk a lot about his sermons, but it is [sic] odd to listen to your husband week after week publically addressing issues of such significance. (#121)

The lack of studies in this area reflects the lack of studies performed in the area of spirituality, in general, at least until recently. This is yet one more specific area of spirituality research that can provide future opportunities.

CHAPTER 4  
JOYS AND OPPORTUNITIES

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many pages of this study have been devoted to identifying the problem areas for clergy wives. This should not be construed as meaning, however, that life with a clergyman brings only misfortune. Actually, the contrary seems to be quite true; most clergy wives have reported being very satisfied with their marriages and their relationships to their husbands' jobs (Crow, 1990; Alleman, 1987; Douglas, 1965; Denton, 1962).

Denton (1962) has identified several joys and opportunities a woman might find if she is married to the pastor. One opportunity might be in finding self-fulfillment, i.e., being able to use and develop one's abilities in everyday life (Denton, 1962, p. 70). The work of the church surely can provide opportunities for people with a wide range of abilities and interests. A second reward mentioned was finding meaning in one's life (Denton, 1962, p. 69), "being part of something I believe in" and playing a vital part in others' lives.

Third, one might gain a sense of recognition for doing good work (Denton, p. 122). This can be a simple expression of appreciation or perhaps a gift. Fourth, one probably gains a place of respect in the church and the community, albeit often vicariously through one's husband.

Fifth, one might gain the knowledge that one has helped other people to find a better way of life. Sixth, being married to the

minister might afford one the opportunity to learn more than the average church-goer about the Christian faith. Finally, one probably has the opportunity to meet a wider range of people than one would have normally. In addition, the minister is a professional, and many of his friends will also be professionals. Even if they cannot afford to live as other professionals, the minister's family at least has the status of a professional family. This, in itself, provides satisfactions and many opportunities unavailable to others.

For all these reasons, being a minister's wife is often reported as providing a satisfying life; in addition, ministers' wives report their marriages to be doing very well, especially in the areas of enthusiasm with love, affection and sexual satisfaction (Hartley, 1978, p. 182).

#### FINDINGS

In this study, the clergy wives were asked what they thought were the top three joys/opportunities of being a pastors' wife. Table 41 illustrates their responses. The three primary joys listed were knowing a wide range of people, being of service to others, and personal growth/fulfillment.

In addition, the women were asked about the condition of their marriages; 91.4% reported that their marriages were "healthy and compatible." Considering the concerns many of the wives shared earlier regarding, for example, finances, loneliness, etc., there seems to be some inconsistency in their answers.

TABLE 39  
JOYS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF PASTORS' WIVES

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Know wide range of people	47	48.5
Being of service to others	42	43.3
Personal growth/fulfillment	32	33.0
Learn more about faith	24	24.7
Having a place of respect	17	17.5
Showing people a better way of life	5	5.2
Other	11	11.3

One explanation may be that the wives are supplying the socially desirable answer to this question; a second possibility is that although they experience some anger and pain at times, overall they feel their marriages are good. A third explanation might be that they deny the depth of their troubles, possibly because of the high expectations that congregations have placed on the pastor's wife's marriage. A fourth possibility may be that they believe that their marriages are healthy and blame his job or his congregation for problems in their lives. Whatever the reason, studies have consistently shown the same results: pastors' wives claim that their marriages are healthy and compatible.

Finally, it should also be noted that many of the written comments from this survey were very positive:

I have been very happy in my years as a minister's wife. It took me a few years to realize I did not have to do all and could live my life as any other women. I have learned to be my own person and do those things which will make me happy and fulfilling. (#130)

The greatest pressure is self-induced. Couples need to recognize that and plan free time together, communicate

honestly and fairly about feelings and expectations. The pastors' wife leads a highly disciplined and rich and purposeful life. However, she needs a life of her own, outside the church to make money and to occupy her when the children leave. (#115)



CHAPTER 5  
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY

Congruent with previous research, this study has identified five specific problem areas for clergy wives: inadequate finances, loneliness, misguided expectations, intrusion, and tired accommodation. In addition, several joys or opportunities have also been distinguished: knowing a wide range of people, being of service to others, personal growth and fulfillment, learning about faith, and having a place of respect in the community. Also consistent with previous research, this study has found that most clergy marriages seem to be healthy and compatible, even regarding the shared performance of household tasks, which previously had been considered a weakness. A sizable minority of wives, however, are still reporting communication problems in their marriages, and about one-third reported not having their emotional needs met by their husbands.

There are also stresses associated with the status and role of "pastor's wife." About a third of the women reported being close to burnout; furthermore, about half (43%) would like help overcoming discouragement, and 60% need help for coping with stress.

When the five problem areas were examined individually, it was found that although several of the same issues remain today, there have been some notable differences from earlier studies.

## Finances

This study has found that financial pressures for clergy wives remain strong, with about half of the respondents reporting dissatisfaction with their husbands' salaries. Even according to the 1991 Wisconsin Conference Guidelines, most clergy were exceptionally underpaid. In addition, the lack of adequate medical, dental, and counseling insurance remain problems for many.

## Impoverishment of Friendships

The inability to form friendships in the church continues to be a problem. About half of the pastors' wives now have non-church friends, possibly because most of the wives (70%) are employed outside of the home and 67.3% are involved in non-church activities. For the other half of the wives, however, there is still an absence of much needed social support.

Moreover, friendships with the most likely group to understand clergy wives, other clergy wives, do not easily form; fear of a breach of confidentiality is considered one of the principal reasons behind this, although competition and spatial distance may also be an issue. In addition, "alienation" was found to be a problem for about half of the wives. This was not due to any singular variable, however; women from all ages and family circumstances reported the problem. Furthermore, "dislocation" was reported by slightly more than one-third of the wives. Finally, it was thought that higher education levels altered one's interests; consequently it was hypothesized that these women might have

interests dissimilar to those of other church women, creating difficulties building friendships. This hypothesis was not supported.

#### Impoverishment of Time Together

Time together as husband and wife and as a family continues to be extremely problematic for about 75% of the pastors' wives; additionally, two-thirds of the respondents expressed concern about having to compete with the church for their husband's time. Marital satisfaction, however, remains high, with 91.4% reporting healthy, compatible marriages. Since a sizable minority of the women profess some serious concerns, however, this figure may be artificially inflated due to social desirability, e.g. 68.7% experience congregational pressure to have an ideal marriage.

#### Triangulation

Triangulation of the wife in minister-church issues was seen as problematic for about half of the wives. In addition, about half of the wives related that the church regularly came between them and their husbands; constant availability and other time commitments were found to be the principal problem. This may indicate an attempt on the part of the clergy couple to avoid facing marital problems by bringing the congregation between them.

#### Intrusion

Intrusion by church members on vacation time or other time off was reported by 2/3 of the wives; this was especially problematic in medium-

sized churches (200-599 members).

#### Expectations and Church Roles

Exceptional expectations from congregations continue; in fact, 83% of the women believe that their role is different than that of most wives. About half of the wives reported that it was hard for them to be themselves; this was especially true for wives in their forties. As noted, it may be that these results are being confounded by an age or a cohort effect, including the tensions associated with adolescent children.

Overall, this sample appeared better equipped to handle congregational expectations. For example, almost half (44.8%) reported receiving no complaints about themselves; of those who did get complaints, the largest group, 35%, simply ignored them. This is congruent with Alleman's (1987) findings. In addition, the women seem to be supported by their husbands with reference to congregational expectations. The wives reported that 46% of the pastors get no complaints about their wives, while 43% of those who do get complaints defend their wives and another 14% ignore the complaint.

One expectation that was problematic to about 1/3 (35.9%) of the clergy wives with children was having to be a buffer between the congregation and their children. Apparently, some congregations still have rather rigid expectations of PK's (pastor's kids) and this can be especially difficult for their mothers.

The primary expectation for a clergy wife has historically

concerned her involvement in his job. Slightly less than half of the women (45%) reported being involved in their husbands' jobs in a supportive background way; 27% considered themselves "teamworkers" with him. Again, about half of the wives believe that they have only the same responsibilities as other active laity. Regardless of their approach, the women were primarily motivated by a belief in the purposes of the church, a call to Christian service and/or a desire to contribute through useful work. These motivations are not significantly different than those found in Douglas' (1965, p. 232) study 25 years ago.

A dramatic change may have taken place, however, in the actual involvement of the wives in the work of the church. While in Douglas' interdenominational study in 1965, 87% of the wives reported performing five or more church activities regularly, in this UCC study in 1990 84.2% reported performing five or less. The overall involvement of the pastor's wife in the UCC in Wisconsin today is not greatly different from that of active laywomen.

### Housing

The housing situation for pastors has also shown substantial changes. Half (51%) of the respondents now have housing allowances. An even greater percentage prefers one (78.5%). In fact, the preference for a housing allowance, has doubled since 1965. Furthermore, about two-thirds of the wives whose husbands receive housing allowances report that the allowance is large enough to pay for all housing costs and the wives did not need to work to pay for housing.

This means that problems of repairs and redecorating are now outside of the congregation's control; it also means that the pastor's home is not likely to be located near the church (83% of the clergy-owned homes are over half a mile away from the church building and 44% are over two miles away). This allows the couple some protection from intrusion, as well as providing the clergy wife a geographical boundary from being imposed on to help out. Moreover, owning a home also allows the couple to build equity, the number one reason for preferring a housing allowance to church-owned housing.

For those continuing to live in a parsonage, however, the same problems continue to exist. Parsonages are still not being maintained promptly or redecorated respectfully and promptly; in fact, only about 40% of the wives in parsonages reported that redecorating and repairs were *usually* performed promptly.

## CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was twofold: 1) to determine how the pastor's job is affecting his wife's life in 1990, and 2) to determine how she was adapting to this unique and traditionally conservative role. Although his job continues to offer her some unique joys and opportunities, these same rewards are increasingly available to her in other areas of her life, especially through outside employment. Additionally, his job continues to adversely affect her life financially, through the lack of social support systems, through the frequent absence of a husband and father from family activities, and



through persons intruding into the backstage areas of her life. Overall, many clergy wives still report needing help with discouragement (43%) and stress (60%).

In addition, this study has found that pastors' wives have continued to find new ways to adapt to their unique social situations; the majority are no longer traditional stereotypical pastor's wives. As early as 1965, Douglas began noting a trend in younger women toward more individuality among pastors' wives. Over a decade later, Hartley (1978, p. 189) affirmed that conclusion. In addition, she predicted that clergy marriages would remain strong and that the move toward individualism would enhance rather than threaten these marriages. With the passing of yet another decade, Alleman (1987, p. 142) likewise found that pastors' wives, at least within three mainline denominations, were becoming somewhat less involved and that many now believed that they should be responsible for only the same amount of church work as would be expected from other active laity.

The results of this study in 1990, with yet a fourth mainline denomination, also show that these trends toward individuality have continued. The old stereotype of the pastor's wife as a plain, saintly, maternal soul who placed her husband's work above all else in life continues to wane. This is not due to a cohort effect, however, but to a period effect. From these data, it seems that major changes in the structural and ideological limits that previously bound her to his job may have occurred, especially during the last quarter century. Those most likely to have affected the role of women, generally, and the role



of pastor's wife, as well, include the institutionalization of the ideas of the women's movement, increasing financial independence for women, higher educational levels for clergy wives, the influx of women into the ministry with the subsequent arrival of the "pastor's husband," and the continuing professionalization of the ministry, especially in mainline denominations.

CHAPTER 6  
IMPLICATIONS

IMPLICATIONS FOR CLERGY FAMILIES AND THE CHURCH

The results of this study suggest several intervention strategies which are offered in an attempt to alleviate some of the discomfort and stress that continue to plague a sizable group of pastors' wives.

Finances

The approach to solving financial problems for clergy wives has traditionally been to attempt to teach her to be more thrifty, to economize. The real issue of not having enough money to live comfortably has not been addressed. Some rather simple strategies are available to not only the clergy wife, but also her husband, his Conference, and the denomination as a whole.

First, congregations need educating. Certainly the costs involved in providing for a family have dramatically risen in recent years; most people know and accept that. But churches are institutions; they are by nature slow to change. Moreover, they rely on the voluntary donations of their members, each thinking of his/her own personal financial situation. The "tragedy of the commons" (Hardin, 1968) is all too possible. Church boards and congregations need to be educated as to what the realistic needs of a pastor's family are and what they must do to meet these needs, both corporately and individually. The Conference and the denomination need to work together to provide congregations with

reasonable guidelines for professional incomes and benefits and to *strongly* encourage each church to follow them. Sixty percent of the respondents in this study asked for stronger support for financial guidelines from their Conference.

Second, clergy need educating. It appears that the clergy themselves are not sure what a clergy income should be, so they experience more than minimal distress when trying to talk to church officials about compensation issues (Noller, 1984, p. 188). Some ministers need to alter their attitudes and accept the fact that "the laborer is worthy of his wages" (Luke 10:7, The Holy Bible). Each Conference and all of its the Associations could make this easier for their clergy by providing workshops on clergy compensation, both for clergy alone and for clergy and laity together. As both of these levels of the UCC already have established committees or divisions that are concerned with ministry, it would seem appropriate to enlarge the work of these groups to include financial issues.

Third, the seminaries could begin to address this problem with ministers-in-training. Rather than simply explain that one of the harsh realities of ministry is poor pay, they might begin to help young clergy to see that poverty is not a biblical command.

Fourth, each Conference might consider a health insurance plan with smaller deductibles and/or exclusions for lab work and x-rays, as well as \$2.00 prescriptions. These types of health plans are offered to many skilled and unskilled workers by a plethora of businesses and schools. It seems shameful to have clergy families going without medical care or

medications just because of their costs. The Conferences are reluctant to adopt a better health plan because of the high cost that would accrue to the churches. However, congregations could be educated to understand that all retired clergy, their spouses, and widows are included in the clergy group health plan. Because many older clergy and their spouses and widows are currently in need of a great deal of medical care, the costs of providing health care to the entire group are driven up by their inclusion. These people have faithfully served the Lord for many years and would have no other health insurance to supplement Medicare if it were not for the Conference plan. The churches ought to consider these premiums an integral part of their mission in serving Jesus Christ, understanding that the inclusion of retired people is unheard of in other sectors of the economy. The active clergy do not want these people dropped from the health plan, but neither do they want their wives and children to go without medical care. Communication with local congregations may be the key.

Fifth, although in the UCC, the Conference has no legal authority over the policies of local churches, the inclusion of dental insurance as a benefit for clergy should be very strongly encouraged.

Sixth, 59% of the respondents requested free or church paid counseling for the pastor, clergy spouse, and family. There will be substantial reluctance to provide money for counseling at the denominational level; the Presbyterian Church has tried this and the program has suffered serious financial problems (Horst, 1990). There may be alternatives, however. Members of churches who work as therapists,

psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, etc. could be identified and could be asked to donate a small portion of their professional time to help clergy families. This could even be done on an ecumenical basis, at least within similar denominational groups, such as mainline churches.

Another strategy might be to provide workshops for clergy that deal specifically with problems of ministry; to provide workshops for clergy wives that specifically concern problems of the kinds identified in this study; to provide workshops for clergy couples on managing time together and other identified problem areas. Most workshops on marriage enrichment provide opportunities for clergy and laity together, but clergy are not merely specialized laity; many of the problems they and their family members encounter are unique to the ministry.

Finally, the value of pensions and annuities could be examined relative to those of other workers, especially other professionals. This should be done at the denominational level.

#### Impoverishment of Friendships

After careful consideration, this researcher could not discern many reasonable strategies for increasing the likelihood of forming friendships for pastors' wives. Some women have been able to form friendships in their churches; most have legitimate fears. Clergy and clergy wife support groups have been tried in various denominational groups and settings. In fact, support groups were requested by 44% of the respondents in this study. Unfortunately, it takes only one breach of confidence for such a group to fall apart; competition between clergy

and/or clergy wives remains an additional problem.

Oftentimes, clergy appear "stiff" around each other, perhaps afraid and definitely competitive. One approach to this problem might be to find ways to build comradeship between clergy families through social efforts, such as clergy family picnics; outings to baseball games, and other events; evenings for clergy couples to attend fine arts events as a *group*. These events could be held at both the district and the association level. Although it is not generally within this denomination's traditions to segregate clergy from laity in this way, it would be helpful to begin to accept the fact that by both ordination and their leadership responsibilities, clergy are segregated from their people to a degree. They share some common problems, some common joys, and some common frustrations, as might their wives and children. They need not do *all* things together, but certainly could do *some* things together. In this way, perhaps clergy families would begin to feel more comfortable and less competitive toward each other. In addition, couples and families would be getting familiar with each other and possibly friendships would be the result. An additional benefit of this sort of fraternizing also might be that clergy could begin to present themselves to congregations as a unified group and one that enjoys a professional status.

#### Impoverishment of Time Together

Several strategies might prove useful in helping clergy families to find more time to spend together. First, pastors need to be educated



about the value of taking time off. Certainly, biblical precedents abound, e.g., Jesus went to the Wilderness and Elijah sat under a desert tree; both of them might have been fighting professional burnout. Burnout occurs when persons work closely with troubled human beings over long periods of time, with little opportunity to retreat or renew oneself. When a helper can leave his/her work at the office and return to a stable and relaxing home situation, burnout is less likely to occur. As we have seen, however, the home is often the office for clergy (Collins, 1977, p. 12).

Second, congregations need a similar education, for if the pastor is burned out, the congregation is sure to suffer, too. Two of the symptoms of burnout are negativity and rigidity. These attitudes, alone, can spread like wildfire in an organization once they are started from a leadership position (Freudenberger, 1977, p. 27). In addition, if the pastor is spending inadequate time with his family, the congregation is also likely to suffer. A pastor cannot effectually lead a congregation, when experiencing marital discord.

Third, seminaries need to *strongly impress* on their students the value of time off.

Fourth, once educated about the value of taking time off, pastors *must take* time off weekly. In fact, congregations could and maybe should insist that the pastor become disciplined in this matter.

Fifth, pastors should take their vacations; again, perhaps congregations should insist, as part of their contract with the pastor, that he/she must take his/her four weeks vacation time. In addition, no



one need know where the clergy family is if they leave home; if they do not leave home, church boards should be careful to inform their members that the pastor's family is not to be disturbed!

Sixth, the pastor might block off times in his/her appointment book each week when he/she will spend time with spouse and children; making these appointments helps the professional to stay intentional about spending time with his family amid the all too numerous demands of the job.

Seventh, since there is often tension at home when an "up-tight people-helper" begins to unwind, precautions need to be taken to avoid appearing brusque with family members. Often clergy come home expecting to avoid everybody, but that is an unfair expectation. If time alone is needed, "it may be necessary to schedule 'buffer times,' periods of relaxation or solitude that come at the end of the work day and rejuvenate us before we rejoin our families" (Collins, 1977, p. 13-14).

Eighth, the clergy husband needs to get support from colleagues. "A support system of three or four friends ... can help keep a balanced perspective on people-handling activities" (Collins, 1977, p. 13); the creation of a ministerial association or other professional organization might be useful.

Ninth, as professional counselors, pastors need support. A group of pastors might meet together regularly with a licensed psychologist or other therapist, not only to encourage and advise one another, but also to discuss counseling cases. This not only reduces burn-out, but helps to protect pastoral counselors by providing "professional supervision"

to their counseling. (As names of clients need not be mentioned, no confidences need be violated.)

Tenth, pastors might consider the use of a telephone answering machine; screening calls during meals and other family times can avoid many needless inconsiderate interruptions to the pastor's time off.

Eleventh, a board of deaconesses/deacons or elders might be established with the responsibility for receiving routine phone calls that are not of an emergency or of a private nature and answering the latter only when the pastor's answering machine is accessible. In fact, these people could be specially trained to perform this job. Surely, ministry can be performed in such ways by laity.

Twelfth, for those families in which the wives are not working full-time, taking a Friday and Saturday off for a weekend or a family retreat can be a very good idea. Children can be taken out of school once in a while; speaking from personal experience, this can greatly help the family during the long winter months. Although this is easier when the children are young, it is manageable with teenagers if it is planned far enough ahead of time. Fifty-one percent of this study's respondents thought that family retreats would be helpful in reducing stress. One respondent, whose church was especially considerate and sensitive shared a wonderful idea:

Our church gives us two "family weekends" each year plus the four vacation weeks. (#229)

Thirteenth, pastors should make it a point to take their sabbatical time! The Conference recommendation is three months of sabbatical time

for every six years of service, or about two weeks a year. This time should be spent renewing and revitalizing oneself; spending time with family is certainly allowable.

Fourteenth, 46% of the respondents felt that they needed more emotional support from their Association. The Divisions on Church and Ministry could investigate ways the Association might be more helpful.

Finally, a radical approach would be for clergy to consider working together more often. For example, when a minister is on vacation, a neighboring minister fills in by taking any emergency or pastoral calls. This could be done more often than vacation time and is certainly not without precedent in the professions. Physicians routinely are "on call" for each other; today it is rare to reach one's choice of doctor "after hours" or on weekends. Clergy could function similarly, and congregations could learn to understand that *pastoral* care can be given by any number of kind, warm, persons.

#### Expectations

According to these data, clergy wives seem to be better prepared to handle congregational expectations than they have been in the past. But clergy and their wives may still need some help in sorting out reasonable from unreasonable expectations, as well as in determining which expectations are actually coming from themselves and being projected onto the congregation. In addition, they may need help in negotiating with congregational leaders, especially about time. These are issues that could be addressed at district clergy meetings and other

gatherings.

Since about half of the wives said that they found it "hard to be yourself," special workshops for clergy wives and clergy couples could be set up to offer strategies in conflict management.

The most important element in handling congregational expectations is that the clergy husband and wife MUST stand together. A clergy husband needs to make it clear to a congregation from the start that *he* is the professional who is being hired, that nothing will be expected from members of his family, and that if a family member does volunteer to help with the work of the church, she/he is to be treated as appreciatively as any other lay person would be. This applies to the behavior of the pastor's children, as well; *he* must make it clear that his children are normal, run-of-the-mill kids and are not to be looked at as exemplars of virtue.

In addition, congregations need education, possibly from the Conference level of the church, in the area of realistic expectations for the pastor and his family (Stout, 1982, p. 23).

### Triangulation

Whybrew (1984) has written an entire book on triangulation and how to handle it; only a brief summary of parts of the book will be presented here as helpful strategies. If triangulation is a particularly harmful problem for some, they would benefit from reading his book.

First, if the clergy wife is being triangulated in between minister-church issues, it will be very difficult for her to change the

situation. She will need to firmly accept that both husband and church will be better off if they each work on their own issues. She must stay connected to both parties while not over-reacting to either of them. By staying out of their problems, she will force them back into the dyadic relationship in which the issue belongs. This is not an easy task, for most people are not even aware they are being "used" in this way; in addition, if they are aware, many persons might feel disloyal, irresponsible, incompetent, even crazy in leaving their husbands to fight it out with the congregation. Wives need to remember that *he* is supposed to be a professional; he should be able to handle these issues or at least know where to get help if the situation is unmanageable.

Preventing triangulation is easier for clergy wives. Each party in the dyads, i.e. wife-husband, minister-congregation, and wife-congregation, must relate to each other with integrity and work on its own issues. The best way for a clergy wife to avoid being pulled into a minister-church problem is to have her own life and marriage in reasonably good order. If she knows who she is and enjoys being herself, she will have little need to get involved in his job problems or in the congregation's complaints (Whybrew, 1984, p. 23). If she has problems with her own identity, or if she has excessive dependency needs, perhaps she should seek professional help.

To avoid having the church triangulated in between minister-wife issues, members of the congregation need to treat the clergy couple the same as other families in the church, i.e. with "benign concern not malignant preoccupation" (Whybrew, p. 29). In addition, the clergy

couple must feel free to seek counseling or help, if necessary. Many churches are simply too parochial in their attitudes toward what constitutes a Christian lifestyle. They need to become more accepting of non-traditional alternatives, like divorced persons, single women pastors, clergy marital problems, etc.

Finally, if the minister is being triangulated in between wife-church issues, he must make it clear that he has been hired to do this job, not her. In addition, she must define herself as an individual, regardless of his or their expectations. The church *must* be able to allow her to be herself; if they cannot do so, then for everyone's good, she should become part of another faith community (Whybrew, p. 33).

### Housing

Almost 80% of the clergy wives reported desiring a housing allowance; moreover those still living in parsonages, are continuing to experience the problems that have always been associated with parsonage living. It seems to make sense, then, for the churches to continue to move toward offering their pastors a housing allowance. The pastor and his wife would feel more responsible and independent, and the church could get out of the real estate business.

For those churches that cannot provide a housing allowance, for pastors without a down-payment, etc., the Conference might provide parsonage guidelines. Thirty-five percent of the pastors' wives in this study thought this would be helpful. Considering that only about half of the married, male clergy in this Conference still live in parsonages,



the fact that 35% requested parsonage guidelines indicates major concern with this issue.

Guidelines on housing for churches that retain a parsonage might include, for example, suggested procedures for negotiating what work needs to be done in the parsonage; what church functions are to be held there, if any; who is responsible for getting work done; what is expected of the pastor and his family while living there, and similar considerations.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This survey suggests several issues to be explored in future research. First, additional studies of clergy wives could be done, especially with samples from different denominations. This small study shows that change has been occurring, but it does not show whether change has occurred outside of the UCC and outside of the State of Wisconsin.

In addition, in recent years, there has been a myriad of studies regarding new religious movements, but few concerning the mainline churches (Bryman, 1989, p. 32). Additional studies of oldline and mainline denominations would be interesting.

Third, studies of spirituality and pastor's wives would certainly be welcomed. The NAE study addressed this issue, but it seems few others have considered spirituality a topic worthy of investigation.

Fourth, studies of congregational expectations would also be worthy of pursuit. Kaiser (1958) showed that laypeople supported the idea that the pastor's wife should do no more for the church than other laity, but



when they were asked about the performance of specific tasks, the laypeople expected her to do almost everything but shovel the church and parsonage walk before Sunday services. Studies attempting to re-examine congregational expectations, then, would not only be interesting, but might help to develop an explanation for the discrepancy found in Kaiser's research.

Fifth, while this study was concerned only with pastors' wives, with the increasing number of women clergy, studies of pastors' husbands would most certainly be valuable as well.

Sixth, since many congregations still have rigid expectations for pastors' children, specific studies about the contemporary "PK" may be useful. They might help to discover, for example, if there are any long-range consequences of life in the parsonage.

Seventh, studies concerning similarities and differences in the ways married and unmarried male and female pastors react to congregational pressures would be useful for the clergy, the denomination, and seminary educators.

Eighth, cross-cultural studies would be interesting. Learning about expectations of "clergy" families in other faiths, e.g. Judaism and Islam, as well as other Christian denominations could be informative.

Ninth, studies like this could be compared to those concerning the family life of other professional groups. Comparisons of life experiences in the various professions and among differing types of professionals would be both interesting and informative. In addition, there may be much that professionals can learn from each other regarding

family living and time management.

Finally, the value of re-studies should not be under-estimated. Re-studies tend not to be performed because they seem mechanical to perform and less interesting than a new and "innovative" project. In addition, they do not usually receive the funding and recognition that other projects warrant (Bryman, 1989, p. 48). However, the value of re-studies for discerning and understanding social change cannot be ignored, especially in the absence of good, longitudinal research.

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APPENDIX APASTORS' WIVES SURVEY

Research has shown consistently that certain factors make the clergy family unique. One of these is housing, so I would like to ask you a few questions about your current housing situation. PLEASE CIRCLE ONE ANSWER FOR EACH QUESTION UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED.

1. In relation to the church building, where is your house located?

1. NEXT DOOR TO, CONNECTED TO, OR ACROSS FROM THE CHURCH
2. LESS THAN 1/2 MILE (BUT NOT NEXT DOOR, ETC.)
3. 1/2 TO 2 MILES AWAY
4. MORE THAN 2 MILES AWAY

2. What type of housing arrangement does the church provide?

1. FURNISHED PARSONAGE
2. UNFURNISHED PARSONAGE
3. HOUSING ALLOWANCE-OWN HOME
4. HOUSING ALLOWANCE-RENT
5. OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

3. IF HOUSING ALLOWANCE,

- A. Does the housing allowance pay for all of your housing costs (rent or mortgage)? 1. YES 2. NO
- B. Do YOU need to earn an income to pay for housing and utilities? 1. YES 2. NO

4. IF YOU LIVE IN A PARSONAGE,

- A. Are parsonage repairs made promptly?
  1. USUALLY
  2. SOMETIMES
  3. NEVER
- B. Is parsonage re-decorating done promptly and respectfully?
  1. USUALLY
  2. SOMETIMES
  3. NEVER
- C. Who pays for repairs/redecorating?
  1. THE CHURCH
  2. THE PASTOR
  3. OTHER (Explain \_\_\_\_\_)



D. Who physically does the work?

1. THE CHURCH
2. THE PASTOR
3. OTHER (Explain \_\_\_\_\_)

E. Which of the following periodically take place at your home?

1. PARSONAGE REVIEW AT YOUR REQUEST
2. PARSONAGE REVIEW AT CHURCH REQUEST
3. OPEN HOUSE
4. OTHER (Explain, \_\_\_\_\_)
5. NONE OF THESE PERIODICALLY TAKE PLACE AT MY HOME.

**ALL PERSONS PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS FROM HERE TO END OF SURVEY**

5. What type of housing arrangement would you prefer?

1. FURNISHED PARSONAGE
2. UNFURNISHED PARSONAGE
3. HOUSING ALLOWANCE-OWN HOME
4. HOUSING ALLOWANCE-RENT
5. OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Why would you prefer this arrangement? (Be specific).

THE SECOND SET OF QUESTIONS CONCERNS YOUR FINANCIAL SITUATION.

7. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

8. If you earn an income, do you work:

1. PART-TIME.
2. FULL-TIME.
3. OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_
4. I DO NOT EARN AN INCOME

9. Do you feel a need to work in order to support a lifestyle appropriate for a minister's family?

1. YES
2. NO

10. Which of the following does your husband receive as part of his compensation package? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- |                     |                                   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. HEALTH INSURANCE | 6. PENSION/ANNUITY                |
| 2. LIFE INSURANCE   | 7. CONTINUING EDUCATION ALLOWANCE |
| 3. SOCIAL SECURITY  | 8. BOOK/JOURNAL ALLOWANCE         |
| 4. DENTAL INSURANCE | 9. UTILITIES (ELECTRIC AND HEAT)  |
| 5. CAR ALLOWANCE    | 10. OTHER (Specify_____)          |

11. Which of the following must your family pay or partially pay? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. HEALTH INSURANCE                    | 6. PENSION/ANNUITY               |
| 2. LIFE INSURANCE                      | 7. WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS            |
| 3. SOCIAL SECURITY                     | 8. BOOKS/JOURNALS                |
| 4. DENTAL INSURANCE                    | 9. UTILITIES (ELECTRIC AND HEAT) |
| 5. CAR EXPENSES<br>FOR CHURCH BUSINESS | 10. OTHER<br>(Specify_____)      |

12. Understanding that no family ever has "enough" money, how satisfied are you with your family's financial situation?

1 = NOT AT ALL SATISFIED      7 = VERY MUCH SATISFIED

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

**A THIRD ISSUE CONCERNS YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN YOUR HUSBAND'S WORK.**

13. How would you describe your involvement in your husband's ministry? 1=I AM IN THE BACKGROUND, SUPPORTIVE

7=I AM A TEAMWORKER, SHARING IN HIS MINISTRY

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

14. To the degree that you are involved, which of the following MOST motivates you to take part in your husband's ministry?

(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. \_\_\_ DESIRE TO CONTRIBUTE THROUGH USEFUL WORK
2. \_\_\_ BELIEF IN THE PURPOSES OF THE CHURCH
3. \_\_\_ A CALL TO BE A PASTOR'S WIFE
4. \_\_\_ A CALL TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE
5. \_\_\_ CONGREGATION EXPECTS MY INVOLVEMENT
6. \_\_\_ MY HUSBAND EXPECTS MY INVOLVEMENT
7. \_\_\_ NO ONE ELSE IS WILLING OR TRAINED TO DO WHAT YOU DO
8. \_\_\_ OTHER (Specify\_\_\_\_\_)

15. Look again at your answers for Question #14. Place an "X" on the line before the ONE answer that states your motivation BEST.

16. The joys or opportunities which have meant the most to you, as a Pastor's Wife are: (CIRCLE THE TOP TWO)

1. HAVING A PLACE OF RESPECT IN CHURCH AND COMMUNITY
2. KNOWING A WIDE RANGE OF PEOPLE
3. PERSONAL GROWTH AND FULFILLMENT
4. SHOWING PEOPLE A BETTER WAY OF LIFE
5. LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
6. BEING OF SERVICE TO OTHER PEOPLE
7. OTHER (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

17. The problems or conflicts which have been most real for you, as a Pastor's Wife are: (CIRCLE THE TOP TWO)

1. INADEQUATE FINANCES
2. FEW PERSONAL FRIENDS
3. LITTLE PRIVACY
4. LACKING TIME FOR SELF
5. CONGREGATIONAL DEMANDS UPON YOU
6. HUSBAND'S DEMANDS UPON YOU
7. HUSBAND'S IRREGULAR WORK SCHEDULE
8. LACKING TIME FOR FAMILY
9. OTHER (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

18. Please circle ALL of the following activities which you frequently perform in your husband's present church.

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. TEACH A SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS  | 10. DIRECT THE CHOIR                    |
| 2. ATTEND WOMEN'S GROUPS        | 11. HELP IN CHURCH KITCHEN              |
| 3. SING IN CHOIR                | 12. PREACH                              |
| 4. COUNSELING                   | 13. WOMEN'S GROUP OFFICER               |
| 5. CALL ON SICK/SHUT-INS        | 14. OFFICER OF OTHER GROUP OR COMMITTEE |
| 6. LEAD DEVOTIONAL SERVICES     | 15. LEAD ADULT BIBLE STUDY              |
| 7. ON PAID STAFF OF CHURCH      | 16. PLAY THE ORGAN OR PIANO             |
| 8. SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT | 17. OTHER                               |
| 9. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR | (Specify_____)                          |

THE NEXT GROUP OF QUESTIONS CONSISTS OF STATEMENTS ON A RANGE OF TOPICS THAT MAY CONCERN CLERGY FAMILIES. CIRCLE THE BEST ANSWER FROM THE FOLLOWING SCALE:

SA = STRONGLY AGREE      A = AGREE      TA = TEND TO AGREE  
SD = STRONGLY DISAGREE    D = DISAGREE    TD = TEND TO DISAGREE

- |  |    |   |    |    |   |    |
|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 19. My responsibilities are the same as those of any laywoman.             | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 20. The Pastor's Wife has many acquaintances but few friends.              | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 21. My closest friends come from my husband's congregation.                | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 22. My role is no different from that of most wives.                       | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 23. Church people don't really understand me.                              | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 24. The congregation treats me as an unpaid assistant pastor.              | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 25. I feel as if I am close to burnout.                                    | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 26. It is difficult to be yourself as a "pastor's wife".                   | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 27. My husband and I have a healthy and compatible marriage.               | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 28. I have few friends for support.  | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 29. The women of the congregation and I have similar interests.            | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 30. I have to be a buffer between the congregation and our children.       | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 31. The congregation expects us to have the ideal marriage.                | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |
| 32. Unless we leave town, parishioners intrude on our vacations/free time. | SA | A | TA | TD | D | SD |



ALL COUPLES MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT HOUSEHOLD WORK. THE NEXT SERIES OF QUESTIONS INVOLVES SOME OF THE DECISIONS YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND HAVE MADE.

36. Please circle ALL of the following household jobs which your husband frequently performs?

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. TAKING OUT GARBAGE            | 6. LAUNDRY   |
| 2. MOWING LAWN                   | 7. CLEANING BATHROOM   |
| 3. GROCERY SHOPPING              | 8. COOKING   |
| 4. VACUUMING/FLOOR CARE          | 9. TRANSPORTING CHILDREN   |
| 5. DUSTING/STRAIGHTENING UP HOME | 10. TAKING CARE OF CHILDREN, (HELPING WITH HOMEWORK, GET THEM READY FOR BED, ETC.) |

37. How satisfied are you with the household division of labor between you and your husband?

(1 = NOT AT ALL SATISFIED, 7 = VERY MUCH SATISFIED)?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

38. During the past month, how often have you and your husband had arguments/disagreements over the household division of labor?

1. NEVER                      2. ONCE OR TWICE                      3. OFTEN

PLEASE ANSWER THE NEXT SERIES OF QUESTIONS BY WRITING IN YOUR HONEST RESPONSES.

39. How do you deal with complaints from church members about your husband?

40. How does your husband deal with complaints from church members about himself?

41. How do you deal with complaints from church members about you?

42. How does your husband deal with complaints from church members about you?

43. How often do you feel that the Church has come between you and your husband? (1 = VERY OFTEN, 7 = NEVER)

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7

44. How do you deal with this feeling?

45. It has been said that the clergy family has no pastor. Who do you turn to with your problems, or in time of emotional crisis?

- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. HUSBAND               | 3. CHURCH FRIEND(S)     |
| 2. OTHER FAMILY          | 4. NON-CHURCH FRIEND(S) |
| 5. OTHER (Specify _____) |                         |



46. Below is a list of some suggestions to remediate pressures on clergy families that have been offered by others. Circle all of these that you think would be helpful?

1. PASTOR-CHURCH CONTRACTS THAT SPECIFY NO COMMITMENT BY FAMILY
2. PASTOR/WIFE/FAMILY RETREATS
3. PASTOR/WIFE/FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS
4. FREE OR CHURCH PAID COUNSELING FOR PASTOR/WIFE/FAMILY
5. MORE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FROM ASSOCIATION/CONFERENCE
6. PARSONAGE GUIDELINES ENCOURAGED MORE BY CONFERENCE
7. FINANCIAL GUIDELINES ENCOURAGED MORE BY CONFERENCE
8. NONE WOULD HELP
9. OTHER SUGGESTIONS (PLEASE, EXPLAIN)

47. Have you read the new Conference "Clergy Compensation Guidelines"?

1. YES

2. NO

FINALLY, I ASK FOR SOME DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, PLEASE.

48. What is your age and what is your husband's age of Dec. 31, 1990.

<u>HUSBAND</u>	<u>WIFE</u>		<u>HUSBAND</u>	<u>WIFE</u>	
1	1	UNDER 30 YRS	4	4	51 - 60 YRS
2	2	31 - 40 YRS	5	5	61 - 70 YRS
3	3	41 - 50 YRS	6	6	OVER 70 YRS

49. How many years have you been married?

1 LESS THAN 10 YRS

2 10 - 19 YRS

3 20 - 29 YRS

4 30 - 39 YRS

5 40 - 49 YRS

6 50 OR MORE YRS

50. About how many years has your husband been ordained? \_\_\_\_\_

51. What is the highest level of education you completed?
- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. SOME HIGH SCHOOL | 4. MASTERS DEGREE       |
| 2. HIGH SCHOOL GRAD | 5. MORE THAN A MASTERS  |
| 3. BACHELORS DEGREE | 6. OTHER (Explain_____) |
52. What is the highest level of education your husband completed?
- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. SOME COLLEGE     | 3. MASTERS DEGREE       |
| 2. BACHELORS DEGREE | 4. OTHER (Explain_____) |
53. If you have dependent children living with you now, what are their ages? \_\_\_\_\_
54. Are you a member of any church your husband currently serves?                      1. YES      2. NO
55. Approximately what is the combined adult membership of all churches your husband currently serves?
- |              |            |                |
|--------------|------------|----------------|
| 1. UNDER 200 | 3. 200-599 | 5. 600 OR MORE |
|--------------|------------|----------------|
56. Of the following groups of persons, which do you and your husband socialize with most often?
- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. FAMILY MEMBERS             | 3. CHURCH FRIENDS        |
| 2. FRIENDS OUTSIDE THE CHURCH | 4. OTHER CLERGY FAMILIES |
| 5. OTHER (WHO)_____           |                          |
57. Are you involved in any nonchurch, community activities or organizations, e.g. YWCA, PTA, women's clubs, that help you to make friends?
- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| 1. YES | 2. NO |
|--------|-------|
58. How often have you usually attended a clergy wife retreat?
- |               |               |               |          |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| 1. EVERY YEAR | 2. MOST YEARS | 3. SOME YEARS | 4. NEVER |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------|
59. How often have you usually attended a woman's retreat?
- |               |               |               |          |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| 1. EVERY YEAR | 2. MOST YEARS | 3. SOME YEARS | 4. NEVER |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------|

ARE THERE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS OR IDEAS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT BEING A "PASTOR'S WIFE"? IF SO, FEEL FREE TO SHARE THEM HERE. IF ADDITIONAL PAGES ARE REQUIRED, FEEL FREE TO ATTACH THEM, BUT BE AWARE THAT ADDITIONAL RETURN POSTAGE MAY BE REQUIRED. AGAIN, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ANY COMMENTS WILL BE KEPT IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE!!!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME! PLEASE RETURN TO:  
PASTORS' WIVES PROJECT  
MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY, LALUMIERE HALL  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SCIENCES  
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53233

APPENDIX B  
COVER LETTER FOR SURVEY

September, 1990

Dear Pastor's Wife,

Being married to a clergyman has been known to be both a joy and a challenge, primarily because of the special relationship existing between pastor, wife and church. Although many studies concerned with clergy have been done in recent years, the ways in which his job affects the life of his wife have been left largely unexamined. You, along with all other wives of Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ pastors are being asked to participate in a survey that will provide this needed information.

In no way is this survey associated with the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ, however. Rather, this project is being undertaken as the topic of a Master's thesis at Marquette University in Milwaukee. The information obtained will hopefully further our knowledge of family living, women's roles, and the church.

A secondary purpose of this survey is to identify stressful life areas for clergy wives and families and attempt to offer suggestions for reducing these tensions. Any ideas you have would be very helpful to this project.

The final results of this survey may prove interesting to you. A summary of the cumulative findings will be made available to you upon request. The information, however, from any particular person will be STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. In fact, this project has been designed so that there is no way to associate your answers with your name, your husband's name, or his church. Please DO NOT write your name or address on any of this material in order to maintain this confidentiality.

With all of this in mind, hopefully you will take the time to complete this survey. Please follow the directions carefully and answer ALL questions unless instructed otherwise. Please answer all questions HONESTLY. There are no right or wrong answers, only your valuable insights into life with a clergyman.

When you are finished, please fold the survey and mail it back using the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.

Finally, if you would like a copy of the summary of the results of this project, simply fill out the enclosed 3" x 5" card and mail it back to the Project Office. If you have any questions,

feel free to call Sandi at Marquette University, Department of Social and Cultural Sciences (414/288-6838).

Thank you very much, in advance, for your time.

Sincerely,

Project Director  
Pastors' Wives Project