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Domestic Tasks, Gender Egalitarian Values and Children's Gender Typing in Conventional and Nonconventional Families¹

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Relationships between gender egalitarian values, family lifestyles, and children's gender typing were studied among 156 Euro-American, working to upper middle class nonconventional families, and a comparison sample of 51 two-parent, married couples. Did efforts to alter domestic task allocation in nonconventional countercultural families influence children's gender typing at age six? Children's gender typing scores were not directly related to patterns of task assignment, although they were moderately correlated with parents' gender egalitarian values and nonconventional lifestyles. The nonconventional families tended to have children displaying less stereotyping of male objects, and more non gender-typed responses. These effects were stronger among girls. Household organization (single parent, married or unmarried couple, or commune), regardless of family lifestyle and values, was strongly related to shared vs. more exclusive forms of task assignment. Mothers' egalitarian values also were associated with more shared tasks. The effects of shared domestic tasks in the home on children's gender typing seemed to be indirect, mediated by the child's sex and the meaning parents attached to their task assignment in the home.

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Families have beliefs regarding who should do different domestic tasks, and try to implement these beliefs in everyday practice. But sometimes family members simply have to do tasks for reasons related to time constraints, availability of family members, or efficiency requirements. Nonetheless, most families try to balance their ideal preferences for the allocation of family responsibilities with the exigencies which confront them in scheduling their everyday routine. In this study, we explore proactive efforts by nonconventional, countercultural families to change the patterns of domestic and child care tasks in their families to make task allocation conform to their values (Weisner, 1986). We compare families with high gender egalitarian values to families with less egalitarian values, and families with a strong commitment to their nonconventional values to those with lower commitment. Do families differ in their sharing of domestic task responsibilities? We then assess relationships between these families' patterns of task allocation and their children's understanding of gender typing at age six. Is there a relationship between family task allocation and children's gender typing?

Proactive Family Task Assignment

The allocation of domestic tasks among family members happens in the context of establishing a daily routine of family life. This adaptive task is a universal one: the creation of a meaningful, sustainable routine of everyday life, one that is also congruent with the abilities, ages and status of family members. Accommodation is the response families make to the adaptive task of creating their everyday routine of life (Gallimore, Weisner, Kaufman & Bernheimer, 1989; Gallimore, Weisner, Guthrie, Bernheimer, & Nihira, 1993). Our perspective on how families allocate tasks to members is based on the idea of accommodation. Accommodation requires the thoughtful reorganization of plans, resources and constraints, time availability, goals and dreams, to produce the regular routines of everyday life. Task assignment and performance is influenced by the overall accommodation process rather than determined by any single factor, whether ideological commitment (e.g., gender egalitarianism), type of household (e.g., single parent), or ecological adaptation (e.g., a kind of occupation).

Task allocation is rarely directly driven by values alone; rather, task allocation is an adapted or accommodated activity (Gallimore, Weisner et al., 1989). Of course, values regarding the desired or ideal family workloads and task allocation—how family members believe it *should* be—can persist in spite of the accommodations which actually are made. Some of the fea-

tures of everyday American family routines that influence this accommodation process include: schedule conflicts, efficiency, personnel available in the home to help, or presence of desired goals other than gender equality. Further, some tasks are "entailed" by others (Burton, Brudner & White, 1977). For example, if one spouse is at home and the other is not, it is easier to do a series of domestic tasks at home all at once, rather than waiting to divide them all equally when the other spouse returns. The person who cleans rice is also usually going to be the person who stores it, cooks it, and serves it. The task *could* be divided up and done another way, but doing one of these interrelated tasks tends to entail at least some of the others.

Cross-Cultural Patterns of Family Task Assignment

Every culture provides preferred ways to establish a patterned daily routine of family tasks and activities. Although variations exist within and between families, *any* possible pattern whatsoever will not do; there are always cultural modal patterns and ecological limits, whether based on moral grounds or efficiency (Ember, 1981). In many societies around the world, for instance, children from about age seven to 15+ are expected to do the bulk of the domestic and child care activities, thereby leaving parents free for leisure or other tasks (Loucky, 1988; Rogoff, Sellers, Pirrotta, Fox & White, 1975; Rogoff, Newcombe, Fox, & Ellis, 1980; Stone, 1982; Weisner, 1982, 1987; Weisner & Gallimore, 1977; Whiting & Whiting, 1975). However, children in North America generally are not expected to do the bulk of the domestic and child care activities.

Task assignment is also related to long term socio-historical changes in the major modes of subsistence and economic complexity (Gross, 1984; Johnson & Johnson, 1987; Loucky, in press). Figure 1 shows that the advent of intensive agriculture, and the subsequent development of urban wage economies, produced major changes in the roles of men and women (Chapin, 1974; Sackett, 1992). Essentially, although both men and women began working outside the domestic domain in wage and trade activities, men on average did so more often and for more hours of the day than did women. The rise of wage work done outside the domestic domain reduced the hours men spent in domestic activities more than it reduced those hours for women. In addition, the number of hours required for work overall (domestic and wage/trade) has increased since the periods when families earned their living primarily from gathering, hunting, pastoralism, and horticulture.

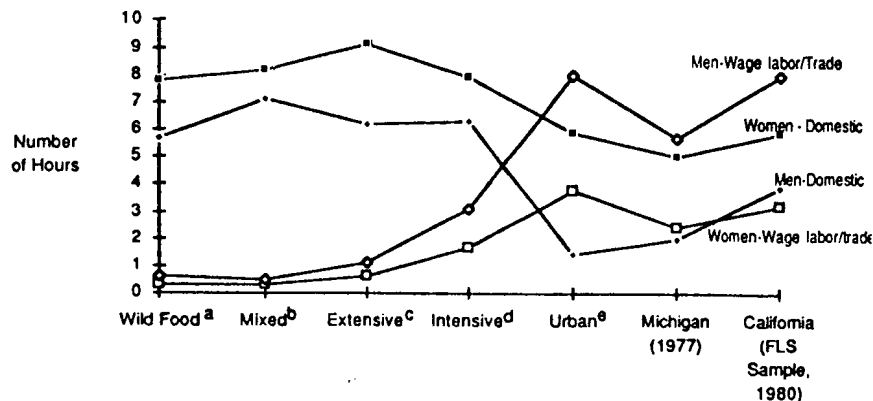


Fig. 1. Mean number of hours men and women devote to domestic versus wage labor or trade activities, for five modes of subsistence, and two U.S. urban samples. [Sources: Sackett, 1992 (cross-cultural time allocation data); Robinson, 1977 (Michigan); Weisner et al., 1991 (California FLS sample).] (a) Wild food gathering/hunting, (b) mixed horticulture/pastoralism, (c) extensive horticulture/simple agriculture, (d) intensive agriculture, and (e) urban samples (trade and wage based).

Comparative cross-cultural data suggest that although both boys and girls assist in women's domestic tasks, girls seldom do men's tasks. Furthermore, "...the most common children's tasks are women's tasks", since both boys and girls are under the supervision of women who use children's labor to assist in their often heavy workloads (Bradley, 1993). As boys reach later middle childhood, they are more likely to leave the domestic domain controlled by women, and gradually do fewer tasks done by and allocated by the women or older girls managing the household.

The modal pattern in the allocation of work is thus historically variable. Contemporary families trying to change domestic and work roles are doing so within an urban, post-industrial era which certainly allows for flexibility, but also constrains change to some extent. Constraints include the exigencies of work in a service and industrial economy, relatively small family sizes (small family size usually reduces domestic workload), formal education (less formal education tends to be related to higher domestic workloads), presence of young children in the home (younger children disproportionately increase workloads for women) (Nyquist & Metzen, 1985), cultural beliefs about marriage and couple relationships, urbanization (rural women do more housework than urban women, but rural men do not do more than urban men) (Lawrence,

Draghn, Tasker, & Wozniak, 1987) and other demographic influences (Oppenheimer, 1982).

Family Task Allocation in North America

The assignment of family tasks in many North American families illustrates the "accommodated" nature of task assignment. Whereas national survey data demonstrate substantial increases in women's employment and in social approval of women's employment, both pragmatic and attitudinal factors make this a less "acceptable" option for mothers of preschool and young children as compared to mothers of older children and women without children (Szinovacz, 1984). There continues to be a pronounced discrepancy between gender-role attitudes and assignment of familial tasks and responsibilities. The evidence suggests that women in the United States still do a disproportionate share of such tasks compared to men. Shared task performance is definitely growing, but not to the extent that changes in ideology might suggest (Hochschild, 1990). Although one family member may do a task most of the time, tasks increasingly are shared amongst several family members, rather than being the exclusive responsibility of one person or one gender.

National survey data indicate growing female labor force participation has led to only a modest decrease in women's traditional domestic task responsibility (Juster & Stafford, 1985; Robinson, 1977; Szinovacz, 1984). In 1981, American men reportedly spent about 14 hours a week doing housework while their wives averaged 30 hours. Employment of women outside the home reduces their (reported) free time, in contrast to husbands whose free time may actually increase with their wives' employment (Robinson, Yerby, Fieweger, & Somerick, 1977). In any event, what some employed women report as "free time" appears to be devoted to household work rather than to leisure (Berheide, 1984). Based on an eight-year study of two-income families, Hochschild (1990) finds that women do household work an extra 12-15 hours per week, and also are likely to be more responsible for daily chores, do more than one activity at a time, assume more mental responsibility for the needs of children, and experience more overall stress in maintaining both public and private roles than their husbands.

Although some have argued that men's involvement has increased sufficiently to change the overall division of labor (and male supplemental participation in housework and caretaking certainly has become more acceptable), large numbers of men have yet to assume major responsibility for these roles (Berk & Berk, 1979). Evidence of the continuing

segregation of household labor as well as of working conditions and attitudes is found in studies of time use (Antill & Cotton, 1988; Berheide, 1984; Blau & Ferber, 1992; Oakley, 1974). Traditional attitudes and practices regarding work roles have been found even in contemporary communes (Minturn, 1984; Weisner & Martin, 1979) which are highly innovative in other respects such as religious practice, shared caretaking of children, or shared wealth. Women's income resulting from work outside the home also lags behind in parity. Blau and Ferber (1992) for instance, summarize data showing that the United States ranks 12th out of 16 industrialized nations in the equality of wages between men and women. Women earn about 71 cents per \$1.00 earned by men in 1987; this is up from 61 cents in 1978. In practice, then, co-equal role-sharing is not easy to achieve or sustain although it is certainly technically and functionally possible (Haas, 1982).

Culture Child Socialization, and Domestic Task Allocation

Family accommodation produces everyday family and domestic routines, and children's participation in these routine activities is a powerful influence in how children acquire gender roles and categories (Whiting & Whiting, 1975; Whiting & Edwards, 1988). B. Whiting (1980) argues that these routine behavior settings—particularly the tasks and personnel around children in everyday interactions—are a preeminent mechanism influencing the socialization of children in societies throughout the world. Whiting and Edwards (1988: p. 4) propose that:

... patterns of interpersonal behavior are developed in the settings one frequents, and ... the most important characteristic of a setting is the cast of characters [the personnel] who occupy the set ... The settings one frequents are in turn related to the culturally determined activities that occupy males and females of various ages in the normal course of daily living, activities that are determined by economic pursuits, the division of labor, and the organization of people in space.

It is well known that child participation in such gender-differentiated domestic and family routines directly influence children's social behavior and gender typing (e.g. Harkness & Super, 1985; Munroe, Munroe & Shimmin, 1984; Munroe, Shimmin, & Munroe, 1984; Weisner, 1979, 1982; Williams & Best, 1982). Within these activities, children's tasks shape their pro-social and responsibility training, and gender understandings (Weisner, 1979).

Levy (1973) describes these everyday cultural routines of life as establishing a pattern of "redundant control" of behavior that is crucial to child socialization. Shweder (1991) emphasizes the power of these everyday practices in moral development. Gallimore, Goldenberg, and Weisner (in press) describe these kinds of activities as the "architecture of everyday

life." Children learn most cultural schemas, including gender categories through their participation in such seemingly mundane activities of everyday life as cleaning, cooking, eating together chatting, arguing, playing or watching TV. The ecocultural context or niche (Super & Harkness, 1986) which organizes these activities, provides "cultural careers" (Goldschmidt, 1990) for parents and children, which vary for boys and girls in systematic, patterned, and comparable ways across cultures (Rossi, 1985). Our view of gender acquisition is based on the hypothesis that beliefs and practices instantiated in the activities of everyday life are among the most powerful influences on children's gender development.

In this view, family tasks and daily routines are both markers for and socializers of cultural and moral standards extending far beyond the mere performance of dishwashing, cooking, or house cleaning, important as these functions are. Rules about domestic activities help define how the cultural world should be understood by children, and what is valued. Children, when they observe or are involved in these practices and chores, are learning what gender means, what age differences and social status marked by age signifies, and are comparing how their particular family practices accord with practices they see around them (Holland & Skinner, 1987). These considerations drive the hypothesis that changes in the allocation of such tasks might lead to differences in children's learned gender categories. How families divide up domestic tasks by gender in particular, and how this is explained to and understood by children, could influence children's gender typing.

Nonconventional Families and Gender Egalitarian Values and Practices

Since so many countercultural families clearly intended to produce change in family relationships and in their children's gender roles, they are a valuable group in which to study relationships between egalitarian values, parenting and family practices regarding tasks, and children's gender typing. Nonconventional and countercultural families who participated in the social movements of the 1960's and 1970's intended to alter their lifestyles to encourage gender egalitarianism in family life, among many other cultural, political, and spiritual goals (Berger, 1981; Roszak, 1969; Tipton, 1982; Yin-ger, 1982; Zablocki, 1980). They "countered", challenged and questioned conventional values and practices. They combined new values with (to varying degrees) new practices regarding domestic tasks and family relationships.

Nonconventional or countercultural parents were not always necessarily promoting truly "new" values and practices, although most saw them

as new. Rather they often were making explicit, core values which remain relatively implicit and underelaborated in American culture. Bellah (1985) indeed makes the case that countercultural values in fact do reflect longstanding American cultural traditions of communitarianism which had been suppressed by the contrasting American cultural tradition of entrepreneurialism of the modern age. The same is true for conceptions of gender. Parents with strongly sex egalitarian ideologies were attempting to instantiate new values of feminism and gender egalitarianism in their families, but also were bringing older American egalitarian and women's rights issues back again, whether or not they were fully aware of this.

The nonconventional parents clearly tried to be innovative in their family lifestyles, and struggled to put their values into practice even as they inevitably had to compromise and accommodate to their local circumstances. The parents in nonconventional lifestyles explicitly rejected, at least to some degree and for some periods of their early years as parents, culturally normative domestic arrangements and family practices, and normative values and beliefs. But they also often could not implement their values into everyday practice, whether due to financial constraints, personal problems, influences of spouses and mates or their own siblings and parents, the effects of a certain "conservatizing" force often accompanying the transition to parenthood, or their own discovery of conflicts and inconsistencies in their nonconventional or countercultural values.

Whatever the cultural history and pragmatic compromises, nonconventional parents with strong gender egalitarian ideologies promoted change in daily routines and family relationships by questioning conventional beliefs and practices, and by attempting to actually change the practices. Did these efforts of nonconventional and countercultural families to alter domestic task patterns influence children's gender typing?

Research Questions

Both theory and empirical findings regarding family tasks suggest that change in gender roles and tasks is occurring in American families, but in a modified or accommodated way. Our study attempted to examine several of the features which influence family accommodation and task assignment, as well as features which might in turn influence children's gender typing. We focused explicitly on gender egalitarian ideology, household organization, work force participation, family income level, and domestic workload of the parents.

1. First, we examined whether nonconventional families in fact had more task sharing and father participation, compared to

conventional families. We compared several kinds of nonconventional families to a conventional comparison sample. Our hypothesis was that more nonconventional families would alter the allocation of domestic and child care tasks, by increasing the tasks shared by all family members as well as by increasing father participation.

2. We then examined the influence of family organization and values commitment on tasks. Nonconventional families may simply have had more personnel present and available in their domestic groups to do tasks and chores compared to the conventional families, for example. Single parents, no matter how egalitarian, simply may not have had the help in their homes to implement shared task assignment, regardless of ideology. After controlling for the presence of household members who were available to do domestic and child care tasks, we hypothesized that nonconventional families with higher commitment to change and gender egalitarian values would have more sharing of tasks and more father involvement than conventional families.
3. We also assessed socio-demographic factors which could influence task allocation in families, such as parents' income, age, and education. We expected that family organization and commitment to nonconventional family lifestyles would be associated with more shared task allocation and father involvement even after controlling for the effects of these demographic measures, when compared to the conventional family sample.
4. We examined three specific features of nonconventional families which might be related to differences in task allocation: mothers' gender egalitarian values, parents' commitment to the countercultural movement and its values of change and experimentation, and the amount of time the mother works outside the home. We hypothesized that gender egalitarian values, commitment to the counterculture and mother work outside the home each would produce more shared task allocation and father involvement.
5. Finally, we examined the relationships between family lifestyle and organization, task allocation patterns, and children's gender role beliefs. We hypothesized that children would be more non-gender typed in their gender-based categories in nonconventional families with stronger gender egalitarian values, more task sharing, and more father participation in tasks.

SAMPLE AND MEASURES

The Family Lifestyles Project has been following a sample of 156 non-conventional families since 1974-75: 50 single mothers, 52 social contract or non-legally married couples, and 54 in various kinds of communes and group living situations. Another 51 married couples were included as a comparison group sample, for a total of 207 families (Eiduson, Cohen, & Alexander, 1973; Eiduson, Kornfein, Zimmerman, & Weisner, 1982; Eiduson & Weisner, 1978; Weisner & Eiduson, 1986; Weisner & Garnier, 1992; Weisner, Bausano, & Kornfein, 1983).

The 156 nonconventional families were contacted through network and personal contact recruitment methods. Forty-one of the comparison group families were collected through a random sample of obstetricians in major urban areas of California. These physicians were asked to nominate from their current cases an expectant mother in a married couple relationship. Random lists of obstetricians were used for sampling in order to provide a random sampling frame located in the same areas where most nonconventional participants were living. Ten additional conventionally married couples were selected through staff contacts in the Los Angeles area.

A wide range of working to upper-middle class families were represented; all were Euro-Americans. All parents were living in California 12 years later, and were between the 20th and 90th national percentile on our socioeconomic measures when selected. Mothers had completed an average of 14 years of education, and fathers 16 years, by the time their child was six. Mothers were between 18 and 32 years of age when first interviewed; 75% were about to have their first child; 47% of the children were girls and 53% were boys. We initially intended mothers to be having their first child in order to follow mothers who were all new parents, and children who were all first born. However, we had to relax this criterion during our sample search since the other selection criteria were not easy to meet. Statistical comparisons of parents with first or later-borns, on measures of values, lifestyle commitment, and gender egalitarian practices in domestic routines, did not show any differences. In any event, participants in countercultural lifestyles were very likely to be in their early parenting years in 1974 and having a first child, so our criteria merely reflected the circumstances of this age and cohort.

Family Organization and Background

Information on family organization (who lived together with the child in the household) was obtained from personal interviews with parents when their child was 12 and 36 months, and through a phone call update and

questionnaire when their child was five years old. Parents' education, age, income, and the nature of mothers' work outside the home were assessed through questionnaire and interview items when children were age six.

Commitment to Nonconventional Lifestyles

Parents' commitment to a nonconventional lifestyle was judged through semistructured interviews with parents, and rated by the interviewer on a five-point scale when interviews were conducted at the trimester and six years. The correlations between our nonconventional lifestyle commitment measures at the trimester and six years was .48 for mothers and .44 for fathers. Only 11% of the mothers and 15% of the fathers changed their ratings more than one point between the trimester and six year assessments. In fact, 55% of the mothers and 53% of the fathers had the identical rating. We used the mothers' commitment rating as the measure of family commitment since more father data were missing, and mothers' and fathers' ratings were highly correlated ($r = .76$).

Parents' Values

Parents' gender egalitarian, pronatural and achievement values commitments were assessed through standard Likert-type questionnaire scales (Weisner & Rochford, 1980; Weisner & Garnier, 1992). These values scores were obtained when children were born, and again when they were three and six. We used the six year scores, since this is the closest time point to the family tasks data collected when children were age five. Each value was assessed using eight items.² The scores of the eight items assess-

²For gender egalitarian values, for instance, sample items included:

—"A woman resents her partner taking over all the important decisions."

—"Women are naturally better at homemaking activities than men."

—"Women should become actively involved in politics and community problems as well as in their families."

—"Even today women live under unfair restrictions that ought to be done away with."

For pronatural values, for instance, sample items included:

—"I see myself as a 'natural person', in tune with the environment rather than exploiting it."

—"I reject the plastic, artificial environment of modern society."

—"Pollution is a small price to pay for the advancement of modern society."

—"It's more important to master nature than be limited by it."

For conventional achievement goals, for instance, sample items included:

—"In my work I do just enough to get by."

—"I think I can continue to grow without setting difficult goals for myself."

—"When I do a job I set high standards for myself regardless of what others do."

—"Children ought to try hard to come out on top in games and sports."

ing each value orientation were averaged to create one measure for each value. This procedure was done for mothers and fathers separately. The sample size of the fathers ($n = 66$ at six years) was considerably smaller than the sample of mothers ($n = 191$) since fathers were not present in single mother households, and some fathers did not complete the questionnaire or participate in interviews. The canonical correlation between parents' values was strong enough ($r = .85$ at the trimester, and $r = .82$ at six years) to use the mother's values as the measures of family values. Using the mother's values also reduced the problem of missing data in subsequent analyses.³

Task Assignment

Data on assignment of domestic tasks and child care were collected through questionnaires mailed to parents when children were five years old. Parents completed a domestic task and chore inventory which asked which family member or members typically performed a list of tasks and chores. Three representative domestic tasks were included: cooking meals, cleaning the bathroom, and taking out the garbage. Child caretaking tasks used were: bathing, dressing, and putting the five year old child to bed. Responsibility for paying bills was used to measure financial tasks. With only a few exceptions, mothers completed these task questionnaires, although the materials were sent to the couple, not specifically to mothers to fill out. This allocation of the task of completing the questionnaire may in itself reflect most couples' perceptions as to which parent should respond to questions about child care and the domestic domain.

The data were initially coded into 45 patterns of task assignment [e.g., whether the task was done by the mother, the father, the FLS study child, other children in the household (male or female), other adult household members (male or female), or a combination of these]. After inspection of the list of tasks and frequencies of responses as to who did them, each task was scored for each family into four general categories: (1) mother only did task; (2) mother and others (but not the father) did task; (3) family members including mother and father shared in the task; and (4) the father did task alone or shared task with others (but not with the mother). ~~Combinations other than these four were very infrequent, and children rarely did tasks at this age, so these categories were dropped from further analysis.~~ We then scored, across each of the seven tasks, the number of families

³Our data show high consistency in values scores over time (canonical correlations of .70 for mothers, and .78 for fathers), and so the one-year time difference between assessment of values and of tasks is unlikely to affect the results.

who were in each of these four categories. We also scored, for each family, how many of the tasks were done alone, or shared with others.

We asked parents to report modal, typical patterns in their responses. However, large numbers of parents reported to us that mothers "typically", "usually", or "characteristically" did childcare tasks, and that fathers did not routinely help them with child care. Such families are coded as "mothers doing childcare alone, without assistance". Such a description is, we believe, an accurate characterization of the modal pattern of childcare task allocation in their family's everyday routine. But it is highly unlikely that we have many fathers who literally *never* participated in any of the childcare tasks we asked about, nor is the pattern necessarily happening every day of the week, every minute of the day. Our data are most useful for providing insights into how *patterns* of participation in particular activities relate to family background characteristics or attitudes (Bernard, Kilworth, Kronenfeld, & Sailer, 1984; Kalton, 1985; Robinson, 1977).

Note that task measures were gathered independently of our assessments of overall conventionality or nonconventionality. Conventionality measures utilized parents' values orientations, parents' own expressions of lifestyle commitments, and our qualitative ratings of each family. Families could and did have gender egalitarian practices regarding to task assignment while being conventional in values orientations, for instance, and vice versa.

In addition to these task data, parents completed a questionnaire which asked them to fill in a typical daily schedule divided into three-hour segments (6-9 AM, 9 AM-noon, etc.). The schedule asked where each family member was, what they were doing, and whom they were with. Parents' time-block reports were transformed into 16-hour day summaries of time use in order to compare our data to other time allocation studies of North American and other samples. Variables were created for identifying how many hours the parent spent on each activity in a typical 16-hour day, including including work outside the home (wage labor), work at home (domestic labor), educational activity and other activities (Fig. 1).

Gender Role Stereotyping

The Sex Role Learning Index (SERLI) was used as an indication of gender stereotyping of objects by the children (Edelbrock & Sugawara, 1978). High scores in the "masculine" or "feminine" categories indicate high gender role stereotyping. High scores in the "both," or non-gender typed, gender egalitarian category indicate low gender-

role stereotyping. Reliability and validity of the SERLI have been established, and its use in this sample previously reported (Weisner & Wilson-Mitchell, 1990). This earlier work showed that the SERLI, which measures cultural categorizations of objects, was the gender measure most likely to be affected by nonconventional lifestyles. Children's appearance, personality ratings, and social behavior and preferences, for instance, were not affected by nonconventional lifestyles when the children were age six.

Nonconventional Lifestyles and Family Organization

We next defined five nonconventional family lifestyle types, by combining our knowledge of each family's commitment to their values and their family organization. We divided the nonconventional families into five groups totaling 173 families (cases from the full data set of 207 which had missing data at child's age 5 on either domestic tasks, family organization or values, had to be dropped from further analyses): the conventional couples ($n = 39$); conventional single mothers ($n = 11$); nonconventional couples ($n = 69$); nonconventional single mothers ($n = 29$); and commune-resident families (shown as "nonconventional communes" in our tables) ($n = 25$).

The families in the original comparison sample who had remained as conventional married couples stayed in the conventional couple group, while those mothers in that sample initially, who had subsequently divorced or separated were now in the new, conventional single mother group. The families in the original nonconventional lifestyle sample were first divided into three groups based on their family organization when the child reached age five: single parent households ($n = 40$), communards ($n = 25$), and couple households (not necessarily married) ($n = 108$). The communards formed a distinctive family lifestyle group of their own; they included all those nonconventional lifestyle families who continued to live in a communal residence, or were still closely tied with a commune group in their everyday lives.

The remaining families were those who were selected originally into the nonconventional sample, and were not commune members. We divided these families into those with a clear, consistent commitment to a countercultural values and lifestyle which they had sustained over the years we had followed them at that point, and those with little or no sustained commitment to countercultural values and goals. This division into high and low values and lifestyle commitment groups was done using qualitative assessments of each family, which were then validated through discriminant

analysis of the family types.⁴ The discriminant analyses used the values questionnaires and interview items described above. Using this knowledge of each families' values orientations and history, some single mothers were added to the group of conventional single mothers, making a total of 11 cases, and some couples were added to the group of conventional couples, making a total of 39. The remaining nonconventional families with high countercultural values and commitment were the single mothers, ($n = 29$), and the nonconventional couples ($n = 69$).

Descriptive Statistics of the Five Family Organization Groups

Table I describes these five family groups when the children were age five, on measures of values and sociodemographic background variables. The five groups were significantly different in their values and family income. Nonconventional single mothers and couples are more gender egalitarian than the comparison sample families, or conventional single mothers, for instance. Nonconventional families were also more pronatural, and less interested in conventional achievement goals. The conventional comparison sample families earned significantly more money per month (mean = \$2408) than did the nonconventional couples (mean = \$1506). Conventional single mothers (\$998) earned some 25 percent more on average than did their nonconventional counterparts (\$803). Income data on communal families are not included, since estimating their personal family income versus their living group contributions is difficult to disentangle. However, most communards were living in comfortable, if limited circumstances, and many worked in jobs contributing toward their groups' goals and mission, in return for room, board and other expenses. All five groups were similar in mothers' ages, and formal education.

⁴This procedure is described in Weisner & Wilson-Mitchell (1990). To capture the differences in families, each case was examined using data from field notes, interviews, and home visits. From this work, a set of family types was generated. Second, these types were subjected to discriminant analyses, to determine the internal homogeneity of each type, and the variables which significantly contributed to identifying the six types. Third, these analyses were used to reexamine the types and placement of families in them. Discriminant function analysis correctly assigned 83% of families to one of six family types using the following variables: parents' values orientations, commitment to the countercultural movement, stability of the family arrangement; parents' marital status; and the domestic group arrangement (e.g., single mother, married or unmarried couples, communal arrangements) ($F = 36.9$, $d.f. = 7, 193$). The remaining 17% of the cases were reviewed individually, and final decisions on their placement were made by staff consensus. The more committed family groups combined together in the present paper, were called "Avant Garde" and "Countercultural" families in the 1990 study, and the less committed combined together in this paper, were called "Conventional Alternatives", or "Changeable/Troubled" families.

Table I. Parent Values and Demographic Measures by Family Organization at Five Years^a

Family lifestyle group	n	Mother values ^b			Conventional achievement goals
		Sex egalitarian	Pronaturalism		
Conventional families ^c	39	3.84	3.39	(.31)	3.72
Conventional comparison sample	11	4.09	3.41	(.35)	3.94
Conventional single mothers					(.37)
Nonconventional families	29	4.44	3.86	(.49)	3.61
Nonconventional single mothers	69	4.39	3.90	(.46)	3.57
Nonconventional couples	25	3.89	3.88	(.46)	3.52
Nonconventional communes		16.60	13.37		4.17
F		.00	.00		.00
p					

Family lifestyle group	n	Parent demographic measures			Mother age
		Family income	Mother years of education		
Conventional families	39	2408.56	14.21	(2.38)	31.93
Conventional comparison sample	11	998.13	13.87	(1.55)	31.38
Conventional single mothers					(4.60)
Nonconventional families	29	803.29	14.33	(2.29)	30.03
Nonconventional single mothers	69	1506.82	14.37	(2.55)	31.75
Nonconventional couples	25		14.38	(2.26)	31.45
Nonconventional communes ^d		14.52	.17		1.40
F		.00	.96		.23
p					

^aNote. Standard deviations are in parentheses.^bValues assessed using eight questionnaire items; scale ranges from 3 to 5.^cA higher score on sex egalitarianism and pronaturalism indicates a more nonconventional values orientation.^dNot available for family-level measurement.*Five Families: Examples of Families in Lifestyle Categories*

It is important to gain a qualitative sense of the families in each of these groups as well as how they were classified into the five groups for purposes of statistical analyses. Although we cannot present detailed field notes and qualitative data in this paper, case examples can help to illustrate the interweaving of values, marital and domestic group circumstances, and income and financial situations which all are shaping the families' domestic routines. (In these five brief vignettes, names and other identifying features of the cases have been changed.)

Lila, for example, is a *single mother in a nonconventional lifestyle* (grouped as a "nonconventional single mother" in our tables). She had the option of marrying the biological father, but rejected the institution of marriage. The baby was not planned but she felt "maternally oriented" and had gone off the pill. Over the years, Lila and her daughter, Nancy, lived in a number of communities and in various household arrangements including living with casual acquaintances for the purpose of sharing the rent, in several domestic communes (which she rejected because she resented other adults telling her daughter what to do), with another single mother and her two children, and finally settled for "just the two of them".

On occasion, a male friend did household repairs for Lila, but otherwise she handled all the family tasks. She believed, however, that ideally, parents should share all tasks. Family ties with the maternal grandparents were strained, especially with her father. The child's paternal grandparents were a thousand miles away, and there were no visits. Roommates and hired sitters cared for Nancy when Lila worked, but otherwise Nancy went everywhere with her mother.

Because they lived mainly on welfare money, they were in "desperate financial straits" most of the time. Lila earned some money as a floor sander—when she worked—and said that she "enjoyed the work, and especially enjoyed the fact that it was not a female occupation." Her goal for the future was "to get into the trades as an electrician". Lila scored very high on our gender egalitarian values scale, and on her commitment to her nonconventional lifestyle. She scored high on the number of tasks she said she did alone and high on the number done with the assistance of someone else other than a male—usually female friends helped—but low on tasks done by other males she knew, and low on shared tasks overall.

In spite of Lila's egalitarian values, however, her daughter scored low on the SERLI non-gender typed score, meaning that she had a high number of gender-typed responses.

Barbara, on the other hand, is a "conventional single mother" who did not have a high score on nonconventional lifestyles commitment or values

She became pregnant while temporarily reunited with her former husband for a brief time when they were considering remarrying, but "she ended up as a single mother." The father did not stay in contact with Barbara, and never saw his child. Over the years, Barbara managed the apartment building where they lived, did some baby sitting and worked part time in the school library, all of which supplemented her welfare checks. Once our fieldworkers got to know her, Barbara was described as a very conventional woman in her values who, though living as a single mother by choice, was "pretty much unaware of the counterculture".

Barbara had no car, and was dependent on her mother for transportation to the grocery store, to the doctor, and for emotional support. Except for transportation, Barbara managed fairly well on her own and, in fact, was given an old truck by her father when her daughter Jane was four years old. She would have preferred to have been at home full time rather than have to work part time, and would have liked to be a traditional mother and homemaker. She scored very high on tasks done alone as well as those done with the assistance of others (particularly her parents), but low on the tasks done with the few men in her life. Although Barbara's values were not strongly sex egalitarian, Jane scored high on the non-gender typed portion of the SERLI scale.

Lynn, her husband Will and their daughter Dana exemplify the *communal family* lifestyles in our study population (labeled "nonconventional communes" in our tables). Their commune's ideology was based on the creedal traditions of a Far Eastern religion. At the time of their daughter Dana's birth, the commune was accustomed to having primarily single adults or couples without children in the group. The fieldworker noted that "Lynn's difficulty with some of the tasks of mothering had to do with the general attitude of the commune. This revolved around the feeling that everyone at the Communal Center had to pull their own weight in terms of tasks supporting the group. There was a good deal of conflict over the role of a mother in terms of how she fit into the group". Lynn told the interviewer that she "would not consider having a second child because it would be unfair to ask the community to support more than one child in a family".

The community philosophy emphasized that childcare was "primarily a woman's activity". Lynn found that it was possible to work in the garden and elsewhere with Dana along with her. Will's play with Dana was primarily directed toward teaching the child and giving her a lot of "intellectual stimulation". There was a communal dining room where the families ate together, so cooking was a shared activity.

Later on, Will "moved into a very important post in the priesthood. It keeps him even busier, and away from his family more than previously". Dana was in full time daycare, then in a public school. When mother and

daughter were together, they tended to do "lady things" together, such as taking a walk in the garden or going to the fabric store. Lynn said that "she tried to play down the sex-role differences" which were a part of her community's ideology, insofar as these ideas were to be applied to her child. To provide a good role model, she "went out of my way to find Dana a woman doctor—but then Dana did not like her!"

Later, Lynn and Will pooled their money and alternated taking care of the checkbook. In contrast to earlier times, Lynn and Will believed in equal sharing of caretaking tasks as their child got older. Lynn said that "when Dana was younger, I took care of her full time, and hated it, but I had no choice".

The parents scored high on gender egalitarian values, and high on commitment to the counterculture. They were also high on tasks done as a family group and with father participation, and low on tasks done exclusively by the mother. Nonetheless, their daughter Dana's non-gender typed beliefs score on the SERLI turned out to be low.

Polly and Brian began as an unmarried "*nonconventional couple*", or as we described them, a "social contract" couple when they entered the FLS project, but were married two years later. Their relationship weathered a number of separations, job changes, and residential moves over the years.

When their daughter was four and a half years old, "Polly was quite pleased with the way Brian took care of the children (including a child from Polly's former marriage)—willingly and eagerly". But by six years, Polly was the main caretaker in the family. She also reported that she felt she was the "final authority" as far as the children were concerned.

When Polly and Brian were first together, they "more or less pooled their resources", but by six years, they had "separate money and family money". Polly always did the cooking and the laundry and believed that Brian should help as much as possible—but "he does not help as much as I would like". She said that "we don't really argue about it, though it pisses me off". Polly had a moderately high gender egalitarian values score, as did Brian, and a similarly mid-level commitment score to the counterculture. She was about average in the number of tasks she did alone, and the family overall was moderately high on father participation in tasks. They scored low on tasks mother did with help from others, excluding the father and on shared family tasks. Their daughter scored in about the middle of our sample on non-gender typing on the SERLI.

Jana and Don came from a midwest traditional family; they are in our comparison sample of two parent, married conventional couples (labeled as the "conventional comparison sample" category in our tables). Jana considered herself a "liberated woman", in comparison to her mother who was a full time homemaker with no outside interests. Jana had a long career

as a registered nurse. Before her marriage, our field notes said that she "was pulled into the role as a mother, yet spoke of plans for a future career change into real estate".

Soon after her son's birth, Jana took two evening classes, and her husband took care of the baby. She mentioned "how helpful he was in the evenings and on weekends". But by three years, she complained considerably about Don's "lack of help", and of his "insensitivity" when he did not help her out after she had prepared an extra special meal. However, Don continued to care for the children in the evenings, including bathing them and putting them to bed.

Jana remained a full time homemaker, and filled up her life with what seemed, according to her, to be "somewhat irrelevant, frivolous activities—but it's important to be social, not like my mother". She admitted that she was "glad to be home with her children, but I cannot stand staying at home doing traditional activities". As to household tasks, Jana said that she "sort of runs the show, but we make joint decisions usually, though if there is a problem, I give my husband the final authority". Jana had a gender egalitarian values score at the sample median, but her commitment to the counterculture was low. She was typical of the overall sample in terms of the number of tasks she did alone, and those shared by everyone in the family. Their family scored high on tasks done by the father with or without help from others. Her son scored low on the SERLI non gender-typed score.

RESULTS

Comparison of FLS Sample to Other American Society Samples

Although the FLS families are within the range of other samples of American industrial society, they are working harder and longer at their tasks in and out of the home than the Michigan (Robinson, 1977) or urban samples (Fig. 1). The FLS sample data show more hours spent in tasks, regardless of whether the tasks were domestic or non-domestic, for both men and women, compared to the urban and Michigan data. One reason for this pattern surely is because the FLS sample consists entirely of families with children age five at the time of data collection regarding tasks. Hence child care and domestic task workloads are quite likely higher in the FLS sample than in samples of families across all stages of the life cycle. Men in the FLS sample do show somewhat more domestic task participation than the other samples, but they are still less likely to perform such tasks as their primary responsibility than are women. Figure 1 suggests

that the FLS families have modified the expected distribution of domestic and work tasks, but have done so within the range characteristic of urban Euro-American society.

Family Organization, Values, Socioeconomic Status and Tasks Among the Five Family Groups

First, we compared the five family groups on the number of tasks performed by families for each of the four categories of task allocation using one-way analyses of variance. Significant differences were found on all measures of task allocation by family group (see Table II). Type of household appeared to be a strong influence on task assignment. Single mothers inevitably did more tasks alone and less tasks ($p < .001$) as a family or with father involvement than multiple parent families, regardless of their values. And nonconventional single mothers did more tasks with help from others (but not, of course, involving a father or other male) than either conventional or nonconventional couples.

Specifically, conventional and nonconventional single mothers did significantly more tasks alone than mothers in nonconventional couple families ($t(168) = 3.66, p < .01$; $t(168) = 3.30, p < .05$, respectively). Nonconventional single mothers did significantly more tasks with help (not including the father) than conventional and nonconventional couples ($t(168) = 3.50, p < .01$; $t(168) = 3.55, p < .05$). This same pattern appeared for tasks done by the father and by the family. Conventional and nonconventional couple and commune families had significantly more father participation than conventional single mother families ($t(168) = 3.88, p < .01$; $t(168) = 5.88, p < .001$; $t(168) = 4.94, p < .001$) and nonconventional single mother families ($t(168) = 3.41, p < .05$; $t(168) = 5.03, p < .001$; $t(168) = 4.41, p < .01$). Significantly more family participation was found in conventional and nonconventional couple families compared to conventional single mother families ($t(168) = 7.08, p < .001$; $t(168) = 7.32, p < .001$) and nonconventional single mother families ($t(168) = 8.32, p < .001$; $t(168) = 8.54, p < .001$).

Conventional and nonconventional families did not differ from each other within each type of family organization. For example, conventional single mothers did not differ significantly from nonconventional single mothers, and conventional or nonconventional couples did not differ from each other on any pattern of task allocation.

Next, we compared the five family groups on the four categories of task allocation controlling for initial differences in family income, mother age and education, and number of people in the family using one-way

Table II. Number of All Household Tasks Performed by Family Members, by Family Organization at Five Years^a

Family lifestyle group	n	Who performs household task				Family shares task ^e
		Mother alone ^b	Mother with help (not father) ^c	Father alone or with help ^d		
Conventional families						
Conventional comparison sample	39	2.68 (1.51)	.52 (1.03)	.79 (1.26)		2.16 (1.31)
Conventional single mothers	11	4.09 (1.51)	1.36 (1.57)	.00 (.00)		.18 (.60)
Nonconventional families						
Nonconventional single mothers	29	3.37 (1.90)	1.56 (1.55)	.07 (.27)		.22 (.51)
Nonconventional couples	69	2.10 (1.71)	.59 (.91)	.83 (1.09)		2.25 (1.67)
Nonconventional communes	25	2.09 (1.47)	1.09 (1.24)	.96 (.93)		1.17 (1.44)
F		5.61	3.68	6.75		21.43
p		.00	.01	.00		.00

^aNote. Standard deviations are in parentheses.^bMother exclusively, or with only very occasional help.^cMother with help from others, excluding the father or adult males in the household.^dFather exclusively or with help from other, excluding the mother.^eFamily jointly responsible for and shares task.

analyses of covariance (see Table III). The same pattern of significant differences by family organization was found on tasks done by the mother alone, mother's tasks in which there was help by the family, and tasks done by the father (alone or with help). Controlling for demographic measures did not change the pattern of task allocation among family groups.

Correlations were computed between the number of tasks performed by families for each of the four categories of task allocation and parental gender egalitarian values, commitment to the counterculture, and amount of time the mother works outside the home within each of the five family groups. Father involvement in domestic tasks was significantly correlated with *both* values commitment, and mother's work outside the home (Table IV).

Commitment to a countercultural lifestyle was significantly correlated ($r = .43, p < .05$) with shared family task performance for nonconventional single mothers, but not for conventional singles. Nonconventional couple mothers who also worked outside the home were more likely to share tasks ($r = .36, p < .01$) than the conventional couple mothers ($r = .00$). Fathers in nonconventional households where mothers worked outside the home were more likely to share tasks, but were unlikely to do them without the joint participation of their spouse. That is, they would share tasks with their spouses, but were seldom reported to take over *primary* responsibility. However, these findings do not represent a strong trend since only 5 out of 60 correlations were significant. We also examined within-group correlations separately for household, child care, and financial tasks, to see if they might show relationships with values; however, none were significantly correlated with values.

No correlations with gender egalitarian values were statistically significant. However, there is a trend for nonconventional families who shared tasks to have more egalitarian values.

Task Allocation and Children's Gender Stereotyping

Given these task assignment patterns, how would children's gender typing be affected? Table V shows the effect of family lifestyle type on children's Sex Role Learning Index (SERLI) scores at age six (using one-way analyses of variance on the SERLI scores, by the five family groups). Children in nonconventional families did indeed have significantly higher non gender-typed responses on the SERLI than children in conventional families. Children in nonconventional couple families had significantly higher non gender-typed responses than children in conventional single mother families ($t(168) = 2.95, p < .05$). In addition, children in noncon-

Table III. Adjusted^a Group Mean Number of Tasks Performed by Family Members by Family Organization at Five Years

Family lifestyle group	▲ n	Who performs household task			
		Mother alone ^b	Mother with help (not father) ^c	Father alone or with help ^d	Family shares task ^e
Conventional families					
Conventional comparison sample	39	3.01	.61	.45	2.20
Conventional single mothers	11	3.91	1.31	.11	.16
Nonconventional families					
Nonconventional single mothers	29	3.21	1.56	.26	.24
Nonconventional couples	69	2.20	.61	.84	2.18
Nonconventional communes	25	2.15	1.41	.95	1.09
F		4.31	2.86	3.92	11.62
p		.00	.03	.01	.00

^aAdjusted by number of people in the household, family income, mother age and education.^bMother exclusively, or with only very occasional help.^cMother with help from others, excluding the father or adult males in the household.^dFather exclusively or with help from other, excluding the mother.^eFamily jointly responsible for and shares task.

Table IV. Correlations Between Family Values and Amount of Time Mother Works, and Number of household Tasks Done by Family Members, by Family Organization at Five Years

Family lifestyle group	n	Who performs household tasks			
		Mother alone ^a	Mother with help (not father) ^b	Father alone or with help ^c	Family shares task ^d
Nonconventional families					
Conventional comparison sample	39	-.30 ^e	-.17	.36 ^e	.18
Conventional single mothers	11	-.36	.23	.00	.18
Nonconventional families					
Nonconventional single mothers	29	.40 ^e	.15	-.22	.43 ^e
Nonconventional couples	69	-.23 ^e	.06	-.10	.10
Nonconventional communes	25	.03	.45 ^e	-.16	-.40 ^e
Correlations with amount of time mother works					
Conventional families					
Conventional comparison sample	39	.09	.08	-.02	.00
Conventional single mothers	11	-.32	.17	.00	.39
Nonconventional families					
Nonconventional single mothers	29	.26	-.22	.04	-.02
Nonconventional couples	69	-.24 ^e	-.06	-.16	.36 ^f
Nonconventional communes	25	-.30	.22	.04	-.10

^aMother exclusively, or with only very occasional help.^bMother with help from others, excluding the father or adult males in the household.^cFather exclusively or with help from other, excluding the mother.^dFamily jointly responsible for and shares task.^ep < .05.^fp < .01.

Table V. Mean Scores on Three Sex Role Learning Index (SERLI) Measures by Family Organization at Five Years

Family lifestyle group	n	Sex Role Learning Index ^a			Non sex typed responses
		Stereotyping feminine objects	Stereotyping masculine objects		
Conventional families					
Conventional comparison sample	39	6.71 (3.38)	7.71 (1.63)		4.53 (3.12)
Conventional single mothers	11	7.20 (3.01)	8.47 (1.60)		3.40 (3.25)
Nonconventional families					
Nonconventional single mothers	29	6.19 (2.93)	6.77 (2.14)		6.10 (3.89)
Nonconventional couples	69	6.19 (3.14)	6.65 (2.35)		6.32 (4.72)
Nonconventional communes	25	7.59 (1.80)	7.62 (1.95)		4.59 (3.51)
F		1.63	4.75		3.65
p		.20	.00		.01

^aSource: Edelbrock & Sugawara (1978). Standard deviations in parentheses.

ventional families were more likely to show less stereotyping of masculine objects. Children in nonconventional couple families had significantly lower masculine scores than children in the conventional comparison sample ($t(168) = 2.96, p < .01$); children in nonconventional single mother families had significantly lower masculine scores than children in conventional single mother families ($t(168) = 3.00, p < .05$). There was also a trend for children in nonconventional families to have less stereotyping of feminine objects, but this difference was not statistically significant.

Correlations showed that differences in SERLI scores were not strongly related *specifically* to patterns of task allocation in the household. We found only one significant correlation between SERLI scores and the number of tasks done by various combinations of family members: fathers' task involvement (either by himself or with family members other than the mother) with a higher score on the SERLI femininity scale ($r = .20, p < .05$), but not with nongender-typed responses, or with masculine responses.

The influence of shared family task assignment on the SERLI was primarily due to effects on girls ($r = .29, p < .01$); there was no significant correlation for boys. Girls were more likely to have a higher feminine gender typing scores on the SERLI and lower scores on non-gender typed responses, if their fathers were involved with tasks in the household. No other specific task pattern was related to boys' or girls' SERLI scores. However, two significant correlations out of 36 suggests only a weak trend.

CONCLUSION

The personnel available to do tasks in the home of course influences who is doing those tasks. This is the strongest statistical pattern in our findings. Values *do* matter in task assignment, but the effects are weak compared to who is available to assist. We did find significant correlations between values and father involvement (e.g., tasks done by fathers alone or shared). Egalitarian values and family accommodation did increase father involvement in tasks when there was a father in the family.

Our results suggest that parents' values orientations and task assignment compete with many other influences in shaping family task accommodation. Recall that the FLS sample as a whole was only modestly different in time use than other samples from North America. Even when mothers worked outside the home, they had only slightly more assistance in domestic tasks. This suggests that there were constraints facing FLS families, even families with very strongly-held egalitarian beliefs, when these families tried to alter their domestic task arrangements. Like other

families in contemporary Euro-American society, most FLS families made real, but comparatively minor, changes in their actual patterns of typical task assignments. Furthermore, unlike parents in many other cultures, only a few FLS parents actively worked to involve their children in sharing domestic tasks by age 5-6. It is likely that specific effects of gender-related task assignment in families would have been stronger if children themselves had been doing these tasks either with parents or older children.

These findings seem consistent with work on children's helpfulness, and their conceptions of responsibility. Generalized helpfulness does not necessarily follow from children's performance of household work, for instance (Goodnow, 1988). Similarly, although work and responsibility understandings in children ages 8, 11, and 14 do show a developmental transition, responsibility principles are thought of differently, and depend on varying degrees of children's practical experience in each responsibility domain and type of tasks (Warton & Goodnow, 1991). Like our findings on gender conceptions and work, data on helpfulness and responsibility suggest that these are learned by participation in family task practices, and are influenced by the accommodated nature of the tasks and meanings parents attach to them.

Most studies assess task organization outside the context of family life and family values. Our own questionnaire measures of values and reports of task arrangements, if not complemented by our much wider knowledge of these families would have suffered from this narrow kind of analysis. Qualitative and case materials on fathers' overall involvement in their families, for instance, show real proactive change, tempered by the reality of accommodation. Nonconventional families have more supportive fathers, for instance, but do not have dramatic numbers of such families implementing truly "co-equal" shared task assignment.

Quantitative assessments of father involvement also confirmed our case-based knowledge. For instance, fathers who were "supportive" or "co-equal" in their overall participation (not only in tasks but in all areas of family activities), as assessed through home visits, interviews, and field notes, were much more likely to be in nonconventional families, and to espouse gender egalitarian values. Over half (54%) of the fathers in nonconventional couple families were supportive or co-equal compared to 11% of the fathers in the conventional comparison sample. The nonconventional lifestyles were innovative in changing family roles, but within the constraints of the personnel and resources available in their everyday activity settings.

There were few direct relationships between task patterns and children's gender typing at age six. The effects of shared domestic tasks in the home on children's gender typing seemed to be indirect, mediated by the child's gender and the cultural and personal meaning parents attach to

tasks in the home. Children's gender typing scores, assessed by the Sex Role Learning Index at age six, were not directly related to patterns of task assignment, although they were related to living in nonconventional families making more efforts to share tasks, and sustaining stronger commitment to gender egalitarian values. Our qualitative data on family task arrangements suggested many of the conditions shaping these patterns of family accommodation: gender egalitarian values, high nonconventional lifestyle commitment, whether mothers were working outside the home, and of course, the personnel available in the home.

Nonconventional families were more likely to debate and change their domestic tasks and roles. There is clear and convincing evidence of this throughout the qualitative data of the FLS study, gathered through open-ended interviews with parents, and field notes. Possibly family debate and proactivity regarding the cultural conventions surrounding tasks and task assignment could influence more nongender typed—behaviors in children, even if changes in actual task performance remain gender-linked. The cultural rationale children are presented with to *explain* the pattern of task assignment in their homes, may have a stronger effect on children's gender conceptions at age six, than the actual task assignment itself. This could be because task assignment is forced to accommodate to the exigencies of the daily routine, while egalitarian values remain strong. Nonconventional families may have been unable to implement their desired domestic task roles, but if their children consistently heard their parents' cultural critique of the conventional norms, perhaps that critique might well influence children. The moral and cultural interpretation of a particular pattern of task assignment may play an independent role in changing children's gender typing knowledge, even when everyday task assignment in practice has little effect. Without a clearly articulated meaning system guiding children's understanding of the practice, perhaps task assignment reverts to being one accommodation among a great many which families have to make and which children learn from each day, and so has little direct effect on children's gender typing during this developmental period.

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Measures of Job Perceptions: Gender and Age of Current Incumbents, Suitability, and Job Attributes

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Two ways of examining the gender and age stereotypes of jobs, characteristics of current incumbents and potential suitability, were compared. Female (n = 70) and male (n = 66) college students, predominantly Caucasian ranging in age from 18 to 57 years, provided their gender and age perceptions for 58 jobs. Although the two concepts have not been clearly distinguished in the literature, they are conceptually and (as found here) empirically distinct. The important roles of current incumbents, suitability, and job attribute perceptions for discrimination research are presented.

Both the gender and age discrimination literature has documented that people hold well-defined notions as to which gender or age is typically associated with an occupation (for gender: Shinar, 1975; White, Kruczek, Brown, & White, 1989; for age: Cleveland and Landy, 1987; Gordon and Arvey, 1986). These perceptions of jobs are likely to play a role in the occurrence of bias in vocational choices and personnel decisions (e.g., Cleveland & Landy, 1983; Heilman, 1983).

Krefting, Berger, and Wallace (1978) have defined the gender-type of a job as "a normative expectation concerning the appropriate sex of a job holder (p. 182)." Age-typing can be defined similarly. Despite its importance for both research and practice, little attention has been directed toward how the gender-type or age-type of an occupation is measured. The most commonly-used method is to ask subjects to indicate the gender or age of people typically occupying the job (Cleveland & Landy, 1987; Gordon & Arvey, 1986; Shinar, 1975; White et al., 1989). A more direct measure