

**Women's work is never done: a sociological exploration of
gender into the household division of labour and
mothering roles and its contemporary implications for
women in performing the "second shift"**

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Abstract

This thesis will examine why women are still expected to perform the “second shift” of both housework and childcare within contemporary society. To discuss this, an exploration of gender and feminist literature will explain the way men and women become associated with different gender traits and roles which occur through the socialisation process. In addition, a contemporary perspective will examine the changes that have occurred for women within the public areas of work and the implications for women in combining both their work and family obligations. This thesis will demonstrate that while feminine roles have been analysed by gender theory, further work needs to be done to challenge men’s roles within the home which has reinforced women’s continued association with their familial responsibilities.

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For: all women, past and present and;

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Introduction

In contemporary society, it appears that women are still expected to perform the “second shift” of both housework and mothering roles. These dominant gender attitudes have reinforced the “appropriate” gender roles women and men should fulfil. The emergence of the term the “second shift” has been accredited to Arlie Hochschild who argued that, despite the relevant changes that have occurred for women outside the private realm, women are still tied to their feminine traits and roles within the home (Hochschild 1989, 6-7, 8). Further, Hochschild referred to the unequal gender relations within the home in terms of task sharing as the “stalled revolution”. These notions have continued to pervade within mainstream society, which has sharpened the dichotomy between the private and public spheres (Oakley 2005; Crompton 2006; McRae 2008). While gender analyses and feminist theory have challenged women’s association with housework and mothering, these theoretical approaches have done little to disrupt the entrenchment of the “second shift” in contemporary life. This thesis will therefore demonstrate that after decades of theoretical engagement further work is required to balance the disproportionate level of domestic work undertaken by women.

In analysing the “second shift” and its prevalence within society, it is important to examine women’s “feminine” roles. The way women become tied to their feminine traits has been a central point of discussion within sociological and feminist theory. In effect, both women and men acquire their appropriate feminine and masculine traits which determine their roles through the socialisation process (Wharton 2005, 31). Socialisation begins at infancy which progresses through childhood as this is where young children learn and attain of what it means to be either male or female (Oakley 1972; Giddens 1990; Wharton 2005). In learning

such roles, in adulthood this presents implications for women in particular as it deems them “suited” for particular tasks such as mothering and the performance of housework.

While the socialisation process explains the way individuals learn to become either male or female, scholars such as Talcott Parsons discussed the socialisation process within the family and the way men’s and women’s traits develop differently (Parsons and Bales 1955, 22). Parsons explained that men provide the instrumental roles whilst women provide the expressive roles (Parsons and Bales 1955, 22). Women, as such, were seen as having a lesser position within the family, one that provides care and love which was pivotal as a socialising agent. The male was seen as carrying a more important function; in being responsible for helping their children into the world so to develop their survival skills and lessen their dependence within the home (Parsons and Bales 1955, 26). The different personalities that occur during the socialisation process within the family deemed women apposite for the motherhood role based on their expressive and caring traits.

The socialisation process has been critiqued by many feminists. Radical feminists such as Kate Millett saw that the socialisation process and the formation of different personalities were perpetuated within patriarchal institutions such as the family which confined women to female roles. As Millett argued “the formation of human personalities along stereotyped lines of sex categories (“masculine” and “feminine”)...is dictated by what its members cherish within themselves...which they find convenient in subordinates...(1971, 26). Her argument discussed how patriarchy exercised control over women’s lives and not men’s. In addition, other scholars challenged the socialisation process such as Ann Oakley who also believed that

caring traits were perpetuated by the family. Motherhood roles were viewed as a social construct in that each woman had an expectation to fulfil based on what it meant to be “feminine” (Oakley 1976, 186). In this sense, the mothering role was difficult to alter since women acquire these traits within the family early on in their lives and therefore become defined by such roles because of their expressive traits.

In further considering the implications of gender, sociologists and scholars have focussed on differing gender relations in terms of domestic labour. Since the 1970s, Oakley has been accredited as being the first to seriously consider the topic of housework and women’s roles as housewives. In her book, *The Sociology of Housework* Oakley found that housework is still primarily seen as “feminine” work that should be reserved for women and not men (Oakley 1974, 29). In this sense, their roles as wives and mothers were viewed as an important construction of their femininity. The women in the 1970s and 1980s did challenge patriarchal institutions in which they demanded that “women’s housework” no longer be attached to the female role (Malos 1995, 110).

Within mainstream society, although women have achieved considerable gains such as entering the workforce and establishing successful careers, it appears that women are still expected to perform the “second shift” of domestic chores. This suggests that more work is required to challenge the unequal gender relations between men and women which are still prevalent within the household. However despite the limited changes within the home, their positions within the long established dual earner income model has seen women become economically independent from men (Daniels and Weingarten 1984; Wilson 2002; Bergmann

2005). Many women who have children are able to return to full time work, in which they are still able to manage both their working careers and their family responsibilities. The changing attitudes towards women's work in the public sphere has seen women continue to attain high positions within the workplace despite becoming mothers and temporarily leaving paid employment to spend time with their children (Crompton 2006, 52).

While it is evident that women are still associated with their familial roles, men's roles within the home have not been thoroughly explored nor challenged. In terms of the tasks undertaken within the home, men and women fulfil different roles according to appropriate gender traits. Sarah Fenstermaker and Candace West argued that dominance is seen as a male trait and submission and docility is seen as a female trait which is linked to gender (2002, 7). In the instance of domestic work, most of the chores are divided into masculine and feminine tasks. Most chores such as cleaning the bathroom, "doing" the laundry are commonly seen as "womanly" tasks, in which men avoid or perform less of (Baxter 1993; Baxter 2002; Sullivan 2004). Hence men and women "do" their gender in terms of the tasks allocated within the household (Fenstermaker and West 2002, 19). This reinforces the vast power relations that see men and women perform different gender roles. Therefore "doing" housework undermines men's "dominant" trait and their perception of masculinity.

Mothering roles and motherhood itself remains primarily a woman's role within contemporary society. When women enter the workforce they are still expected to fulfil their caring duties in being a mother to their children (Wilson 2002; Crompton 2006). This however, sees men approach the roles of caring differently. The notion of fatherhood has a

different connotation and meaning than the motherhood role. Within families, patriarchal power establishes that women ought to remain responsible for children (Mathews 1984; Wearing 1984). Within mainstream society, women are still expected to balance both their work and family roles, while the man is mainly focussed on his career (Crompton and Harris 1998, Crompton 2006). By not challenging the constructed masculine traits, women's association with their expressive, mothering roles and expectation to perform the housework has resulted in the continued "second shift".

Structure of Thesis

This thesis will demonstrate that despite significant gains in the public arena, women are still tied to the greater percentage of domestic work. To undertake this project, the thesis will discuss the way women and men acquire their traits and learn their roles through the process of socialisation and the way their different genders are produced. This thesis will also examine past literature in discussing the implications in acquiring such traits, especially within the family and the way women are particularly affected. Finally, an exploration into the contemporary literature will demonstrate that the feminine traits women acquire and the female roles they perform establish implications for women in which they continue to carry out the "second shift".

In this thesis, Chapter One will discuss the way individuals learn to acquire and attain different traits through the socialisation process. It will demonstrate how these traits that are learned at an early stage in life determine the roles men and women fulfil as adults. The chapter will explain the sociological approach in acquiring gender roles and it will also

outline a psychoanalytical perspective based on the scholarly work of Nancy Chodorow who discussed the Oedipus complex in the way women's mothering produces distinct personalities between girls and boys. Additionally, this chapter will employ a sociological perspective to investigate men's and women's behaviour and whether their traits stem from a sociobiological explanation. Finally, important feminist theory from Ann Oakley and Gayle Rubin will explain that men's and women's roles are not biologically determined rather they are socially constructed.

Chapter Two will discuss the implications for women through this socialisation process. Based on a sociological perspective, particularly a functionalist approach, a discussion into the different personality traits men and women acquire will be explored through men's instrumental and women's expressive roles within the family. The implications of women's expressive roles where men remain dominant reinforce women's feminine traits in being caring in which they are seen as apposite for such roles. This chapter will also explain the implications of the socialisation process and how it confines women to their mothering roles which are perpetuated by the family. In addition, this chapter will discuss the household division of labour and the explanation of different gender relations within the home. Through the sociological theory of the gender display model (Goffman 1977; Fenstermaker and West 2002), an exploration into the way men and women continue to perform appropriate roles within the home emphasise that housework is a woman's and not man's responsibility.

Finally, Chapter Three will discuss the contemporary implications for women in integrating both their work and family roles. Firstly, this chapter will highlight the changes that have

occurred for women in the public sphere, such as full time work and gaining high occupational statuses. This chapter will discuss the implications for women in commencing full time work with family responsibilities which has reinforced the established “second shift”. Hence, despite the increased presence of women in the workforce they are still expected to perform the majority of the housework and childcare roles within the private domain.

In discussing the way women learn and attain their feminine traits at an early stage in their lives, the implications of these traits are reinforced in their mothering roles and the housework they perform. In the wider context of work beyond the private realm, women have been obligated to balance both their familial and work roles, which have in turn widened the dichotomy between the public and the private spheres. While theory has challenged the implications for women based on their acquired feminine traits and roles, men’s roles and their masculine traits have not been challenged which has unendingly associated women with their family roles.

Chapter 1: The Sociology of Gender

Gender is a complex concept that remains a defining norm for both women and men. The concept of gender can be understood as a set of cultural ideas that construct images and expectations for females and males (Wharton 2005, 6). Gender, as such, is centred on males and females behavioural traits and characteristics through which the notion of masculinity and femininity are established and conceived (Connell 2002, 6). Moreover, gender is viewed as a social category and a core aspect of social identity which emphasises how women and men are positioned within society based on their sex categories (Connell 2002, 6).

This chapter will undertake a sociological exploration of gender in discussing the way women and men learn and attain feminine and masculine traits through early socialisation as children that in turn determine their roles as adults. In addition, this chapter will employ a sociobiological perspective to examine the different behaviours of women and men and whether this explains their dissimilar characteristics. Finally, a clear distinction between sex and gender will be established to demonstrate that biological and anatomical differences do not shape the roles that men and women conform to in fulfilling societal expectations. Consequently, the differing traits acquired reinforce the appropriate gender roles for the sexes. In particular, women are expected to fulfil roles such as mothering and housework that reflect their feminine traits.

Becoming Gendered: Socialisation and the Learning of Gender Roles

Socialisation refers to the process whereby individuals take on gendered qualities and characteristics through which they learn to acquire a sense of self (Wharton 2005, 31). In this

sense, people learn what society expects of them as males and females. Socialisation involves the learning of one's social status and to perform the roles attached to those statuses. Gender roles are the socially learned patterns of behaviour which differentiate men and women in society (Duberman 1975, 26). Hence, masculine and feminine gender roles are acquired during one's lifetime through learning, role taking and observation.

To explain the complexities of socialisation, one needs to examine it from the perspective of early development in children as this is where one learns to become either masculine or feminine. As Wharton explains "children learn gender identity through daily interaction and observation in which they learn to adapt to their own understandings of what it means to be male or female" (2005, 28). At a young age, children are exposed to various surroundings that influence their own personalities that shape them as individuals. This in turn becomes an influential factor in determining the assigned roles they perform as adults.

There are different ways one acquires their gender. Early socialisation within the family is where boys and girls are taught to act in ways thought appropriate for their gender. When a child is born different ways of interacting with children marks the beginning of a process known as social learning (Wearing 1996, 94). Parents act as socialising agents that influences different behaviours in children, further preparing them for their future roles (Oakley 1972, 174). Parents treat their children differently according to their appropriate gender roles. For instance, boys are viewed as being strong and are encouraged to participate in outdoor activities and rough games. This develops a sense of autonomy and independence. Girls on the other hand are viewed as fragile that must be handled with care, protected, kissed and

loved (Wearing 1996, 94). Such socialisation determines the adult roles where girls identify with domesticity such as learning to clean the dishes while boys respond differently to these roles as they learn to identify with work outside the home.

Children learn their appropriate gender roles through what they see and observe (Oakley 1972, 176). In primary socialisation, a young girl may observe her mother cradling and nurturing a small child. Consequently, the girl is most likely to follow her mother in performing feminine roles as she plays with her toys (Oakley 1972, 175). These parental influences shape the appropriate behaviour for their gender. Secondary socialisation refers to external influences such as children's books which depict characters in a particular way that has an effect on young children. As Giddens explains girls are usually portrayed in books as being "passive and confined mostly to indoor activities. Girls cooked and cleaned for the males or waited upon their return" (1990, 163). Hence, children learn to understand their own identities and in the instance of young girls they are taught at an early age their potential future roles as mother and housewife. Boys, on the other hand, learn their dominant traits which prepares them for the world outside the home.

The learning of gender roles impacts on individuals to conform to certain societal ideals. This is reflected in the way cultural standards position people, namely women, in particular ways.

As de Beauvoir explains:

One is not born woman, but rather becomes one...
no biological...fate determines the figure that
the human female presents in society; it is civiliz-
ation as a whole that produces this creature...which
is described as feminine.

(1988, 295)

One way to interpret de Beauvoir's claim is to take it as a reference to gender socialisation in which females become women through the feminine traits they acquire. Since the process of socialisation is a social construction, women are expected to attain the societal standards in becoming a woman. Therefore, femininity is thought to be a product of culture and the way women are taught from a young age to fulfil certain gender roles through the socialisation process.

Other theoretical approaches have been applied in examining the socialisation process. One particular approach is psychoanalytic theory which is concerned with the idea that some aspects of gender and gender identity result from unconscious psychological processes (Wharton 2005, 36). The most influential version of the psychoanalytic theory was the perspective developed by Nancy Chodorow who argued that gendered personalities developed differently between males and females because women tend to be primary caretakers of children. Chodorow explained that the perpetuation of mothering from mother to daughter has made women more focused on personal life experiences which have seen women become vulnerable (1978, 9). The symbolic pull towards their mothers has adverse consequences in their heterosexual adjustments (Chodorow 1978, 10). Consequently, families organised around women's mothering and male dominance create incompatibilities in relations between women and men.

In Chodorow's theory of gender development and personalities, she engages with psychoanalytic theory that was developed by Sigmund Freud. Freud however placed

substantial emphasis on gender identity with genital awareness and the importance of the father in the development of children (Giddens 1990, 166). Chodorow, however, discussed the significance of the mother since the mother is the most dominant individual in their early lives. In her interpretation of the Oedipus complex, Chodorow focuses on object relations theory which emphasises that objects are people, aspects of people and symbols of people (1978, 42). In this sense, girls and boys tend to internalise the object that they first encounter which is usually the mother (Chodorow 1978, 42). However, this attachment gained within the Oedipus complex needs to be broken in order to achieve a separate sense of self with the child required to become less dependent on the mother and her nurturing characteristics.

The feminine Oedipus complex differs from the masculine Oedipus complex in the way a separate sense of self is achieved (Chodorow 1978, 127). Females tend to remain closer to their mother, and hence remain longer within the Oedipus complex. Her transition within it is not seen as problematic, as her pre-oedipal attachment to her mother remains a continued connection within the Oedipus complex. As Chodorow explains:

girls do not simply remain closer to their
mother in the relational experience of the Oedipus
complex... it is not symmetrical with that of boys...
the ego in its internal object relational situation
changes...as her relationship with her mother
remains more important...

(1978, 127)

Consequently, the mother does not encourage her daughter in individuating from herself, thus it develops flexible and blurred ego boundaries. Because there is no sharp break from the mother, the young girl later within her adult role has a sense of self that is continuous with others (Chodorow 1978, 128). The male in contrast has a well-defined ego boundary since he

resolves his Oedipus complex as he rejects the closeness of his mother (Chodorow 1978, 128). Thus, males resolve their Oedipus complex, while girls tend to remain within it due to their continued attachment to their mothers.

The development of different personalities determines the subsequent roles men and women perform in their adult lives. The different relational capacities for boys and girls and their sense of self was the result of growing up in a family in which women mother (Chodorow 1978, 173). The differing relational capacities and forms of identification of girls and boys prepare women and men to engage in their appropriate adult roles. For instance, men and women relate differently towards work and family with women seen as having a continuous connection to and concern for children (Chodorow 1978, 179). Men are seen as being separate from the family, with women connecting to men, rather than vice versa (Chodorow 1978, 179). Such different relations see masculine occupational roles identify with the public sphere of work while feminine occupational roles focus on the nurturance and care of children within the private sphere. Chodorow's ideas are important as they help to understand the universal nature of male dominance over women.

Carol Gilligan, another prominent psychoanalyst, developed an analysis of gender differences based on images of adult women and men have of themselves and their attainments (1982, 40). Gilligan was the first to consider the gender differences regarding the mental processes of males and females in their moral development rather than just justice (1982, 40). The differences between girls and boys existed in their feelings towards caring relationships and connections with other people (Gilligan 1982, 41). In this sense, women define themselves in

terms of personal relationships and judge their achievements by reference for their ability to care for others. Based on intensive interviews carried out with American families, Gilligan concluded that women's moral judgments were more tentative than men's (Giddens 1990, 168). One may argue that since women's situations are anchored in caring relationships, men are seen as having "outward-looking" attitudes. Hence, women's views of themselves are based upon fulfilling the needs of others, rather than pride in individual achievements.

Doing Gender: Social Interaction and Gender Relations

Gender cannot only be defined as a set of traits; rather it is also continuously developed through interaction (Wharton 2005, 55). Symbolic interactionism is an important concept which explains that gender is learnt and "done" within interaction and created through human actions (Fenstermaker and West 2002, 6). American sociologist Erving Goffman explained that when human beings interact, situations are set up in ways that make them play their roles according to social scripts about how to be feminine or masculine (1976, 303). Hence ways of interacting within social situations gives individuals the ability to learn to produce and recognise masculine and feminine displays which is expressed by individuals. This explains certain arrangement between women and men in displaying appropriate behaviour.

The social arrangements established between men and women are not natural or biological (Fenstermaker and West 2002, 5). In this context, gender differs from biological influences, in that gender is the conduct in relation to normative connections of appropriate behaviour and attitudes of ones sex category (Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin, cited in Chafetz 1999, 250). Gender is a powerful ideological device that produces and reproduces the constraints that are

predicated on sex categories. Further, it can be argued that gender is not simply what one “is” rather something one “does” on an everyday basis (Fenstermaker and West 2002, 29). When one “does” their gender, they are acting out or performing appropriate masculine and feminine behaviours. As Fenstermaker and West explain:

Gender is conceived as an emergent of
social situations: both as an outcome and
rationale for various social arrangements...
it is seen as a means of legitimating one
of the most fundamental divisions of society.
(2002, xii)

One way to understand this interpretation of gender is that it is a system of social practices that constitutes people as different and organises relations of inequality (Fenstermaker and West 2002, 5). Social arrangements between the sexes reinforce how gender inequalities are played out in social situations that men and women encounter in their daily lives. As Goffman explains, the arrangements between the sexes emphasises the way gender is organised and reproduced through social organisations (1977, 306). Therefore men and women are placed in a certain “order” that seems to benefit one individual over the other.

One implication of the different social arrangements between men and women can be viewed in the way society positions women. Feminine and masculine gender norms are problematic in that gendered behaviour perpetuates women’s subordination so that women are socialised into subordinate roles (Goffman 1977, 306). For women, this can be applied to the role of motherhood as a cultural expectation. While reproduction is considered a natural phenomenon which involves anatomical features suited for procreation, feminine expectations establish motherhood as an ideal role for women. As Duberman explains, “constructions like

gender...take the form in not just the realm of ideas and beliefs, but more importantly in the notion of identities and social situations” (1975, 27). Women are seen as the primary caregivers who “do” their gender to provide, nurture, and care for infants. In this sense, it can be argued that the process of becoming a mother is an expectation that is perpetuated and shaped by society.

Men’s power and dominance is expressed in social interactions and situations. Masculinity can be defined as an aspect of men’s behaviours which is the ideology that reinforces male domination. This in turn becomes the ideology of patriarchy (Brittan 1989, 4). While masculinity is itself a social construction, it does have sanctions for men who do not attain to certain societal standards. One way of exploring this is through the “poor boy approach” where men usually achieve male identities through sports (Wearing 1996, 58). Men learn the separation of self from others by orientating themselves towards achievement and male-governed behaviour (Wearing 1996, 58). As young children they learn to crave attention to be successful. This idea that he must be a “winner” and be dominant is considered an important idea in attaining success (Wearing 1996, 58). However, this is problematic in that those men who do not accomplish such appropriate masculine behaviour to “prove” their dominance are labeled a wuss or considered weak or inferior (Wearing 1996, 59). This reinforces that there are implications for men who do not conform to certain expectations of what it means to be masculine.

Gender inequality remains a persistent force within society and social situations. The social organisation of gender can be seen in many social situations such as the home where social

arrangements are reinforced in terms of allocating appropriate tasks to each sex. As Probert argues, “the division of labour that exists within the home sees women carrying out double the amount of housework, despite the increase in 70% of women in the workforce” (1997, 317). Carrying out such tasks reinforce the social arrangements between the sexes which is reflected in the work they perform based on their appropriate sex categories (Goffman 1977, 306). Therefore, social arrangements that are predicated on one’s gender category reinforce the superiority of one group of individuals over the other. Women are expected to “do” the majority of the housework that is associated with their passivity. Men on the other hand are viewed as dominant figures whose acquired masculine traits do not reflect their notion of being masculine if they are engaged in activity considered to be female work.

Sex, Gender and Biology: A Sociological Perspective

In the field of sociology, categories of “sex” and “gender” provide sites for inquiring into human behaviour. The theory of sociobiology remains central in determining the different characteristics of humans such as male dominance and female submissiveness (Epstein 1988; Van Kreiken et al 2006). In the study of the evolution of human behaviour, sociobiology has provided an explanation into genetic and biological factors which may influence such behaviours (Van Krieken et al 2006, 305). The sociobiological view of differences between the sexes offers insights into the behaviour and social organisation of humans.

The word sex, in everyday language, refers to the anatomical differences between individuals that make them male or female. Accordingly, the sex hormones and chromosomes contribute to different levels of development (Giddens 1990, 159). Both males and females have twenty-

three pair of chromosomes, the sex chromosomes. The pair is noted XX for female and XY for male (Giddens 1990, 159). It is due to these sex chromosomes that the male and female biological form develops. As Edward Wilson, a sociobiologist (cited in Oakley 1972, 26) points out “the main function of sex hormones in both males and females is to ensure that the body develops in line with its chromosomal sex to become capable of reproduction”. The effect of these chromosomes and hormones enables both male and female bodies to mature.

Sex hormones contribute to the different weight, height and strength of males and females at birth, with the Y chromosome (male) having a much more superior advantage over the X chromosomes (female) (Oakley 1972, 27). For instance the male at birth is 7.50 lbs and the female is 7.44 lbs, which is ahead of the female in the development phase (Oakley 1972, 27). Mechanisms of sexual development are triggered in both sexes later in life, when physical maturity is reached. While the physical differences reach a maximum at puberty, adult men possess more muscle than women (Giddens 1990, 159). Accordingly, biological differences seem to predispose men towards active, physically demanding work while women are not meant for work focused on muscle strength.

Within the biological debate, there are suggestions that other factors mould women and men into two separate categories. Cynthia Epstein has argued that brain development based on the size, shape and lateralisation were used to explain the conflicting intelligence factors (1988, 54). There are many differences between the male and female right and left hemispheric areas with males having more lateralised functions (that is, seem to work independently) (Epstein 1988, 54). According to Epstein, the female brain however can only do one thing at a time

without confusion (1988, 54). Epstein argues that women are more “left-hemispheric which is more linear and digital while men are right hemispheric with analogic and contemplative features” (Epstein 1988, 54). This suggests that based on the argument of the anatomical differences between men and women, men are considered to be dominant in this area while women are considered to be inferior and weaker.

The differences between men and women are prevalent in the ways they think and feel. Women have competencies with emotional strength which prepares them well for the nurturing role and the devotion to their infants. As Epstein explains, women have a tendency to “read an infant’s expression and have greater strength in handling a delicate infant while men are more rough and tumble physical play and teaching objects of manipulation” (1988, 54). Human research supports the idea that sex hormones and organisation of the brain structure contributes to these differences between the sexes.

Biological based explanations for the behaviour of men and women cannot be solely confined to hormones, genes and brain function. Scholars such as Talcott Parsons and Robert Bales approached gender roles based on their importance to society. Parsons and Bales saw the isolated nuclear family as specialising in two basic functions – socialisation of the young and stabilisation of adult personalities (1955, 19). It further characterised the importance of the woman’s role in the family as ‘expressive’, who provides warmth, comfort and a sense of security (Parsons and Bales 1955, 19). While this fulfils the socialisation of the young, she must also devote her attention to her husband, who provides the ‘instrumental’ role.

Within this context, scholars have attempted to explain that women were “naturally” more suited to the mothering role (Parsons and Bales 1955, 26). A woman’s bearing and early nursing produces a strong relation between the mother and small child. According to Parsons and Bales, this explains that women’s gender roles are reinforced through their reproductive roles as mothers, which emphasises differences between the sexes based on biological determinism (1955, 26). Thus, women are by nature weaker and more expressive and are therefore tied to their family roles. Such traits give a more positive value to masculine qualities than feminine ones. These traits such as being home orientated, submissive and emotive is the opposite of how a male is described as being confident and assertive (Broverman, cited in Wearing 1996, 5). These ideas, therefore, are channelled towards biological explanations in that women’s feminine traits highlight their suitability in performing their biological roles.

While sociobiological explanations have attempted to examine the behavioural differences, other scholars have approached it differently. Anthony Giddens questioned whether biology influences behaviour (Giddens 1990, 159). While it has been argued that women are naturally smaller, weaker and caring and males are naturally more aggressive and less emotive, it is not considered a primary factor in determining the different roles for women and men. Giddens explained that the level of aggressiveness which “women lack is a trait which varies across many cultures and some women are in fact expected to be passive and subordinate and take on such roles” (1990, 159-160). While prominent sociobiologists such as Edward Wilson (cited in Giddens 1990, 160) have vehemently defended their argument, social learning

determines human behaviour as it is learned over a lifetime, contributing to shaping different male and female identities.

The Sex/Gender Distinction: A Feminist Approach

The terms sex and gender are difficult to characterise, however, they can be understood as two separate categories (Oakley 1972, 158). During the 1960s, the term gender was employed to show that biological differences (sex) could be differentiated from social/psychological ones (gender) (Oakley 1972, 158). Feminists found the distinction useful as a way to counter the biological determinism in explaining men's and women's behaviour and their occupation of certain gender roles. Therefore, the sex/gender distinction became an important tool to explain the differences prevalent between women and men.

American psychoanalyst Robert Stoller was one of the first to establish a clear distinction between the two concepts. Firstly, Stoller agrees that there is a link between sex and gender in that to determine the sex of an individual "one must assay the following physical conditions: chromosomal, hormonal...internal and external genitals and secondary sex characteristics. Most people fall under one category: male or female" (cited in Oakley 1972, 159). However, while it is important to acknowledge the obvious signs of physical characteristics of males and females, biology is not the underlying factor that determines the differences between men and women. As Stoller argues:

Gender is a term that has psychological and cultural rather than biological connotations; if the proper terms for sex are 'male' and 'female', the corresponding terms for gender are

masculine and feminine...
(cited in Oakley 1972, 159)

In this sense, gender is the socially imposed division upon the sexes. In reference to women, while biological differences are fixed in what it means to be female, society dictates how women should behave and act (Duberman 1975, 26). This in turn shapes women's femininity and the roles they should acquire such as being a mother based on their expressive traits. In reference to men, the construction of masculinity highlights that men are constructed to be the superior sex as they are not associated with the female roles women undertake.

While the concept of sex and gender has been treated by feminists as two separate concepts, it has been argued that they depend upon one another (Rubin 1975, 15). Gender can be seen as a social category that becomes projected on the biological category of sex. Feminists such as Gayle Rubin interpreted sex and gender as concepts that complement one another as gender is the "social interpretation of sex...we can refer to [sex] as the "coat rack" view of gender...our sexed bodies are like the "coat racks" which provide the site upon which gender is constructed" (1975, 16). Therefore, gender is conceived as being either masculine or feminine which is imposed upon sex as society dictates the cultural standards of how men and women ought to behave.

Other feminist scholars explain the relationship between sex and gender in a different way. Judith Butler, for example, takes a different approach by arguing that defining gender as the cultural interpretation of sex is misunderstood if sex itself is a gendered category (1990, 6). Since gender is socially constructed, gender is neither the causal result of sex nor is it

seemingly fixed as sex (Butler 1990, 6). Hence, if gender is the cultural meaning that the sexed body assumes, then gender cannot be said to follow on from sex. Instead, Butler argues that gender ought not to be “conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning on the pre-given sex and as a result gender is not to culture as sex is to nature” (1990, 7). One may argue that sex is viewed as a construction and not as a natural element occurring within men and women.

The social construction of gender suggests certain gendered meanings are inscribed on anatomically differentiated bodies, where bodies are understood as passive recipients of cultural constructions. Moira Gatens offers a similar viewpoint to Butler in arguing that certain social processes creates the body as passive and neutral (Gatens 1996, 8). Gatens suggests that the sex/gender distinction ignores the relationship that exists between the male body and masculinity and the female body and femininity and that the subject is seen as a sexed subject (Gatens 1996, 8). Hence, this implies that there is a close relationship with biology and our gender categories.

As a relationship can be established between the concepts of sex and gender, feminists saw that the differences between men and women were in fact socially produced and therefore changeable. Gayle Rubin, for instance, uses the phrase “sex/gender system” in order to describe a “set of arrangements by which the biological raw material of human sex and procreation is shaped by human, social intervention” (1975, 16). One can argue that women’s and men’s situations are in fact not determined by their biology, rather it is a social construction. For instance, women’s roles as mothers are viewed as a social product

influenced by societal norms and standards. Hence gender (masculine and feminine) are independent of sex (biological). As Oakley establishes, to be classed as a man or a woman, is as much a function of dress, gesture and personality as it is of possessing a particular set of genitals (1972, 23). This suggests that biological or anatomical characteristics are not primary in determining women's and men's roles as they are always influenced by social expectations.

This chapter has explained gender as an important concept that reinforces the "appropriate" roles men and women should perform according to their sex categories. The way gender is produced and reproduced through many social situations highlights its prevalence and the ways it affects individuals, particularly women. While gender is learned at an early stage in people's lives, socialisation is a lifetime process that affects men and women in their adult roles as well. Moreover, the sex/gender distinction sees gender as a social construction that is not determined by biology; rather it is a cultural norm that overlaps the sex categories. While debate has surrounded the sex/gender distinction and whether they ought to be treated as two separate categories, it can be argued that gender roles are learned as it dictates the way women and men should behave and act.

Chapter 2: Motherhood, Families and the Household Division of Labour

The household is an important organisation of gender relations between men and women. The private sphere and women's position within the family, particularly their responsibility for childcare and housework, has been at the centre of feminist research on gender domination (Baxter 1993, 7). Past feminist scholars, such as Ann Oakley, examined not only the role of the housewife but also the division of labour within the household (1974), ideologies of domesticity (1974) and motherhood roles (1976). Oakley argued that "the home is the symbol of women's oppression...the identities of women and lifelong activities are defined by their domesticity and being primary caregivers to children" (1974, 25). While the household no longer determines the public forms of patriarchy, women in the contemporary world are still associated with their mothering roles and household responsibilities (McKie et al 1999, 4).

This chapter will employ a sociological perspective, particularly a functionalist approach, to explain the distinct gender roles men and women undertake within the home. Based on this explanation, an insight into the dominant ideologies on motherhood will be examined through the understandings of socialisation in which women are expected to carry out the main task for nurturing and rearing children. This chapter will also explore women's oppression in the context of a feminist scope, particularly second wave feminism, and its role in shedding light on issues such as the family and household relations. In addition, an exploration through the sociological theory of "doing gender" within the household will be discussed to demonstrate that the established gender roles still perpetuate within the private sphere. Therefore this chapter will demonstrate that motherhood roles and the household system reinforce gender relations of power which see women perform female roles.

A Theoretical Perspective of the Family and Gender Roles

The family is considered to be an institution in which gender and gender roles are established and conceived (Parsons and Bales 1955, 17). Sociological explanations of the family with its distinct gender roles for men and women stems from the work of American sociologists Talcott Parsons and Robert Bales. In the 1950s, Parsons developed a functional model for the nuclear family and applied it to the middle class American family which emphasised the instrumental/expressive roles of men and women (Parsons and Bales 1955, 17). Their theoretical analysis reinforced how the concept of socialisation is functional for both sexes and the family as a whole.

Parsons and Bales central point highlighted that the function of the family is not interpreted as a function impacted by society or biology rather it is through the socialisation process (Parsons and Bales 1955, 17). The socialisation process impacts on the different personalities and traits men and women develop. Parsons and Bales argued that the “human personality is not “born” but must be “made” through the socialization process, that in the first instance families are necessary...they are the “factories” which produce human personalities” (1955, 16). In this sense, the socialisation process produces different personalities and traits for women and men which characterise them as being different from one another.

In examining the development of specific personalities on the basis of socialisation, the family was seen as fulfilling a particular purpose within society. The socialisation of children was an important aspect in their preparation to become effective male and female adults in that particular society. Parsons and Bales examined the different roles men and women

undertook within families and the extent to which they differed (1955, 14). The system of the nuclear family was made of two subsystems: the husband/father “instrumental” leader and wife/mother “expressive” carer which serves to fulfil the wider function of each individual within society, especially the woman’s role in being a mother to her children (Parsons and Bales 1955, 22). In this sense, while men exercise their leader roles within the family, women are confined to their roles as carer and nurturer based on their acquired traits through the socialisation process.

According to Parsons and Bales’ analysis, each of the subsystems within society needed to play a part in preparing the child for its participation in society. As such, the male and female contribute differently to shape the child’s personality based on their own personalities acquired through the socialisation process. Parsons and Bales explained that in the early years, it is the mother who had a special relationship to the child as emotional carer and supporter (1955, 37). The woman’s role, in this case, is considered less important in preparing children to adapt within the wider society. Accordingly, the occupational role of the father provides the role model of this. The mother’s expressive role as helpmate releases tension within the family and acts as a support for the father (Parsons and Bales 1955, 37). Hence, the dissimilar roles of men and women reduce competition between the two subsystems and act as an important solidarity for the family.

Parsons and Bales also argue that the different personalities that men and women attain impact on a child’s personality and the roles they perform (1955, 14). The fully mature adult male is expected to have an occupation and to exhibit characteristics associated with his

instrumental position. The fully mature adult female is expected to be a mother and to exhibit characteristics associated with her expressive traits (Parsons and Bales 1955, 14). The traditional gender roles men and women perform are based on the socialisation process which sees the female undertaking roles reflective of the family. As Parsons and Bales explain, the adult feminine role has not “ceased to be anchored primarily in the internal affairs of the family, as wife, mother and person in charge of household affairs” (1955, 14). Hence the woman is viewed as the opposite to the man in terms of her role in the home and as a mother. Such views were central in understanding the family’s role within society which was applied to the nuclear family in its way of positioning men and women in particular ways.

Parson’s work on the study of the family and the socialisation process has been critiqued by feminist scholars who have challenged the concept of gender socialisation (Millett 1971, 33). The family, it was argued, was a power hierarchy with men exercising much patriarchal dominance (Millett 1971, 33). American feminist Kate Millett was one of the first to insist that the root of women’s oppression was buried deep within the patriarchal system. Millett’s argument focused on the power-structured relationships and arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another (1971, 33). Patriarchal ideology exaggerates differences between men and women, which render men dominant and women subordinate. This then becomes particularly forceful when exercised through institutions such as the family.

The socialisation of both sexes serves the patriarchal system that reinforces male superiority and female inferiority. The formation of human personalities along stereotyped sex categories establishes particular traits for men and women (Millett 1971, 26). One may argue that such

categorising impacts on women who are allotted certain roles according to their personality traits. As Millett explains “sex roles assign domestic service and attendance upon infants to the female...interest and ambition is pursued by men outside the confines of the home” (1971, 26). This means that by acquiring different personality traits men and women are positioned to fulfil their “suited” sex roles in which men are dominant whilst women are subordinate.

The process of socialisation within the family affects women and men. Parsons and Bales particularly emphasised women’s expressive roles which were seen as paramount for society in the socialisation of children (Parsons and Bales 1955, 37). Like Millett’s critique of socialisation and family roles, feminist scholars such as Ann Oakley saw that women’s subordination is perpetuated through the family. According to Oakley’s explanation, the assertion that women need to be engaged in motherly roles is viewed as an ideal feminine trait:

Of all the rationales offered for women’s presence in the home...the myth of motherhood is the most persuasive, for even if the housewife and wife roles are capable of change the maternal role is not. Women’s position in the family is found in their maternity.

(1977, 186)

One may interpret this notion in that while the state of other roles within the family may change, the maternal role is internalised within the woman which is reproduced within the household. In turn, women devote themselves to experiencing motherhood, which becomes her primary function.

The term mothering is said to be any relationship in which one individual nurtures and cares for another (Oakley 1972; Wearing 1984). The image of the mother as the primary caretaker has an underlying set of values and beliefs which sees the female as the most suited to its role (Wearing 1984, 11). Such an ideological view contributes to the construction of femininity in shaping the “ideal” woman. As Mathews explains the process of becoming a “good” woman is based on attaining the standards of femininity which is embedded within the mothering role (1984, 6). The mother, in this sense, is perceived as an individual who devotes herself to her children, protects and nurtures them and puts her child’s interests well before her own (Mathews 1984, 6). By demonstrating feminine traits such as being passive, nurturing and caring, women are deemed “suited” for the role of motherhood.

The masculine and feminine positions are very different in terms of children and childcare roles. The role of the mother is quite distinct from other members within the family such as the man/father role (Wearing 1984, 23). This idea is reflected through gender ideology which is linked to patriarchal power in serving the interest of a dominant group. Wearing explains that the exercise of power through a common set of beliefs enables a dominant group or individual to influence, shape or determine the very wants of a subordinate group or individual (Wearing 1984, 24). This ideology is central in explaining the supposedly “natural” propensity of women for the nurture and care of others in the family which is associated with making parenting the specific responsibility of the female gender (Wearing 1984, 24). In this context, the ideology of motherhood sees the primary parent as female which confines and subordinates them. Men on the other hand, pursue interests that are not related to the mothering role which is considered to be a woman’s responsibility.

Such an ideology remains etched within contemporary society where women are expected to bear full responsibility of children which are determined by the ideology of the family (Richards 1997, 162). The family is said to determine the roles of men and women with traditional ideas explaining that women are meant to be the primary caregivers of children as it is a maternal instinct fulfilling their feminine purposes (Richards 1997, 162). Men however do not associate themselves with roles that are perceived as “female”. Such ideas have been critiqued by feminists such as Ann Oakley who argued that by confining women to the “capacity of loving their children, it ensures women’s continued oppression because the cycle of mothering is constantly reproduced within the family...and the consequences of maternal love are prevalent” (2005, vii). From this perspective, motherhood is viewed as a social constraint that still sees women needing to fulfil societal standards of femininity which emphasises selfless maternal love as an important attribute.

Changes and Continued Challenges: Second Wave Feminism

Second Wave Feminism became a revolutionary path for women in the late 1960s that attempted to challenge women’s subordination and marginalisation (Malos 1995, 110). The women’s movement allowed for the growing revolt against their oppression as a sex that was voiced by millions throughout the world. The movement addressed a range of issues such as the family which sought to overturn the barriers that determined and defined women’s lives (Malos 1995, 110). Yet women’s place within society was regarded as a topic of interest well before the feminist movement emerged. One of the first feminist writers to explore women’s experiences was Simone de Beauvoir who argued that throughout history women have been denied full humanity and have struggled to find meaning in their lives. In her revolutionary

book, *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir's central argument is based on the idea of male control and patriarchy, in that:

a man is in the right of being a man; it is woman
who is in the wrong. Male activity creates values...
male models the face of the future. The woman on
the other hand is always and archetypally Other.
(1988, 16)

Hence the dominant male ideology was an accepted norm that contributed to women's oppression. Women were constrained because of the feminine roles they attained based on societal expectations (de Beauvoir 1988, 15). Certain images such as motherhood encouraged women to acquire ideals reflecting her femininity. Whilst women's positions within society have undergone substantial change since the book's publication, de Beauvoir captured the notion of women being considered the "Other" less important sex, in contrast to the male.

The publication of Betty Freidan's *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963 was a landmark book that explored the dissatisfaction many middle class women felt at their limited opportunities in life. Women were encouraged to see an image of themselves as housewives and mothers, reinforcing the common belief of what women ought to be. Freidan explained that women's situation was called "the problem with no name" which was characterised by feelings of failure, nothingness and lack of completion (1963, 6). She encouraged women to find their "real" identity and perform a more meaningful role within the public sphere like their male counterparts (Freidan 1963, 7). Second Wave Feminism began to challenge the unequal power relations that existed between the sexes. The established women's movement, the National Organization for Women (NOW), attempted to demystify the idea that women were oppressed through the idea of biology (Freidan 1963, 7). Rather, women's positions were an

ideological and social construction that had confined women to 'feminine' social roles based on their caring and expressive traits.

Feminist scholars agreed that the construction of femininity was fundamental in explaining women's continued oppression. For instance, many girls were socialised into feminine values and behaviours which were associated with passivity and submissiveness (Freidan 1963, 27). Freidan based her research on women in the US during the 1950s, in an era where women had disappeared from the public sphere and had succumbed to the "feminine mystique". Friedan argued that women were only defined as being "healthy, with a beautiful home, educated [up to a certain point] and concerned only with her husband, her children and her home" (1963, 28). Such issues relating to femininity foreshadowed later arguments based on women's positions within society.

Second Wave Feminism continued to contest women's subordination during the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s (Malos 1995, 117). Women raised demands that disputed their specific forms of oppression and called into question prominent topics such as the deep-rooted traditional division of labour. Many women believed that their oppression within the home was perpetuated by the structure of the family (Malos 1995, 117). Thus, the family was viewed as the central institution that reaffirmed the unequal gender relations between women and men.

As Malos explains, the family was seen as:

Not a natural object but it is a cultural creation.
There is nothing inevitable about the form or role
of the family...it is the function of ideology
that sees women undertake such roles, which
contribute in further subordinating women.

(1995, 117)

The family represented defining gender roles within the home for men and women. Such arguments saw that the family was considered the major institution in which gender relations were apparent and where women were still associated with feminine tasks such as housework and mothering roles.

While feminism may have liberated women to pursue meaningful careers outside the private sphere, the feminist movement has not freed them from social expectations such as motherhood roles (Oakley 2005, v). From the 1990s through to contemporary society the unequal social relations within the family home have not been bridged despite decades of challenging the existing domestic division of labour. As Oakley's new research shows, women in today's society are still considered the primary individuals who perform the majority of housework (2005, 54). The struggle to transform social relations between men and women within the family has remained a focal point of research within contemporary literature.

Household Relations and the Gendered Division of Domestic Labour

The household division of labour remains a contested terrain in which a division in the distribution of work exists between women and men. Prevailing gender attitudes have reinforced traditional activities as women continue to perform the majority of household and childcare responsibilities (Baxter 1993, 8). As Oakley further argues, gender differences of tasks within the "family home have seen women remain entirely responsible for such

roles...the feminine role is also the basic structure of society and to the ideology of gender roles which pervade it” (1974, 29). Oakley’s research based on 40 interviews conducted in the late 1960s reinforced women’s expectation to bear full responsibility as housewives. Past research on gender roles remains relevant as it reinforces the continued power relations within the household which see women be continually associated with family roles.

Gender ideology, which is based on the theory of socialisation, examines how individuals are socialised into appropriate male and female gender roles (Baxter 1993, 9). For some early radical feminists such as Millett, the importance of male dominance is learned at an early age which defines the male as aggressive and the female as passive. As Millett explains, the “early childhood socialisation ensures that the maintenance of patriarchy foundation contributes in conditioning women to accept their ascribed status and temperament” (1971, 35). Such views can be attributed to the family, the institution which shapes gendered identities. From this perspective, the exercise of patriarchy within the family is responsible for allocating appropriate roles for women and men.

One of the implications of the socialisation process that can be seen within the home refers to the role of housework. Household labour is viewed as a representation of caring and appreciation of the home which is central to the female role. Women perform more housework which enables them to behave in accordance with feminine and expressive traits. (Grzela and Bouchard 2010, 773). Men on the other hand are reluctant to share the household responsibilities since their identity is not prescribed toward domestic work. They cannot therefore automatically participate as they have not developed the same sense of

responsibility that is internalised by girls as they grow up (Grzela and Bouchard 2010, 773). Hence the “unmasculine” image that is affiliated with housework sees full responsibility placed upon women.

Another way in which the division of labour can be understood is through the gender display model. This model points to the symbolic construction of housework as woman’s work and as a display of love for her family and subordination to her husband (Baxter 2002, 402). Gender display, as a theory was first developed by Erving Goffman who based his work on symbolic interactionism in which gender is expressed during social interaction. Goffman likened gender displays between men and women to the roles of domination and subordination, characterising the relationship as unequal (1977, 306). However, other scholars such as Sarah Fenstermaker and Candace West further developed this by explaining that gender display is how individuals create social life as meaningful through interaction with others and that gender performance is something that one “does” (Fenstermaker and West 2002, 156). This idea emphasises the dissimilar relations between men and women through the notion of gender.

The gender display model was applied to housework which argued that current arrangements for the organisation of domestic labour support two ideas: the production of household goods and services and gender. Fenstermaker and West argued that the “household produces gender through the everyday enactment of dominance, submission and other behaviours symbolically linked to gender” (2002, 6). Hence, by “doing gender” as a process, gender identity is produced as men and women carry out routine activities. Doing housework, then, is an

important concept of “doing gender” which sees gender outweigh other factors such as marriage and children, in explaining the allocation of tasks (Baxter 2002, 402). These views sees women “doing womanly” indoor chores such as the laundry and cooking while men are associated with “doing manly” outdoor activities such as mowing the lawn and household maintenance (Baxter 2002, 402). In “doing” these arrangements within the home, it reinforces men’s unwillingness to participate in tasks considered “unmasculine” such as vacuuming and cleaning the bathroom. By not participating in such activities, women are given the role of “doing” the majority of tasks considered to be feminine.

The allocation of certain tasks is identified as norms that are embedded within the household. Sociological research reinforces such theoretical concepts with women being responsible for at least three quarters of general housework, irrespective of being employed or unemployed (Sullivan 2004, 209). Janeen Baxter, a social researcher, conducted a survey in Australia in 1986, 1993 and 1997 to investigate changes in housework participation. In 1986, women continued to perform the bulk of feminine tasks such as cleaning the house and washing the clothes compared to only 18 and 14 percent for men, respectively (Baxter 2002, 412). Such patterns in 1993 continued to be prevalent with women performing 75 per cent of general house cleaning and 82 per cent of ironing (Baxter 2002, 412). The marginal changes that have occurred were seen in the 1997 data with a 12 percent rise in preparing meals and cleaning up after meals (Baxter 2002, 412). These patterns of unequal domestic labour highlight the suitable masculine and feminine chores within the household reinforcing such differing gender relations.

Contemporary research in household participation suggests a similar pattern in comparison with past social research. In the US, for instance, women are still expected to perform 73 per cent of all household tasks, while men only put in one third of such effort (Robinson et al 2004, 195). In traditional feminine tasks, 63 per cent of women cook meals while men only perform 12 per cent (Robinson et al 2004, 195). Men, continue to perform outdoor activities that reinforce their appropriate “masculine” roles, with 80 percent mowing the lawn and 87 per cent “doing” home maintenance (Robinson et al 2004, 195). Women perform minimal “manly” activities such as mowing the lawn with only 23 per cent undertaking this activity. However, changes with indoor activities such as sharing of meal preparation have only slightly increased by 4 percent as these tasks are associated with “public” jobs which reaffirm masculine appropriateness.

The everyday tasks of childcare responsibilities that are associated with women are viewed as a natural expression of femininity. The routine care of the home and children is seen as expressing and reaffirming their gendered relations to men (Coltrane 1989, 167). The traditional role of men, in contrast, is limited to protecting and providing for children (Coltrane 1989, 167). While men do play a key role in these activities, their roles are defined by the activities they do not do in comparison to the mother. The theory of “doing gender” can be applied to childcare activities in terms of men’s and women’s participation levels. As Coltrane explains, doing gender in terms of childcare is a “routine and recurring accomplishment which involves socially guided activities that see a particular pursuit of displaying masculine and feminine “natures”” (1989, 169). In this sense, appropriate gender

relations are sustained in conforming to accepted norms of childcare for which women remain primarily responsible.

Past social research from Australia confirms that women are still allotted an unfair proportion of childcare responsibilities. In 1986 women were still responsible for childcare tasks than men; approximately 66 to 67 per cent compared to 35 to 42 percent for men, respectively (Baxter 2002, 404). The pattern that was recorded over the years shows that women are still responsible for general chores associated with children, with minimal changes occurring. For example bathing and dressing children was still seen as a woman's job with women performing 69 per cent of the tasks compared to 31 percent for men (Baxter 2002, 410). In the 1997 data, women were still expected to bathe children and 72 per cent of women were still required to assist children with their homework (Baxter 2002, 410). This explains that women are still affiliated by traditional feminine roles with the household while men remain reluctant to be associated with "woman's work".

The contemporary trends continue to display a minimal shift for women, whether involved in paid or unpaid employment. For instance women in the US are still expected to undertake 71 per cent of a combined total of childcare tasks, more than double than what was seen in the past (Bianchi 2000, 408). Despite decades challenging the unequal division of household responsibilities, this research suggests that women still appear to take on the majority of child rearing tasks. The only change noted within current literature is a 5 per cent increase in men who are willing to take care of children while women are involved in paid employment (Bianchi 2000, 411). This research suggests that men are still reluctant in taking primary

responsibility for children, with recent figures showing that in a combined total of housework and child care tasks, women account for 70% of such tasks within homes (Sullivan 2004, 209). Hence, data confirms the theoretical underpinnings in that women still are expected to undertake traditional feminine activities, all of which confirm their femininity in “doing” their appropriate gender roles.

This chapter has examined the ways the household and the family reinforce and dictate the appropriate roles for men and women which in turn produce different implications. Men are seen as performing their instrumental roles whilst women are expected to provide their expressive roles in socialising children with nurturance and care. This chapter also discussed the social construction of the mothering role that acts as a constraint for women, which stems from the socialisation process within the family. In seeing the woman as the central caregiver, it pigeonholes them in seeing motherhood as an ideal that needs to be attained to fulfil their femininity. The chapter also discussed the dissimilar relations between men and women within the household and the persistence of the domestic division of labour. Gender, as such, is accomplished and performed through the different roles men and women undertake within the home which reinforce opposing gender relations.

Chapter 3: Contemporary Implications for Women in Integrating Family and Work Roles

In contemporary society women are expected to manage both their family and work obligations. With the replacement of the traditional breadwinner/housewife model, women have been able to successfully combine both roles, which have reinforced their emergence in the labour market and economic independence from men (Bergmann 2005, 3-4). With the implementation of the dual earner income model, the increase in female work participation has challenged existing gender inequalities (Wilson 2002, 25). Yet despite the economic changes, women are still expected to fulfil the societal normative of undertaking family responsibilities, particularly mothering roles and domestic duties (Crompton 2006, 43). This view reinforces the asymmetrical gender relations within the family that present implications for women in their continued associations with family responsibilities.

This chapter will discuss that despite women's changing roles in the public sphere, women are still performing the bulk of the nurturing roles as well as a higher percentage of the housework. First, this chapter will point to the changes in the public realm which sees women continue to attain high occupational roles. However, women are still obligated to combine their working careers with their family roles. Finally, an explanation into the pervading gender attitudes associated with the traditional roles within the home reinforces the expectation for women to perform the "second shift" (McRae 2008, 215). This dichotomy between the private and the public highlights women's affiliation with appropriate feminine tasks within the home in which men remain disassociated from as it does not emphasise their "proper" masculine roles.

Changing Gender Attitudes, the Family and Maternal Employment

The shifting gender attitudes towards women and their work roles have been reflected in their gains within the public sphere. As a result, an unprecedented number of married women have entered the labour force that has increased their longer hours in employment (Bergmann 2005, 13). In 2007, for instance, married women in the US, particularly with small children, had surpassed single women in the workplace by 61 per cent (Blau et al 2010, 83). In Australia, at least 72 per cent of married women were engaged in the workforce while being occupied with family duties (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). These changes can be attributed to the transformations in the economic model of the full time homemaker that had once separated women from the workplace, whilst fulfilling the traditional norm of raising children. As Crompton explains the once conventional view “where a man’s job is to work and a women’s is to look after the family has declined with only one-fifth of women conforming to this traditional model” (2006, 43). Moreover, women with children under the age of five no longer conform to this idea, opting to remain within the employment sector.

Whilst married women have remained economically active, their participation levels in the labour force are shaped by their personal circumstances which “orientate” them towards particular types of employment such as the professional sectors (Crompton and Harris 1998; Crompton 2006). According to Glover and Kirton, their positions within the market and hours performed is determined by their mothering responsibilities to infants and young children with many shifting from full time to part time work (2006, 60). Part time work is considered to be employment that constitutes less than 35 hours per week in which 41 per cent of women

occupy such positions and men only 10 per cent (Glover and Kirton 2006, 60). Women “choose” to orientate towards part time work as it is the only form of labour market access for women with family responsibilities which provides women the much needed flexibility in their work schedules in managing childrearing and their careers (Glover and Kirton 2006, 60). In occupying part time work, women remain independent from men as it lessens the economic dependence on the male wage (Glover and Kirton 2006, 34). It acts to destabilise the male breadwinner model of the family in allowing women to remain economically active within the labour market.

While part time work allows women to manage work and family roles, it establishes implications for women within the labour market. Women who choose this type of employment pay a high price, as they are likely to be exposed to low status occupations (Buchmann et al 2010, 281). The creation of certain jobs specifically for women with families places them into female typed areas with lower pay and poorer working conditions (Buchmann et al 2010, 281). This, in turn, leads to occupational sex segregation within the labour market. As Scott explains, the “fulfillment of “woman’s work” is viewed as a less rewarding career which are considered to be an extension of women’s traditional feminine roles” (2008, 167). Most sex segregation is concentrated in areas such as the industry/sector level and includes work such as hotel and catering, health and social work and other voluntary work (Glover and Kirton 2006, 34). Occupational segregation is not just prominent in these areas of work, but within women’s previous occupational statuses. For instance, within the education sector women who may have occupied full time teaching fill relief teaching on a

regular basis (Glover and Kirton 2006, 35). The problematic nature of part time work remains an inappropriate long term option in reconciling work and family responsibilities.

The disadvantages that part time work presents sees many women return to full time employment. During the mid decade of the 1980s in the US, nearly half the mothers reentered full time work soon after giving birth (Hayghe 1986, 43). By the time their youngest child was 4 years of age, 60 per cent were in the workforce (Hayghe 1986, 43). Such a trend saw 25 million children in the US, over half of married couples, in families where the mother was absent from the home on a regular basis (Hayghe 1986, 43). These figures suggest that women returning to full time work has challenged past attitudes towards women's work in that women can successfully combine both roles.

Contemporary society has seen similar trends as in 2005 in the US there were 2.4 million married mothers whose youngest child was less than a year old when they returned to full time work with 79 per cent of women being under the age of 35 (Cohany and Sok 2007, 7). This pattern is clearly seen in other Western countries such as the UK with figures from 2006 revealing that half the mothers with preschool children have full time jobs, rising to almost 80 per cent of those whose youngest child is aged 11 or older (McRae 2008, 179). Moreover, full time work sees women in the UK spending less time in the home but they are still expected to fulfil their familial duties. As McRae explains, "women's hours at home increase by 5.5 hours per week when engaged in part time work...however women's hours in the home only slightly decreases when engaged in full time employment" (2008, 179). This suggests that despite their participation within the public sphere women's hours within the home have not

changed nor is there an indication that an increase in male participation has occurred within the home to compensate for the hours women spend in the workforce. Hence, women are still affiliated with their feminine roles that are centred within the home.

In combining work and family roles women still continue to retain their previous positions after the birth of their first child and when returning to full time work during the child's primary school years. Since 2004, 33 per cent of women in the UK who held managerial positions continued to remain in these positions, often having their salary and job benefits increased (McRae 2008, 187). Many women returning to full time work had secured promotion advancements from their previous positions irrespective of their "working mother" statuses. However, promotional chances and general benefits have only been associated with women who attain full time continuous employment throughout their careers. As McRae explains, those who were engaged in part time employment on an intermittent basis did not benefit from such promotions (2008, 193). As a consequence, women's occupation of part time work to manage family responsibilities were most likely to experience limited promotional benefits within the labour market. This suggests that women who are responsible for family roles have their careers disrupted which in turn impacts on the opportunities available to them in the employment sphere.

In spite of the economic emergence of women within the labour force, the "orientation" towards work differentiates for women and men (Daniels and Weingarten 1984; Hatt 1997). From a past perspective, the 1980s participation pattern of men remained solid with continued engagement in their middle years, which only begins to change when approaching their 50s

and 60s (Hatt 1997, 13). For women, however, their work is affected by their mothering roles. As Crompton explains women in the contemporary are obligated to take on the work of “parenting and caring for children...when they return to full time work, they are still expected to remain responsible for both roles” (2006, 56). Such occupations see women fulfil traditional feminine roles, which highlight their obligations towards their children.

Women fill particular types of employment according to their family responsibilities and lifestyle (Bianchi 2000, 405). In this sense, women’s careers are more likely to be disrupted as they spend time performing their motherly roles outside the scope of paid work (Bianchi 2000, 406). While it can be argued that men’s and women’s participation vary significantly, men’s traditional place within the labour market and disassociation from home responsibilities contributes to women fulfilling an important normative which is mothering.

As Crompton explains:

Both structural and normative constraints shape women’s decisions relating to the balance achieved by women in both roles. Men’s selves are...associated with their primary roles that is not related to the home or caring role...
(2006, 52)

Hence, women’s mothering roles are not considered to be separate from work obligations like the males. This in turn reinforces the dominant gender attitudes associated with women’s feminine roles that deem them suitable for motherhood. These attitudes suggests that women should remain the primary caring figures of children for which men are perceived as “unsuited” to because of their constructed dominant traits. Such caring and expressive roles are typically associated with females.

The Second Shift: Balancing Paid Work and Family Commitments

The establishment of the dual earner income model which saw the replacement of the traditional “breadwinner” husband and “housewife” wife, restructured women’s roles and their place within the public sphere (Hatt 1997; Bergman 2005). Past scholars incorporated the term “symmetrical family” in which men and women should each combine family and work responsibilities (Young and Willmott, cited in Pleck 1984, 237-238). While men’s roles outside the private sphere were commonly associated with paid work, women have been affiliated with performing household and caring duties within the home. Moreover, the phrase “women’s two roles” was introduced to include an additional role women added to their work schedules. As past and contemporary research has suggested women continue to perform the “double shift” of both their working careers and family obligations (Pleck 1984; Baxter 1993; Crompton 2006).

The issue of women balancing both paid work and family obligations has been at the centre of scholarly research (Pleck 1984; Hochschild 1989; Crompton 2006). This notion of women being responsible for both roles was labelled as the “second shift” (Hochschild 1989, 13). Though women’s economic gains and their emergence into the dual earner income model were well established, women were still likely to perform the unequal proportion of childcare and housework. Basing her research on interviews conducted during the 1970s and early 1980s, Hochschild found that many women were doing twice the amount of childcare and housework than men (1989, 15).

Different explanations have been put forward to explain men's minimal participation within the home. One possible theoretical approach can be examined through gender ideology in determining the allocation of tasks appropriate to each sex. Hochschild argued that men could not identify with housework as it challenged their notions of masculinity (1989, 15). Moreover, Hochschild explained that men's reluctance in performing more housework was described as a "stalled revolution" which established unequal power relations which were centred on gender ideology in which:

Men's and women's gender ideologies...are different based on cultural beliefs about manhood and womanhood. Men make connections that are related to power who believe women should perform the work at home as well. Woman's gender ideology sees...many take responsibility for housework and childcare as it fulfills the idea of womanhood.

(1989, 15)

The dominant gender ideology pigeonholes women into performing tasks that sees them associated with female work. Women have an expectation in fulfilling these roles since patriarchal power sees women suited to tasks such as housework and being primary carers to children.

Another way to explain men's slow participation in the home can be applied to socialisation that is centred in gender ideology. Men and women are taught at a young age what their appropriate gender roles are as adults which they come to internalise. As Hochschild explained, men and women are socialised differently, which has had negative implications as they "never learned the conventional gender roles women were brought up with. This was

only taught to women” (1989, 217). Hence men cannot identify with work considered to be “feminine” or “woman’s work” as it does not reflect their idea of what it means to be masculine.

Past social research confirms the limited levels of participation that men perform in the household. In Australia for example, women’s hours in the home had significantly dropped by 12 hours per week, down from approximately 30 hours per week in 1987 to approximately 17.5 hours per week in 1992 (Sheldon cited in Baxter 2002, 400). This trend had been attributed to the dramatic rise in women’s labour force participation. Studies based in Australia from 1984-1992 suggested that women’s hours had actually trebled in performing the “second shift” of housework and childcare (Baxter 2002, 400). Women engaged in full time employment were expected to perform the exact amount of housework as a woman employed part time. Women spent 9 hours per week preparing meals compared with only 2 hours per week for men (Baxter 1993, 74). Similarly, women were expected to perform 4 hours of washing per week while men only 0.75 hours per week. The only “shift” that was observed was the increase in cooking and preparing meals with women and men performing 2 hours each per week evenly (Baxter 1993, 74). This data suggests that women’s traditional roles within the home had remained central in their lives with the data revealing that men did not wish to be associated with household tasks that challenged their masculinity.

Social research has also indicated minimal shifts in men’s roles in increasing their time spent with children. While studies suggest that men have increased their childcare tasks, women still spend twice as much on childcare then do men (Baxter 1993; Wilson 2002). On average

women in full time employment performed only 2 hours more than their spouse on traditional childcare tasks (Baxter 1993, 76). For instance, feeding the children averaged 7.5 hours per week compared with only 2.52 hours per week for men (Baxter 1993, 76). There were slight shifts of men's participation in putting children to bed averaging only 1.57 hours more than their wives. Other tasks such as helping children with homework averaged only 2 hours per week for men. On average, women in full time employment were expected to spend almost twice the amount of time on housework as do women who are employed part time or as full time homemakers (Baxter 1993, 76). These trends from past research have indicated that while men had increased their time on housework and childcare, women were still expected to put in longer hours in such tasks. Such gender relations indicated that men's and women's constructed roles differed within the home based on their feminine and masculine traits.

Gender ideology reinforces the different power relations between men and women within the home. The pervading gender attitudes have contributed in emphasising women's appropriate gender roles as women continue to perform the "second shift" of childcare and housework (Bianchi 2000, 406). Since men's constructed "manly" traits do not associate them with such roles, women are expected to perform the normative expectations of what it means to be a woman as this reinforces the ideals of womanhood. As Grzela and Bouchard explain:

women are still tied to household duties and the role of motherhood...in this sense they are fulfilling of what it means to be a good mother, wife, and eventually a woman. This is the driving force in women being overburdened today.
(2010, 773)

This means that women have their own perception of what is expected within the private sphere. By not fulfilling such roles, they are not reflecting the social norms of what a woman should do (Brown and Diekmann 2010; Grzela and Bouchard 2010; Coltrane 2010). These normative ideas have continued to perpetuate within the contemporary world with women occupying these gender roles despite numerous gains outside the private sphere.

Women's contemporary positions and earnings within the labour market have undergone substantial transformations (Winkler 1998; Blau et al 2010). As of 2007, their increase in labour force participation in the US is estimated to be at 59.3 per cent (Blau et al 2010, 80). The emergence of the dual earner model sees 68 per cent of couples in the US with children now living together as dual earner families (Blau et al 2010, 294). As dual earner couples, the combined earnings from 2004-2007 brought into the home have been estimated to average \$81,600 in the US. One consequence of married women's earnings in the US is that in some families the percentage of wives with higher annual earnings than their husbands had increased from only 16 per cent in 1981 to 26 per cent by 2006 (Blau et al 2010, 294). This shows that parity has been achieved within the employment sector which has elevated women's economic power.

These similar trends have been prevalent within Western countries, particularly in Australia. During the 1980s, 31 per cent of Australian women were in the labour market with figures nearly doubling to 61 percent in 1995 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Men's participation levels during the 1980s and 1990s were significantly high suggesting their participation has been relatively stable. In the contemporary, the labour participation rate for

most women who are working full time stands at 62 per cent as of 2006 while for men it is 72 per cent (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008). Additionally, the number of women in the labour force also suggests their significant economic emergence based on their incomes. During the 1980s, women aged 18-64 earned \$78,000 while in 2005 women were earning \$81,000 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008). During 2005-2006 the total income women had earned had increased to 38 per cent. This suggests that within Australia there have been changing attitudes towards women which has been reinforced by their economic independence from men.

While women's economic emergence has been recognised, women are still expected to perform more housework than men. For example, women in Australia are spending longer hours in the workplace, their hours on tasks within the home has significantly dropped by an hour and 45 minutes to performing 16 hours per week on unpaid tasks (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009). However, this did not see a reciprocal increase in the work men undertake in traditional indoor tasks normally done by women, with women still performing an average of 33 hours per week on tasks such as grocery shopping, cleaning and caring for children. However, men have increased their share of domestic work. Between 1992 and 2006, men's hours in the household rose by an hour and 25 minutes to 18 hour and 25 minutes per week (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009). However, it was still estimated that women who combine both their work and family obligations still performed most of the housework. For instance as of 2006, women still put in at least 30 hours per week while men only 18 hours per week (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009). As such, men are still spending more time in the workforce which has seen them undertake fewer tasks within the household. This data

further suggests that there are still incompatibilities in gender relations within the home with minimal shifts occurring towards traditional female roles within the family.

Women's influx into the public sphere of work and economic stability had led to the expectation that a more egalitarian approach in task sharing would evolve (Breen and Cooke 2005, 43). However, it seems that the "stalled revolution" has prevailed. Despite women spending longer hours within the workforce, women still continue to perform the bulk of the housework (Breen and Cooke 2005, 43). One possible explanation into the persistence of women's responsibility for the domestic sphere arises because couples "do" their appropriate gender. Based on the gender display model, couples accomplish their gender which occurs within interaction (Sullivan 2004, 3-4). In the instance of housework it reinforces the routine performance of housework that individuals enact. Therefore women and men perform the greater or lesser proportion of housework to fulfil the normatively defined gender expectation of "proper" masculine and feminine roles.

Contemporary social research conducted in the UK from 2003-2007 solidifies that men and women who were both engaged in full time work did not share the housework and childcare responsibilities equally (Harkness 2008, 239). As employment figures rise, the hours spent within the home is substantially affected. Those with small children under the age of 5 had increased their employment levels substantially with hours on housework decreasing (Harkness 2008, 239). The data from 2003-2004 does not show evidence that men have increased their hours of unpaid labour in the home to compensate for women's increased hours in paid work. It also suggests that men's hours within the labour force remain

continuous. While women are performing less “female” based housework, it does state that women are placed in a better position. However as research confirms, the female patterns of work within the home are strongly gendered, with women expected to perform 70 per cent of the total hours of housework and childcare combined (Harkness 2008, 245).

The research conducted included a comparison between hours spent by couples where women work either full time or part time and households where both couples work full time. The first set of data explained that in households where dependent children are present, men in paid and unpaid work have remained unaffected irrespective of children or not. In 2003-2004, men with children spent an extra two hours per week on paid work but no more time on unpaid work in the home (Harkness 2008, 239). In 2003-2004, women spent on average 21 hours on paid work with an additional 6 hours on unpaid work in the home (Harkness 2008, 243). When women undertook part time work their time in the home increased. While full time working mothers are employed for a shorter period of time than their partner (39 compared with 46 hours in 2003-2004), they still do the bulk of the “female” housework (Harkness 2008, 245). While they complete 46 hours of paid work, they perform 70 per cent of the unpaid labour at home (Harkness 2008, 245). Based on these statistics, men’s hours in unpaid tasks has not shifted with men on average performing no more than 5 hours per week who were participating in paid employment. Contemporary research suggests that men and women are still unequal with men spending less time on housework as it does not reflect the traditional masculine ideal image, further sharpening the dichotomy between the private and public spheres.

The trends in women performing mothering roles have not changed despite the emergence of women into the workforce. Statistics have confirmed that women's roles are still centred on caring for children. To compare and contrast, in 1965 women in the US spent an average of 2.2 hours per day on childcare tasks while in 1998 women were spending 3.5 hours per day with children, additionally combined with work obligations (Bianchi 2000, 405). As a general activity women had spent more time tending to children and caring for them than any other leisure activity (Bianchi 2000, 405). Such statistics in the US indicate that women engaged in full time work spent more time than men performing parenting roles. While men's contribution to raising children has increased, it is still women who perform the majority of such tasks. In recent studies conducted, women from dual earner families were expected to perform an estimated 4.5 hours per week in looking after their children (Harkness 2008, 245). Whilst men's contribution to children has increased, women are expected to perform 6.5 hours more per week since men spend longer hours than women in the labour force. As such, women's association with childcare is still viewed as a female role and women are expected to provide their expressive roles to their children while men's superior status sees them focused on their careers which are considered to be men's "proper" roles.

In past literature, it has been suggested that the number of hours spent in paid employment has seen women's hours in the home decrease (Pleck 1984; Baxter 2002). In the mainstream, while men and women work full time with dependent children, women are still expected to carry the major responsibilities for the traditional unpaid feminine tasks such as cooking at 60 per cent, cleaning at 66 per cent, and washing and ironing at 74 percent (Harkness 2008, 254). In 2004 the study of dual earner couples in UK families estimates that such tasks are shared in

only one third of family households (Harkness 2008, 255). To demonstrate the relationship between the hours of paid work and housework, the time husbands and wives spend on unpaid work varies with wives working hours. Between 1994 and 2004, unpaid work hours have fallen substantially beyond 30 hours of paid work (Harkness 2008, 254). While the husbands' unpaid hours in the home shows a small increase as their wives work more hours, men contribute just one third of all housework hours. However, women's hours for unpaid work remain greater than those of their partners averaging 8.5 hours more (Harkness 2008, 254). As men's share of paid work declines in some households, their hours on unpaid work rises (Harkness 2008, 255). However, the average contribution never rises to more than 45 percent of all household hours. This reinforces the belief that men do not affiliate themselves with work that does not reflect their prevailing masculine identity. Therefore, they do not execute work that is viewed as being "suited" for women. Hence, this has contributed to women being overburdened in undertaking "second shift" of dual roles.

Whilst there does not seem to be an apparent shift in married women and men sharing the housework within the home, couples living together or who cohabit display greater levels of sharing household work and childcare responsibilities. Like dual earner income couples within marriages, cohabiting couples can either have children and be actively engaged in the workforce or they can be living together with no children (Miller and Sassler 2010, 677). Social research from 1996-1997 in Australia explains that there seems to be a greater sense of egalitarianism with these couples in terms of agreeing upon a fair amount of domestic work. As Baxter explains, men in de facto relationships tend to perform more of the traditional female tasks in the home while women have substantially decreased their hours in performing

these routine tasks (2005, 300). Couples that cohabited prior to living together had agreed on a more equal sharing of household tasks (Baxter 2005, 300). These trends were attributed to factors such as decreased external norms and obligations that saw men and women equally participate in household work. In more recent data from Australia in 2006, women still continued to perform nearly two thirds of the housework. While it is accurate to say that men have increased their share in the housework performed, women are still expected to perform the majority of the chores despite living in an “egalitarian” relationship.

Contemporary data explains that while such relationships for women and men establish greater equality, women are still expected to perform a slightly larger proportion of work within the home (Miller and Sassler 2010, 696). Data suggests that shifting gender attitudes and behaviours towards housework indicate a greater share in the overall unpaid labour in the home. For instance, in 2003 in the US it was seen that women and men with work obligations share 40 to 60 per cent of the household labour such as the cleaning and cooking (Miller and Sassler 2010, 683). Yet, despite the relative “freedom” both couples have in terms of economic stability, women are still expected to perform more household chores irrespective of egalitarian held beliefs. Hence, the female partner carries out the higher burden in undertaking the “second shift” (Miller and Sassler 2010, 696). Therefore, this contemporary data indicates that while there is greater “choice” within cohabiting relationships and economic stability, these patterns of participation continue to reinforce the disproportional domestic division of labour and childcare duties that married couples experience.

In dual earner income households for married couples, men and women approach their gender roles differently which has seen women undertake the majority of “womanly” tasks within the home (Blau et al 2010, 295). However, other scholarly literature presents an alternative argument into the possible direction of future gender roles. Jeremy Adam Smith’s contemporary book *The Daddy Shift*, argues that a new model of the family has emerged that has shifted gender roles within the family. Based on interviews conducted in the US, Smith argues that gender roles are reversing in terms of women’s and men’s places within the private and public spheres. According to Smith, men are now more likely to stay at home and raise their children and perform the housework whilst women are engaged in full time employment (Smith 2009, x). As Smith further states, “in 2007 an average of 159,000 stay at home dads were observed...since 1995 the figures have doubled...nearly one in four school children are now spending time with their dads” (2009, X). This literature indicates the changes in the gender gap which traditionally associates women with feminine tasks. This view challenges the unequal power relations that are currently prevalent within the household.

These contemporary perspectives place emphasis on the changing economic structure in terms of the dual earner income model, which has challenged the existing notion of women being associated with their mothering roles (Smith 2009, xii). Based on the changing economic factors in which women have benefited from, Smith argues that female breadwinning has begun to emerge, something that was only commonly associated with men. Since 80 per cent of mothers are now engaged in full time work, men are more likely to occupy part time work and take on the traditional “feminine” role (Smith 2009, xii). Since women have acquired more economic power and are earning relatively more than their spouses, men’s participation

in housework and taking care of children will be affected. This would then position women to be associated with the public world of work while men with the home, as they take full responsibility of roles traditionally associated with women.

The changing gender attitude that may lead to dissimilar gender roles has not affected the majority of society. While society may be challenging these stereotyped roles, women still perform the “womanly” tasks (Grzela and Bouchard 2010, 777). Current views within society still see men and women affiliated with their appropriate gender roles. As Brown and Diekmann explain gender roles will remain the same as both sexes have a sense of the roles they should occupy:

gender normative roles are embedded within society...
men and women have internalised the social roles
differently...the way they were taught to do so.
Traditional gender roles will continue to see men have
greater emphasis on their career while women will still
be affiliated with family roles.

(2010, 569)

This view explains that the current and future gender relations between men and women will see a continuation of traditional roles. In this sense, men and women have internalised differently their responsibility based on family roles. While such views will see women continue to be associated with paid work, they will continue to be associated with roles that reflect the family since men’s constructed roles have not been challenged.

This chapter has discussed the contemporary gender roles that are prevalent within families. The vast economic gains women have made including their increase in the labour force have

challenged traditional views of women's place within the private sphere. Women's entrance into the public sphere with children has been an important change that has seen women be able to return to full time work while benefiting from increase in income and work positions. Yet, women still remain affiliated with mothering roles often needing to occupy work that fits with their family duties. In addition, this chapter also discussed the emergence of the dual earner income model that has seen women achieve parity with men in the labour force. The analysis of social research data from both a past and contemporary perspective indicates that minimal changes have occurred within the household with men not increasing their participation of domestic work. As a result, changes have not occurred within the home that has seen women continue to undertake the "second shift" as we have not challenged the roles men should take on in the home that are considered "unmasculine". If the constructed masculine traits begin to be disrupted, then some shifts within the home may start to emerge.

Conclusion

This thesis has argued that the “second shift” that situates women as doing most of the housework within the home is still alive and well. The thesis has also demonstrated that the economic emergence of women in the public sphere of work has not been seen a reciprocal sharing of duties in the private sphere. This thesis has therefore demonstrated that women still remain accountable toward female roles within the home and, in effect, women are compelled to manage their work and family obligations despite their long established success beyond the private sphere.

The unequal gender relations within the home that has endured continuity have been attributed to the socialisation process and the family. In the instance of mothering roles, it has been explained that through socialisation women learn to acquire particular traits that are associated with nurturing and caring. Men however are taught to associate themselves with masculine traits such as being dominant and being career orientated and competitive (Giddens 1990; Wharton 2005). These traits then disassociate men from work within the home that are considered to be feminine or family related. The implications of such traits that are acquired during the socialisation process establish male dominance and patriarchal power within the family that serves as a powerful ideology that subordinates women. In this sense, the constructed masculine and feminine traits produce two different genders that emphasise women’s appropriateness for such expressive roles.

These ideas of male dominance remain prevalent and problematic within mainstream society. It is still considered a woman’s responsibility to manage their family obligations whilst

combining it with their working careers. It has been discussed that the number of women returning to work in the present has doubled. Women are still expected to occupy part time work for longer periods of time before returning to full time work to enjoy the full benefits of work opportunities. In spite of the increase in the number of women re-entering full time work, women are still expected to be primarily responsible for childcare. On the contrary, men's roles do not see them suited towards female roles and as a consequence their careers are rarely disrupted to fulfil "particular" jobs such as part time work because of family obligations. These dominant gender attitudes have certainly not shifted or been challenged as women feel obligated to perform roles that are internalised and reproduced within the family.

This thesis also discussed the prevailing household division of labour in which women are still expected to carry out female tasks. This idea has been discussed through the gender theory model that explained that men and women "do" their gender based on the housework they perform. Consequently, women have been much more associated with tasks such as cleaning, ironing, mopping and cooking than men (Baxter 1993; Baxter 2002). This is also still relevant in terms of childcare for which women still remain responsible when entering full time employment. Men's constructed masculine traits have reinforced their dissociation from performing housework that is considered to be "womanly tasks".

This idea has been applied to the prevailing "second shift" that has endured within the home. To support this, social research was compared and contrasted from a past and present perspective that suggests minimal changes have occurred in sharing household activities. Past research has indicated that men's participation levels have not shifted despite women

spending longer hours in the labour force. Current research suggest that despite women achieving parity with men in the public sphere, the household still remains unequal with many women continuing to perform the “double shift”. Further, contemporary statistics indicate that women perform 70 per cent of a combined total of household labour and childcare tasks along with their work obligations outside the home (Wilson 2002; Crompton 2006; McRae 2008). In this sense, women still expected to “do” the feminine based roles while men remain disassociated from such tasks.

The contemporary “second shift” remains static as women are still expected to undertake most of the housework and childcare tasks. It can be said that the “stalled revolution” still remains an embedded problem within the everyday lives of women and men. Despite gender theorising in attempting to reverse the roles within the home, it has failed to challenge men’s traits and their constructed masculine roles associated within the family. If we begin to challenge these constructed masculine traits that highlight men’s power and dominance and in turn place emphasis on terms such as fatherhood/parenthood and househusband, we would then begin to challenge what is considered feminine. In doing this, women would no longer be required to perform the burden of the “second shift”, as Arlie Hochschild had referred to, and men would be much more inclined to participate in tasks within the home.

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