

The Second Shift

Chapter 1

- Women changed rapidly but the jobs they went out to and the men they came home to have not changed – or not so much. Marriage has become a shock absorber of tensions borne by this “stalled revolution.”
- 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 mother 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.
- Women believed the second shift was their issue and most of their husband agreed,
- One reason women took a deeper interest than men in the problems of juggling work with their family life is that even when husbands happily shared the hours of work, their wives felt more responsible for home and children,
- As masses of women have moved into the economy, families have been hit by a “speed-up” in work and family life is that even when husbands happily shared the hours of work, their wives felt more responsible for home and children.
- 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 (more than a third, less than half), and 10 percent did less than a third.
- Men have more control over when they make their contributions
- Another reason women may feel more strained than men is that women more often do two things at once – write checks and return phone calls, vacuum and watch kids
- Women more often juggle three spheres of job, children, housework while men juggle two – job and children
- Women also devote proportionally 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.
- Since most parents prefer to tend to their children than clean the house, men do more of what they’d prefer to do.
- Men also do fewer of the undesirable household chores: fewer wash toilets and scrub bathroom floors
- As a result, women tend to talk more intently about being overtired, sick, and “emotionally drained.”
- 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.
- 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.

Chapter 2

- Quarrels that erupt result mainly from a fiction 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.

- It is women who are being drawn into wage work and women who are undergoing changes in their way of life and identity.
- Women are departing more from their mothers' and grandmothers' way of life, men are doing so less.
- Both the earlier entrance of men into the industrial economy and the later entrance of women have influenced the relations between men and women, especially their relations within marriage.
- The entrance of men into industrialized work did not destabilize the family whereas in the absence of other changes, the rise in female employment has accompanied the rise in divorce.
- This strain between the change in women and the absence of change in much else leads me to speak of a "stalled revolution."
- A stalled revolution lacks social arrangements that ease life for working parents, and lacks men who share the second shift.
- Supermom- does all work at home themselves and retains job
- Shallow ideologies –which were contradicted by deeper feelings.
- Deep ideologies – which were reinforces by such feelings.
- A gender strategy is a plan of action through which a person tries to solve problems at hand, given the cultural notions of gender at play.
- To pursue a gender strategy, a man or woman draws on beliefs about manhood and womanhood, beliefs that are forged in early childhood and thus anchored to deep emotions. They make a connection between how he/she thinks about their manhood/womanhood, what he/she feels about it, and what he/she does.
- A woman's gender ideology determines what sphere she wants to identify with (home or work) and how much power in the marriage she wants to have (less, more, or the same amount).
- Three types of ideology of marital roles: traditional, transitional, and egalitarian.
- Traditional
 - Even though she works, the "pure" traditional woman wants to identify with her activities at home (as a wife, mother, a neighborhood mom), wants her husband to base his identity on work and wants less power than him.
 - The Traditional man wants the same
- Egalitarian
- The "pure" egalitarian wants to identify with the same spheres as her husband does, and to have an equal amount of power in the marriage.
- Some want the couple to be jointly oriented to the home, others to their careers, or both of them to jointly hold some balance between the two.
- Transitional
 - Any one of a variety of types of blending of the two.
 - A transitional woman wants to identify with her role at work as well as at home. Unlike the egalitarian, she believes her husband should base his identify more on work than she does. A typical transitional wants to identify both with the caring for the home and with helping her husband earn money, but wants her husband to focus on earning a living
 - A typical transitional man is all for his wife working, but expects her to take the main responsibilities at home too.
- Found contradictions between what people said they believed about their marital roles and how they seemed to feel about those roles.

- Develop gender ideology by unconsciously synthesizing certain cultural ideas with feelings about their past. They also developed their ideology by taking opportunity into account. Some in adolescence they matched their personal assets against the opportunities available to men or women of their type; they saw which gender ideology best fit their circumstances, and they identified with a certain version of manhood or womanhood
- Superdad – working long hours and keeping his child up late at night to spend time with. Or cut back work hours. Or scale back housework. Or share second shift.
- “strategy” refers to his plan of action and to his emotional prep for pursuing it
- As more couples work two jobs these problems will increase. If we can’t return to traditional marriage, and if we are not to despair of marriage altogether, it becomes vitally important to understand marriage as a magnet for the strains of the stalled revolution, and to understand gender strategies as the basic dynamic of marriage.
- How a person wants to identify himself or herself influences what, in the back and forth of a marriage, will seem like a gift and what will not.
- When couples struggle it is over the giving and receiving of gratitude
- Family myths – versions of reality that obscure a core truth in order to manage a family tension

Chapter 4: Holts

- Nancy describes herself as an “ardent feminist,” an egalitarian (she wants a similar balance of spheres and equal power).
- The Holts consider their fatigue and impoverished sex life as results of Joey’s problem.
- Joey felt the normal oedipal attachment of a male child to his mother. Joey was having the emotional problems of growing up that any parent can expect.
- When I first met the Holts, Nancy was absorbing far more of the second shift than Evan. She said she was doing 80 percent of the housework and 90 percent of the child-care. Evan said she did 60 percent of the housework, and 70 percent of the child-care.
- Nancy’s reminder became sharper. The sharper they became, the more actively Evan forgot. This cycle of passive refusal followed by disappointment and anger gradually tightened.
- Their problem was a conflict between their two gender ideologies. Nancy wanted to be needed and appreciated at both work and home. She wanted Evan to appreciate her for being a caring social worker, a committed wife, and a caring mother. But she cared just as much that she be able to appreciate Evan for what he contributed at home, not just for how he supported the family.
- A gender ideology is often rooted in early experience and fueled by motives formed early on, and such motives can often be traced to some cautionary tale in early life.
- Doormat. Determined not to be like her and not to marry a man like my father.
- Evan imagined things very differently. He loved Nancy and if Nancy loved being a social worker, he was happy and proud to support her in it. He did not see why, just because she chose this demanding career, he had to change his own life
- Two other beliefs probably fueled his resistance as well. The first was his suspicion that if he shared the second shift with Nancy, she would “dominate him.”
- His job difficulties had lowered his self-respect, and now as a couple they had achieved some ineffable “balance” – tilted in his favor, she thought – which, if corrected to equalize the burden of chores, would result in his giving “too much.”
- Evan perhaps also feared that Nancy was avoiding taking care of him.
- Passive resistance