Boys vs. Girls & Oldies vs. Newbies:
The Impact of Age and Gender on Role Saliences

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Layperson Summary for Honors Proposal

Outdated views on how men and women interact with different roles typically places men in the “breadwinner” career-minded roles and women in the “homemaker” family-minded roles. However, one individual may identify with multiple roles throughout his or her life, and how they place significance on their roles depends on personal values and priorities. These roles and the significance you place on them influences how you prioritize your time, energy, and effort, and most impacts how you identify as a person.

While some researchers theorize that as one role’s priority goes up, another’s must go down, more research is showing that one individual may be high and/or low in significance for multiple roles. The purpose of this study is to find out more information about how men and women relate to their roles. Not only do stereotypes affect how society views gender roles, but different life experiences (i.e. going to college, starting a family, retiring) also affect how individuals prioritize their responsibilities at different stages of their lives, so this study will also examine how individuals relate to these roles at different ages.

To test this, the researcher will recruit alumni from a business program at a southeastern university via email to participate in an online survey. The survey will be
made up of items regarding participants’ family, career, and overall life experiences and responses to statements about where they derive their motivations and satisfactions. Analyses will then be conducted to examine the relationships between men, women, and their priorities for work and family responsibilities.