



# Men, Women and Household Work

*Jacqueline J. Goodnow, Jennifer M. Bowes*

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As recent media coverage has dramatized, the issue of household work has become a major topic of discussion and debate. This book comprises a pathbreaking report on this timely subject. It explores different and more equitable ways of sharing household work, based on substantive interviews with fifty couples. The book examines the nature of domestic work patterns, the dynamics of work sharing, and how these structures influence the styles of talk and negotiation that couples use. It also reports on the principles and goals which influence sharing, such as fairness, the quality of a relationship, and standards and preferences within the workplace and home. It goes on to discuss how factors outside the relationship--friends, family, and the women's movement--affect the decision to share household work responsibilities, and how these agreements change and evolve. This entertaining and highly readable book uses the couples' own words to bring to life the way stereotypes are set aside and new patterns negotiated and established. It makes a major contribution to the understanding of gender, work, and relationships. In addition to its potential as a course text in classes on gender dynamics, the book will be of interest to all readers interested in the modern family and domestic relationships.

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