Balancing Rosie and June: A Study of Lynchburg College Postwar Alumnae and the Impact of The Feminine Mystique

Dinah Watson
Lynchburg College

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalshowcase.lynchburg.edu/utcp

Part of the American Film Studies Commons, American Literature Commons, Family, Life Course, and Society Commons, Gender and Sexuality Commons, Literature in English, North America Commons, Modern Literature Commons, Other American Studies Commons, Other Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons, Other Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons, Other Sociology Commons, Politics and Social Change Commons, Regional Sociology Commons, Sociology of Culture Commons, and the Women's Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
http://digitalshowcase.lynchburg.edu/utcp/26

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Showcase @ Lynchburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Theses and Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of Digital Showcase @ Lynchburg College. For more information, please contact digitalshowcase@lynchburg.edu.
Balancing Rosie and June:

A Study of Lynchburg College Postwar Alumnae and the Impact of
The Feminine Mystique

Dinah Watson

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for undergraduate honors in history,
at Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, Virginia

History Department

Dr. Phillip Stump.
Professor of History at Lynchburg College

Dr. Dorothy Potter
Assistant Professor of History at Lynchburg College

Dr. Nichole Sanders
Assistant Professor of History at Lynchburg College

March 26, 2007
Acknowledgements

This research paper that began as a dreaded assignment for a required senior class, ultimately culminating into a project that will always bring back fond memories of a special time and place and the people that made it so.

My thanks first of all go to those alumnae women of Lynchburg College who magnanimously shared the memories of their college days during the 1950's and early 1960's. Without their support this project would have failed miserably.

Lynchburg College, from my survey findings, has been traditionally blessed with wonderful educators. The alumnae would be pleased to know that same tradition continues today. My own experiences can be added to their stories of the many special instructors at Lynchburg College who took their time to patiently guide me through an undertaking that seemed to be insurmountable. They somehow taught me that all things are indeed “do-able”- even this project. Scholars such as Dr. Dorothy Potter who graciously allowed me to interview her and who took time over her Thanksgiving Holiday to review my draft and to offer many appreciated suggestions in order that my paper might meet the assignment deadline. Dr. Mike Santos who offered his expertise of the 1950's and 1960's period and who spent hours reviewing survey questions and giving suggestions to someone who just “wandered” into his office one day without an appointment. Dr. Nichole Sanders, whose own extensive research into Women’s History, steered me in the right direction and showed me how to remain focused on what I was attempting to prove in my thesis. Dr. Peggy Pittas who was kind enough to give me valuable insight and instruction on how to interpret the psychological data that was collected from the survey results. Dr. Stef Nicovich who rescued me at the last minute and loaned his expertise in technology in order that my media presentations could run smoothly for my presentations.

Certainly a simple “thank-you” seems to be indeed inadequate when it comes to acknowledging how much Dr. Phil Stump contributed to this project. He is a true mentor who through his patience and ever continuing support encouraged me to look beyond the obvious and to discover an insight into life that only history can offer.

I would also like to thank Matt Brandon and Betty Howell in the Alumni office who without their help this project could never have gotten started. They provided me with information needed for my alumnae survey which is an integral part of my research. I know this was a very time consuming task, yet they somehow managed to supply me with the information I needed to get the survey mailed while still maintaining the confidential integrity entrusted to them by the college and their department.

A world of thanks goes to Sarah Lester and Diana Jenkins in the history department who so kindly, came to my rescue one very hectic afternoon and helped me get the mailing out for the alumnae survey. I truly believe that I would still be stuffing envelopes and making copies if it were not for their thoughtful assistance.

I want to thank my daughter, Lindsay, who took a week-end from her busy schedule to help me tabulate survey results and who showed me how to make graphs on the computer so that my paper might start to take on the appearance of a professional study. Lastly, thanks go to my wonderful husband, Mike, who has not only supported me through this project, but who has wholeheartedly cheered me on through all of my academic challenges as a non-traditional student. During a time in our lives when we could be, and perhaps should be, more worried about writing wills instead of history papers, he has afforded me the opportunity to accomplish a long held dream of mine by obtaining a degree. With his help, I do not have to say, “I wish I had done this”, I can say “I did it!”
In 2003, the movie *Mona Lisa Smile* debuted describing the frustrations that many college women may have faced in the years after World War II.\textsuperscript{1} Wellesley College was the elite all-female institution that openly and proudly prepared its young women with the proper rules of etiquette and correctness. Despite Wellesley's own excellent academic reputation, its close proximity to the prestigious single-sex male college, Harvard, made it even more appealing and convenient for the Wellesley girls to find a "suitable" husband. The novice young art instructor, Katherine Watson, was unique in that she wanted to offer her students not only a chance but a choice to be more than just a wife and mother-the opportunity to have a career if they wished. The novice young art instructor, Katherine Watson, was unique in that she wanted to offer her students not only a chance but a choice to be more than just a wife and mother-the opportunity to have a career if they wished. This film illustrated a time when life may not have always been as simple as the history books would have us believe. The 1950's and early 1960's was a period filled with many changes. Lives were being transformed as new social, political, and technological developments were being introduced into a world once preoccupied with war. It is not surprising that many females were left struggling to find their own identity and wondering whether they should follow the lead of "Rosie" the working woman or "June" the stay-at-home mother.

Today historians are divided on whether or not educated women suffered from the same image that we are told stigmatized many women of the 1950's and early 1960's. Following World War II, society was filled with uncertainty and opposition for women. The idea that domestic constraints bound the postwar middle-class woman was popularized by Betty Friedan's 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique*.\textsuperscript{2} She was a noted journalist during this time who based many of the conclusions represented in her best selling book on a 1957 survey she gave to fellow alumnae of the 1942 graduating class at Smith College. Many historians and even scholars from

\textsuperscript{1} *Mona Lisa Smile*, directed by Mike Newell, 120 min., Columbia Pictures, 2003, DVD.
other fields are beginning to question whether the evidence Friedan used to support her conclusions was indeed an accurate representation of this era.

In order to ascertain whether the experience of women at a coeducational non-elite college might have been different from that described by Friedan, I conducted a random sample survey of Lynchburg College women graduates (the LC Survey) from the years 1950, 1955, 1960, and 1965. These years are representative of the postwar period, and used to establish a benchmark to examine popular cultural beliefs. Because of the limited number of alumnae during 1950 and 1955, all women graduates on record in the Alumni Office at Lynchburg College for those years received a survey. Every third female graduate on record for the years 1960 and 1965 received a survey. The survey asks questions analogous to those Friedan posed to participants in her questionnaire. Respondents received a cover letter describing the project without giving too much detail, in order not to bias their responses. The cover letter invited respondents to participate further in personal and/or telephone interviews. Due to the large positive response to this invitation, a total of fifteen women were selected at random from this group to participate in the telephonic oral interview session. A total of one hundred and thirty three surveys were mailed to the Lynchburg College alumnae, with a response rate of 55%. In analyzing the results from this project and in reviewing the findings of several of the revisionist historians and others, I will identify many inconsistencies in Friedan’s conclusions.

Friedan believed many factors combined to create a problem among middle-class American women that could only be described as “the problem that has no name.”\(^3\) Postwar women had the latest consumer goods and the newest technology at their disposal, designed to make their lives easier than ever before. Still women could not put into words why they felt

\(^3\) Friedan, 16. 
estranged and upset about their own lives.⁴ Throughout Friedan’s book this message was quite clear and reverberated over and over again—women living in a society that forced them to accept the role of subservient wife and mother experienced a feeling of discontent and incompleteness. According to many sources, women were afraid to share this secret with their friends and families until Friedan’s critique of the “feminine mystique” changed the course of women’s history. The “feminine mystique” was a term Friedan coined to describe how society perpetuated the belief that American women should find satisfaction and contentment in their lives just by being homemakers and mothers. Even college educated women were supposed to find happiness in scrubbing floors, making elaborate dinners, and having the smartest and best children on the block. Women feared that expressing themselves in any venue other than those society predetermined for them would experience a loss of their femininity. Friedan attacked this idea and further determined that the culture of the 1950’s and 1960’s did not permit women to accept or fulfill their basic needs as human beings. Much as the character Katherine Watson told her students in the movie Mona Lisa Smile, Friedan led many women to believe that their full potential as a woman could only be recognized by finding their own true identity (by pursuing a career). Friedan led the reader to believe that women everywhere were suppressed by the ideas perpetuated in the feminine mystique.⁵

Friedan in her book challenged the educational system and stated that society trained young women to go to college to find a suitable spouse. She further maintained the idea that the educators themselves perpetuated this charade by forcing young women to take gender related courses designed to keep women at home without the chance of ever having a career of their own. Rules and conformity were a by-product of the postwar period and Friedan was quite

⁵ Friedan, 69.
outspoken on her views of early marriage and large families. She believed it to be a disgrace and a travesty that college educated women should only be “housewives” and held the media, to a large degree, responsible for such a belief. The media portrayed women as child-like beings that were incapable of taking care of anything other than jobs in the home. Complicated matters such as family finances were usually considered beyond the scope of a woman’s intellect.\(^6\) These were just a few of Friedan’s ideas that gained attention among postwar women. The question that must be answered needs to be whether or not Friedan’s study was indeed representative of the majority of postwar women.

Douglas T. Miller, a professional historian, and Marion Nowak, a journalist, in their book, *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were* written in 1975, seem to mirror many of the ideas presented by Friedan.\(^7\) In 1981, Colette Dowling, a journalist with many magazine articles to her credit, wrote *The Cinderella Complex: Women’s Hidden Fear of Independence*, in which she, too, identified a problem similar to the one Friedan identified. She called it The Cinderella Complex, in which fear and repressed attitudes did not allow women to use their minds or their creative abilities.\(^8\)

Many historians, however, during the later decades of the twentieth century such as Joanne Meyerowitz, an associate professor of history at the University of Cincinnati, and Jessica Weiss, an assistant professor at California State University, started to question whether the evidence Friedan presented during the postwar period was indeed representative of the time. Other scholars, such as Eugenia Kaledin, whose primary focus was in American Studies at

---

6 Friedan (Based on many of her chapter titles and other significant topics she addressed).


Northeastern University, attempted to show a side of American women in the 1950’s that demonstrated their strengths and a turn from the victimization attitude.9

These revisionist historians and scholars have countered Friedan’s conclusions based on extensive research of their own. Meyerowitz provided evidence in her paper, “Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946-1958”, that popular magazines of the period did present coverage of successful women outside of the home.10 Jessica Weiss, in her book To Have and to Hold: Marriage, the Baby Boom & Social Change, neutralized the domestic bliss of the postwar family and gave proof of how real families truly lived as opposed to the images portrayed by the popular culture and Friedan.11 Eugenia Kaledin, in her book Mothers and More, looked at postwar women from a social viewpoint instead of an historical one. She explains that while women were discouraged from being considered equal with men, these restrictions allowed women to evolve and to establish a set of values of their own. This value system was ultimately used to define women’s achievements.12 All of these representatives of modern day scholarship express their concern for what is being taught as truth about the postwar period. Since The Feminine Mystique has so profoundly shaped the view of postwar women in popular culture as well as academic history, it is important to study and analyze the validity of Friedan’s version of this era and compare it with more modern day perceptions.13

11 Jessica Weiss, To Have and to Hold: Marriage, the Baby Boom & Social Change (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000).
12 Kaledin, 2.
13 Laura Shapiro, Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950’s America (New York: Penguin Group, 2004), 245-246.
Obtaining the "MRS" Degree

One point to which Friedan oftentimes referenced, was the statement that women went to college only to “get a husband.” Friedan told the story of a young girl she met when she returned to Smith College to present her own survey findings to her fellow classmates in 1957. She was distraught that the young girl planned to get married right after graduation and expressed her desire to have four children. Friedan was shocked to learn that this girl, along with others in the newly graduated class of 1957, all wanted the same thing—a husband, children, and life in suburbia. Friedan could not believe that the education offered by her own Smith College could have deteriorated to this point. The passion that Friedan and her fellow classmates once had when they graduated was no longer visible in these young women from Smith—had they all fallen victim to the tragedies imposed by the feminine mystique?

While twenty-four percent of Lynchburg college alumnae surveyed did admit that they went to college to find a spouse, forty-seven percent of the respondents appeared to cast at least some element of doubt on the popular “MRS” assumption presented by Friedan, reporting that they did not meet their husbands until later, after graduating from college. Only thirty percent of the women reported having met their future spouse while attending Lynchburg College. In contrast to how Friedan presented the Smith graduates to the public in her book, fifty-nine percent of LC women stated they went to college to prepare for a career, while another twenty-four percent reported they wanted to go for their own well-being simply because they enjoyed the challenges of learning. This data would appear to be in stark contrast to the results reported by Friedan.

14 Friedan, 12.
16 Lynchburg College Alumnae Survey 2006, Question 12.
17 Lynchburg College Alumnae Survey 2006, Question 2.
The Educators

Aside from the MRS degree assumption, Friedan stated that educators helped to circulate a belief during the postwar period suggesting that educating women beyond the high school level served no useful purpose—women only had to learn how to be feminine. Although today we could not imagine any college president leading a public debate against the perils of educating women, Lynn White, Jr., president of Mills College, a private liberal arts women’s college in California, did just that in the 1950’s. He believed that giving young women the tools to think for themselves would only foster resentment for the household tasks they needed to perform and their predestined roles as wives and mothers would become even more distressing for them. Therefore, educators like White adopted special programs designed with the college woman in mind. Classes that centered on home economics or family and marriage issues were the courses offered to the female students attending Mills College. White insisted that females should stay away from any field that employed men, in order that they not threaten a male’s livelihood and future employment opportunities. White’s arguments were quite representative of the way sexual prejudices filtered into the 1950’s education adopted by the popular culture.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{18} Miller and Nowak, 160-161.
Freud and the “Functionalists”

White’s ideas as an educator could have been adopted from the philosophy of Sigmund Freud. Friedan stated that Freudian-based concepts began to take hold in America in the 1940’s, fueling the idea of sexual prejudices. This philosophy ultimately stifled educated American women by tying them to the old image where choices were made for them and they were denied individual identity. Friedan stated that the “most zealous missionaries of the feminine mystique were the functionalists,” who seized the opportunity to promote Freudian based ideas. Educators, such as Lynn White, began to promote the idea that women in college should be taught classes such as marriage and family, mental-health education, and child-birth.

Functionalists were defined as people like Margaret Mead, who essentially “froze” and stagnated women’s roles into a glorified state by defining them according to their biological function. Friedan believed the functionalists characterized social ideals by trying to tell women what they “should be” thus furthering the idea of the feminine mystique.

Eugenia Kaledin, in her book Mothers and More: American Women in the 1950’s, described a different view of White and Mead. She stated that though White was indeed concerned with teaching young female students how to become better wives and mothers, he was equally concerned about what was actually happening to the roles of women in the postwar society. Contrary to his chauvinist reputation, he reportedly fought for the rights of women, criticizing “shameful discrimination” against females when it came to hiring them at the college level. Mead actually declared that although women were often educated like men, they were

19 Friedan, 95-96.
20 Ibid., 150.
21 Ibid., 115-116.
22 Ibid., 128.
23 Ibid., 126.
24 Kaledin, 49.
denied opportunities for employment for fear it would interfere with their domestic obligations.\textsuperscript{25} It would appear that although Mead and Friedan had quite opposing viewpoints in many ways, they believed in some of the same basic principles. For example, while they both believed in the goodness of home and family, Mead was in fundamental agreement with Friedan when she described domesticity as, "not ‘the end-all and be-all’ of every human being in the society."\textsuperscript{26} Perhaps, Mead was suggesting, like Friedan, that some women needed to find other outlets besides the home in which to enrich their lives.

\textit{Lynchburg College Educators}

When the Lynchburg College graduates were asked about their personal educational experience, eighty-seven percent, during the twenty year period surveyed, stated they were encouraged to take the classes they wanted at Lynchburg College.\textsuperscript{27} One interviewee, when asked why she had reported that she had been discouraged by some member of the faculty from taking certain classes, commented that her advisor was actually looking out for her best interest as a student and she now realizes that fact. She had \textit{wanted} to take Marriage and the Family, a popular course Lynchburg College was offering at the time, but was told she should not. She laughed and said that actually was the one class she probably should have taken. However, after further discussion, it was discovered the only reason she was told not to take the class was her heavy course load that term. Her advisor felt it would be in her best interest not to take the course because of her numerous intense classes. This woman was discouraged from the very class that Friedan had criticized educators for pushing.\textsuperscript{28} Another woman described her

\begin{footnotes}
\item[25] Ibid., 58.
\item[26] Ibid.
\item[27] Lynchburg College Alumnae Survey 2006, Question 3.
\item[28] Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #1, October 18, 2006.
\end{footnotes}
experience in very much the same way. Before coming to Lynchburg College, she had briefly attended Radford College, which at the time was a single-sex school in Virginia, but found the ultra-conservative environment that was imposed at that institution not conducive to the best learning environment for her. At Lynchburg College she was much happier and described her experience very differently from the one she had encountered at Radford. At Lynchburg College she found instructors who supported the best interests of all students whether they were male or female.\textsuperscript{29}

Although Friedan reported that educators tried to steer young women into gender specific classes, this did not seem to be the case as evidenced by the following graphs that illustrate a diverse choice of majors offered for these postwar women.\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{29} Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #2, October 19, 2006.
\textsuperscript{30} Alumni Data collected from Alumni Office at Lynchburg College.
In 1948, new majors started to open up for students that included such courses as economics, political science, world government and history.\textsuperscript{31} By 1953, Lynchburg College began a study that would reevaluate the classes being taught during that time. No documentation

\textsuperscript{31} Michael Wayne Santos. \textit{A Beacon Through the Years: A History of Lynchburg College 1903-2003}, (Virginia Beach: Donning Company, 2005), 289.
was recorded to reflect any sort of gender stereotyping for men or women. The aim of the college was to continue to develop a curriculum geared towards quality liberal arts education while providing sufficient vocational training. In 1953, Lynchburg College offered twenty five majors in six divisions. All students were required to take certain generalized classes that were necessary to fulfill what faculty members believed were needed to foster “an educated Christian citizen.” After those requirements were fulfilled, the student was free to select courses in his or her own fields of interest.32

From this information it can be surmised that perhaps Lynchburg College, as a liberal arts college in the South, was far more concerned with religious issues as opposed to the gender related ones that Friedan noted. From the 1950 graph, one can see that religion constituted the largest percentage share of the majors from which female students selected. These data suggest that during the 1950’s, religious concerns were at an all-time high after World War II.33 It must be remembered that Lynchburg College, like many colleges, even Friedan’s own Smith College, was founded on the principals precipitated by a Christian education. This may have played a significant role in influencing women’s choices in selecting a college in a time when religion was viewed as a safe-guard from the threat of Communism and suburban communities were beginning to form as an alternative to urban lifestyles. Churches in those suburbs were an accepted social outlet for meeting new people and gaining acceptance in ones community. While Senator Joseph McCarthy preached his sermons about the Cold War concerned with the evils of Russia, Christian ministers spoke of the moral decay of the world. It is also worth noting that the number of women students studying religion had significantly declined by 1965 as psychology and sociology began to take its place as the popular choices.

32 Lynchburg College Jubilee 1903-1978, (College Archives, Knight-Capron Library, Lynchburg College), 15.
33 Miller and Nowak, 85.
The trends in course preferences during the twenty year period surveyed are interesting to review. By 1955, the survey results indicated a sharp increase in psychology majors. At first, one would imagine that perhaps this heightened interest in psychology would lend support to the Freudian based theory as previously discussed. However, one interviewee stated that all education majors were required to major in psychology in order to meet the requirements for teaching.34 Again this could lead many to believe that what Friedan was protesting concerning sex-directed educators, or those instructors who tried to influence what classes were taught to students based on their gender, could possibly be true.35 Dr. Peggy Pittas, a professor of psychology at Lynchburg College, verified that it was indeed true that education majors during the 1950’s were required to also major in psychology. However, it was important to note that the emphasis at Lynchburg College during that period was focused on behavioral psychology and not on the Freudian theories that many colleges were teaching at the time. She did confirm that Smith College would have been an institution that taught Freudian concepts during that period.36 Freudian theory focuses more on the unconscious internal aspects of a person’s behavior.
especially when it comes to defining gender roles while behavioral psychology is assessed more
on the external behaviors of an individual and takes on a more scientific basis.

Sociology began to steadily increase in popularity from the early 1950’s to the middle of
the 1960’s. Again, if one chose to accept results based on preliminary findings without
researching them to confirm their true validity, one could easily misinterpret the data. It could be
assessed that because of the heightened social awareness during this period of important events
such as the Civil Rights Movement and the resurgence of gender roles brought about as a result
of the Second Wave of Feminism, that sociology would have been a logical major. Dr. Pittas
stated that though sociology could have risen during the 1960’s due to the trend of the social
aspects noted, she believed that well-liked faculty members played an equally important role in
making it such a popular major during that time. Dr. Pittas stated that many majors even today
attract students because of the popularity of the instructors.\textsuperscript{37} From this researcher’s own
experience, this factor does appear to play a significant role in determining which courses are
selected for further study. Students are more inclined to take a class from an instructor whom
they feel comfortable with and not afraid to ask questions of in class. This bond can ultimately
lead to a more conducive learning environment.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
Rules and Etiquette

Regardless of teaching styles, or which curriculum or school of thought an individual institution decided to adhere to, no one can argue the fact that the 1950’s and early 1960’s was a period filled with conformity and rules. Everyone complied with the societal demands of proper dress, speech, attitudes and behavior. Teens, for example, in colleges across the country, were clean-cut and concerned with making sure their reputations were kept intact.\(^{38}\) In one scene from the movie *Mona Lisa Smile*, Katherine Watson’s female housemate, who was also an instructor at Wellesley, was teaching her young female students the rules of etiquette they would need to get along in the “real world”. According to several interviews taken from the Lynchburg College respondents, this scene from the referenced movie could have taken place at the Lynchburg College dining room in the 1950’s. Even though more than fifty years has passed, the alumnae reminisced with positive and fond memories of their dining experiences at LC.

Women were required to wear hose, heels, and dresses or skirts, while the men wore coats and ties according to many of those interviewed.\(^{39}\) This guide to the importance of

\(^{38}\) Miller and Nowak, 274, and 277.

\(^{39}\) Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #4, October 18, 2006.
personal appearance in the dining room can best be found in *The Hornet*, the student handbook of Lynchburg College. The following was found in the 1957-1958 edition:

Attention to your personal appearance in preparation for a meal is essential, not only for the sake of your own poise and self-assurance, but also for the sake of your fellow students, who will enjoy you more if your are well groomed...you will be expected to have a shower and change into something different for dinner... You must look well groomed and meticulously clean.

You will assemble in the lobby of Westover Hall. The head waiter will make all necessary announcements, then the blessing will be said or sung... Hostesses for the dining room will be selected...they will make sure that the physical needs of each member of your table are cared for and will assume the social direction of your table... Setting the standard of conduct and table manners is important because the conduct of one table in a large room often affects the morale of the whole dining room.40

However, what did not get printed in the handbook was that when the hostess passed the “family-style” served food to her right around the table draped with the white tablecloth, many times the person seated in the corner would be left with no food. “Starvation Corner” must have made an impression on a number of the former students since it was noted that where one was seated at the table was carefully calculated before dinner. Unsuspecting freshmen students soon began to learn the rules of the dining room if they wanted to get anything to eat.41 This was all done in good fun. The Lynchburg College “family” meal experience usually concluded as students adjourned to a small adjoining room for a brief period of after-dinner dancing.42 This experience however, came to a close during the 1958-1959 academic year when the College went to a cafeteria system.43

Smith College had similar dining customs and even today Smith women eat by candlelight each Thursday evening to continue their tradition of elegant family-style dining. Students, too, still have the opportunity to share in the custom of a Friday afternoon tea, where

---

41 Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee References #5 and #6, October 18, 2006.
42 Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #5, October 18, 2006.
43 Santos, 325.
students can enjoy the company of their fellow students after a busy week of classes. This tradition goes back more than one hundred years.44

Perhaps the dining habits practiced at Lynchburg College and still today at Smith College would only have served to perpetuate the beliefs maintained by Friedan and others that colleges were teaching their students the art of conformity in a society already bound by rigid gender expectations and rules. However, the Lynchburg College women perhaps did not conform as much as administrators may have wanted to believe. There were reports of sunbathing on the roof-tops of Westover Hall and some of the young women just happened to “sneak” down the fire escape on a few occasions to meet with their boyfriends.45 This act of defiance from any Lynchburg College woman would not have been tolerated if the student had been caught in such an offense.

Life After Graduation

As the college years came to a close, many Lynchburg College women had to make a decision. Some did marry, but even so, ninety-nine percent of the women reported that they went to work after graduating from college at least for a while.46 Friedan on the other hand, reported that it was not unusual for women who had lived under the feminine mystique’s shadow to be frightened by the prospect of going out into the world and facing the test of “real work.” She stated that many clung to their safe haven of being a housewife.47 Friedan wrote that “fewer and fewer women were entering professional work” and further declared that the shortages in fields such as teaching, nursing and social work were reaching a critical stage by the late

45 Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #7, October 18, 2006.
46 Lynchburg College Alumna Survey 2006, Question 6.
47 Friedan, 243.
1950’s. Dowling stereotyped women in much the same way as Friedan. She believed women had a psychological dependency that forced them to look to others for their strength.

Contrary to what Friedan surmised, Lynchburg College alumnae over the twenty year period surveyed said they did indeed enter the professional world. Seventy percent of the women became involved in the educational field in some capacity whether in the teaching field directly or in an administrative role. One LC interviewee stated that she went to work after graduation because she remembered vividly the period of the Great Depression. She recalled that her father had lost his job during this period and her mother had to find employment and assume the role of providing income for the family. Her father took on many of the traditional roles that her mother would have normally done, but she said her family did whatever they needed to do to get through the tough economic times. She went to work after graduation because she still wanted and needed to work to contribute to her own household finances. This suggests that LC women were not bound by the perceived norms of what a typical family should be during this period that being to remain in the home only to be a housewife and mother. This woman had the educational skills which she chose to utilize and in doing so made an important impact in the betterment of her family’s economic situation.

48 Friedan, 13.
49 Dowling, 31.
50 Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #8 October 18, 2006.
Continuing Their Education

Not only did Lynchburg College women get their degrees, many of the postwar graduates decided that furthering their education would be a good choice for them. Friedan said that in coeducational colleges, females were hesitant to show their intelligence in classrooms where males were present for fear they would be considered too bright. The source she alluded to was a study conducted by Mirra Komarovsky, who found that forty percent of college women played “dumb” with men. Friedan concluded from this research that this was because women thought of themselves as sexual beings who needed to become future wives and they did not want to jeopardize their chances of securing that role. She did admit that there were a few exceptions.

Perhaps Lynchburg College women fell into the remaining sixty percent of women found in Komarovsky’s study who were not afraid to show their intelligence. As illustrated by the following graph, many of the women surveyed continued their education beyond the bachelor level with many of the women reporting that they had completed their master’s degrees, and some even their doctorate.

![Graph showing percentage of advanced degrees](image)

It should be noted that because of the high number of LC women who went into the teaching profession, and while many women may have needed to take additional classes for

---

51 Friedan, 165.
52 Friedan, 369.
53 Friedan, 165.
54 Lynchburg College Alumnae Survey 2006, Questions 8 and 10.
licensing requirements, the important thing to remember is that these women continued to work for many years outside the home. They could have selected other professions, those not requiring further educational requirements; from these statistics it suggests that a significant number of LC women decided to make the choice of educational advancement for their own benefit. These results can also be used to refute Friedan's assumption that women only attended college merely to find a husband and to prepare themselves for domestic servitude.

Friedan was correct in pointing out the discrimination that many postwar women faced as a result of their gender. One interviewee told the story of how she went to the University of Virginia to obtain her master's degree and for the first time she encountered gender prejudice. The University of Virginia, during that time in the 1960's, was still an all male institution with the exception of the graduate programs. While attending Lynchburg College, she had never experienced the feeling of being inferior but at the University of Virginia, "men hated you because you were a woman, and you were in their school." She went on to say how young women had to go around the campus in groups to avoid being harassed and threatened. The women were told they were allowed to attend the university because they were "tokens." After coming from a coeducational environment where instructors had adopted a "hands-off" kind of attitude towards a student's academic decisions and one that allowed students to think independently, she was not prepared for what she experienced in a predominately single-sex male institution.

55 Lynchburg College Alumnae Survey 2006, Question 10.
56 Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #9 October 2, 2006.
Marriage

Popular culture of the postwar years oftentimes painted a picture of marital bliss. It would appear from most accounts that almost everyone in the 1950's got married and started a family soon afterwards. Marriage ages as young as seventeen or eighteen won the approval of family advisors like Walter Stokes, who was the author of the 1948 book, *Modern Pattern for Marriage*. He stated that marriage had a stabilizing effect on young lives. In the 1950's, even parents condoned youthful marriage. Psychiatrist Sidonie M. Gruenberg further declared that it was not unheard of for a girl not married or with marriage plans not already in place by the time she was twenty to face a life of being alone.57 Friedan made the statement to her readers, “By the end of the 1950’s, the average marriage age of women in America dropped to 20, and was still dropping, into the teens.”58

However, in accordance with information found in the U. S. Census Bureau’s records it would seem these youthful marriages were the exceptions instead of the norm. In 1940, the average age for women to marry was 21.5. The age did drop by 1947 to 20.5, but remained constant until 1973 when it climbed once again to the age of 21.59 The average age of first marriages never dropped into the teens as Friedan reported.60

57 Weiss, 23.
58 Friedan, 12.
60 Friedan, 16.
According to results taken from the LC Survey, Lynchburg College women who obtained degrees waited to marry until they were older and perhaps more mature.61

It is important to remember that in the early 1950's, sometimes students were as young as sixteen when they first started college. Therefore, many LC women, as previously reported, had the opportunity to work, apply their educational skills, and pursue some level of independence in order to find their own identity if they were so inclined before marriage. Although many LC women did marry much earlier, some even in their teens as Friedan reported, the averages suggest this trend did not hold true for the majority of the women. According to personal accounts given by several of the LC interviewees, a minority of women they knew were already married or married before completing their degrees at Lynchburg College. Based on these verbal accounts, it is important to note that at least some women after marriage felt strongly enough about their education and made it a priority. Ninety-eight percent of the Lynchburg College women surveyed did eventually marry.62

One interesting note is that Lynchburg College women did seem to validate the divorce patterns that popular culture stated. According to data collected by the US census bureau, divorce rates remained constant during the 1950's. According to these government findings, divorce rates started to climb in the later half of the 1960's. Lynchburg College women seemed

---

61 Lynchburg College Alumnae Survey 2006, Question 11.
62 Ibid.
to reflect that same pattern as shown by the following graph as rates rose sharply beginning in 1965.\footnote{Lynchburg College Alumnae Survey 2006, Question 11.} These patterns could reflect the new social standard of acceptance of divorce as well as the fact that more women were gaining their economic independence as dual-income earning families started to also be more wide-spread.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{LC_women_divorced_graph.png}
\caption{\textbf{\% LC Women Divorced 1st Husband}}
\end{figure}

\textbf{On Being a Housewife and Mother}

Even though the connotation of “housewife” often still evokes pictures of June Cleaver in her spotless kitchen baking a homemade pie with perfectly coiffed hair and heels, Lynchburg College women for the most part were proud to be considered a “housewife.” Many interviewees laughed at the humor found in such a portrayal and confirmed that the image of themselves and the women they knew were far different from the one portrayed by “June.” Eighty-seven percent of the women who responded said they considered themselves a housewife/homemaker at least during some period in their life with seventy-three percent acknowledging that they were fulfilled by the profession.\footnote{Lynchburg College Alumnae Survey 2006, Questions 20-21.} The interviewer in this study did not ask the respondents if they were “totally” fulfilled as housewives as did Friedan who reported that sixty percent of those in
her study reported that they were not totally satisfied. It would appear that such a question could be considered somewhat coercive, further resulting in biased data. One LC interviewee confided that she would not have traded the eight year period she took off from paid employment to stay home with her children for anything. In fact, if she could do it all over again she would do the same thing. Of those Lynchburg College women who decided to return to work after having children, the average age of their youngest child was 6.8 when they chose to return to the work force. Furthermore, seventy-one percent stated that they returned to work on a full-time basis.

After marriage, society perpetuated the belief that it was "odd" if a couple did not immediately start a family. In fact, one way a woman could prove her femininity was to have a child. Partly as a result of this propaganda, the population of America grew by 18.5 percent during the 1950's because women were told that the only path to true femininity was in raising a child and being a homemaker. Friedan stated that statisticians were surprised at the increase in numbers of babies born among college educated women—these women were now having four to six children instead of two. It should be noted that she did not mention who the statisticians were or make any reference to their qualifications.

According to a census conducted by the US Government, even though family size in American did increase between the years of 1940 to 1957, families averaged only 3.7 children. Of course there were exceptions across America that recorded families having more children than that number. Some Lynchburg College alumnae reported they had as many as five

65 Friedan, 345.
66 Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #10, October 22, 2006.
70 Miller and Nowak, 155.
71 Friedan, 12.
72US Census Data, Online posting 24 October 2006 http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/review/mmwrhtml/mm4847a1.htm
children. However, the important fact to remember is that these families were the exception and should not be made representative for all college educated women. The survey data revealed that the average number of children for this study fell far below the national averages reported, but even more importantly they did not come close to the figures reported by Friedan. Lynchburg College women over the twenty year period reported having on the average 2.5 children.

**The Media**

Although it would be hard to imagine any mother who had four to six children having the time to critically read a magazine or watch a television program, Friedan declared the media was perhaps the worst culprit in spreading the propaganda of the feminine mystique. The media prevented women from seeking their own identity on a maturity level to which they were capable of aspiring. The image created by television, movies, novels, and magazines was that women were being taught to conform to a certain mold. She believed the image of women portrayed by the media was one that represented all women as young and almost "childlike" creatures. Young mothers only appeared to be happy at home with their babies because this was the picture presented by society as the way things should be personified. Friedan chastised the media by saying there was nothing they offered women to read or view that pertained to a woman's intellect. She spoke of a personal encounter she had on one occasion during a meeting with other magazine writers. Since the other writers were mostly men, they argued that housewives were not interested in the public issues of the day nor were they concerned with international affairs.

74 Friedan, 7.
These male writers believed that women were not capable of understanding satire and other thought-provoking concepts. According to Friedan, male writers believed as a woman’s education increased, her interest in educational matters appeared to be focused more on her children, not on herself. Friedan wanted to know “when did women decide to give up the world and go back home?” She believed that a great many women writers dropped their careers after the war giving men the opportunity to write articles for women’s magazines. This travesty thus helped to further perpetuate the housewife-mother image. Since male editors were primarily concerned with the economic well-being of their magazines, they concentrated more on pleasing the advertisers, who wanted to introduce their newest products and appliances, while paying little attention to the women who read their magazines.

The four leading women’s magazines of the day were Ladies Home Journal, McCall’s, Good Housekeeping, and Woman’s Home Companion. Friedan told her readers in the Feminine Mystique when the magazine editors, who were predominately male, ran stories of women who were heroines, they were shown “usually marching toward some goal or vision of their own, struggling with some problem of work or the world, when they found their man.” Historians Charles and Mary Beard, like Friedan, had long criticized the magazine male editors for their biased views. It is important to remember that the Beards were noted for their activists’ viewpoints concerning social issues with Mary Beard being a prominent suffragist and historian. Perhaps such opinions could lend themselves to preconceived ideas about what was written in magazines by the male editors. Other historians like Douglas Miller, note that

75 Ibid., 29-32.
76 Friedan, 47-48.
77 Friedan, 32.
78 Ibid., 33.
magazines portrayed the working mother as a serious danger to her family and children—such was a story that *Life* magazine ran in one of its monthly issues.⁸¹ Miller used this example to illustrate how the media manipulated women just as Friedan claimed.

Although Friedan and others have deemed the magazine sector of the media as a repressive force against women in the postwar years, Joanne Meyerowitz discovered through her own research, evidence that directly challenged Friedan’s arguments. Meyerowitz discovered that over sixty percent of the articles that appeared in magazines during the postwar era actually praised women for their individual achievements.⁸² She further stated that the magazines she sampled actually celebrated women in both domestic and non-domestic roles.⁸³ In her study, she discovered another important statistic that previous researchers had ignored or simply chosen to overlook. She found that articles in the 1950’s actually focused less on domestic issues than they had done in the 1930’s and 1940’s.⁸⁴

Jessica Weiss relied on interviews she conducted with American families and concluded that postwar culture was far more complex than once portrayed. She stated in her findings, much like Meyerowitz, that Friedan ignored the fact that many magazines exalted both domestic and non-domestic roles of women.⁸⁵

Nancy Walker was another researcher who found that contrary to what is now deemed popular opinion, the editors of women’s magazines after World War II were careful to listen to what their readers wanted from their particular magazine. Many of them frequently conducted polls of their readers or encouraged questions from them to keep apprised of what the public

⁸¹ Miller and Nowak, 164-165.
⁸² Meyerowitz, 1458.
⁸³ Ibid.
⁸⁴ Ibid., 1478.
⁸⁵ Weiss, 54.
wanted to read. Walker also pointed out that most magazines during this time were geared towards the white middle or upper class woman. She found that although women’s magazines did emphasize domestic responsibilities many of them regularly published book reviews and articles on public figures and oftentimes gave an insight to countries all over the world.

The media of the 1950’s and early 1960’s did not reflect women’s interest in world affairs but concentrated more on the family unit of the United States and how it “should” be remembered. If a person is so inclined, they can still catch the reruns of Happy Days, with Fonzie and Richie “hanging out” at the local “soda shop” with Rock n’ Roll music playing in the background on the jukebox. It was images like this that started to appear in the early 1970’s and caused nostalgia for the “good life” of the 1950’s and early 1960’s. For example, movies like American Graffiti and The Way We Were, or television sitcoms like Laverne and Shirley recreated an idyllic world icon of youth and innocence. Many of the earlier television shows that were popular in the 1950’s did not become widespread until a later date as more and more families began to purchase the new technological marvel known as television.

One Lynchburg College woman stated that shows like Father Knows Best, or Leave it to Beaver, were not popular with her family since they did not own a TV. Several women reported they still, on occasion, enjoy watching reruns of these programs and oftentimes miss those days of long ago. Andy Griffith is still a favorite and one woman reported that she and her husband try to watch it daily. Another woman stated that these shows did portray life for the most part as she remembered it to be and believed the youth during that time showed far more

---

86 Walker, 4-5.
87 Ibid., 7.
88 Ibid., 18.
89 Miller and Nowak, 4.
90 Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #11, October 2, 2006.
91 Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #12, October 18, 2006.
respect for their parents than they do now.\textsuperscript{92} Another interviewee in support of this line of thought said she was influenced by her own moral upbringing and the media could have done little to sway her convictions.\textsuperscript{93} These stories seem to once again show the strong impact that religion made on this culture and the strong inherit beliefs that were associated with this time period.

\textit{Managing the Finances}

However, when it came to managing the family finances it was interesting to note that perhaps “Father did not know best” as the title of the popular sitcom of this period may have suggested to its TV viewers. The majority of Lynchburg College women reported that they either managed the family budget themselves or jointly with their husbands.\textsuperscript{94}

This data certainly painted a different picture from the one Friedan told her readers in 1963. She relayed this story, printed in \textit{McCall’s} magazine in their June 1955 edition, about the housewife who tried to be independent, but discovered that by expressing her liberation she

\textsuperscript{92} Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #13. October 19, 2006.
\textsuperscript{93} Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #14. October 19, 2006.
\textsuperscript{94} Lynchburg College Alumnae Survey 2006, Question 25.
almost lost her husband. The story began with the picture of a woman balancing her checkbook by herself and arguing with her spouse. The wife soon learned that she could be losing her husband to the “‘helpless little widow’” in the neighborhood whose main appeal was that she could not think for herself—she needed a man to help her. The woman’s friend advised her to fake helplessness herself. The friend assured her that was the only way to get her husband away from the widow. Since the wife was a college graduate and had always considered herself independent, she struggled with having to resort to such drastic measures in order to win back the affections of her husband and release him from the clutches of the vulnerable widow. Still in the end, the wife succumbed to her friend’s suggestion and pretended to be frightened by a burglar (although she was fully aware that the noise she heard was simply a tiny mouse). “‘She lay still in the soft bed, smiling sweet, secret satisfaction, scarcely touched with guilt.’”

The Lynchburg College women interviewed told another story. One interviewee, when asked why her husband handled the family finances, stated that she did math all day long at her job and believed it was only fair for him to do the numbers at home. She further declared that she was quite capable of handling the checkbook, but her husband had more time at home than she so he adopted that particular duty in their family.

Another interviewee told of an experience she had one day in the early 1960's when she tried to open a checking account at the local bank in her community. During this period it was quite common for banks to offer incentive gifts, such as mixing bowls, to prospective customers if they would open an account with them. She visited the bank and told the bank representative that she would like for her name to appear first on the checks. She was promptly informed by the representative that her request would not be possible since checks always had the husband’s

95 Friedan, 41.
96 Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #15, October 18, 2006.
name listed first. At this point she went to the bank manager—after that meeting with the manager she left the bank with her name listed first on the checking account and with her mixing bowls.\footnote{Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #16, October 2, 2006.} This story points to two points that should be considered. The fact that the gift offered by the bank to their new customers was mixing bowls could have implied that their target market for new accounts was women. Secondly, this story suggests that LC women were independent, decisive, and were willing to get what they wanted. This narrative once again proved that most LC women did not merely accept what society deemed as the recognized “truth” when it came to the role of gender norms and responsibilities.

*Comparing Lynchburg College Alumnae with Friedan’s Findings*

It would appear that most of Friedan’s arguments used by her to describe postwar women were not applicable to the Lynchburg College alumnae surveyed. Most LC women attended college because they chose to, they were supported by their instructors, and the majority of the women surveyed did eventually marry but did so after graduation. Lynchburg alumnae did contribute to the world’s population growth, but certainly not to the extent to which Friedan reported. The survey also revealed that Lynchburg College did believe in conformity by its students, but again a majority of the respondents were positive on this point and felt no animosity towards these rules. The vast majority of Lynchburg College women did go into the workforces however, many did so after their children were older. The respondents also showed they were quite capable of managing the family finances and did not hesitate in assuming that role in their family. Perhaps, the key points in this study revolve around the fact that Lynchburg College women, unlike the women in Friedan’s book, made their own choices and were not bound by the rigid societal demands that Friedan maintained were the norms of that period.
Evaluating Friedan

One must question why Friedan chose to present women in such a negative and submissive light when stories like those told by the Lynchburg College women represented the strength and individuality of college-educated women. Carl Friedan, Betty’s husband was noted as saying in a 1970’s interview that he did not like the way his wife projected her image as a “shackled” housewife. In reality, Carl Friedan said he had paid for a full-time maid in order for his wife to work during the marriage either as a full time or free lance journalist. He stated that Betty “seldom was a wife and a mother” as she declared to her readers. It is important to insert here that Horowitz and Friedan were noted for their controversial discussions, but in order to fairly represent both sides for the sake of historical integrity his opinion was included in this report. Friedan, according to historian Susan Ware, gave a more positive version of the Smith College survey results to the Smith Quarterly in 1961. Yet in her book she presented a negative image causing Ware to suggest that, “‘if Friedan had stuck with her original interpretation of the Smith questionnaires … she would have painted a more accurate picture of what middle-class American women faced in the 1950’s.’”

This fact was reiterated by a woman who had worked with Friedan on interpreting the original survey results. Although this woman believed there was evidence to support some of Friedan’s feminine mystique theories, for the most part the Smith graduates reported they were satisfied with their lives. One would assume that Friedan, as a feminist, would have wanted to present women in a positive manner rather than attempt to prove their weaknesses and vulnerability. While reviewing the Smith college website for prospective students it seems a bit

98 Daniel Horowitz, Betty Friedan and the Making of The Feminine Mystique: The American Left, the Cold War, and Modern Feminism (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), 154.
99 Ibid., 193-194.
100 Ibid., 209.
some historians have criticized her for, actually enabled her to achieve things for women that could not have been accomplished without her driving personality.\textsuperscript{105}

**Conclusion**

It is critical to review and understand the motives behind the societal mores that occurred in the years of World War II and the twenty year period that followed. Most historical accounts of women during this period have centered on the “Rosie the Riveter” and the “June Cleaver” stereotypes. “Rosie” was the image that represented the strength and independence of women in America during World War II while “June” embodied the middle-class suburban housewife dream perpetuated during the postwar years. The opportunities that were afforded to women during World War II created a stepping stone and perhaps a watershed mark for needed reform and civil rights for women, but the years that followed according to most historical accounts attempted to return them to the domestic icons of the past.

Whether this survey validates or refutes the stereotypical woman of the postwar years, this researcher can only state that the information contained in this Lynchburg College report is as accurate and free of biases as one can humanly control. It is important to remember that approximately fifty years separates today and the days when these wonderfully supportive alumnae graduated from Lynchburg College. It is important to recognize that time does have a way of erasing negative memories. Likewise, even though the number of survey responses was high, the small sampling and circumstances due to time constraints for follow-up oral interviews had to be limited. A more in-depth study should be conducted to further validate the findings reported.

\textsuperscript{105}Horowitz saw Betty Friedan’s radical Marxist views noted in his book as a contributing cause for the underlying purpose of *The Feminine Mystique*. 
Regardless of any inaccuracies that could have occurred in this study, from most accounts Lynchburg College women were proud, and are still proud of the way their education at a small southern college in central Virginia has enabled them to pursue their dreams and goals. Their education at Lynchburg College has allowed the majority of them to live satisfying and productive lives. Perhaps the demographics of Lynchburg College or the fact that Lynchburg College was coeducational from its inception played a vital role in the conflicting findings reported between the two surveys. Alternatively, perchance, the reality is far simpler in that I have no books to sell. What this review does reinforce is the importance of having an open mind and learning the truth—especially when it comes to something as important as our history. Betty Friedan died in the early months of 2006. Since much of her life was plagued with controversy, may she finally “rest in peace.”
Appendix

Copy of Survey Questions:

*Senior History Thesis Survey Questions*

1. In what year did you complete your degree at Lynchburg College? _______
   What was your major? ____________________________________________

2. What was your primary reason for attending college?
   a. To find a husband
   b. To prepare for a career
   c. Because I was interested in learning
   d. Other, please specify__________________________________________

3. In thinking about the types of classes you wanted to take, did your instructors at Lynchburg College encourage or discourage you in your selection?
   a. Encouraged
   b. Discouraged

4. If they discouraged you from taking certain classes, was it because you were a female student?
   a. Yes
   b. No

5. Did you ever feel that the rules applied to the female students were more stringent than those applied to the male students?
   a. Yes
   b. No

6. Did you work, outside the home, after you graduated from LC?
   a. Yes
   b. No – skip to question #8

7. If you were employed after graduating from LC, in what position, where, and for how long?__________

8. Did you ever return to college to get another or higher degree?
   a. Yes – Classes taken or higher degree(s) obtained_____________________
   b. No – skip to question #11

9. If you returned to college, where did you attend school and when?

10. Why did you decide to return college?
    a. Needed additional credentialing for my job
    b. Was interested in learning
    c. Changed careers and needed additional expertise
d. Other—Please specify_____________________________________________________

11. Have you ever been married?
   a. Yes - at what age?__________ Did you remain married to this man? _____
   b. No – skip to Question #22

12. How did you meet your husband?
   a. He was an old high school sweetheart
   b. He also attended Lynchburg College
   c. I met him after graduation
   d. Other, please specify_____________________________________________________

13. Did you have children?
   a. Yes, how many__________?
   b. No – skip to question #20

14. Did you work outside the home after getting married, but before having children?
   a. Yes
   b. No

15. After having children, did you work outside the home?
   a. Yes
   b. No – skip to question #19

16. If you did return to outside employment soon after your children were born, did you work full or part-time?
   a. Full-time
   b. Part-time

17. Did you feel guilty for leaving your children when you worked outside the home?
   a. Yes
   b. No

18. If you chose to return to outside employment when your children were older, what was the age of your youngest child when you returned to the work force? _______________________

19. If you were not employed after being married and/or having children was it primarily because of:
   a. Choice
   b. Job Opportunities were not available in my field of study
   c. Husband would have objected
   d. Peer Pressure not to work
   e. Other – Please elaborate___________________________________________________

20. If you did not work outside the home, did you consider yourself a “housewife?”
   a. Yes
   b. No
21. Did you find the role of housewife personally fulfilling?
   a. Yes
   b. No

22. If you were employed, after completing your degree, did you consider your employment primarily a job to pay expenses or did you consider your employment a career and a path towards future advancement?
   a. Job
   b. Career
   c. NA – was not employed

23. Did you vote regularly during the 50’s and 60’s?
   a. Yes
   b. No

24. Did you feel free to discuss your political views openly with your spouse and or friends during those years?
   a. Yes
   b. No

25. Did you or your husband manage the family finances?
   a. Self
   b. Husband
   c. Responsibility was shared

26. Knowing what you know now, would you have gone to college?
   a. Yes
   b. No

27. Do you believe that the role of women in today’s society has changed significantly between the time that you graduated from Lynchburg College to the present day?
   a. Yes, if so, in what ways
   b. No
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>e</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Copy of Cover Letter Sent With Survey Requests:

My name is Dinah Watson and I am a senior history student at Lynchburg College. I am quite sure you all remember how hard projects and papers were back when you attended Lynchburg College. Some things never change and for my senior thesis I am researching what history has taught us for decades concerning women and the social aspect of their lives during the post World War II years of the 1950’s and 1960’s. As part of my research, I am surveying women who graduated from Lynchburg College during this time period and would appreciate your help with my study.

The attached survey should only take a few minutes of your time to complete and all responses will be held in the strictest confidence. However, if you would be available to talk with me confidentially either by phone or in person, I would be most grateful. Individual interviews will play a vital role in my research. Your personal reminiscences could prove most helpful, and if you would be willing to speak with me please let me know how I might contact you using the space provided below.

I would like to mention that I am a non-traditional student, born in the 1950’s, so my interest in this topic is special. Thank you in advance for your response to these questions. In order to meet the deadline for my paper, I would appreciate hearing from you no later than October 9, 2006.

Contact Information:

Name_____________________________________
Telephone__________________________________
E-Mail Address______________________________
Best Time to Contact You______________________

Thank you so much for your time and prompt response!

Sincerely,

Dinah Watson
Watson_dh@students.lynhburg.edu
434-933-8795 (h)

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey please contact

Dr. Phil Stump in the History Department at Lynchburg College 434-544-8391
Bibliography

Alumni Data collected from Alumni Office at Lynchburg College.


Lynchburg College Alumna Survey 2006, Question 2.

Lynchburg College Alumna Survey 2006, Question 3.

Lynchburg College Alumna Survey 2006, Question 6.


Lynchburg College Alumna Survey 2006, Question 11.

Lynchburg College Alumna Survey 2006, Question 12.


Lynchburg College Alumna Survey 2006, Question 16.

Lynchburg College Alumna Survey 2006, Question 18.

Lynchburg College Alumna Survey 2006, Question 25.


Lynchburg College Jubilee 1903-1978.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #1, October 18, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #2, October 19, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #3, October 19, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee References #4, October 18, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee References #5 & 6, October 18, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #7, October 18, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #8, October 18, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #9, October 02, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #10, October 22, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #11, October 22, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #12, October 18, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #13, October 19, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #14, October 19, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #15, October 18, 2006.

Lynchburg College Personal Interviewee Reference #16, October 02, 2006.


*Mona Lisa Smile* directed by Mike Newell, 120 min., Columbia Pictures, 2003. DVD.


Pittas, Dr. Peggy, Phone Interview October 26, 2006.


US Census Data, Online posting 24 October 2006 [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/review/mmwrhtml/mm4847a1.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/review/mmwrhtml/mm4847a1.htm)

