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ELEVEN

The Interplay between Work and Family and Its Impact on Community Service

Alice S. Rossi

Introduction

Age, sex, and social class represent hierarchies within which our lives are embedded, determining what we do to earn a living, what paycheck we bring home, where we live, and even what we do in our leisure hours. For most adults, daily life revolves around jobs, homes, family, and friends. For all our vaulted claims to personal freedom and individualism, Americans are not primarily unencumbered selves pursuing life goals according to their own self-interests. This has long been a fundamental premise in sociological theory, but it has become a lively issue in moral philosophy as well and is at the heart of recent communitarian challenges to rights-based liberalism (Blustein 1991; MacIntyre 1984; Sandel 1982). The goals we seek, and the probability of our reaching them, are circumscribed by sex and race and by religious and ethnic background, birth cohort, and location on the ever-changing trajectory of age. This holds true even in broad historical and geographical terms: Natalie Davis and Arlette Farge (1993) tell us that their study of Europeans from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries reveals that "daily life unfolded within the frame of enduring gender and social hierarchies." Anthropologists studying societies extremely different from those in the developed nations in the West have drawn the same conclusion. One of the shocks adolescents experience when they finally become independent adults is the realization that they have exchanged one set of restrictions—those imposed on them by parents and schools, for another—those imposed by employers, spouses, and the responsibilities that attend childbearing and rearing.

This chapter focuses on the jobs held by adults in our national survey. Because jobs and wages are strongly influenced by sex and education, we give these two characteristics consistent attention throughout the analysis. Because our interest is in the life course, we also give special attention to age. Topics covered include objective characteristics of jobs in terms of demands on time and energy, the stress level respon-

dents attribute to the nature of their work, the extent to which the work they do is a source of pride and respect from others, their overall satisfaction with their work situation, and the returns they bring home in the form of pay. We examine variation in how jobs affect home life and, finally, how the combination of job and family characteristics affect community service, as indexed by the time respondents spend in volunteer work and the money they contribute to organizations and charities.

To set the stage for this analysis, we briefly discuss several social and economic changes that have been taking place in the larger society in recent years that have serious implications for the lives of adults, young and old, men and women, trends that provide interpretive clues for the results of our analysis.

Economic Trends

There have been both bright and dismal reports concerning the American economy over the last decade. In 1998 the Clinton administration reported the lowest unemployment rate in thirty years and the creation of millions of new jobs, but there are less sanguine indicators as well: the continuing, and in fact increasing, inequality in wage distribution; a record level of consumer debts and personal bankruptcies; a mushrooming of high incomes among the very rich, with 1% of Americans now holding 35% of the nation's wealth; and, despite the low unemployment rate, the fact that there were almost two million more children living in poverty in the late 1990s (14.5 million) than in 1989 (12.6 million) (Reich 1998).

Another recent economic trend concerns the stock market. We no longer hear the phrase "playing the market"; stock purchases are now described in purely optimistic terms as "investments." Incredibly, among registered voters in 1997, shareholders outnumbered those not in the market 53% to 43%, according to an October 1997 NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll, and it has been reported that in 1998 the share of wealth Americans had in stock holdings hit a fifty-year high, exceeding the value of their homes for the first time in three decades (Wyatt 1998). As Jacob Weinberg suggests (1998), there is now a mass culture of investing, the first to exist anywhere in the world. This trend must have been in James Atlas's mind when he proposed a contemporary equivalent of an old Jewish joke: "What's the difference between a garment worker and a poet? A generation. Maybe that joke should be

retooled for our entrepreneurial age: What's the difference between a poet and a venture capitalist?" (Atlas 1998, 34).

It is an open question, however, how this radical change will affect society, particularly because a rising market exacerbates social inequality. In the short run, there clearly are benefits from stock investments, which have been generating gains of about 18% a year since 1982, far in excess of safer investments in money-market accounts and certificates of deposit, which have earnings of only about 5%, even less if you subtract a 2% inflation increase. The problem is that investors do not adequately view their stock purchases as a form of gambling, but assume a continuation of high gains well into the future. Most such investors do not see themselves as occupying the top of a hierarchy of gambling, with those less well off gambling in casinos, and the poor gambling in lotteries. More serious still is the possibility that the lure of the stock market encourages speculative gains in lieu of savings or earned income, and hence undercuts the traditional virtues of industry and thrift. It is sadly ironic that the poorest members of society, welfare mothers, are being subjected to shorter periods of public support and encouraged to take jobs that by and large pay very poorly, while those at the top of the class hierarchy are enjoying speculative gains for which they did nothing but gamble to obtain. Because they are members of a particularly fortunate birth cohort, today's elderly fare far better economically than the young and middle aged, and far better than the elderly of only a few decades ago, thanks to the increased value of their homes and a steady flow of income from pensions, stocks, and social security.

Social Trends

Over the course of the past several decades, there have been slow but steady changes taking place in the relations between men and women. Opportunities have opened in the economy for women, while they have diminished for many men, particularly those with low or outmoded skills or those affected by downsizing who often have had to take new jobs with much lower wages. There have been widespread discussions, often stimulated by feminist scholars and activists, concerning the inequities in the division of labor between husbands and wives, a particularly sore point now that the majority of married women are employed yet still handle a majority of the domestic chores (e.g., Hochschild 1989). Men are urged to become more involved in infant

and child care as the plight of women juggling family and work responsibilities is spotlighted. Far less attention is given to the pressures men experience on their jobs and on the homefront as women increasingly expect, and more men themselves desire, more equitable sharing in chores and childcare responsibilities (Coltrane 1996; Crosby 1987, 1991; Eckenrode and Gore 1990; Parcel and Menaghan 1994). The overwhelming majority of our MIDUS respondents believe men and women should share equally in domestic chores and childrearing, but the actual division of labor they report still shows the traditional pattern of women performing a far larger proportion of such chores than their partners do. Little wonder, then, that Reed Larson and Maryse Richards found a decided sex difference in the emotional well-being of dual-earning married couples when they return home from work: husbands' moods improve while the moods of women, who often face household chores and the end-of-day scrappiness of their children, worsen, thus suggesting opposite cycles of emotional well-being in the daily lives of men and women (Larson and Richards 1994).

There are many intriguing but unsettled questions concerning the implementation of this new ideology of sex roles. One very broad thesis dominates our perspective as we examine the interplay between work and family: the ongoing sex stratification of the workplace represents a barrier to equitable roles for men and women in their homes and family life. Men's jobs are valued far more than the jobs women have traditionally held, and as a result there are still very few couples who earn comparable salaries, even if they have similar levels of education and job experience and are close enough in age to be at similar stages of their careers. As we will report below, among the dual-earning couples in the MIDUS sample, only 10% have similar earnings; 37% of husbands earn $21,000 or more than their wives earn; only 5% of wives earn that much more than their husbands, a ratio of more than 7:1. Differences in pay matter; no matter how committed a couple is to sharing home responsibilities equitably, rational decisions may dictate that the partner earning the most, whose job is therefore of greatest economic importance to the family, may be excused from carrying a fair share of homefront burdens.

It is also possible for a changing sex role ideology to effect a change in social stigma: thirty years ago, women who worked while having young children at home were often targets for social criticism; today, women who remain at home at this early stage of family life are more apt to experience social stigma than are working mothers. Clearly when

AFDC was implemented decades ago, it was on the belief that mothers of young children should remain at home; today, welfare reform is premised on the notion that children do not need exclusive maternal care and young mothers should return to the workforce as soon as possible after the birth of a child. We shall look closely at our data for clues to the stresses and pleasures attending changes such as these, particularly among young adults who have felt the impact of such value changes most keenly.

Our first topic is respondents' judgment of the adequacy of their income in meeting their needs or those of their families living with them. This is particularly interesting because it highlights the fact that a surprisingly large proportion of our sample of adults are feeling financial strain despite the high employment rate of recent years. Those who are hurting the *most* are our youngest respondents, whereas those feeling the *least* financial strain are older adults over sixty years of age, a profile consistent with some of the points made above.

Actual Earnings Level and Subjective Assessment of Its Adequacy

Table 11.1 sets the stage for this initial analysis, showing the proportion of adults who feel their income is not sufficient to meet their needs. Inspection of these results shows highly significant differences as a function of age, sex, and marital status. In all eight possible comparisons, the elderly are *least* apt to feel their incomes are insufficient to meet their needs, a dramatic example of the far more secure circumstances confronting today's elderly compared to that which their grandparents and great-grandparents faced. In ten of the twelve comparisons, those who are *not* married feel greater financial duress than the married do. Here too one suspects this is a new pattern in our time, reflecting the fact that married women are far more likely to be working and contributing to household income, apparently sufficiently so that despite the greater likelihood that they have children to feed and clothe, they and their husbands are experiencing less income inadequacy than are adults who are not living with a partner. More to be expected is the fact that unmarried *women* are far more likely to feel financial pressure than are unmarried *men*. This is particularly the case among less well educated adults at all three stages of life. Many such women are single parents, which undoubtedly adds to their financial strain. Note, however, that it is among young, less-educated men that marital status makes the greatest difference (44% of the unmarried vs. 32% of the

TABLE 11.1 Percentage of Respondents Who Report They Do Not Have Enough Money to Meet Their Needs, by Age, Sex, Education, and Marital Status

	Young (25–39)	Middle Aged (40–59)	Old (60–74)
Men			
High school or less			
Not married	43.6	33.3	18.8
	(39)	(57)	(32)
Married	31.9	30.4	18.8
	(116)	(181)	(96)
More than high school			
Not married	29.5	26.6	24.1
	(112)	(109)	(29)
Married	30.0	21.6	7.9
	(217)	(324)	(126)
Women			
High school or less			
Not married	53.7	60.0	33.8
	(67)	(95)	(80)
Married	44.0	26.0	16.0
	(116)	(181)	(94)
More than high school			
Not married	45.4	36.8	24.4
	(119)	(182)	(78)
Married	30.0	27.4	18.4
	(203)	(63)	(76)

Note: The question read, "In general, would you say you (and your family living with you) have *more money* than you need, *just enough* for your needs, or *not enough* to meet your needs?" The majority of the sample report they have "just enough" (55%); only 15% report "more than they need"; twice as many (30%) report "not enough" money. There is enormous variation in the percentage reporting "not enough" by all four demographic variables; the extremes are represented by older, married, well-educated men (8%) and young, unmarried, less well educated women (54%).

married men report not having enough money to meet their needs). It is likely that many of these men have poor prospects of marriage due to low wages or an erratic employment history.

Note, finally, the very wide range in this subjective sense of income inadequacy when taking into consideration age, education, and marital status. In both sexes, the contrast is very sharp: from only 8% among married, well-educated men in the oldest age group to 44% among the young, less well educated, unmarried men; among women the same sharp contrast holds, though at a higher level of stress—24% versus 54%.

There is of course an objective reality underlying these subjective

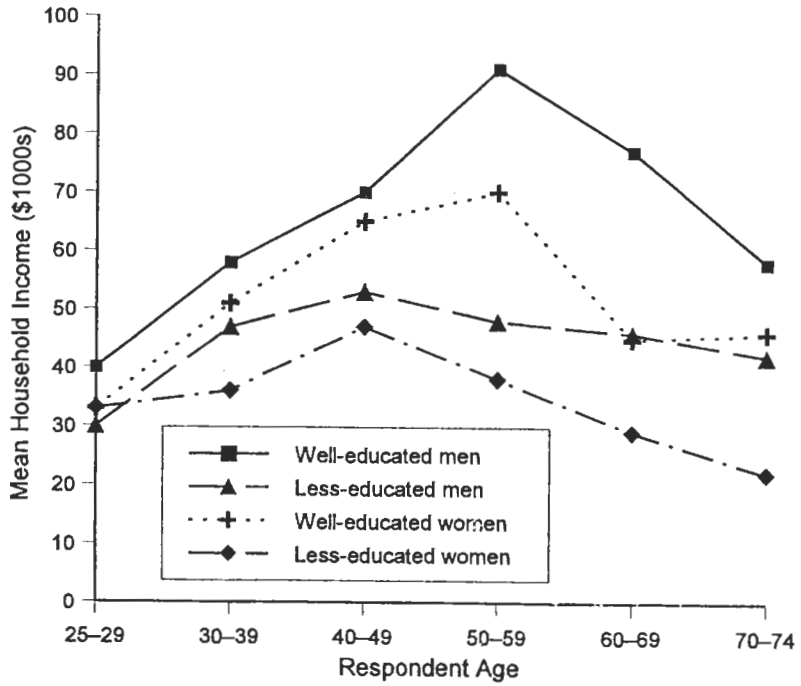

FIGURE 11.1. Average total household income, by age, sex, and education.

judgments, which can be seen by inspecting the differences in actual income by the same sociodemographic variables. To depict the life course trajectory of earnings more finely, figure 11.1 shows six categories of age, from under thirty to seventy or older. This figure compares the *total household income* among less- and well-educated men and women. Among the better educated, income peaks in their fifties, for the less well educated, in their forties, a longstanding pattern that has differentiated middle- from working-class adults for many decades: those who go on to higher education begin their careers at older ages, but their education eventually pays off with significantly higher wages later in life. Also, within each level of educational attainment, women report smaller household incomes than men, and once more the sex difference, like the educational difference, increases with age. Education and sex differences are minimal among young adults in their late twenties, maximal among those in their fifties and sixties.

If we restrict attention to *personal earnings* rather than total household income and compare men and women by marital status, as shown

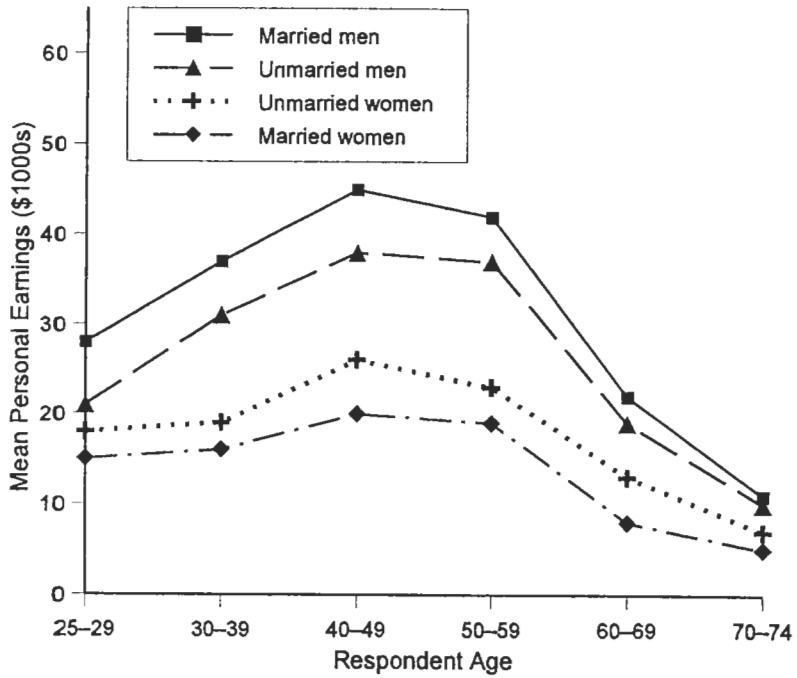

FIGURE 11.2. Average personal earnings, by age, sex, and marital status.

in figure 11.2, the same curvilinear age profile occurs, though more so among men than among women. Figure 11.2 also shows a reversal by marital status within the two sexes: Among men, those who are married earn more than the unmarried at all stages of life. Among women the reverse holds: unmarried women report higher earnings than married women. Married men carry more family responsibility, and many feel pressure to work harder by taking on more than one job. Then too, adequate resources continue to be a factor in mate selection, often leaving men with lesser drive and hence lower income out of the marriage market. By contrast, many well-educated women with ambition choose not to marry. Consequently it is men at the *lowest* level of skill and education and women at the *highest* level of skill and education who tend to remain unmarried or to experience marital breakups.

Multivariate analysis permits us to see the relative contribution of each of the four sociodemographic factors to the subjective judgment that earnings are inadequate to meet either personal or family needs, or both. In addition, we add the number of children to the analysis, since

TABLE 11.2 Regression of Income Inadequacy Judgment on Sociodemographic Characteristics, by Sex (beta coefficients)

Variable	Men	Women
Age	−.198***	−.212***
Total household income	−.293***	−.277***
Educational attainment	−.084***	−.091**
Number of children	.073**	.115***
Married/cohabiting[a]	.039	−.085***
R^2	.150***	.157***
N	1,436	1,519

Note: For income inadequacy judgment, high = not enough money, low = more money than needed.

[a] 1 = yes; 0 = no.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

obviously this plays a role in such judgments. Table 11.2 shows the results of a regression analysis of income inadequacy judgments as a function of the five predictor variables. All five show significant net effects on income judgment calls: those who report not having enough money to meet their needs are younger, low income, less well educated adults with one or more children. Marital status, as one might surmise from table 11.1, is significant for women: unmarried women, net of age, income, presence of children, or educational attainment, are feeling financial duress to a much greater extent than are married women. The reverse is true for men, although statistically not significantly so.

The results to this point underline the fact that sex and social class represent social hierarchies built into the structure of the economy. It is not only that marriage continues to be a route to stronger, more secure financial situations for women, but even within marriage, an imbalance in earnings leaves men in more favorable circumstances because their incomes remain significantly higher than those of their wives. Figure 11.3 provides the evidence, in the distribution of income differences between husbands and wives among dual-earning couples alluded to in the introduction above. Some may take comfort from the fact that a full 18% of wives earn five thousand dollars or more in excess of what their husbands earn, but the longstanding overall pattern remains. A full 61% of husbands earn much more than their wives; a good 37% earn over twenty thousand dollars more.

In light of the fact that it is young adults who are feeling much greater financial stress than are the elderly, one might anticipate that

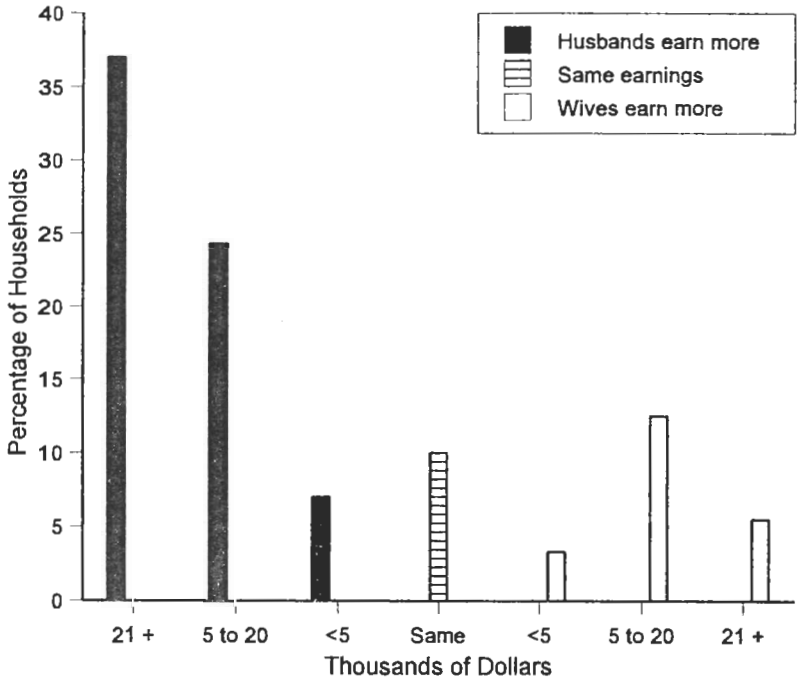

FIGURE 11.3. Distribution of earnings differences between husbands and wives among dual-earning couples.

they would also report greater commitment to their jobs, working harder than others who do their kind of work or taking every opportunity to work overtime even if it meant cancelling social plans. But this is surprisingly not the case, as we will see in looking at the same structural parameters in relation to our measure of work obligation. As shown in chapter 7, normative obligations are significantly related to the quality of life experiences in the families in which our respondents grew up, providing the rationale for the next step in our analysis.

NORMATIVE OBLIGATIONS TO WORK

Were norms fully consistent with motivation and behavior, one might predict that young adults who report that their incomes are inadequate to their needs would feel much greater obligation to their job duties than older adults do, would go out of their way to do well in their jobs, and would work hard even under unpleasant circumstances or despite a lack of respect for those who supervise them. As mentioned

TABLE 11.3 Mean Ratings on Work Obligation Scale, by Age, Sex, and Education (beta coefficients)

	Young (25–39)	Middle Aged (40–59)	Old (60–74)
Men			
High school or less	22.3	23.0	23.9
More than high school	20.7	22.8	23.4
Women			
High school or less	22.6	23.5	23.4
More than high school	22.2	23.6	23.9

Note: The work obligation scale is a three-item scale of ratings on degree of obligation felt, from 0 ("no obligation") to 10 ("very great obligation"), to do more than most people would on their kind of job, to work hard even if they didn't like or respect their supervisors, and to cancel plans to visit with friends if asked (but not required) to work overtime. The work obligation scale (range 0–30) is significantly related to age (f = 20.9, significant at the .001 level), modestly to gender (f = 6.3, significant at the .01 level): older adults have higher ratings than younger adults, and women, higher than men. Education is not significant. Note that the subgroup with the *lowest* rating on work obligation is, surprisingly, young, better-educated men.

previously and shown now in detail in table 11.3, this is not the case: uniformly among both men and women, and at both levels of educational attainment, our oldest respondents show higher levels of obligation to work than the young adult respondents do. In chapter 3 we showed that a similar pattern holds for civic obligations and altruism, but there we suggested that this age profile is due to family life stage and a resurgence of religious beliefs in the later years: as family obligations are fulfilled, attention shifts in midlife to the welfare of others and a broader participation in civic life. The pattern shown for work obligations is not consistent with this interpretation. It seems more likely that young adults are confronting new circumstances that dampen the degree of work obligation from what their parents felt at comparable ages: many younger adults today are seeking a better balance in life between the pressure and pleasure of work on the one hand and family life and leisure on the other (Coltrane 1996; Gerson 1993). Despite the prevalence of social expectations that dictate women should seek their place in the economy, many young women are in the labor force out of necessity, in order to attain and maintain the standard of living they desire. Many young men may also desire a better balanced life, with family commitments undercutting their dedication to go beyond the call of duty in job performance. Note that the subgroup with the very *lowest* work obligation rating is young, well-educated men (mean = 20.7).

There may also be another source of historic change that affects the

age relationship to work obligations: changes in parental childrearing practices. Duane Alwin has documented this trend in numerous studies, showing that over the past several decades, parental socialization values have changed in the direction of stressing more flexibility and independence in rearing children, with less emphasis on conformity and obedience (Alwin 1984, 1990, 1991, 1996). It is possible that our younger MIDUS respondents are showing the effect of their parents' emphasis on independence and autonomy, with the unintended consequence that they have not acquired the values and habits underlying work obligations to the degree of earlier cohorts whose parents emphasized conformity and submission to authority and the work ethic.

Our MIDUS module on the characteristics of the family of origin has no extensive battery of items on parental socialization values, but two measures are relevant here: the general religious ambience of the home when respondents were growing up, and the chores and rules they were subjected to, that is, whether they were given regular chores to do and the extent to which their parents had rules about how they spent their time. We have already shown, in chapter 3, that there is a strong net effect of parental religious values on those held by the respondents themselves and that there is an increase in religiosity over the life course. Hence in exploring the age difference in work obligation, we incorporate these two attributes of the family of origin along with age in a multivariate analysis of work obligation (table 11.4). We also include one personality scale of greatest relevance to normative obligations—agency—on the premise that it takes some degree of self-confidence and assertiveness to outperform co-workers and to work hard despite harboring unfriendly feelings toward supervisors, items in the work obligation scale.

These four predictor variables are not powerful determinants of work obligation for either men or women, as indexed by the modest R^2s shown in table 11.4. There is evidence, however, that both personal agency and an early experience of parental supervision and of participation in home maintenance (via regular chores) do play a role in contributing to work obligation. But age itself, independent of such predictors, continues to be positively associated at a significant level with work obligation levels. Despite the fact that men and women do not differ in their reports of how religious their families of origin were, this background variable predicts only men's work obligation level. We have no ready explanation for why this may be the case; our best guess is that men grow up taking for granted that employment will be a fea-

TABLE 11.4 Regression of Work Obligation Scale on Family of Origin Characteristics, Agency Personality Scale, and Age, by Sex

Variable	Men	Women
Family characteristics		
Religion important in family of origin[a]	.067**	−.008
Chores/time-use rules scale[b]	.053*	.082**
Respondent characteristics		
Agency personality scale[c]	.155***	.116***
Age	.124***	.111***
R^2	.055***	.035***
N	1,414	1,480

[a] High = very important; low = not important.

[b] The chores/time-use rules scale is based on two items rating extent to which respondents had regular chores to do and were subject to rules on how they spent their time while they were growing up. Scale range is from 2 ("no rules or chores") to 8 ("a lot of rules and chores"); mean = 5.9, SD = 1.4, alpha = .65.

[c] The agency personality scale, described in detail in chapter 7, is based on self-ratings on the extent respondents consider themselves to be dominant, assertive, self-confident, forceful, and outspoken. Scale range is 5–20; mean = 13.7, SD = 3.2, alpha = .79.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

ture of their adult lives, whereas more women anticipate employment on conditional terms as a function of family economic needs and ages of children.

The question of why young adults report more income inadequacy but lower work obligation remains largely unanswered to this stage of the analysis. We turn next to how adults feel subjectively about what they do on their jobs compared with what they do in their homes as a source for deriving pride from what they do and respect from others in reaction to their roles in these two major life domains.

PRIDE AND RESPECT DERIVED FROM WORK ON THE JOB AND IN THE HOME

Two parallel items concerning the two domains of home and work are the measures used in this analysis: we label them "job pride" and "home pride" for simplicity's sake, though both scales include items on respect gained from others as well. We will first inspect the sociodemographic characteristics of the two scales (age, sex, and education), then test whether either or both scales contribute to overall satisfaction with current life situations, and then explore more deeply what aspects of current jobs or what circumstances at home are significant factors in

determining whether adults derive pride and respect from these two domains of life.

Demographic Correlates of Job and Home Pride

Attitudes toward home maintenance have a long history of being associated with chores and drudgery. One readily thinks of domestic chores as cleaning away dirt, a monotonous repetitive job with few intrinsic rewards; far more rarely is it associated with a high order of skills in organization and management or with fine cooking and its aesthetic presentation, despite the lure of women's magazines or TV shows on cooking and home decoration. On all sides we are inundated with advertisements for home appliances and cleaning products that will reduce the time required to maintain a shiny clean home. Some feminist scholars go so far as to claim a male-female dualism that encompasses the cultural oppositions of reason and emotion, purity and impurity, cleanliness and dirt. Phyllis Palmer points out that *white* clothing was required in suffrage marches in the 1910s and in Equal Rights Amendment rallies in the 1970s because "white is visually dramatic, but as the bride's color, it also conveys messages of virginity, nonsexuality, physical purity, and fragility" (Palmer 1989, 150).

By contrast to unpaid work in the home, paid work is socially valued work, and it comes as no surprise that in rating the extent to which pride and respect are garnered from the work done at home and on the job, both men and women show higher ratings on job pride than they do on home pride. In table 11.5, this is true for all twelve possible comparisons. Note, however, that this contrast is *most* sharp among well-educated young and middle-aged women, whose home pride ratings are an average of 5.7 and 5.9, respectively, whereas the average job pride rating is 6.7 among the well-educated young women and 7.1 among their middle-aged counterparts. Once again, however, we find that older respondents of both sexes and both levels of educational attainment have higher ratings on both scales than do younger adults.

Pride and respect derived from the two domains are significantly and positively correlated (r = .27, significant at the .001 level), suggesting some common element shared by both measures. Preliminary analysis (not reported here) found one measure of this common element, a subscale of Carol Ryff's measures of psychological well-being (Ryff 1989,1992): *self-acceptance,* which taps respondents' feelings about themselves in terms of liking most parts of their personality and feeling pleased with how things are turning out in their lives. While

TABLE 11.5 Pride and Respect Derived from Work at Home and on the Job, by Age, Sex, and Education

	Young (25–39)	Middle Aged (40–59)	Old (60–74)
Home pride[a]			
Men			
High school or less	6.4 (153)	6.7 (237)	6.9 (122)
More than high school	6.2 (328)	6.4 (432)	6.6 (155)
Women			
High school or less	6.0 (181)	6.2 (272)	6.7 (167)
More than high school	5.7 (322)	5.9 (407)	6.5 (147)
Job pride[b]			
Men			
High school or less	6.5 (136)	7.1 (185)	7.2 (52)
More than high school	6.7 (300)	6.9 (379)	7.1 (57)
Women			
High school or less	6.4 (118)	6.8 (187)	6.9 (38)
More than high school	6.7 (257)	7.1 (336)	7.4 (59)

[a] Two-item scale based on rating the extent to which respondents take pride in the work they do at home and the respect others show for the work they do at home. Alpha = .81; score range, from 2 ("not at all") to 8 ("a lot"). Analysis shows all three variables are statistically significant: mean rating of men = 6.5, of women = 6.1, anova f = 41.4, significant at the .01 level; on education, low-educated mean rating = 6.4, high = 6.2, anova f = 20.4, significant at the .001 level; on age, mean rating of young = 6.0, middle aged = 6.3, old = 6.7, anova f = 29.4, significant at the .001 level.

[b] Two-item scale based on rating the extent to which respondents take pride in the work they do on their jobs and the respect others show for the work they do on their jobs. Alpha = .79; score range from 2 ("not at all") to 8 ("a lot"). Base *N*s for job pride mean ratings are employed adults. Only age is statistically significant, i.e., older respondents report more pride and respect from their jobs than younger respondents do.

conceding that self-acceptance may be a *result* as well as a *determinant* of the pride and respect scales, it is nonetheless worth testing whether the pride scales remain independent and significant as predictors of overall life satisfaction. The results of this test are shown in table 11.6. As the table shows, self-acceptance is indeed a powerful determinant of how satisfied respondents are about their lives in general. But it is also the case that both job pride and home pride contribute significantly to the life satisfaction ratings and do so for both men and women. Educa-

TABLE 11.6 Regression of Overall Life Satisfaction on Job Pride, Home Pride, and Self-Acceptance, by Sex, among Employed Respondents (beta coefficients)

Variable	Men	Women
Job pride	.114***	.117***
Home pride	.146***	.194***
Self-acceptance scale	.452***	.409***
Age	.111***	.059
Educational attainment	−.014	−.048
R^2	.332***	.303***
N	1,098	978

Note: Overall life satisfaction is a single-item rating in response to the question "Using a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means "the worst possible life overall" and 10 means "the best possible life overall," how would you rate your life overall these days?" Self-acceptance is a three-item modified version of Ryff's psychological well-being subscale of self-acceptance: self-ratings on liking most parts of their personality, pleased with how things have turned out so far in their lives, and not disappointed about achievements in life. The scale is modest in reliability (alpha = .58), mean = 16.5, SD = 3.5, on a 3–21 scale range.

*** $p < .001$.

tion is negatively related to life satisfaction, but not significantly so net of the self-acceptance and pride scales. Older men are significantly more satisfied than are young men, but age does not differentiate women.

Determinants of Job and Home Pride

Job Pride

What job characteristics are likely to explain variation in the extent to which adults take pride in their work and garner respect from others? Clearly the rewards obtained from work are tapped by the size of paychecks, so one prediction is that personal earnings may explain some part of such variation. Putting in very long hours on the job plus the time it takes to travel to work may predispose adults to greater satisfaction with their jobs for a variety of reasons, for example, as a rationalization for the toll taken by long hours of work or as a proxy for deep commitment to one's work role. Conversely, the variation may exist simply because part-time jobs involve lesser skills and hence less intrinsic gratification. Qualities of the work day may also affect whether the job triggers pride or not, and we therefore include a job stress scale in exploring the determinants of job pride. The open question is whether these job characteristics are powerful enough as determinants

TABLE 11.7 Regression of Job Pride Scale on Job Characteristics, Personality, and Norms among Employed Respondents (beta coefficients)

Variable	
Job characteristics	
Respondent's earnings	.080**
Job stress scale[a]	−.046*
Hours at work plus commute per week	.018
Personality and normative obligation	
Self-acceptance scale	.251***
Work obligation scale	.188***
Sociodemographic characteristics	
Sex[b]	.034
Age	.112***
Educational attainment	−.009
R^2	.144***
N	1,843

[a] Three-item scale on frequency with which respondents experience too many demands on them, a lot of interruptions, and not having enough time to get everything done during their work days. Alpha = .67, score range 3–15, mean = 8.9.

[b] male = 1; female = 2.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

to override the influence of personality, work obligation, and the sociodemographic characteristics of sex, age, and education. Table 11.7 shows the results of this multivariate analysis.

Inspection of the table quickly indicates the primacy of high self-acceptance, high work obligation, and age as predictors of job pride: adults who feel good about themselves, have a strong sense of commitment to work, and are older show the highest degree of pride in their work. In terms of job characteristics, the results suggest that time on the job plays no role whereas higher earnings predispose to high pride, qualified by a reduction in pride if the jobs involve pressure (too many demands), distraction (a lot of interruptions) and lack of closure (feeling at day's end that there was not enough time to finish the tasks of the day). Neither sex nor education contribute significantly. It is of particular interest that age continues to contribute a significant increment to pride in one's work, despite the presence in the regression equation of many age-related variables, in particular personal earnings and work obligation. It may be that younger adults have not yet reached their preferred position in the economy, as more older adults have. It is also possible, however, that young adults are under far more pressure in the

attempt to juggle work and family responsibilities, undercutting the degree to which they feel pride in their work. We will return to this issue in the next section.

Home Pride

A very different cluster of characteristics is invoked in explaining variation in the extent to which adults take pride in home maintenance. A preliminary analysis suggests that a major source of such pride concerns how home chores are handled—the sheer amount of time devoted to domestic chores, whether the chores are divided fairly and equitably in combination with more general qualities of the relationship with spouses or significant partners. Table 11.8 shows the results of our multivariate analysis that includes such major predictor variables, plus

TABLE 11.8 Regression of Home Pride Scale on Marital Team Scale, Personality, and Characteristics of Domestic Division of Labor among Married or Cohabiting Adults (beta coefficients)

Variable	
Self-acceptance scale	.218***
Household and marital characteristics	
Marital team scale[a]	.197***
Division of domestic labor[b]	.101***
Respondent's weekly hours on domestic chores	.068**
Division of labor fairness rating[c]	.090***
Homeowner[d]	−.039
Socio-demographic characteristics	
Sex[e]	−.213***
Age	.100***
Educational attainment	−.167***
R^2	.188***
N	1,994

[a] Four-item scale measuring the extent to which respondents and spouses/partners consult each other, plan and make decisions together, feel better talking things over with partner. Alpha = .88, scale range 4–28, mean = 24.6.

[b] High = respondent does a lot more than partner; low = respondent does a lot less.

[c] High = very fair; low = very unfair.

[d] Own = 1; rent = 0. Homeowners score higher than renters on the home pride scale ($f = 40.8$***) and do more domestic chores (owners, 13.6 hrs; renters, 11.4 hrs; $f = 10.4$***), hence with domestic chores in the equation, homeowning has no significant net effect on home pride.

[e] Male = 1; female = 2.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

the well-being measure of self-acceptance and the three primary sociodemographic variables of age, sex, and education.

Unlike job pride, which showed only age to be significant among the sociodemographic characteristics, the multivariate home pride analysis indicates that all three such variables remain significant predictors, over and above the interesting new characteristics of household management and marital characteristics: being older, male, and less well educated predisposes to deriving greater pride from home care. Adults who score high on the home pride scale tend to be those whose marital relationship reflects a fair and equitable style as team members who consult with each other, make plans together, and find conversations with each other to be a source of subjective good feelings. Of equal interest is the finding that those who do the largest *proportion* of home chores, contribute the most *time* to them, and consider their division of labor to be fair to them are most apt to score high on home pride. We had hypothesized that homeowners would score higher on pride than renters, which they do, but this distinction is not an independent predictor; homeowners contribute more time to caring for their homes, which is the stronger of these two variables in predicting level of home pride.

It is of particular interest that men derive more pride from what they do at home than do women, perhaps reflecting the changes wrought in recent decades in sex role expectations: younger women today are far less likely to take pride in home care than were women in the past, and as we saw in table 11.5, this is particularly the case for well-educated women. Younger men are now expected to play a larger role in home care than in the past and may derive more respect for doing so than men did in the past. Many of today's elderly men would not have been seen even wheeling a baby carriage in public places or caught with an apron on in their younger years, whereas many young men today are rewarded with public and private acclaim when they are vocally and visibly active in the care of the homefront. Other analyses we have conducted with MIDUS data found that men work longer hours and take more time getting to and from work than do women, and women take on more domestic chores than their partners do, but if one adds up all the hours spent on the job, the commute, and doing domestic chores, there is little residual sex difference, with married women exceeding married men in such time allocations by less than two hours a week (Rossi, 1996).

Further clues to the place of jobs in the life experience of contempo-

rary adults can be found in respondents' judgments about how their jobs affect their home life, the next step in our analysis.

Negative Effects of Jobs on Home Life

Though we can conceptually distinguish work from family as two distinct and different domains of life, in reality the two domains have strong effects on each other. A common concept invoked in sociological analyses of this interaction is "spillover," the extent to which jobs affect home life and home life affects jobs (Eckenrode and Gore 1990). In the design of MIDUS we measured these spillover effects in both directions (from job to home and from home to job) and with separate measures on positive and negative effects. In the analysis to follow, we concentrate on the scale that measures the negative effects of jobs on home life. (We refer to "home life" rather than "family life" to assure that those who live alone as single, divorced, or widowed adults could report as readily as married or cohabiting adults to the items in our battery.)

We initiate the analysis with the same three sociodemographic characteristics used throughout—sex, age, and education. Table 11.9 provides this rudimentary profile. It is immediately clear from these results that age is by far the most significant predictor of this negative spillover effect from work to home life: it is young adults who report the highest mean scores on this scale, and the very subgroup that we found earlier

Table 11.9 Mean Ratings on Negative Effects of Job on Home Life Scale, by Age, Sex, and Education, among Employed Respondents

	Young (25–39)	Middle Aged (40–59)	Old (60–74)
Men			
High school or less	10.5	10.3	7.9
	(135)	(185)	(55)
More than high school	11.1	10.9	8.6
	(300)	(378)	(57)
Women			
High school or less	10.6	10.1	7.6
	(120)	(188)	(40)
More than high school	10.6	10.8	9.6
	(255)	(338)	(60)

Note: Home life scale is a four-item scale of ratings on job making respondents irritable at home, tired at home, distracted by job problems at home, or reducing their efforts given to home activities. Alpha = .83, scale range from 4 (no negative effects of job on home life) to 20 (high negative effects).

to have the lowest level of work obligation—well-educated younger men—here shows the highest level of negative effects. Jobs that require advanced training at higher skill levels are more apt to leave one tired and irritable at day's end, and these jobs make it more difficult for one to disengage from work while at home (as tapped by the item determining whether job problems distract one while at home). In five of six comparisons, women exceed men in these reports, perhaps reflecting the fact that women's jobs tend to involve less self-pacing and flexibility. That age plays so strong a role suggests it is a proxy for stage of family life: one assumes (and we will test below, whether it is the case) that the presence of young children captures some of the variance in these negative job effects and explains why the young, women, and the better educated experience greater negative spillover from work to home life.

We bring together a variety of measures of greatest relevance to explain what determines the negative effects of work on home life: Job stress is a top candidate because it measures the extent to which work involves many demands and interruptions and tasks that never seem to reach closure, all of which can contribute to irritability and fatigue at home. Sheer time required for the job plus the commute may encroach upon the time needed or desired for home activities. A separate measure consists of ratings on the extent to which respondents feel their jobs have negative effects on their physical and mental/emotional health. For couples with children, it is reasonable to assume that irregular hours of employment are disruptive to family schedules, hence we include a dichotomous code that differentiates between those who work only during the daytime versus those who are on a rotating day-night shift schedule or only work during evening or nighttime hours. Personal earnings is included because variation in income is very great, and it is reasonable to assume that the top-paying jobs have greater potential to increase pressure at work and to reduce the time available for home-centered activities. The presence of children who require supervision and training is potentially a chief factor in explaining why younger adults report more negative job effects than do older adults.

Table 11.10 shows that three major job characteristics have strong and independent negative effects on home life and do so at comparable levels for both men and women: Jobs that involve high levels of daily stress and negative effects on health and require long hours on the job and the commute are critical determinants for negative impact of work on home life. The presence of young children at home contributes even

TABLE 11.10 Regression of Negative Effects of Job on Home Life Scale on Job Characteristics and Presence of Young Children, by Sex (beta coefficients)

Variable	Men	Women
Job stress scale	.405***	.361***
Effects of job on physical/mental health[a]	.256***	.333***
Hours at work plus commute per week	.146***	.139***
Daytime work only[b]	−.053*	−.040
Personal earnings	.070**	.024
One or more children under thirteen years	.055*	.067**
R^2	.381***	.395***
N	(959)	(875)

[a] Two-item scale rating the effect of job on physical health and on mental/emotional health. Alpha = .77, scale range from 2 ("very positive") to 10 ("very negative").

[b] 1 = yes; 0 = no. Women are more likely than men to work only during the daytime (71.5% vs. 62.8%; $\chi^2 = 18.3^{**}$), and working evenings or nights has more negative effects on home life than working only during the day (26.3% vs. 19.4% high negative effects; $\chi^2 = 24.6^{**}$).

$^{*}p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$. $^{***}p < .001$.

further, over and above the characteristics of the jobs held. High personal earnings increase such negative effects for both men and women, though significantly so only for men: high-paying professional and managerial jobs, more often held by men than women, are likely to involve greater responsibilities, more people to supervise and evaluate, and greater difficulty in avoiding bringing home tension, fatigue, and distraction from work. Any job that requires evening or nighttime hours at work imposes an additional source of stress at home, cutting into family time and relaxation and making difficult the coordination of family social schedules.

Overall Satisfaction with Work Situation

We turn now to one final analysis of the work domain: an overall rating of the degree of satisfaction adults derive from their work situation. We phrased the question for this overall single-item rating so as to embrace any kind of work MIDUS respondents were doing: not merely paid work, but unpaid as well; and not only jobs, but also work done at home. This permits us to explore how employment status affects such subjective overall judgments, in particular among older adults, many of whom are retired, and among younger women, many of whom are homemakers. Table 11.11 allows us to see how employ-

TABLE 11.11 Mean Ratings of Satisfaction with Work Situation, by Age, Sex, Education, and Employment Status

	Employed			Not Employed		
	25–39	40–59	60–74	25–39	40–59	60–74
Men						
High school or less	7.2	7.3	8.2	4.4	4.1	7.2
	(143)	(201)	(47)	(14)	(34)	(67)
More than high school	7.1	7.4	8.3	4.2	5.7	8.1
	(308)	(383)	(53)	(21)	(47)	(83)
Women						
High school or less	7.2	7.3	8.2	6.3	6.5	6.9
	(124)	(185)	(43)	(55)	(81)	(106)
More than high school	7.3	7.5	7.8	7.0	6.8	7.7
	(260)	(344)	(60)	(61)	(65)	(82)

Note: Satisfaction with work situation scale is a single-item rating from 0 ("worst possible") to 10 ("best possible") work situation. The question was phrased to cover all kinds of work situations ("whether part-time or full-time, paid or unpaid, at home or at a job.") Anova analysis shows only age is statistically significant ($f = 14.6$, significant at the .001 level), i.e., older respondents report higher satisfaction than younger respondents. Note in particular, however, the *very* low ratings given by young adult men who are *not* employed, whether low or high education.

ment status differs within the subgroups structured by age, sex, and education and to pinpoint the most interesting subgroups from this comparative perspective.

What immediately stands out in these results is the very great importance of sheer employment among younger and middle-aged men. For all but the non-employed in these subgroups of men, ratings are above the mid-point on the 0–10 rating scale; but non-employed young and middle-aged men, at either educational attainment level, show the lowest ratings of satisfaction with their work situation. The satisfaction level of men in these circumstances reflects the broader societal expectation that adult men *should* be working for pay, an expectation clearly internalized by the men themselves. By contrast, younger women who are not employed show only modestly lower ratings of their work situation (as homemakers) compared to their employed counterparts. Somewhat surprising is the finding that among non-employed women, it is those who have not gone beyond high school who show far lower ratings of satisfaction than the employed women do, and this is true in all three age groups. Despite feminist rhetoric that would suggest otherwise, better-educated women at home are almost as satisfied with their circumstances as their employed sisters are.

The profile shown for older adults reflects a similar pattern: it is less

well educated men and women for whom not working involves a sharp reduction in satisfaction ratings (7.2 for less-educated men vs. 8.2 for well-educated men; 6.9 for less-educated women vs. 8.2 for well-educated women). We suspect it is the general income level at which adults are living that underlies these effects of educational attainment and employment status: most of the better-educated women homemakers have husbands of equal or better education than themselves, hence they have more options for how to spend their time and can enjoy a lifestyle with greater amenities and opportunities for service and pleasure than women homemakers in lower socioeconomic circumstances can. This same factor applies to older men as well: those who have had more education have enjoyed higher earnings, hence there is a less negative impact of retirement upon their lifestyles.

We narrow our attention in table 11.12 to adults who are employed, and we explore the relative contribution of the various characteristics of jobs that we used in the course of earlier analyses—negative effects of jobs on health and home life; derivation of pride and respect from jobs; earnings; and work obligation—for their effects on overall satisfaction ratings of work situations.

On the down side, jobs that have negative effects on either health or home life reduce the satisfaction derived from the work situation. On the up side, the more pride and respect adults derive from their jobs, the more they earn, and the greater their commitment to work gener-

TABLE 11.12 Regression of Work Situation Satisfaction Rating on Job Effects on Health and Home Life, Earnings, and Work Obligation Scale, among Employed Respondents (beta coefficients)

Variable	
Effect of job on physical/mental health[a]	−.279***
Negative effects of job on home life[b]	−.200***
Job pride scale	.231***
Personal earnings	.132***
Work obligation scale	.054**
Sex[c]	.040*
R^2	.298***
N	2,078

[a] High = very negative; low = very positive.
[b] High = very negative; low = not at all negative.
[c] Male = 1; female = 2.
$^*p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$. $^{***}p < .001$.

ally, the higher the overall satisfaction reported by adults. No surprise here, except to note that each of these variables makes an independent contribution to work satisfaction, net of all others, and does so to a highly significant degree.

There is also a slight increment of higher satisfaction reported by women compared to men, over and above all the job-related variables in the equation. We probe more deeply into how employment status affects the work situation ratings of women in table 11.13, which reports the results of a multivariate analysis done separately for employed and non-employed women and which brings together a variety of measures about circumstances in their family and home settings. Heading the list of predictor variables is the quality of the marital relationship, in this instance the same scale we used previously that deals with the extent to which the couple works as a team, consulting each other, talking things through, and so forth. The results for women whose lives are centered at home rather than split between home and the workplace show how important marital teamwork is, which has the highest beta coefficient in the equation for homemaking women; by contrast, employed women's ratings of overall work situation are most strongly affected by self-acceptance (i.e., whether they feel good about themselves

TABLE 11.13 Regression of Work Situation Satisfaction Ratings on Family Characteristics and Personal Resources among Married Women, by Employment Status (beta coefficients)

Variable	Not Employed	Employed
Family characteristics		
Marital team scale	.212***	.126**
Home stress scale[a]	−.124*	−.145***
Number of children under thirteen	.096	.110**
Home pride scale	.100*	−.018
Hours on domestic chores	.130*	−.027
Personal resources		
Educational attainment	.059	−.026
Self-acceptance scale	.154**	.249***
Age	.164**	.054
R^2	.199***	.130***
N	292	609

[a] Four-item scale on frequency respondents report their home situation involves too many demands, not enough time to get everything done, lots of interruptions, and no control over the amount of time to spend on tasks. Alpha = .69, mean = 10.0 on 4–20 scale range, SD = 2.8.
$^*p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$. $^{***}p < .001$.

and how their lives are working out), followed by whether their home settings are low in friction and stress.

Of particular interest is the contrast between homemaking and employed women on the home pride scale and the time investment they make in domestic maintenance: these variables have no effect on the ratings employed women give, though they are negative in sign, that is, employed women who put in a lot of time doing chores and who take pride in their homes report less satisfaction with their work situation (in a job setting), whereas among homemaking women, a high degree of pride in their home duties and longer hours devoted to such care significantly increase the satisfaction they derive from their work setting (their homes). Having children under thirteen at home does not *reduce* work satisfaction for either group of women; rather the data show a *positive* effect of having young children on work satisfaction for women at home as well as for employed women. In the latter case, work may be gratifying as a means for contributing to the support of such children, as a respite from young children's activities, and as a source of adult stimulation and interaction.

This brings to a close our analysis of adult experience in the workplace and the interplay between jobs and family or home life. We turn, for the last step in our overall analysis, to the question of how job and family characteristics affect the extent to which adults contribute to the larger community, by means of giving time and money to community organizations, causes, and charities.

The Impact of Job and Family Characteristics on Community Service

In planning this analysis we drew upon results shown in chapter 3 on the sociodemographic pattern most closely associated with the various domains and dimensions of social responsibility. In the community domain, we reported a marked difference between men and women: women are more likely to serve as volunteer workers to fulfill their obligations to the community, while men are more likely to contribute financially to community organizations. Since we have also seen sex differences in numerous threads of analysis in the preceding sections of this chapter, we conduct this final multivariate analysis separately for women and men within the two dimensions of community service, time and money.

Preliminary analysis showed, surprisingly, that the amount of time spent on the job plus commuting has no significant relationship to vol-

unteer time, nor do any job effects on home life. Hence we limit the job characteristics in this analysis to overall satisfaction with work situation and whether the job entails any impairment of physical or emotional health. In light of the finding reported in chapter 3 that having children is an important inducement to volunteer work, we include family size as a predictor variable along with amount of time devoted to domestic maintenance, though our prediction that time spent on home chores would reduce the time available for volunteer service was not confirmed. As reported below, investment of time in home care carries quite a different meaning than we had assumed. We include both education and income in the analysis because we have already found they play quite different roles in time compared to money investment in the community. We also include frequency of religious service attendance because, as Robert Wuthnow has reported (1994) and as we confirmed in chapter 3, active involvement in a religious institution often provides a pathway from a general biblical command to love and serve others to commitment to broader public welfare concerns. Some degree of personal agency is also required for adults to actively and voluntarily seek out settings in which they can contribute to the public good. Finally, we presume civic obligation to be a powerful predisposing stimulus to individual action in helping others.

Many of the results shown in table 11.14 merely confirm prior findings or support the direction of effect we predicted: Of the two resource variables, education is the major predictor of hands-on volunteer time, whereas household income serves that role for financial contributions. Frequent religious service attendance is a powerful predictor of contributing both time and money for men and women. Being assertive, outspoken, and self-confident (qualities in the agency personality scale) clearly contributes to competence in moving into the larger world of community organizations as a volunteer, whereas even the most shy and introspective adult can contribute money.

Beyond these confirmations of our predictions, however, there are some surprising results shown in table 11.14, and they relate in interesting but contrasting ways to sex differences. For married employed women, time devoted to volunteer work actually increases if they do not find satisfaction in their work situation. This suggests that work dissatisfaction stimulates women to seek gratification elsewhere, through volunteer service, so long as their jobs do not have serious negative effects on their physical and mental health. And the more time women invest in caring for their homes, the *greater* is the time they

TABLE 11.14 Regressions of Time and Money Contributions to Community Organizations/Charities/Causes, by Sex, among Employed Married or Cohabiting Adults (beta coefficients)

	Time (hours per month of volunteer work)		Money (amount per month to organizations/ charities/causes)	
Variable	Men	Women	Men	Women
Normative obligations				
Civic obligation scale	.106**	.081*	.024	.059
Job characteristics				
Work satisfaction rating	.015	−.130**	.014	−.029
Negative effect of job on physical/mental health	−.001	−.086*	−.037	−.035
Family characteristics				
Weekly hours on chores	.067*	.132***	−.046	.008
Number of children	.096**	.058	.119***	.034
Personal characteristics				
Agency personality scale	.094**	.085*	.006	.034
Frequency of religious service attendance	.169***	.099**	.410***	.290***
Resources				
Educational attainment	.101**	.212***	.161***	.045
Total household income	−.026	−.036	.225***	.295***
R^2	.093***	.099***	.332***	.196***
N	853	614	853	614

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

contribute to volunteer work, an interesting support for Alan Wolfe's argument (1989) that civic virtue is a matter of generalizing family and neighborhood affections to include the wider community. In our MIDUS finding, we infer that time invested in domestic maintenance may function as an index of commitment to the personal care and pleasure of others at home, which is then generalized to include concern for the welfare of more distant members of the community. Many leaders in the world of voluntary organizations have expressed concern that women's movement into the labor force reduces their availability for filling the ranks of volunteers. Our evidence qualifies this; it is not the time spent on the job but the pleasure or pain associated with work that may affect volunteer service. Employed women who do not find gratification in their jobs may seek involvement in voluntary associations, where their presence is welcomed and their service is gratefully ac-

knowledged perhaps more now than ever in the past precisely because the pool of women available to work as volunteers has shrunk.

A rather different set of life circumstances seems to be at work in men's commitment to volunteer service. Having children encourages men to contribute both time and money to community organizations. So too, the more frequently men attend religious services and the more time they contribute to maintaining their homes, the greater their investment in community service. This suggests that when adult men become fathers, continue in or rejoin religious congregations, and move in the direction of sharing responsibility with their wives in home upkeep, they become more oriented to the public good and the welfare of others in a larger sense as well. This profile is strikingly similar to that which we found in a Boston area–based study of parent-child relations across the life course (Rossi and Rossi 1990), in which parenthood was more strongly associated with high scores on expressivity in men than in women. Whether married or not, or mothers or not, women's social roles and choice of occupations provide outlets for expressive behavior, which is less common for men. By contrast, men are more likely to become expressive and nurturant when they become fathers, which in turn predisposes them to community service. There are larger political and policy implications to these findings, which we shall discuss in the following, concluding section of this chapter.

CONCLUSION

We began this chapter by emphasizing the structural constraints imposed by age, sex, and education, and the significant ways in which recent social and economic changes are challenging such traditional hierarchies. Despite the profound changes that have accompanied political and legal efforts to move more quickly toward an egalitarian society, it remains the case that economic inequalities continue largely unabated. This is dramatically evident from the demographic profile of household incomes, personal earnings, and subjective assessments of financial duress reported by our MIDUS respondents. We find that earnings are structured by age, sex, marital status, and educational attainment: Women's earnings in the aggregate are moving closer to men's wages (though a sizable gap still exists), but in the context of marriage, it remains overwhelmingly the case that husbands typically earn thousands of dollars more than their wives do. The relation between economic resources and marital status is reciprocal, however, in that low-earning

males have fewer marriage opportunities and increasing numbers of women need not depend on marriage for economic survival.

Economic reality also imposes constraints on the extent to which men and women, however ideologically committed to an egalitarian partnership in marriage, can manage their daily lives in accord with their beliefs. Differences in pay may necessarily affect couples' decisions about the division of childcare and home maintenance responsibilities. Despite the research showing that men rank fatherhood as more important than paid work (e.g., Gerson 1993; Lamb and Sagi 1983; Pleck 1983), work role requirements make it extremely difficult for young adult men to practice what they espouse. Our analysis shows that it is younger, well-educated men, especially those with high earnings, who report the highest mean scores on the negative effect of jobs on their home life. To the extent that holding down a high-paying job makes a man successful, it is his success that subjects him to work that involves longer hours, tension, often a considerable amount of work-related travel, and a level of responsibility that makes it very difficult not to bring home job-related problems and worries, thus reducing the likelihood that he can fully participate, without distractions, as an equal in childrearing and home care.

Other of our findings illustrate the impact of changing sex role expectations: Women derive more pride and respect from their jobs than they do from their work at home; men report more pride in their work at home than women do. Being a woman homemaker has become devalued in contemporary society, whereas men can anticipate social praise from their wives and neighbors and often from their work colleagues if they take on more responsibility for child care and home maintenance than was usual for men of a previous generation. This author experienced a dramatic example of this in the 1970s when her husband answered a doorbell, vacuum cleaner in hand. The caller was a woman graduate student, who lost no time informing her peers that the male Professor Rossi not only espoused a belief in sex equality but acted upon it as well!

On the other hand, not being employed continues to carry far greater social stigma for a man than for a woman: as we saw, men in their twenties through their forties who were not employed at the time of our survey rated their situation far more unfavorably than women their age who were not employed. Among young and middle-aged women who are well educated, homemakers appear as satisfied with their circumstances as employed women. This is not so, however, for

women with no more than a high school diploma, among whom those employed are significantly better satisfied than those at home. We also infer a very different effect of having young children at home on men compared to women. For men with young children, jobs impose a greater negative effect on their home life. For women, having young children at home increases the satisfaction of both employed and homemaking women with their respective work situations. In all these examples of our findings, there is evidence of the significant influences of economic pressures and job requirements that are barriers to further social change in the roles of men and women in their private family lives. A more positive note is struck by our finding that having young children stimulates a significant increase in time devoted to volunteer work for both men and women. We will return to the significance of this finding at a later point in this discussion of findings.

Among our most intriguing, but at the same time puzzling and difficult to interpret, findings are age differences, often stronger than differences in sex, education, or marital status. Young adults report the highest levels of financial duress and the highest negative effects of jobs on family life. Older respondents, by comparison, report the lowest income inadequacy and the highest scores on pride and respect derived from home and job, both of which are highly predictive of overall life satisfaction. Yet despite their job-related stress and financial duress, it is also young adults who scored the lowest on our work obligation scale. A cross-sectional survey is a snapshot, frozen in time, resulting in data from which it is typically difficult to differentiate change rooted in normal developmental processes from change reflecting cohort characteristics and historical factors. Consistent with the historic change in childrearing techniques from high stress on conformity and obedience toward a more permissive approach that encourages independence and autonomy in children, we found that older respondents, whose parents routinely assigned them domestic chores and held consistent standards concerning how they used their time, were as adults highly committed to work obligations, whereas younger adults reported the lowest levels of work obligation. It should be noted that permissive childrearing that encourages self-reliance and autonomy on the part of children is an ideology congenial to busy parents desirous of active lives of their own away from parenting. The eventual impact on the children, however, may be an undercutting of their subsequent motivation, drive, and ability to postpone gratification, all qualities typically required for job success in modern economies.

The counterpart to this cohort interpretation of low work obligation among young adults is the generally more satisfactory economic situation of today's elderly. Our survey results impress us anew with the prescience of demographers like Samuel Preston (1984) and Richard Easterlin (1980), who more than a decade ago were among the first social scientists to describe the fundamental change that had begun to take place in the socioeconomic status of the elderly compared to the plight of young children over the preceding several decades. In the 1930s it was the plight of the elderly that researchers defined as problematic; today it is the plight of children that concerns us, and on the basis of our analysis, such concern should include young adults. Not only are our elders living longer, but they have more secure benefits in social security and federally funded health care than any preceding cohort of elderly in Western history has had. Although our survey did not include the very old (the age cut-off being seventy-four) and did not include any young adults below twenty-five years of age, we were nonetheless impressed to find the persistent significance of age differences in this survey.

This is not to say that all the age differences we noted are grounded in cohort differences. Clearly a family life stage is implicated as well. We noted that incomes peak for adults in their fifties if they are well educated, in their forties if they have lower levels of educational attainment. But economic pressures associated with childbearing and early childrearing occur much earlier—for the less well educated, in their twenties, for the better educated, in their thirties. The flatness of real wages in recent decades has left many young adults with a lesser probability of enjoying any significant increase in wages over time, despite imminent increases in need. This sets the stage for low rates of procreation, higher rates of employment among married women, and shorter periods of maternity leave after a birth.

There is one final issue of considerable importance that our findings highlight: becoming a father and taking more responsibility for home maintenance stimulates men to extend themselves to the larger community. We suspect that just as growing up in a home that assigns domestic chores to children and supervises how they spend their time stimulates higher levels of work obligation in adulthood, so too the increasingly significant role that men are playing in domestic management and child care has important consequences for society. We have found the most illuminating perspective in terms of which to appreciate the broader societal significance of men's increased commitment to

family roles to be that of Joan Tronto. In her important book, *Moral Boundaries* (1993), Tronto distinguishes between several meanings of "caring": *caring about, taking care of,* and *caregiving.* Society has traditionally held that a man's key responsibility is to work at his job in order to "take care of his family." By contrast, a woman's role should be centered on *giving care,* not *taking care of.* We have seen this sex difference in numerous chapters in this volume: women give more social and emotional support to family and friends, interact more with kin and friends, provide more hands-on caregiving, and do more volunteer work than men do; men are more likely to make financial contributions to younger family members and community organizations than women are.

Tronto argues that we should not necessarily think of money contributions as caregiving; financial support is more a matter of "taking care of" than it is of "caregiving" because money does not in itself satisfy human needs, it only provides the resources by which such needs can be met. Feminist scholars have long noted that there is a great deal of work involved in converting a paycheck into a satisfaction of human needs; as Tronto points out, to equate providing money with satisfying needs is to undervalue caregiving in our society.

When caregiving is undervalued, it becomes relegated to the least well off members of society. Throughout history, care work has typically been the charge of slaves, servants, and women. In occupational terms, jobs that require giving care directly are devalued and offer low pay: cleaning hotels, offices, and homes; providing childcare; maintaining buildings. These jobs are disproportionately held by the relatively powerless members of society—women, blacks, and Hispanics. By contrast, "caring about" and "taking care of" are the duties of the powerful and are typically associated with masculinity. Doctors "take care of" patients, but nurses and aides "give care." The hierarchy of prestige therefore follows cultural values that have long dominated Western society: public accomplishment, rationality, and autonomy are defined as worthy qualities, whereas caregiving has been devalued to such an extent that it is viewed as the opposite—private rather than public, interdependent rather than independent, emotional rather than rational. When caring is thought of as a disposition rather than as a practice, as an individual attribute rather than an aspect of social structure, Tronto suggests, it is an easy step to defining care work as "naturally" appropriate for women and those of lower status in society, leaving higher status men to indulge in "caring about" such larger

issues as the International Monetary Fund and in "taking care of" needy kin or the poor in their community by writing a check. Tronto proposes a redefinition for this latter type of caring: "privileged irresponsibility" (Tronto 1993, 121). Finally, if care work is to be viewed in the context of human interdependence, as a society we should be upgrading, not downgrading, those who do care work of the "caregiving" variety.

Even a moment's reflection suggests there is a long, difficult road ahead before any such development can occur. It calls for a *downgrading* of the rewards that accrue to those whose labors do not contribute significantly to human welfare and an *upgrading* of the pay and prestige accorded to those in occupations that do contribute significantly. But large social changes are often achieved through incremental changes hardly recognized for their potential contribution to societal goals of greater equity and fairness. It is our belief that encouraging children to take active roles in home chores is one such incremental change. By setting a table, doing laundry, or shopping for others in the family, children can develop an appreciation for and commitment to contributing to others, a first step toward a broader conception of service and responsibility. Men who are now struggling to achieve a genuine partnership with their wives in home and family life, from participation during childbirth through infant care and child supervision, as well as sharing repetitive domestic chores, are no longer merely "taking care of" their family by the money they bring home; they are actively engaged in "giving care" to their young. By so doing, they are learning, often for the first time, to express the intense feelings of love and tenderness that an infant or young child evokes and to master the hundreds of skills needed to run a household well and beautifully, not merely efficiently. Scott Coltrane's recent book, *Family Man* (1996), provides insightful descriptions of men attempting precisely such role changes. So we take our finding that despite their busy lives, it is not merely women, but young adult fathers who are contributing more hours to volunteer work as a hopeful omen of a slow but very important transition to a more equitable and interdependent society.

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