

A. HOCHSCHILD, THE SECOND SHIFT,
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Preface

When I was thirty-one, a moment occurred that crystallized the concern that drives this book. At the time, I was an assistant professor in the sociology department at the University of California, Berkeley, and the mother of a three-month-old child. I wanted to nurse the baby—and to continue to teach. Several arrangements were possible, but my solution was a pre-industrial one—to reintegrate the family into the workplace, which involved taking the baby, David, with me for office hours on the fourth floor of Barrows Hall. From two to eight months, he was nearly the perfect guest. I made him a little box with blankets where he napped (which he did most of the time) and I brought along an infant seat from which he kept an eye on key chains, colored notebooks, earrings, and glasses. Sometimes waiting students took him out into the hall and passed him around. He became a conversation piece with shy students, and some returned to see him rather than me. I put up a fictitious name on the appointment list every four hours and fed him alone.

The baby's presence was like a Rorschach test for people entering my office. Older men, undergraduate women, and a few younger men seemed to like him and the idea of his being there. In the next office there was a seventy-four-year-old distinguished emeritus professor; it was our joke that he would stop by when he heard my son crying and say, shaking his head, "Beating the baby again, eh?" Textbook salesmen with briefcases and striped suits

A Speed-up in the Family



SHE is not the same woman in each magazine advertisement, but she is the same idea. She has that working-mother look as she strides forward, briefcase in one hand, smiling child in the other. Literally and figuratively, she is moving ahead. Her hair, if long, tosses behind her; if it is short, it sweeps back at the sides, suggesting mobility and progress. There is nothing shy or passive about her. She is confident, active, "liberated." She wears a dark tailored suit, but with a silk bow or colorful frill that says, "I'm really feminine underneath." She has made it in a man's world without sacrificing her femininity. And she has done this on her own. By some personal miracle, this image suggests, she has managed to combine what 150 years of industrialization have split wide apart—child and job, frill and suit, female culture and male.

When I showed a photograph of a supermom like this to the working mothers I talked to in the course of researching this book, many responded with an outright laugh. One day-care worker and mother of two, ages three and five, threw back her head: "Ha! They've got to be *kidding* about her. Look at me, hair a mess, nails jagged, twenty pounds overweight. Mornings, I'm getting my kids dressed, the dog fed, the lunches made, the shopping list done. That lady's got a maid." Even working mothers who did have maids couldn't imagine combining work and family in such a carefree way: "Do you know what a baby *does* to your life, the two

o'clock feedings, the four o'clock feedings?" Another mother of two said: "They don't show it, but she's whistling"—she imitated a whistling woman, eyes to the sky—"so she can't hear the din." They envied the apparent ease of the woman with the flying hair, but she didn't remind them of anyone they knew.

The women I interviewed—lawyers, corporate executives, word processors, garment pattern cutters, day-care workers—and most of their husbands, too—felt differently about some issues: how right it is for a mother of young children to work a full-time job, or how much a husband should be responsible for the home. But they all agreed that it was hard to work two full-time jobs and raise young children.

How well do couples do it? The more women work outside the home, the more central this question. The number of women in paid work has risen steadily since before the turn of the century, but since 1950 the rise has been staggering. In 1950, 30 percent of American women were in the labor force; by 2002, that had doubled to 60 percent. Over two-thirds of mothers, married or single, now work; in fact more mothers than non-mothers are in the workforce. Women now make up 47 percent of the labor force and two-job marriages now make up 63 percent of all marriages with children.

But the biggest rise by far has been among mothers with small children. In 1975, 45 percent of mothers with a youngest child between ages three and five were in the labor force; by 2000, 72 percent of such mothers were doing paid work. In 1975, 34 percent of mothers with children three and under were in the labor force, by 2000 that had risen to 61 percent. And it was the same story for mothers of children age one and under; that rate rose from 31 percent in 1976 to 58 percent in 2000.

Since more mothers of small children are now in the labor force, we might expect more to work part time. Instead, of all the mothers of children three and under who worked in 1990 and in 2001, 69 percent worked full time. And of all the moms of chil-

dren one and under who worked in 1994, 66 percent worked full time; in 2001, that number had risen to 68 percent.¹

If more mothers of young children are stepping into full-time jobs outside the home, and if most couples can't afford household help, how much more are fathers doing at home? As I began exploring this question I found many studies on the hours working men and women devote to housework and child care. One national random sample of 1,243 working parents in forty-four American cities, conducted in 1965–66 by Alexander Szalai and his coworkers, for example, found that working women averaged three hours a day on housework while men averaged 17 minutes; women spent fifty minutes a day of time exclusively with their children; men spent twelve minutes. On the other side of the coin, working fathers watched television an hour longer than their working wives, and slept a half hour longer each night. A comparison of this American sample with eleven other industrial countries in Eastern and Western Europe revealed the same difference between working women and working men in those countries as well.² In a 1983 study of white middle-class families in greater Boston, Grace Baruch and R. C. Barnett found that working men married to working women spent only three-quarters of an hour longer each week with their kindergarten-aged children than did men married to housewives.³

Szalai's landmark study documented the now familiar but still alarming story of the working woman's "double day," but it left me wondering how men and women actually felt about all this. He and his coworkers studied how people used time, but not, say, how a father felt about his twelve minutes with his child, or how his wife felt about it. Szalai's study revealed the visible surface of what I discovered to be a set of deeply emotional issues: What should a man and woman contribute to the family? How appreciated does each feel? How does each respond to subtle changes in the balance of marital power? How does each develop an unconscious "gender

strategy" for coping with the work at home, with marriage, and, indeed, with life itself? These were the underlying issues.

But I began with the measurable issue of time. Adding together the time it takes to do a paid job and to do housework and child care, I averaged estimates from the major studies on time use done in the 1960s and 1970s, and discovered that women worked roughly fifteen hours longer each week than men. Over a year, they worked an *extra month of twenty-four-hour days*. Over a dozen years, it was an extra year of twenty-four-hour days. Most women without children spend much more time than men on housework; with children, they devote more time to both housework and child care. Just as there is a wage gap between men and women in the workplace, there is a "leisure gap" between them at home. Most women work one shift at the office or factory and a "second shift" at home.

Studies show that working mothers have higher self-esteem and get less depressed than housewives, but compared to their husbands, they're more tired and get sick more often. In Peggy Thoits's 1985 analysis of two large-scale surveys, each of about a thousand men and women, people were asked how often in the preceding week they'd experienced each of twenty-three symptoms of anxiety (such as dizziness or hallucinations). According to the researchers' criteria, working mothers were more likely than any other group to be "anxious."

In light of these studies, the image of the woman with the flying hair seems like an upbeat "cover" for a grim reality, like those pictures of Soviet tractor drivers smiling radiantly into the distance as they think about the ten-year plan. The Szalai study was conducted in 1965-66. I wanted to know whether the leisure gap he found in 1965 persists, or whether it has disappeared. Since most married couples work two jobs, since more will in the future, since most wives in these couples work the extra month a year, I wanted to understand what the wife's extra month a year meant for each person, and what it does for love and marriage in an age of high divorce.

MY RESEARCH

With my research associates Anne Machung and Elaine Kaplan, I interviewed fifty couples very intensively, and I observed in a dozen homes. We first began interviewing artisans, students, and professionals in Berkeley, California, in the late 1970s. This was at the height of the women's movement, and many of these couples were earnestly and self-consciously struggling to modernize the ground rules of their marriages. Enjoying flexible job schedules and intense cultural support to do so, many succeeded. Since their circumstances were unusual they became our "comparison group" as we sought other couples more typical of mainstream America. In 1980 we located more typical couples by sending a questionnaire on work and family life to every thirteenth name—from top to bottom—of the personnel roster of a large, urban manufacturing company. At the end of the questionnaire, we asked members of working couples raising children under age six and working full-time jobs if they would be willing to talk to us in greater depth. Interviewed from 1980 through 1988, these couples, their neighbors and friends, their children's teachers, day-care workers and baby-sitters, form the heart of this book.

When we called them, a number of baby-sitters replied as one woman did: "You're interviewing us? Good. We're human too." Or another, "I'm glad you consider what we do work. A lot of people don't." As it turned out, many day-care workers were themselves juggling two jobs and small children, and so we talked to them about that, too.

We also talked with other men and women who were not part of two-job couples, divorced parents who were war-weary veterans of two-job marriages, and traditional couples, to see how much of the strain we were seeing was unique to two-job couples.

I also watched daily life in a dozen homes during a weekday evening, during the weekend, and during the months that followed, when I was invited on outings, to dinner, or just to talk. I

found myself waiting on the front doorstep as weary parents and hungry children tumbled out of the family car. I shopped with them, visited friends, watched television, ate with them, walked through parks, and came along when they dropped their children at day-care, often staying on at the baby-sitter's house after parents waved good-bye. In their homes, I sat on the living-room floor and drew pictures and played house with the children. I watched as parents gave them baths, read bedtime stories, and said good night. Most couples tried to bring me into the family scene, inviting me to eat with them and talk. I responded if they spoke to me, from time to time asked questions, but I rarely initiated conversations. I tried to become as unobtrusive as a family dog. Often I would base myself in the living room, quietly taking notes. Sometimes I would follow a wife upstairs or down, accompany a child on her way out to "help Dad" fix the car, or watch television with the other watchers. Sometimes I would break out of my peculiar role to join in the jokes they often made about acting like the "model" two-job couple. Or perhaps the joking was a subtle part of my role, to put them at ease so they could act more naturally. For a period of two to five years, I phoned or visited these couples to keep in touch even as I moved on to study the daily lives of other working couples—black, Chicano, white—from every social class and walk of life.

I asked who did how much of a wide variety of household tasks. I asked who cooks. Vacuums? Makes the beds? Sews? Cares for plants? Sends Christmas or Hanukkah cards? I also asked: Who washes the car? Repairs household appliances? Does the taxes? Tends the yard? I asked who did most household planning, who noticed such things as when a child's fingernails need clipping, cared more how the house looked or about the change in a child's mood.

INSIDE THE EXTRA MONTH A YEAR

The women I interviewed seemed to be far more deeply torn between the demands of work and family than were their husbands. They talked with more animation and at greater length than their husbands about the abiding conflict between them. Busy as they were, women more often brightened at the idea of yet another interviewing session. They felt the second shift was *their* issue and most of their husbands agreed. When I telephoned one husband to arrange an interview with him, explaining that I wanted to ask him about how he managed work and family life, he replied generally, "Oh, this will *really* interest my *wife*."

It was a woman who first proposed to me the metaphor, borrowed from industrial life, of the "second shift." She strongly resisted the *idea* that homemaking was a "shift." Her family was her life and she didn't want it reduced to a job. But as she put it, "You're on duty at work. You come home, and you're on duty. Then you go back to work and you're on duty." After eight hours of adjusting insurance claims, she came home to put on the rice for dinner, care for her children, and wash laundry. Despite her resistance, her home life *felt* like a second shift. That was the real story and that was the real problem.

Men who shared the load at home seemed just as pressed for time as their wives, and as torn between the demands of career and small children, as the stories of Michael Sherman and Art Winfield will show. But the majority of men did not share the load at home. Some refused outright. Others refused more passively, often offering a loving shoulder to lean on, an understanding ear as their working wife faced the conflict they both saw as hers. At first it seemed to me that the problem of the second shift was hers. But I came to realize that those husbands who helped very little at home were often indirectly just as deeply affected as their wives by the need to do that work, through the resentment their wives feel toward them, and through their need to steel themselves against

that resentment. Evan Holt, a warehouse furniture salesman described in Chapter 4, did very little housework and played with his four-year-old son, Joey, at his convenience. Juggling the demands of work with family at first seemed a problem for his wife. But Evan himself suffered enormously from the side effects of "her" problem. His wife did the second shift, but she resented it keenly, and half-consciously expressed her frustration and rage by losing interest in sex and becoming overly absorbed with Joey. One way or another, most men I talked with do suffer the severe repercussions of what I think is a transitional phase in American family life.

One reason women took a deeper interest than men in the problems of juggling work with family life is that even when husbands happily shared the hours of work, their wives felt more *responsible* for home and children. More women kept track of doctors' appointments and arranged for playmates to come over. More mothers than fathers worried about the tail on a child's Halloween costume or a birthday present for a school friend. They were more likely to think about their children while at work and to check in by phone with the baby-sitter.

Partly because of this, more women felt torn between one sense of urgency and another, between the need to soothe a child's fear of being left at day-care, and the need to show the boss she's "serious" at work. More women than men questioned how good they were as parents, or if they did not, they questioned why they weren't questioning it. More often than men, women alternated between living in their ambition and standing apart from it.

As masses of women have moved into the economy, families have been hit by a "speed-up" in work and family life. There is no more time in the day than there was when wives stayed home, but there is twice as much to get done. It is mainly women who absorb this "speed-up." Twenty percent of the men in my study shared housework equally. Seventy percent of men did a substantial amount (less than half but more than a third), and 10 percent did less than a third. Even when couples share more equitably in the work at home, women do two-thirds of the *daily* jobs at home,

like cooking and cleaning up—jobs that fix them into a rigid routine. Most women cook dinner and most men change the oil in the family car. But, as one mother pointed out, dinner needs to be prepared every evening around six o'clock, whereas the car oil needs to be changed every six months, any day around that time, any time that day. Women do more child-care than men, and men repair more household appliances. A child needs to be tended daily while the repair of household appliances can often wait "until I have time." Men thus have more control over *when* they make their contributions than women do. They may be very busy with family chores but, like the executive who tells his secretary to "hold my calls," the man has more control over his time. The job of the working mother, like that of the secretary, is usually to "take the calls."

Another reason women may feel more strained than men is that women more often do two things at once—for example, write checks and return phone calls, vacuum and keep an eye on a three-year-old, fold laundry and think out the shopping list. Men more often cook dinner *or* take a child to the park. Indeed, women more often juggle three spheres—job, children, and housework—while most men juggle two—job and children. For women, two activities compete with their time with children, not just one.

Beyond doing more at home, women also devote *proportionately more* of their time at home to housework and proportionately less of it to child-care. Of all the time men spend working at home, more of it goes to child-care. That is, working wives spend relatively more time "mothering the house"; husbands spend more time "mothering" the children. Since most parents prefer to tend to their children than clean house, men do more of what they'd rather do. More men than women take their children on "fun" outings to the park, the zoo, the movies. Women spend more time on maintenance, such as feeding and bathing children, enjoyable activities to be sure, but often less leisurely or "special" than going to the zoo. Men also do fewer of the "undesirable" household chores: fewer wash toilets and scrub the bathroom.

As a result, women tend to talk more intently about being overtired, sick, and "emotionally drained." Many women I could not tear away from the topic of sleep. They talked about how much they could "get by on" . . . six and a half, seven, seven and a half, less, more. They talked about who they knew who needed more or less. Some apologized for how much sleep they needed—"I'm afraid I need eight hours of sleep"—as if eight was "too much." They talked about the effect of a change in baby-sitter, the birth of a second child, or a business trip on their child's pattern of sleep. They talked about how to avoid fully waking up when a child called them at night, and how to get back to sleep. These women talked about sleep the way a hungry person talks about food.

All in all, if in this period of American history, the two-job family is suffering from a speed-up of work and family life, working mothers are its primary victims. It is ironic, then, that often it falls to women to be the "time and motion expert" of family life. Watching inside homes, I noticed it was often the mother who rushed children, saying, "Hurry up! It's time to go," "Finish your cereal now," "You can do that later," "Let's go!" When a bath was crammed into a slot between 7:45 and 8:00 it was often the mother who called out, "Let's see who can take their bath the quickest!" Often a younger child will rush out, scurrying to be first in bed, while the older and wiser one stalls, resistant, sometimes resentful: "Mother is always rushing us." Sadly enough, women are more often the lightning rods for family aggressions aroused by the speed-up of work and family life. They are the "villains" in a process of which they are also the primary victims. More than the longer hours, the sleeplessness, and feeling torn, this is the saddest cost to women of the extra month a year.

Marriage in the Stalled Revolution

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EACH marriage bears the footprints of economic and cultural trends which originate far outside marriage. A rise in inflation which erodes the earning power of the male wage, an expanding service sector which opens up jobs for women, new cultural images—like the woman with the flying hair—that make the working mother seem exciting, all these changes do not simply go on around marriage. They occur *within* marriage, and transform it. Problems between husbands and wives, problems which seem "individual" and "marital," are often individual experiences of powerful economic and cultural shock waves that are not caused by one person or two. Quarrels that erupt, as we'll see, between Nancy and Evan Holt, Jessica and Seth Stein, and Anita and Ray Judson result mainly from a friction between faster-changing women and slower-changing men, rates of change which themselves result from the different rates at which the industrial economy has drawn men and women into itself.

There is a "his" and "hers" to the economic development of the United States. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, it was mainly men who were drawn off the farm into paid industrial work and who changed their way of life and their identity. At that point in history, men became more different from their fathers than women became from their mothers. Today the economic arrow points at women; it is women who are being drawn into wage

riage raises the prospect of economic insecurity, and for many, outright poverty.

Because of sex segregation in the job market, women in full-time jobs earn about seventy cents for every dollar a man earns. Thus, the old means of economic support is less secure, and a new, equal basis of self-support is not yet within reach. To support themselves and their children, most women can't look forward to the promise of work, and can't look with assurance "back" to marriage either.

More women now work not simply to "help their husbands financially or to "use their talents," but because they fear for their marriages. Anita lived a married life. But secretly she imagined becoming divorced. She resisted pressure from Ray to quit because she feared the prospect of losing her place at work, and feared that if and when she divorced she would fall into a financial trap. Yet the official reality with which they both wanted to live was that the marriage "was for keeps." So she hid her pragmatic motive for working, claiming instead to work because "she loved it," because she "needed to keep busy," because "they needed her at the office." As divorce has spread, more and more uncertain women are led to seem married but to ponder work and family in "unmarried ways."

The "His" and "Hers" of Sharing: Greg and Carol Alston



AT 7:45 one Sunday morning I slowly drive my car up a newly paved street lined with young trees and clusters of two-story homes that form a curving line up a hill overlooking the San Francisco Bay. It has the feel of a new housing development; along each street the shrubs are sculpted with the same taste. Streets have names like Starview, Overlook, Bayside, and though the traffic goes back and forth only within the development, there are ten-mile-an-hour signs every half block, as if an informal understanding could not be trusted. Between groups of every six houses, ivy lawns sprawl into large communal spaces, and their mailboxes are clustered under a small, communal mailbox roof. It was a developer's attempt at community.

At this hour the sidewalks, strewn with Sunday newspapers, are empty. Other times of day I see only employees—a Chinese gardener trimming, a Chicano handyman fixing floodlights, two white workmen carrying rolls of carpeting from their truck to a home. Half the units are filled with retired couples, Carol Alston tells me later, and the other half with two-income families. "The elderly don't talk much to the young, and the working couples are too busy to be neighborly: it's the kind of place that could be neighborly, but isn't."

Greg Alston answers the door. At thirty-seven, Greg is a boyish, sandy-haired man with gold-rimmed glasses, dressed in well-worn jeans and a T-shirt. Also at the door is Daryl, three, with a

dimple-cheeked grin. He has bare feet, and shoes in hand. "Carol's still asleep," Greg tells me, "and Beverly [their three-month-old baby] is about to wake up." I settle in the living room, again the "family dog," and listen as the household wakes up. At 7:15 Greg has risen, at 7:30 Daryl, and now, at 8:00, Beverly is up. For a while, only Greg and Daryl were downstairs. Greg was talking to Daryl about tying shoes, Daryl was discussing the finer distinctions between Batdog, Spiderbat, Aquaman, and Aquababy. Soon, Carol has dressed and calls out to me; I help her make the bed. She breastfeeds Beverly and puts her in a swing which is hung near the dining-room table between two sets of poles; the swing is kept in motion by a mechanical bear, whose weight, as it gradually slides down one of the poles, drives the mechanism that moves the swing. As Carol cleans off the dining-room table and does the dishes, she tells me about a wild two-year-old child of friends whom they had taken to Marine World Saturday, and who had thrown a metal car at the baby. She begins making pecan and apple pancakes for breakfast. Greg is repairing a torn water bed downstairs. Each parent has one child.

Carol, thirty-five, is dressed in a jogging suit and sneakers. She has short-cropped hair, no makeup, tiny stud earrings. There is something pleasantly no-nonsense in her look and a come-on-and-join-me quality to her laugh. She and Greg have shared an extremely happy marriage for eleven years.

Carol is not trying to integrate family life with the demands of a fast-track corporate career by being a supermom like Nina Tanagawa. Three years before, she had gotten off a fast-track career as a systems analyst, quit what she calls her "real" job, and begun freelance consulting for twenty-five hours a week. Carol is not clinging to older ideas about women, like Carmen Delacorte. As a child, Carol had always envisioned having a career and, as an adult, she'd always had one. She says she's always divided the work at home fifty-fifty. "I don't know if I'd call myself a feminist," she tells me, as if studying the term from a distance, "but yes, Greg

and I have always shared at home, no discussion about it, up until I went part time, of course."

From the beginning, Greg wanted Carol to work and, in fact, told me he felt "upset" now that she wasn't working full time, since he missed her income. For seven out of their eleven years together, Carol earned as much as a systems analyst as he earned as a dentist. In fact, she now earned part time almost as much as Greg earned full time. "The more income she makes, the earlier we can retire," Greg said.

For the past three years, since having Daryl, Carol's strategy has been to reduce her hours and her emotional involvement at work, and to do most of the second shift because she has been home more. But the couple would share again after next November, she said, when they planned to fulfill an eleven-year dream of escaping the gridlock traffic and the drugs and racial violence of the urban schools to move to a tiny town in the Sierra mountains called Little Creek. There Greg, too, would take up part-time work. The Alstons have always loved boating and camping; in Little Creek they could enjoy the outdoors in an egalitarian version of a Rousseauist retreat from modern life. They are among the lucky few who could afford this. In short, the financial and ideological stage was set for Greg and Carol really to share the work of the home.

Apart from the *work* at home, it is clear to begin with that Greg and Carol shared the *life* of the home. If a home could talk, the Alstons' place would say a lot about their closeness and about the importance of children in their lives. Their house is a comfortable, unpretentiously furnished, ranch-style home, designed so that if you close all the doors, the dining room, kitchen, and living room are still visible to each other. A picture over the mantel shows a dreamy child blowing at a balloonlike moon. Beneath it are porcelain ABC blocks, with a German beer stein to the left, and wedding photos of brothers and sisters to the right. Each sitting area throughout the house shows some material indication of

the presence of children: a crib in a circle of living-room chairs, a tiny rocker in an alcove, Daryl's pictures on the refrigerator, and a hook to hang his Batman cape on. Upstairs, above Carol's desk, hangs her framed college diploma, her CPA certificate, her state board of accountancy certificate; and beside these are corresponding documents for Greg, a picture of Daryl, and a picture of Carol and Greg white-water rafting. Hanging in the garage are two home-made "dancer" kayaks. ("We made them with a group of boating friends," said Carol. "A girlfriend and I made meat loaf and we just kept painting all day.") Daryl's room is a cooperative effort too. Carol had hung a "star chart" on computer paper on Daryl's door; he had earned one star beside BRUSH TEETH, three beside PICK UP CLOTHES, and none beside PUT NEWSPAPER IN BOX, CARRY BEVERLY'S BAG, or GET UNDRESSED. Greg had designed Daryl's walnut built-in crib and ladder, and set up the electric car tracks. Carol had bought the elephant lamp with the party hat on in front and the colored beanie on its rump. Everything seems integrated with everything else.

There is only one sad note in the house: hanging in the hallway is a framed, glass-covered composition of the wedding invitations of four couples, their closest friends. In the middle, as if joining the couples together, is a \$20 bill. It captures a moment of whimsy and exuberance, and expresses the idea of a gamble. "We made a bet that whoever got married last had to pay the others twenty dollars," Carol explained. Then she grew quiet. "Tim and Jane—the ones in the right top—are divorced, and Jim and Emily, on the bottom left, are in trouble." The Alstons' move to Little Creek would certainly solve the traffic problem, but perhaps they also felt it would remove them from today's strains on marriages.

Within the couple, either Carol or Greg was often doing something for the other. If Carol was holding Beverly she might ask Greg, "Could you feed the cat the dry food?" When Greg was hammering on a fixture in the bedroom and the phone rang, he said, "Can you get it?" One adult was as likely as the other to answer the phone or chat with a sick neighbor.

They handled the usual tensions at dinnertime in a similar way. Whenever his parents cast out a line of marital communication over the dinner table, Daryl would grab at it. "Michael hasn't signed the contract yet," Greg would say to Carol. "The Michael from my school?" Daryl would butt in. "No, a different Michael that Daddy and Mommy know." Carol would answer. At dinner, it was as often Carol as Greg who answered Daryl's questions.

When he was home, Greg spent as much *time* involved with the household as Carol did; and he tried to maximize his time at home. On the weekends, Greg worked as long as Carol did so that whatever each was doing, they invested the same amount of time in their work. In all, Greg contributed more time to the second shift than Evan Holt, Frank Delacorte, Peter Tanagawa, Robert Myerson, or Ray Judson. Both Carol and Greg felt the arrangement worked well and was fair. Carol did not, after all, work an extra month a year.

On the other hand, in some ways they did not share. Carol cut back her hours of work and changed her philosophy of work after Beverly's birth, whereas Greg told me that not much changed for him. If real sharing means sharing the *daily* or *weekly* tasks, then again, they didn't really share. Whether she worked full time, time and a half, or half time, Carol was responsible for the daily and weekly chores such as cooking, shopping, and laundry in addition to such nondaily chores as shopping for children's clothes, sending out Christmas cards, writing family letters, remembering birthdays, caring for house plants, and taking family photos. Greg's household list was mainly made up of nondaily chores: household repairs, paying bills, and repairing both their cars.

Carol was not a supermom like Nina Tanagawa. Nor did she passively renegotiate marital roles, as Carmen Delacorte did, by "playing dumb." Nor did she stage a "sharing showdown," as did Nancy Holt through her Monday-you-cook, Tuesday-I-cook scheme. But, over a period of time, Carol pursued several other strategies. First, when the demands of work went up, Carol's production at home went down. For example, Carol explained, "When

I worked full time, we both ate a big lunch at work, and Daryl eats at day care, so I didn't cook." Second, Carol cut back her work hours, so that she had more time to do her daily chores. Third, from time to time she renegotiated roles with Greg. These were Carol's three strategies, and Greg had a fourth. He evened out the score, it seemed, by seeing how long Carol was taking with the cooking, cleaning, and tending the children, and kept at his wood-work until she stopped. That way, Greg was working "as long as" Carol, only on his projects. These were not hobbies like Evan Holt's projects "downstairs." Greg often checked his projects with Carol, did them in an order she would suggest, or consulted her on the colors, sizes, and shapes of the things that he made. What Greg did profited them both, but it was not sharing the daily chores and did not take the daily pressure off Carol.

INSIDE "EQUAL TIME" ON SUNDAY

Compared to Carol, Greg did less with the children and more with the house. He was the handyman. He looked at the mantelpiece with a carpenter's eye; he thought about repairs on the septic tank in the back yard of the house in Little Creek. Carol was the parent who noticed a developing hole in Daryl's trousers. At one point, as Greg pulled out the vacuum cleaner, he joked, "Carol's just a woman. She hasn't vacuumed for so long, she'd have to re-learn. A man better handle this." But, in fact, 80 percent of his tasks that day put him on the male side of the gender line.

Too, Carol was more child-centered than Greg when she was with the children. For example, when each parent stopped occasionally during the day to talk with me, usually Daryl was there, trying to join in (he loved talking into my tape recorder) or to get his parent's attention. Carol would give Daryl time. ("Yes, Daryl, I think that Superman can fly higher than Batman. What do you

think?") But Greg was not indulgent of the interruptions ("Daddy has to talk with Arlie," or "If you don't stop making that noise, you'll have to go to your room," or "Go see Mommy").

Carol's breast-feeding of Beverly gave her a natural advantage in forming a close bond with the baby. Some fathers of nursing infants gently rock them, burp them, change them, and do everything they can until the baby drinks from a bottle, at which point the father is no longer disadvantaged. Other men seem to avoid their infants, focusing on older children, if they have them, until the "disadvantage" has passed. Greg took a middle path. He focused his attention on Daryl. It was he who usually helped Daryl put his pajamas on, had a "peeing contest" with him in the toilet (Daryl loved that), and tucked him warmly in bed.

Greg would take care of Beverly when Carol needed him to; but he held her like a football, and when she cried, he sometimes tossed her in the air, which made her cry more. Now when Greg picked her up, half the time she was fairly calm and half the time she would arch her back and fuss. The family explanation for this was that "Beverly doesn't like men." As Carol told me flatly, "Beverly fusses when men pick her up, except for her grandfather." But the only men who picked Beverly up were Greg and her grandfather.

Was this constitutional with three-month-old Beverly? Or was it "natural" male ineptitude on the part of Greg? I was wondering this when a telling episode occurred: Beverly was in her rocker in a pink dress and booties. Carol was cooking. After a while, Beverly began to fuss, then cry. Greg unbuckled her from the bear swing and held her, but she still cried. He sat with her at the dining-room table, trying to read over a dentistry magazine. She wailed. Greg called out, "Mom, come!" and explained to me again that "Beverly doesn't like men." I recalled a certain way I used to comfort my sons, bobbing slowly up and down as well as forward and back (we called it the "camel walk"), asked if I could try, demonstrated it, and she calmed down. Greg replied, "Oh, I know about

that one. It works fine. But I don't want to have to get up. See, when Carol teaches night class Tuesdays, I have her all night and I don't want her getting used to it." To relieve Carol, Greg very often took care of Beverly "anyway." But however unconsciously, he seemed to resist the extra effort of taking care of his three-month-old child in a way she liked.

Primary parents to a young child can offer contact to the child in the very way they talk. Carol could be saying, "You have your gray pants on today," or "Do you want your apple cut up?" Her voice conveyed a sense of welcoming attachment to her children. She used a "primary parent voice." Along with making one's lap available for sitting, and rotating one's head to keep sensing where a child is, it is this primary parent's voice that makes a child feel safe at "home base." Greg used it intermittently in the course of the day; Carol used it all the time.

One Tuesday, when Carol was teaching an evening class in a business school, I could hear the garage door closing, and the sound of Greg in the kitchen scraping the pizza pan in the kitchen sink. Soon Daryl came into the kitchen and the two went to watch TV. Once "Mousterpiece Theatre" was over and an absorbing documentary about an expeditionary team climbing Mount Everest had caught Greg's attention, Daryl moved to imaginative play with a car. He began to tell a long tale about a frog going "fribbit, fribbit" in the car. The documentary was now at a dramatic moment when the team had nearly reached the top. The expedition's doctor was telling an indispensable team member that his lungs could not take the climb. Greg was listening to "fribbit fribbit" with half an ear. He tried to draw his son's attention to the program with fatherly explanations about Yaks, and snow caves, but no dice. Daryl brought out some cards and said, "Dad, let's play cards." "I don't know how," Greg replied. "You can read the directions," Daryl suggested. "No," Greg said. "Wait for your mom. She knows how."

During the season when she was working longer hours than

Greg, Carol said, "There have been nights when I've come home and Daryl's dinner was popcorn." "Does he do that as a treat for Daryl?" I asked. "No, just lazy," she said with a laugh.

Greg was a very good helper, but he was not a primary parent. Many of his interactions with Daryl took the form of inspiring fear or aggression and then making a joke of it. For example, one evening when Daryl had finished dipping his dessert candies into his milk, and was waiting to be taken out of his high chair with milky hands, Greg playfully wiped his hands with a cloth, took the boy out of his high chair, and held him upside down. "I'm going to wash you off in the dishwasher." "No!" "Yes! You're going to be shut inside to get all cleaned off." "Haah." The boy half-realized his father was joking, and was half-afraid. Only when a sound of alarm continued in Daryl's voice did Greg turn him right side up and end the joke. Again, when Greg was fixing the water bed with some pliers, he held the pliers up to Daryl. "These are good for taking off eyelashes." "No!" "Yes, they are!" Only when the boy took the pliers and held them toward the father's eye, did Greg say, "That's dangerous."

There were safer jokes that Daryl always got, about "taking off your nose." "Daddy's going to take off Daryl's nose and eat it." Or, "I'm going to throw your nose down the garbage disposal." But another often-repeated joke was a less sure bet: "Ow. You kicked me. I'm going to kick you back." As often as not there was a scuffle, serious protest from Daryl, and serious explanation from his father that it was "just a joke." All these were gestures unconsciously designed, perhaps, to "toughen" Daryl, to inoculate him against fear, to make him cry less, to make him more like a man, more like a good soldier.

Carol and Greg talked about Greg's sense of humor as if there were something a little unusual about it. Carol warned me early on that "some people think Greg has a disquieting sense of humor." When I talked to him alone, Greg said spontaneously, "Sometimes Carol doesn't understand my sense of humor. Daryl doesn't

either. But it's how I am." Greg's "humor" was unusual among the families I studied, but only in degree. Fathers tended toward "toughening" jokes more than mothers did.

Some fathers answered children's cries less readily, and with a different mental set. One father worked at home in a study looking out on the living room where a sitter tended his nine-month-old son. When asked whether his son's cries disturbed his work, he said, "No problem, I actually want him to fall and bang himself, to get hurt. I don't want anything serious to happen but I don't want him to have a fail-safe world." When we'd finished the interview, the husband asked his wife (who also works at home) how she would have answered the same question. She said immediately, "I hate to hear him cry."

Many parents seem to enter a cycle, whereby the father passes on the "warrior training" he received as a boy, knowing his wife will fulfill the child's more basic need for warmth and attachment. Knowing she's there, he doesn't need to change. At the same time, since the husband is rougher on the children, the wife doesn't feel comfortable leaving them with him more, and so the cycle continues. Greg carried this warrior training farther than most fathers, but the cycle was nearly obscured by the overall arrangement whereby Greg and Carol otherwise spent an equal amount of time and effort on the second shift.

Primary parenting has to do with forging a strong, consistent trusting attachment between parent and child. For small children, a steady diet of "toughening" is probably not good primary parenting. Greg seemed to presume that "someone else" was giving his children the primary goods. He could afford his "jokes," because Carol would come forward with her warm, out-reaching voice and watchful eye, to neutralize their effect.

Ironically, Greg felt more confident about his parenting than Carol felt about hers. In discussing parenting, Greg compared himself to his father, who was less expressive than he, while Carol compared herself to the baby-sitter, whom she thought more patient and motherly. Neither drew a comparison to the other.

EMOTIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF A STRATEGY

The main strategy that either Carol or Greg pursued was Carol's quitting her full-time job, and this had important emotional consequences for her. As Carol explained: "After Daryl was born, I stayed home for six months, and I discovered how much of my self-esteem was wrapped up in money. Being out of work, I felt really inferior. When I went out to the supermarket in the morning, I felt fat [she hadn't lost the weight from her pregnancy] and dumb. I wanted to go up to the people in the aisles and say, 'I have an MBA! I have an MBA!' I didn't want to be classified as a dumb housewife."

Like an urbanized peasant might feel returning to a land he had ambivalently left behind, Carol now felt a mixture of scorn, envy, and compassion for the housewives shopping in the market. She mused: "I learned not to judge. Whereas before, if I saw a woman with a kid, I would think, 'What is she doing? Why isn't she doing something productive with her life?' I think I was partly jealous, too. You go into the store in the middle of the day, there are all these thirty-year-olds shopping. I mean, where do they get the money? It made me wonder if there's some easier way to do this."

After a while, Carol began to feel an affinity with women who don't work outside the home:

I don't know whether I'm rationalizing in order to feel good about myself while I'm not working, or whether I'm on to the innermost truth. But I've changed my perspective. I've missed the sexy part of business, going out to lunch and talking about big deals, talking about things that "really mattered." I lived like that for years. Only over the past few years have I realized how superficial that life really is. In the long run, what's important is Daryl, Beverly, Greg, and my friends—some of those friends are work friends. These are who I will carry in my heart to the grave.

I have a different identity now. I don't feel like I *have* to have a job. Greg shouldn't *have* to either.

Carol's strategy of cutting back her hours and commitment to work came with a deeper change. At first she tried to buoy up her flagging self-esteem, then she questioned the very basis of it. Greg's routine didn't change much nor did his perspective.

BEHIND THEIR GENDER STRATEGIES

Carol would have preferred for Greg to go light on the "pliers jokes," the "you-hit-me" jokes, the fatherhood of toughening. She would have preferred that Greg give Daryl something more than popcorn for dinner. In short, Carol wanted Greg to act more like a primary parent. But she didn't press him to change his ways. She was enormously grateful that he woke up with Daryl Saturday mornings, and worked the second shift as hard as he did.

Carol and Greg present a certain paradox. Both *believed* in sharing both housework and childcare. This is the first side of the paradox. On the other hand, in the psychological fabric of child care and home management, Carol was far more central. Each side of this paradox poses a question. First, why did they believe in sharing? After all, the Delacortes, the Tanagawas, and indeed 40 percent of the women and three-quarters of the men in this study did *not* believe in really sharing the responsibility and work of the second shift.

In Carol's background was hidden an important experience that may have fueled her strong desire to be an independent career woman, and to adopt the ideology that, in the late 1980s in her upper-middle-class professional circle, went with it. Carol remembers her mother—a navy wife left alone for six months at a time to care for two small children—as an example of womanhood to avoid. As Carol realized: "I remember her dressed all day

in her nightgown, sighing. My sister says our mother was suicidal. I don't remember that. But she did try to leave us. My sister and I were into the normal mischief, wouldn't go to bed. My mother said, 'Well, I'm leaving.' And she walked out the door. I can remember telling my sister, 'Don't worry. I know how to make soup.'

Through her early twenties she had few thoughts of marriage or children, and Greg won her heart only by gallantly declining a big job offer in another city in order to be with her. (Many happily married women described some "career-sacrifice" gesture their husband made that convinced them that this was the right man for them.) "I was strong-minded," she said, "and I wanted a man who would never let me down." Part of "never letting her down" was probably connected to Greg's continued involvement at home.

For his part, Greg wanted Carol to work and he wanted to share the second shift. Carol speculated that it was because Greg's mother had worked full time from when Greg was five years old. "I thank Meg [Greg's mother] for setting him an example of how independent a woman should be." After Greg was five, his father retired from the army, got a teaching credential, taught math and wood shop in middle school, and was home when Greg returned from school. His mother worked overtime as a secretary in order to make ends meet. His father shared the second shift and Greg may have identified with his father.

The other side of the paradox is that, despite their "modern" belief in sharing the work at home, Carol and Greg implemented this belief in a "traditional" way. When they could permit themselves to do so, some traditional men such as Peter Tanagawa actually patented their children in a more "motherly" way than Greg did. Again, why? Greg commented:

My dad never touched me much. He was probably afraid. Plus, my dad is quiet, like I am. He doesn't express himself. I have reflected upon the fact that I don't embrace my dad. About six months ago, when he was here, I accidentally

embraced him. I'm glad I did. He commented on it. He said that I hadn't hugged him for years. He used to wrestle with me a lot but that stopped after I started to beat him at fourteen. After that we didn't really touch. I don't know whether it was him or me, but it stopped.

Perhaps Greg's awkward way of holding his daughter, and his aggressive joking with his son manifested his fear of getting close. Perhaps Greg's jokes were a verbal stand-in for the old boxing matches. But time had brought some change.

Greg would plant many small kisses on Daryl's cheek each night, and from time to time hug Daryl in the course of tussling with him. Greg was, he felt, more physically affectionate with Daryl than his father had been with him.

Greg was not as much a primary parent as were Michael Sherman or Art Winfield (described in Chapter 12). Nor was Carol as ardently committed to getting her husband to be a more primary parent as Adrienne Sherman was. Part of the reason seemed to be that Carol had discovered she *enjoyed* parenting. After all, she had completely put off thoughts of children until her thirties, and a few months after her son was born, she'd put him in the care of a babysitter for ten hours a day. (Even now she urged Greg's mother to live near them in Little Creek to "raise the kids.") Unlike some women, Carol had not been attached to the idea of being the main parent until her second child was born. Now parenting was more important to her, and now it loomed larger in Carol's identity than it did in Greg's perhaps because she found it a way to re-parent herself.

The greater importance of parenthood for Carol may illustrate the theory Nancy Chodorow presents in her book *The Reproduction of Mothering*.¹ Chodorow argues that women develop a greater desire to be a mother than men do to be fathers. This is because as children most boys and girls are both brought up by mothers. Socially speaking, this need not be; after a child is born, fathers can care for children as well as mothers, she argues. But as

long as it is *women* who mother, boys and girls will develop different "gender personalities," which alter their later motives and capacities. Both girls and boys first fuse with the mother. But when girls grow up, they seek to recapitulate this early fusion with the mother by becoming mothers themselves. When boys grow up, they try to recapitulate that early fusion by finding a woman "like mother." The reason girls and boys recapitulate this early fusion in different ways is that girls are females, like their mothers, and can more readily identify with her than boys can. According to Chodorow, because mothers are the object of the child's earliest attachment, boys and girls differ in another aspect of "gender personality." Girls are more empathic, more able to know how others feel than boys, though they are less able than boys to maintain a clear boundary between themselves and others.

Chodorow's theory deals with the familial origins of men's and women's motives for becoming parents. By her mid-thirties, motherhood was a more central identity to Carol than fatherhood was to Greg, and perhaps this is one reason why.

But in Chodorow's theory, all women come out pretty much alike. Her theory doesn't explain why some women like Adrienne Sherman felt no urge to be the primary parent, while Carmen Delacorte had always felt a strong urge, and Carol Alston only came to feel it in her middle thirties. Carol didn't want her husband involved at home as ardently as Nancy Holt did, but she clearly didn't want to "protect" her husband from the burden of parenthood like Ann Myerson, nor did she want him in the picture mainly to exert authority, as did Carmen Delacorte. Clearly women's motives *differ* enormously, according to some additional principles.

In Chodorow's theory, all men are pretty much alike too. So we don't know why Evan Holt and Seth Stein are so disinterested in fatherhood while Art Winfield and Michael Sherman have immersed themselves so passionately in it. Clearly, other factors—the quality of a person's early bonds with their mother and father, and broader cultural messages about manhood and womanhood—

enter in. The concept of gender strategy adds to Chodorow's theory an interpretation of the remarkable differences we find between some men and other men, and between some women and other women.

To understand why Carol and Greg Alston's approach to parenthood is different from that of other couples, we need to take account of other kinds of motives—Carol's desire to be different from her own mother, unfused with her, joined instead with Greg. It is probably true that, for better or worse, Carol's mother was a more important figure to her than her father. She criticized her mother. She didn't like her. But she talked about her mother far more, and with greater feeling, than she talked about her father. So, in that respect Carol fits Chodorow's theory. But because this fusion was problematic for Carol, she had invested a great deal of energy in her early adulthood avoiding motherhood. Now that she was trying it out, it was not so easy for Carol to become a mother-not-like-her-mother; it was frightening. Every bit of Greg's support helped; and perhaps that was why she wanted Greg by her side at home. She found legitimacy for this wish in egalitarian ideology.

By happily sharing the job of earning money, by not caring much about material things, she freed Greg from worry about being the provider. By expressing gratitude for all he did around the home, she encouraged him to do more. Consciously or not, Carol pursued a strategy of bringing Greg to her side to support her in the task of being a mother-not-like-her-mom.

To understand Carol and Greg, we need something else missing from Chodorow's theory: culture. Carol's mother didn't offer a good example of mothering, but even as a small child Carol had some idea about what "regular" mothers do; there was a culture of motherhood outside her home, and she grew up in that culture. For some periods of Greg's boyhood, Greg's father was a primary parent to him—and thus an exception to Chodorow's theory—but a primary parent who could hug his son only in a boxer's clench. This way of being a dad surely has much to do with the

notion of manhood with which Greg's father grew up. Both Carol and Greg grew up knowing about male and female cultures and attached a strategy of action to selected aspects of their cultures.

Carol also pursued her wish to bring Greg into the home more timidly than she might have, had greater societal conditions been better for women. Although the cultural shifts and work opportunities of the 1980s had led Carol and Greg to a life ideologically and financially removed from patriarchy, that older, entrenched system influenced them, as it had influenced many others, anyway. Because conditions were worse for women in general than for men in general, Carol felt more grateful to Greg than he did to her. The love ran both ways, but the gratitude ran more from Carol to Greg than from Greg to Carol. Although Carol had for years earned more money than Greg and had taken responsibility for all the most pressing aspects of the second shift, Greg did not spontaneously talk about being grateful to Carol for this.

Carol had catalogued a series of "miserable boyfriends" she'd met in college whose laundry she'd washed and whose weekend dinners she'd cooked. Compared to these other possible men, Greg was wonderful. Greg hadn't washed any girlfriend's laundry, for him the pickings weren't so slim. Again, Carol explained: "My God, these single mothers whose husbands don't see the kids or pay child support. I don't know how they do it. I couldn't. Being a single mother is the worst thing that can happen to you, next to cancer." Greg would never leave; Carol was grateful for that. But Greg didn't feel haunted by a dread of abandonment, by the sense "that could happen to me." He couldn't picture himself as a single father. The general supply of male commitment to share responsibility for children was far lower than the female demand for it. Through this fact in the wider society, patriarchy tipped the scales inside the Alston marriage; it increased Carol's sense of debt to Greg. It evoked her extra thanks.

And her extra thanks inhibited her from making further demands on Greg, who was already doing comparatively so much. Carol had a "wish list" on which sharing primary parenting was

probably fourth or fifth after the desire that Greg be healthy, faithful, mentally sound, and able to help provide. Greg had a wish list too, with many of the same wishes. But given the generally worse lot for women, Carol's extra sense of gratitude and of debt inhibited her going as far in her wish list as Greg went in his. In this different rate of climb up each "wish list," Carol and Greg were like nearly every couple I met. Greg Alston really was unusual, and given the scarcity of such men, Carol was "right" to be grateful. She had fewer options. Equal as they felt they were, the burden of the second shift fell mainly on Carol's shoulders. And it was the larger, societal support of inequity between the sexes, a system outside of their stable, happy marriage, that indirectly maintained the "his" and "hers" of sharing.

No Time Together: Barbara and John Livingston



CONSUELA, the baby-sitter, finally opens the door a crack, looks me over, and lets me in. She leads me up to the second floor of the Livingstons' friendly, weather-worn Victorian home to a family room with overstuffed chairs, family photos, and an excitable parrot in a large cage, all of which seem to face the cluster of toys on a blanket in the middle of the room on which Cary, two and a half, sits drawing trolls.

Mary Poppins is on the video machine, and has been all day. Just now, Mary Poppins, the nanny, is announcing dinner to the upper-middle-class British Mr. and Mrs. Banks and their children, all primly seated at the dinner table. As I settle in, start drawing trolls with Cary, and talk with Consuela, Barbara Livingston returns from work. She asks Cary for a kiss, then changes into jeans. Half an hour later, John Livingston returns from work, gets a big running hug from Cary, and sits down to chat. In a while, he rises to drive Consuela home, saying to his wife, "On my way back should I pick up some carry-out for dinner?"

Unlike Mary Poppins, so free and—at least symbolically—"on the rise," Consuela, at twenty-two, has a seven-year-old child of her own, living in El Salvador with Consuela's mother. As Barbara explained to me later, the baby-sitter shared a small two-bedroom apartment with two workers and her husband, a salad waiter at the Toreador Restaurant. As an undocumented worker, Consuela fears the immigration authorities. "She never goes to the park