

Criminology 321/Week 13 Writing Up Your Research



The Home Stretch

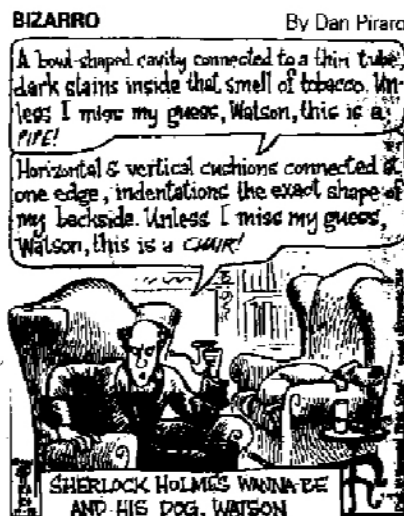
- You are in the home stretch
- Course web page gives you report guidelines
- Today's lecture shares other tricks of the trade [neither it nor text Chapter 13 will be examined]

Know Your Audience

- Always consider your audience
- As the guidelines for your final paper suggest:
 - “[D]o keep in mind that this is a methods course, which means we are more interested in the methodological decisions you make and why you make them more than any connections to the literature. This means that you will have a much smaller “introduction” and much larger “methods” section than would be the case in an article you were trying to publish.”

An “Interesting” Frame

- Making valid observations isn’t enough
- The Sherlock wannabe’s observations are true, but who cares?
- Make it “interesting”



An “Interesting” Frame

- A qualitative interview study done as a semester-long course project by Patricia Ratel (available on the course web page) is illustrative
- The paper begins with a connection to the literature and her first words underline the importance of her topic and prompt us to read further:

One Day at a Time: Single-Parent Mothers in Academe

file:///E:/Pahys1/homepage/Ratel2.htm

One Day at a Time: Single-Parent Mothers In Academe

Tricia Ratel

Single parenthood is becoming increasingly pervasive in Canada. Statistics Canada (1984) reports that the number of lone-parent families increased by 10% in the preceding decade. Although some of these families are headed by males, the vast majority (82.6%) are headed by females. Indeed, as a demographic category, "single mothers" comprise 11.3% of the total population, and every indicator suggests this will continue. Until recently, very little was known or understood regarding the dynamics of their particular niche, but recent studies have enhanced our knowledge in a variety of areas.

Statistically speaking, the majority of single mothers in Canada live in poverty. Twenty per cent of all single mothers earn less than \$5,000 per year, while 37% earn less than \$15,000 per year, and these women have the lowest income growth rate in the country (Statistics Canada, 1984, p.5). Norton and Glick (1986) compared single and two parent families on a variety of social and economic variables, and were led to conclude that:

By most objective measures, the vast majority of these families hold a disadvantaged position in society relative to other family groups. They are characterized by a high rate of poverty, a high percentage of minority representation, relatively low education, and a high rate of mobility. In short, they generally have little equity or stature in society and constitute a group with unusually pressing social and economic needs. (p. 16)

Other researchers have examined the economic pressures associated with single motherhood and have demonstrated that a number of factors, unique to today's economic environment, play a distinct role in perpetuating the poverty of these women. In most instances it is the woman who is least able to support the family, and yet, in eight out of ten cases it is the woman who assumes this responsibility. Inflation, high unemployment, job discrimination, lack of prior job experience, rising costs of adequate childcare, and inconsistent or non-existent child support all contribute to the feminization of poverty (Grief, 1986).

In many instances, single mothers are maintained solely by the state, and their existence is meager at best. In other cases women seek employment and some degree of self-sufficiency. However, Pett and Vaughn-Cole (1986) suggest that most single mothers acquire low status positions because of socialization processes and are fearful of taking the risks associated with pursuit of an education, career opportunities, or non-traditional jobs that would prove more lucrative. The researchers highlight this as one of their most troubling findings as it implies a *cul-de-sac* of serious and continued economic deprivation. They argue for changes in both public policy and public attitudes to facilitate the development of educational

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An “Interesting” Frame

- Ratel combines
 - Phenomenon becoming more pervasive
 - Little is known
- But note three other things going on in her introduction as well
 - Setting “hooks”
 - Setting a pattern of statement and justification
 - Narrowing the focus

Setting “hooks”

- The introduction sets up your paper
- “Hooks” are the relevant elements that guide you down the path to your research by “baiting” the reader to recognize certain factors

One Day at a Time: Single-Parent Mothers In Academe

Tricia Ratel

The welfare dead end hook

The economic hook

The childcare hook

The gender hook

Single parenthood is becoming increasingly pervasive in Canada. Statistics Canada (1984) reports that the number of lone-parent families increased by 10% in the preceding decade. Although some of these families are headed by males, the vast majority (82.6%) are headed by females. Indeed, as a demographic category, "single mothers" comprises 11.3% of the total population, and every indicator suggests this will continue. Until recently, very little was known or understood regarding the dynamics of their particular niche, but recent studies have enhanced our knowledge in a variety of areas.

Statistically speaking, the majority of single mothers in Canada live in poverty. Twenty per cent of all single mothers earn less than \$5,000 per year, while 37% earn less than \$15,000 per year, and these women have the lowest income growth rate in the country (Statistics Canada, 1984, p.5). Norton and Glick (1986) compared single and two parent families on a variety of social and economic variables, and were led to conclude that:

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training programs and the provision of adequate financial support and childcare systems for the economically insecure and depressed single mother (p.110).

Sanik and Maudlin (1986) have analyzed the role of work in the lives of single mothers – and particularly the impact of combined job and home life responsibilities – by comparing singles to marrieds, and parents to non-parents. They found that single mothers were particularly at risk for multiple role strain and reduced levels of emotional and physical well-being:

It comes as no surprise that employed single mothers have the least amount of time to spend on household tasks, child care, personal care, and volunteer work ... In order to meet the demands of the family it is the single employed mother alone who sacrifices time in personal care activities including rest and sleep. (p.56)

Burden (1986) examined the same issue and found identical results. She also found impacts on rest of psychological and emotional strain experienced by these women, they nonetheless exhibited high levels of job satisfaction and family hook ties of absenteeism. She suggests that an understanding of the varying time demands plus stress due to hook of their marital status and employment could be of benefit to employers, and that such information should be utilized to improve multiple roles hook ment for these employees.

Other researchers have focussed on a variety of psychological and human challenges that face single-parent families. For example, Hill (1986) examined structural differences between intact, widowed, and single-parent families, and noted that single-parent families lack the personnel to fill all the normally expected positions of a family. Therefore, extra burdens are placed on the remaining family members who must compensate with increased effort to accomplish tasks such as physical maintenance, social control, and tension management (p.28).

Wells Gladow and Ray (1986) found that positive adjustment to single parenthood was directly associated with the amount of social support received. Specifically, the authors found that friends and family contribute significantly to the emotional and physical well-being of single mothers. The 'network support' of friends eases emotional distress created by feelings of loneliness and isolation. They found this form of support to be of greater importance than the pursuit of love relationships, which the researchers suggest are over-emphasized in our culture, and can be detrimental to the adjustment process. Family support usually takes the forms of financial aid, assistance with housing, childcare and other tangible problems. The researchers conclude that a single parent with both forms of support will be better hook More on support ssary emotional and physical adjustments associated with this life transition.

Hanson (1986) undertook a multivariate analysis of factors associated with well-being among single mothers. Broad social support networks and communication skills were significantly affected by the hook Effects on the child management. The researcher noted particularly the inter-relatedness of physical and mental health, and that good health in the hook with good health in the child. Hanson states,

While single parent families experience many problems they are not necessarily less able to manage them than other family configurations. Single parent families can be healthy environments in which to live. (p.131)

Not surprisingly, many researchers have focused on the effects of single parenting on the children. Heatherington, Cox, and Cox (1979), Kelly and Wallerstein (1980), and Blecham (1980) all have examined the emotional and behavioral problems associated with family dis-equilibrium following marital separation, and concluded that although these adjustments can be traumatic, they do not produce permanent disabilities for the children. Furthermore, the adjustments of children are closely associated with the adjustments of the mother. The pertinent factors associated with

Setting “Hooks”

- These set the stage for the study
- Ratel ends her introduction with a statement of what her research will involve
- Every element has been justified; every element makes sense; every word follows from what has been written before

healthy readjustment include the general emotional availability of the parent, the ongoing level of family conflict, the ability of the parent to be warm and affectionate, the parent's personal support systems, financial stress, and the presence of additional stresses.

Finally, Duvall (1986) examined the impact of single-parent families on children to determine if these children "grew up a little faster" than other children. The findings indicated that this was the case to a certain extent, although the children did not have any more chores than the comparison group. However, more than half the children were "latch key kids" and it was felt that, because of this, the mothers were reluctant to allocate further responsibilities because of the intimate and confidante relationships that emanate from such circumstances. In this regard the children did "grow up a little faster."

Although the research in this area offers insight to the phenomenon of single parenthood, an investigation of the unique experiences of single mothers attending university has apparently not been undertaken. The present research represented an attempt to remedy this shortcoming. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to undertake an exploratory examination of the single mother experience in the academic context, by investigating a sample of women's lives in terms of their financial situations, their physical and emotional well-being, their social support systems, their academic experience, and the effects of their circumstances upon their children.

Methodology

The Women

As the research undertaken was exploratory in nature, a purposive sampling technique was utilized. This proved to be advantageous for several reasons. First, I was able to interview women whom I knew and, as a relationship of trust had been previously established, the participants were willing to grant me access to their lives. As I share their status, I believe they felt comfortable discussing their situations with me. Knowing that I had similar experiences gave the women confidence in my ability to report on the phenomenon and encouraged open disclosure.

The second reason a purposive sampling method was chosen was to ensure some variation within such a small sample. The ages of the women ranged from twenty-four to forty-one. Three of the women had one child, two were rearing three children, and the remainder had two children. One of the women had just started her first semester at university, while another woman had been in attendance for six years; the other women had been pursuing their education between two and four years. Furthermore, the women represented a variety of faculties, including business, education, psychology, criminology, anthropology, and fine arts. The experience of single motherhood also varied. One woman had been separated only a year, another had been on her own for twelve years.

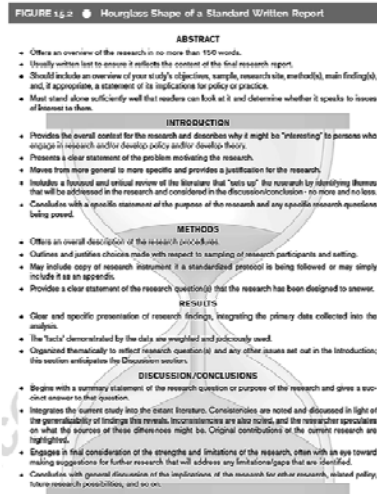
A total of nine women were approached and agreed to be interviewed. One interview was deleted from the analysis as the process was treated lightly and the resulting responses were flippant and dubious at best. Another respondent was lost because of concerns with confidentiality and the possible repercussions of involvement in the study. The analysis below focuses on the remaining seven participants.

The Interviews

Interviews were conducted within the women's homes, and each lasted between three and four hours. The interviews proved to be an emotionally turbulent process for the women. It is difficult to encapsulate, in a few brief lines, the underlying essence of the interviews except to state, without

“Hourglass” shape

- Note also how Ratel’s paper is following the classic “hourglass” shape for a paper
 - Starting off broadly
 - Narrowing into a specific focus
 - [Later it should broaden out again]



Methods

- The challenge is now set, but how did she proceed?
- She begins by telling us she interviewed some women
- But that’s not enough; we need to know enough to critically evaluate her choices. She delivers:

healthy readjustment include the general emotional availability of the parent, the ongoing level of family conflict, the ability of the parent to be warm and affectionate, the parent's personal support systems, financial stress, and the presence of additional stresses.

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Methods

- Ratel is explaining her decisions
- Note how she starts off making the connection between her sampling strategy and her objectives; consistent with the idea we learned that there is no one "best" sampling technique: "It [always] depends."

Methods

- Makes a connection with validity issues
 - Notes how her familiarity with the women (and their familiarity with her), plus her similar status, all should combine to promote validity.
- Or is she just being a Pollyana on this?
 - Saying it should be valid and actually having it so are two different things. Can't tell at the moment; shall put our concerns on hold until later.

Methods

- Follows with a description of the sample
 - Notes age; number of children; experience at university; declared major; time since separation or divorce
 - Gives some sense of the diversity
- Notes that two respondents were deleted
 - Gives reasons: one flippant; the other concerned about confidentiality

Methods

- We learn some things about Ratel through those revelations. She is:
 - forthright about what she is doing
 - not a Polyanna about rapport; she recognizes flippant responding when she sees it
 - lives up to her ethical obligations – participants with concerns need not participate
- That's *who*; next is discussion of *how*

One Day at a Time: Single-Parent Mothers in Academia

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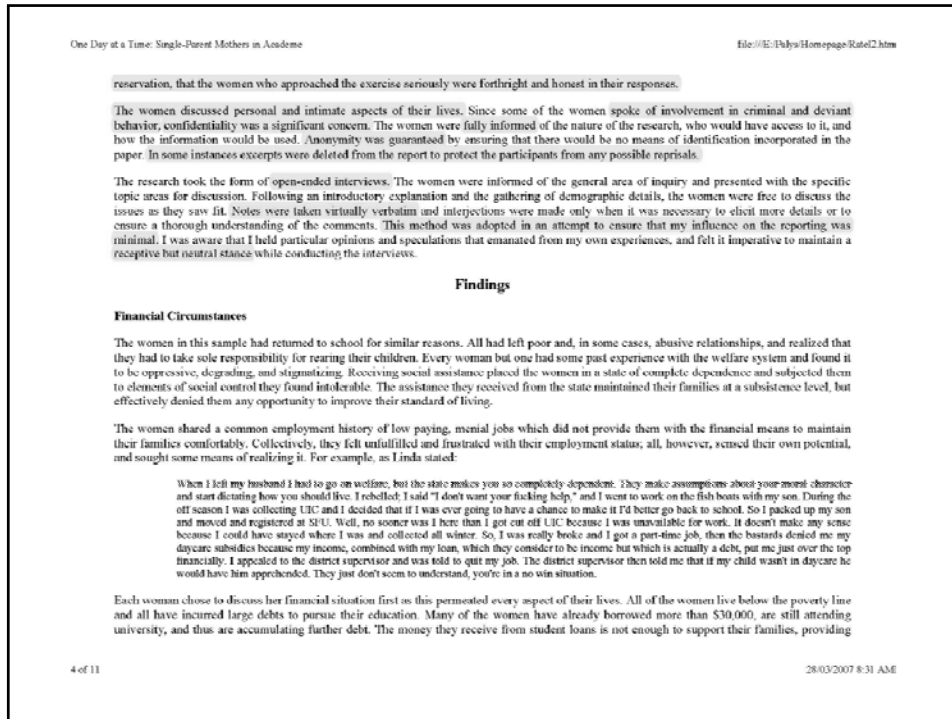
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Methods

- Again we learn as much about Ratel as we do about her study.
- She mentions her belief that all went well and the facts are consistent with that view:
 - Superficial interviews do not take and evasive respondents do not talk for 3-4 hours at a time.
 - Also, the kinds of information revealed show trust on the part of respondents

Methods

- And Ratel's description shows why she is deserving of that trust
 - She lets us know how she approached informed consent
 - She tells us what she did to protect her participants re confidentiality
 - She lets us know what she did to minimize bias and maximize validity

Results

- The way you present your results will vary depending on the specifics of your research
- Give yourself enough time to allow your paper to find its form
- In Ratel's case, the approach was to identify themes and summarize her findings in relation to those themes

Results

- The themes she includes are:
 - Financial circumstances
 - Physical and emotional stress
 - The children
 - Social support
 - Academics
- And where have we seen all these before?
All were hooks; “academics” is her new contribution

Results

- Note how Ratel mixes her own words and those of respondents. The exact mixture of these will vary among researchers; many would argue for more
- Note correspondence between Ratel’s characterization and quotes she offers as evidence
 - Strong correspondence creates confidence in the reader; if tenuous, it undermines credibility

them with just enough to pay for tuition, housing, and food. The women have to work to provide their children with the necessities of school supplies, adequate clothing, dental checkups and the luxuries of extra-curricular activities, birthday parties, and Christmas presents. Ironically, the need for employment extends the length of time they have to attend the university, which means incurring even greater debt.

Employment has other ramifications that warrant discussion. The women are struggling to alter the dependent and destitute nature of their lives yet, as soon as the women start earning extra income, they can be denied some of the benefits available to them when they are in a completely indigent state. Their income is to be included in their loan applications, thereby possibly reducing the amount they will be given the following semester; this serves to perpetuate the necessity of maintaining employment. They can be denied reduced medical premiums and daycare subsidies, effectively negating any extra income they might be earning. The women find themselves in an economic Catch-22 and feel that their efforts are being thwarted by policies that are internally inconsistent and illogical.

In some instances their economic situation created a degree of frustration and desperation that motivated the women to certain acts of criminal behavior. Most of the women have left income undeclared; some have committed fraud and theft; one turned to selling illicit drugs to make ends meet, and others have maintained relationships with men for financial benefit. For example, Brenda stated,

My debt load is well over \$32,000. To make ends meet I've had to collect welfare illegally while I've been at school. I've worked under the table and collected UIC and I'm terrified Big Brother is going to charge me with fraud. I'm always lying to the state to get by ...The system's fucked; you try your best to get ahead and you have to fight every step of the way. The ironic thing is that I'm no better off than if I was on welfare and I take more risks. The only difference is that the stigma isn't there. It's OK to be a starving student, but you still starve. The really offensive thing is that the system will support you if you want to take a six week accelerated course, but not if you want a career and some options in your life. There's no social support in the system. Last summer, I was so broke, I seriously considered looking. I was so desperate for money, I was stealing food, toilet paper ... and I've developed an amazing capacity for manipulating the phone company, the landlord, the loans department ... It's a total con; after a while you begin to believe what you're saying. You feminizes your poverty by saying you're poor it's a scam, or it's survival. You tap into your poverty and it stases you back in the face. So you tell yourself that you're not really an East End welfare mom; you're a student but it's a false consciousness. You cling to your goal, but at the same time you're aware that there may not be anything out there for you when you're finished. I go downtown and look at the prostitutes and I don't see other women, I see myself and hope that I can stay out of it for another year.

Physical and Emotional Stress

Initially an attempt was made to differentiate between the emotional and physical stresses experienced by the women in this study. This proved to be an impossibility as I quickly discovered that the physical and emotional burdens associated with the women's status were inextricably intertwined and served to exacerbate each other.

All the women interviewed stated emphatically that they were physically exhausted. The multi-faceted nature of their lives, the adoption of three separate and distinct roles (i.e., wage earner, student, and mother) created demands on their time and energy that were difficult to manage. Inevitably, the women sacrificed their own well-being to meet these demands. Collectively, they reported that they are in poor physical health and pointed to lack of sleep, lack of exercise, and inadequate diet as the key contributing factors. The women contend with some anxiety because of their financial situations, but also must face the pressures associated with the academic environment, as well as meeting the challenge of raising their children alone.

There is a distinct cyclical element to this situation in which the inability to cope with the physical demands manifests itself in an inability to deal with the emotional stresses. This in turn takes a toll on their physical well being. As Karen stated:

I was on anti-depressants for the first year I was in school. I came very close to having a nervous breakdown, twice actually. I have a prescription for Valium but I'm trying not to rely on the drugs any more. I live on coffee and cigarettes; I'm always exhausted. After I deal with the kids at night, cook and clean, read bedtime stories, you know ... I have to work until two or three in the morning because it's the only time I have to study. I get up at 5:30 in the morning so I can have a half an hour to myself before the kids get up and I start all over again. Occasionally, I force myself to back off and get some sleep. As soon as the semester starts, I'm counting down the weeks hoping I can make it through to the break. People tell me I don't deal with the stress appropriately, that I should get some exercise and get some more sleep. I know they're right but I have to laugh. Who's got the time? They just don't have a clue what I'm dealing with here.

The women readily admit that they do not cope with the stress well. In most cases they articulated an underlying feeling of panic and a realization that they were barely managing the demands placed upon them. In fact, it appears that any additional stress becomes overwhelming. In one case, a woman became pregnant and suffered an emotional collapse. In another instance, a woman took leave from the university because her ex-husband was attempting to take her children from her. A third woman found herself unable to carry on when her mother became seriously ill. Some of the women have experienced mental and physical breakdowns, and episodes of depression are not uncommon. A majority of the women have resorted at one time or another to various forms of substance use and abuse, including dependencies on alcohol, tranquilizers, cocaine, and marijuana, to temporarily alleviate their stress. Brenda stated:

I'm exhausted. I sleep four or maybe six hours a night, I'm totally unhealthy after two years of school. ... I have no energy. Your whole life, every aspect - emotional, physical, spiritual, and social - is ignored to get through. You tap into them occasionally to prevent yourself from going insane. Every minute of your day is scheduled. I keep telling myself that I have to get the damn degree; when I get it I can be a whole person again. I've had complete emotional and physical breakdowns ... You think you develop coping strategies, you think you're dealing with your stress, but you're just masking it because on a deep hurting emotional level ... you're not coping with it at all.

The Children

In each case the women's children represented one of the primary motivations for pursuing an education. Every woman hoped to offer her children a better lifestyle. This goal incorporates more than financial or material gain; the women also seek a sense of security and a variety of options and opportunities for their children. They cope with their circumstances largely "for" their children; and yet, their circumstances generate a degree of emotional and physical neglect that produces feelings of anxiety, guilt, and remorse.

In reviewing the financial difficulties experienced by the women, it became apparent that the children had to do without most of the luxuries afforded other children. In some instances, it was the necessities that were omitted and this has compelled some women to take drastic measures.

The demands placed on the women often detracted from their parenting skills. Most of the women stated they did not have the time or energy to manage their children effectively, and that this resulted in a degree of emotional neglect. In two cases, this neglect had manifested itself in behavioral problems. For example, one child is a chronic bed wetter at the age of eight. Another woman reported that her children are completely undisciplined and difficult to control.

Another factor that directly affects the majority of children in this study is the lack of quality childcare. It has been previously noted that daycare is

Results

- Note how Ratel uses pseudonyms to keep it personal while retaining confidentiality; it also allows us to see how she is using quotes from *all* of her respondents and not just going back to the same one or two all the time
- Also note the general pattern of assertion-evidence/assertion-evidence/assertion-evidence

Discussion/Conclusions

- Remember the hourglass mentioned earlier?
- The introduction starts off broadly and narrows down to the specific issues and concerns that will be the focus of study
- The methods and results section operate within that focus

Discussion/Conclusions

- The Discussion and Conclusions section(s) is/are the time to start broadening out again
- Your job in this/these sections is/are fourfold:

Discussion/Conclusions

1. To give a brief statement of how your results “speak” to your research questions
2. To discuss the implications of these results for the bigger issues that made this research “interesting” for you
3. To temper your inferences with critical reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of the research; and
4. Any final statements you want to make about your research and its implications

Discussion/Conclusions

- We can see each of these in Ratel's paper
- In a first paragraph, note how she begins with a restatement of the purpose of her research and the bigger picture it was designed to address

One Day at a Time: Single-Parent Mothers in Academia

file:///E:/Poly/Homework/Ratel2.htm

above the difficulties stemming from their single parent status. For example, the women frequently take correspondence courses to permit them time to work and care for their children. Often, courses in which they are interested are offered only at night, and they are unable to attend. Similarly, there are many university-sponsored events and activities in which the women cannot participate because of their familial responsibilities. The women spoke of having to cut corners academically, and felt depressed and angry because they had to make those concessions with their education. Although these frustrations arose because of their status, they were aired because the women did not feel that they were deriving full benefit from the university environment. Their academic pursuits are intrinsically valued. The women enjoy the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge and often feel cheated in the academic arena. As Linda asserted,

I think that the university experience is probably very different for students without my responsibilities. It is supposed to be the best time of your life. ... Well, it's the *hardest* time of my life, but I love it, and I have to do this for my own sake and for my children.

Discussion and Conclusions

The structural characteristics of Canadian society are changing rapidly, and the family unit has seen many transformations in the last twenty years. Nonetheless the traditional nuclear family still predominates, although any imaginable configuration can be found in contemporary society. One of the prevalent trends altering the face of Canadian families in the last two decades is the growing pervasiveness of the single parent. The majority of single-parent households are headed by women and, although we know something of them in the aggregate from statistical surveys, very little research has been done that shows the human face of this group. The purpose of this research was to do so by exploring the circumstances of a small and yet diverse sample of single mothers attending university, and examining some of the factors that shape their experiences.

It is apparent that the women contend with a variety of problems that are unique to their status. The women live in or near poverty, accrue large debts to pursue their goals, and suffer debilitating physical and emotional stress as they attempt to maintain three separate and distinct life roles. They have a limited amount of social support, and their children are subjected to a number of pressures, including some delinquency. Their education is of paramount importance as their overriding goal is to better their life chances and remove themselves from the experiences common to most single mothers.

The literature revealed that the majority of single mothers are struggling financially. Those who adopt dual roles by entering the work force are subjected to elevated levels of stress. It was acknowledged that the well being of single mothers is correlated to the amount of social support they receive. Furthermore, a distinct relationship was found between their physical and mental well-being. Generally, the children experience some temporary emotional and behavioral problems while adjusting to the breakup of the family, and the demands placed upon their mothers served to enhance the need for emotional independence.

Although there are a number of obvious similarities between single mothers generally and those in the academic setting, the pursuit of an education clearly aggravates the pressures and problems normally experienced by single mothers. The endeavors undertaken create a situation in which each factor plays upon and exacerbates the rest. This experiential dynamic is unique to the women in this study, and its comprehension necessary for a thorough understanding of the phenomenon in question. Figure 1 depicts the interaction between the five variables examined in this study and demonstrates the complexity created with the adoption of this status. The cross-impacts make more transparent that adding a single element – attending university, in this case – adds not just a single element or impact to one's life, but a whole new set of pressures that affect and are affected by every other element of one's life.

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Discussion/Conclusions

- This statement of the purpose that guided the research is followed by a succinct summary of how the results of the research speak to that purpose
- She also connects back to literature she cited earlier

above the difficulties stemming from their single parent status. For example, the women frequently take correspondence courses to permit them time to work and care for their children. Often, courses in which they are interested are offered only at night, and they are unable to attend. Similarly, there are many university-sponsored events and activities in which the women cannot participate because of their familial responsibilities. The women spoke of having to cut corners academically, and felt depressed and angry because they had to make these concessions with their education. Although these frustrations arose because of their status, they were ailed because the women did not feel that they were deriving full benefit from the university environment. Their academic pursuits are intrinsically valued. The women enjoy the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge and often feel cheated in the academic arena. As Linda asserted,

I think that the university experience is probably very different for students without my responsibilities. It is supposed to be the best time of your life. ... Well, it's the *hardest* time of my life, but I love it, and I have to do this for my own sake and for my children.

Discussion and Conclusions

The structural characteristics of Canadian society are changing rapidly, and the family unit has seen many transformations in the last twenty years. Nonetheless the traditional nuclear family still predominates, although any imaginable configuration can be found in contemporary society. One of the prevalent trends altering the face of Canadian families in the last two decades is the growing pervasiveness of the single parent. The majority of single-parent households are headed by women and, although we know something of them in the aggregate from statistical surveys, very little research has been done that shows the human face of this group. The purpose of this research was to do so by exploring the circumstances of a small and yet diverse sample of single mothers attending university, and examining some of the factors that shape their experiences.

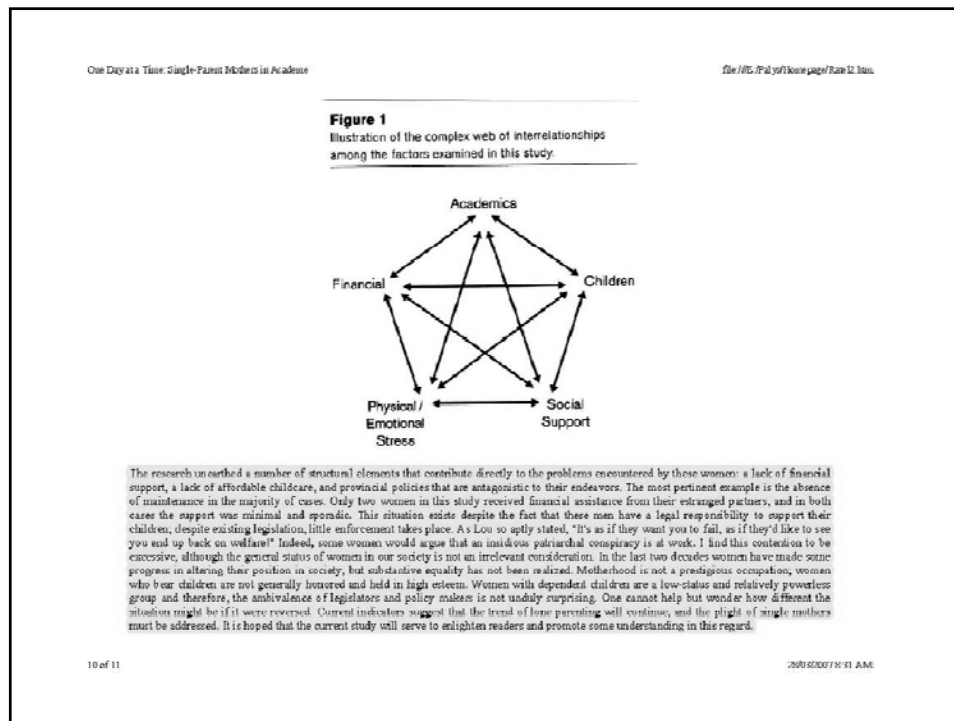
It is apparent that the women contend with a variety of problems that are unique to their status. The women live in or near poverty, accrue large debts to pursue their goals, and suffer debilitating physical and emotional stress as they attempt to maintain three separate and distinct life roles. They have a limited amount of social support, and their children are subjected to a number of pressures, including some dereliction. Their education is of paramount importance as their overriding goal is to better their life chances and remove themselves from the experiences common to most single mothers.

The literature revealed that the majority of single mothers are struggling financially. Those who adopt dual roles by entering the work force are subjected to elevated levels of stress. It was acknowledged that the well-being of single mothers is correlated to the amount of social support they receive. Furthermore, a distinct relationship was found between their physical and mental well-being. Generally, the children experience some temporary emotional and behavioral problems while adjusting to the breakup of the family, and the demands placed upon their mothers served to enhance the need for emotional independence.

Although there are a number of obvious similarities between single mothers generally and those in the academic setting, the pursuit of an education clearly aggravates the pressures and problems normally experienced by single mothers. The endeavors undertaken create a situation in which each factor plays upon and exacerbates the rest. This experiential dynamic is unique to the women in this study, and its comprehension necessary for a thorough understanding of the phenomenon in question. Figure 1 depicts the interaction between the five variables examined in this study and demonstrates the complexity created with the adoption of this status. The cross-impacts make more transparent that adding a single element – attending university, in this case – adds not just a single element or impact to one's life, but a whole new set of pressures that affect and are affected by every other element of one's life.

Discussion/Conclusions

- In a final paragraph Ratel speaks to some of the implications of her research



Connections

- One of the great strengths of Ratel's paper, and something you should be striving for, is the connectedness between sections
 - The *intro* lays the groundwork for the methods
 - The *methods* follows from the introduction and provides fodder for the results and discussion
 - The *results* and *discussion* follow from the methods and tie back into the issues raised in the introduction

Final Comments

- Could Ratel have done more?
 - Yes ... often the final discussion and conclusions would contain more self-reflection about the limitations of her research
 - We will expect that in your papers
 - “How I could have done it better”

Final Comments

- Research reports are re-creations that cut out most of the dead ends, tangents
- First drafts inevitably have those side trips
- You can find more suggestions about what to include in your final report on the course web page:
- <https://www.sfu.ca/~palys/GuidelinesForCrim321OralHistoryProject.pdf>

Other examples

- The oral history by Aaren Ivers on our course web page about two Indigenous women is in this Ratelian tradition
- Another way to do the oral history would be to do it in a more narrative style, as Ashley Peckford did
- Either way, please make sure you address the methods questions in that portion of your report

Final Comments

- Note the TAs would prefer hard copies delivered to the Crim department drop box
- If you would have to make a special trip, digital copy sent to your TA is okay
- And remember that the final exam is on December 15 at 8:30 AM in AQ 3181
 - Same format as the midterm

