SPECIAL FOCUS: GENDER AND THE PROFESSORIATE

Academic Motherhood: Managing Complex Roles in Research Universities

Kelly Ward and Lisa Wolf-Wendel

Since 1998, more than a dozen articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* have argued that academia should be more supportive of faculty members who attempt to balance family and work responsibilities (e.g., Williams, 2000a; Wilson, 1999). Generally, these articles point to the problems faced by those trying to achieve this balance and suggest ways in which higher education could be more supportive of this effort. Simultaneously, many administrators are responding to faculty demands to adopt "family friendly" policies on their campuses (Raabe, 1997). Recognizing the current political

KELLY WARD is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education at Washington State University. Her current research interests include faculty roles and rewards, faculty involvement in service, the scholarship of engagement, and work family concerns in higher education. LISA WOLF-WENDEL is an Associate Professor of Higher Education at the University of Kansas. Her research interests focus on equity in higher education related to faculty and students, dual career couples, and the academic labor market. The authors thank Kathleen Christensen and the Sloan Foundation for grant support of this research and other research on work and family issues in higher education. They also thank the University of Kansas and Oklahoma State University for their financial support, and Michael Mills, select women in the study, and this journal's reviewers for contributing to its development. They presented an earlier version of this article at the 2002 meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) in Richmond, Virginia. Address queries to Kelly Ward, Washington State University, 367 Cleveland, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-2136; telephone: (509) 335-4702; fax: (509) 335-6961; e-mail: kaward@wsu.edu.

environment, even the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) recently called for colleges and universities to formalize policies for stopping the tenure clock for new parents (AAUP, 2001). The AAUP statement notes, "The lack of a clear boundary in academic lives between work and family has, at least historically, meant that work has been all pervasive, often to the detriment of family" (p. 2). Despite some progress, advocates of family-friendly policies argue that academia has a long way to go in sufficiently supporting faculty members with families (Williams, 2001). That is not to say, however, that everyone in higher education is supportive of such policies. Indeed, there are those who argue that some of these efforts at accommodating parents are fundamentally unfair and "privilege breeders at the expense of the childless" (Chronicle Colloquy, 2001).

The problems of faculty members with children recently have received increased attention and consideration in the literature and in practice because of changing faculty demographics. Today, women make up an increasing share of new faculty hires (Finkelstein, Seal, & Schuster, 1998). Women faculty are less likely to have children compared to women in professions such as law and medicine (Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1989), and only 31 percent of current women faculty have children (Perna, 2001). Still, the demographics (both age and gender) of the newly hired faculty suggest that an increasing number are likely to want to have children (Varner, 2000).

The focus of this study is on women faculty, in large part because they continue to bear the brunt of childrearing responsibilities in our society (Hochschild, 1989). For those newly hired women faculty who want to have children, the tenure clock often ticks simultaneously with the biological clock, requiring them to find ways to make being a professor and a mother a reality (Varner, 2000; Varner & Drago, 2001). Institutional accommodations were previously deemed unnecessary when many academic professionals were men with stay-at-home wives or were women who opted not to have children (Finkel & Olswang, 1996; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996; Williams, 2000a).

Women faculty themselves bear significant responsibility for achieving their own sense of balance. However, given the time and resources required to attract and hire quality faculty members, it is in the best interest of academic institutions to understand the challenges these women face, and work to make the academic environment conducive to their success. These personal and institutional accommodations are likely to affect those who choose to enter academia, faculty productivity and satisfaction, faculty retention, and ultimately the overall quality of higher education. The purpose of this study is to describe how women who are tenure-track faculty at research universities and mothers of young children combine and manage their dual roles as professors and parents.

Have Child, Need Tenure:
A Review of Relevant Literature

The research on women faculty with regard to work and family offers mixed, though mainly negative, messages about the relationship between family status and career outcomes. Some studies have found, for example, that there is a negative relationship between having children and research productivity (Hargens, McCann, & Reskin, 1978; Sonnert & Holton, 1995). Other researchers have found parental status unrelated to faculty research productivity (Cole & Zuckerman, 1987; Fox, 1995; Hamovich & Morgenstern, 1977; Zuckerman, 1987). Surprisingly, Bellas and Toutkoushian (1999) found that the number of dependents did not affect time devoted to research activities. They also found that faculty with children had higher levels of research productivity than those without.

The variability in this research can be attributed to the methods used. For example, some studies do not disaggregate the data by either institutional type or by faculty rank. Without this disaggregation, it is difficult to determine the effect of having children on productivity, especially because women with children are more likely to be found at lower faculty ranks and at institutions with higher teaching loads than both male and female faculty without children (Fox, 1991; Perna, 2001). Still other studies (e.g., Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999) did not disaggregate the data by gender and family status and therefore are unable to delineate the specific effects of children on women's research productivity.

Recognizing the limits of outcomes research in studying the complexity of work and family, other studies focus on how motherhood affects the academic career as a whole. This research tends to be more in-depth, is contextually based, and is focused on the totality of women's experience. In general, this research shows that significant tension exists for women faculty who combine work and family (Armenti, 2000; Grant, Kennelly, & Ward, 2000). For example, Armenti (2000), in a qualitative study of how women academics blend private and public lives, found that the structure of academic careers silences women's personal lives and creates taboos related to being a parent. Armenti also concluded that faculty members who were childless were worried about the effect children might have on their careers, a finding that has been reported elsewhere (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988). Similarly, Grant, Kennelly, and Ward (2000) found that both men and women faculty in scientific disciplines experience conflicts between career and family life. In contrast, Ropers-Huilman (2000) found that, even though women faculty were given mixed messages about having children, they sought coherence among the various aspects of their lives and many "spoke of the ways they envisioned their family and work experiences as complementing each other" (p. 26).

Finkel and Olswang (1996), in a survey of women faculty at a research university, found women perceiving that the time required by children poses a serious threat to tenure. Supporting this finding, they found that almost half the participants in our study were childless as a result of their careers and that 34% of those who delayed having children did so because of their careers. Sorcinelli and Near (1989) found that, for faculty, balancing the needs of professional responsibilities and family life was a significant source of stress.

In general, the literature suggests that while men and women as professionals, partners, and parents struggle with the task of achieving a balance between work and family life, the challenge for women is greater than for men, given the simple logistics of the biological clock, the tenure clock, the physical demands of pregnancy and childbirth, the gendered expectations of family obligations, and the ongoing disparity with which women take on the "second shift" through maintenance of children and home (Drago & Williams, 2000; Hochschild, 1975, 1989; Spalter-Roth & Merola, 2001; Varner, 2000; Williams, 2000a). While many women faculty opt not to face the challenge by deciding not to have children (Armenti, 2000; Finkel & Olswang, 1996), by securing non-tenure-track positions, or by working at less research-intensive institutions (Perna, 2001), those who do attempt to balance parenthood with faculty life at research universities find that academic work, although intrinsically satisfying, is also consuming and can have negative effects on personal life (Finkel & Olswang, 1996; Finkel, Olswang, & She, 1994; Sorcinelli & Near, 1989).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON WORK AND FAMILY

The theoretical framework for this study calls upon four theories that examine the combination of work and family. Three of these theories—role conflict, ideal worker, and male clockwork—view the combination of work and family as incompatible and negative. The fourth, an expansionist view of work and family expounds on the benefits of multiple roles. We review each of these theories briefly.

Barnett and Hyde (2001) outline traditional theories of gender, work, and family. Collectively, these traditional theories focus on gender differences—psychological, biological, and sociological—and the separation of work and family. These theories suggest distinct separations between work and family, with women more suited to home and child care and men more suited to work outside the home (Fowlkes, 1987). Most literature on work and family in academe is based on these traditional theories, which imply that work and family are mutually exclusive activities for women. More specifically, many researchers cite role conflict theory to explain the incompatibility of the roles of professor and mother (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Barnett

& Marshall, 1992; Crosby, 1991; Fowlkes, 1987). Role conflict theory "posits that individuals have limited time and energy, and adding extra roles and responsibilities necessarily creates tensions between competing demands and a sense of overload and inter-role conflicts" (Marshall & Barnett, 1993, p. 64). The theory explains that commitment to multiple roles can lead to incompatible and/or excessive role expectations, which in turn can lead to physical and mental disequilibria (Fowlkes, 1987).

In addition to role conflict theory, which would apply to women in all professions, the unique environment of academia and the finite nature of the tenure clock have produced specific theories about the relationship between academic work and parenthood. In the academic profession, the ideal worker is married to his or her work, can move at will, and works endlessly to meet the demands of tenure (Williams, 2000a, 2000b). Work structured in this manner leaves little time for childbearing or -rearing (Williams, 2000b). Such a theory might explain why pioneering academic women who gained access to the faculty ranks often did so after having made the decision to remain single and/or childless (Solomon, 1985). The professoriate presumes a singleness of purpose that parenthood does not always allow (Hochschild, 1975; Williams, 2000a). Although men are shouldering an increasing share of responsibility for family life, women still tend to be primary caregivers for young children and aging parents (Hochschild, 1989). A faculty member trying to establish her career in the face of conflicting time demands between workplace and home may not be able to be an ideal academic worker (Ward & Bensimon, 2002).

A related theoretical explanation of women and their challenges as mothers in academic careers is one that sees the tenure clock as based on a male model (Hochschild, 1975; Williams, 2000a). Grant, Kennelly, and Ward (2000) explain, "The clockwork of the [academic] career is distinctly male. That is, it is built upon men's normative paths and assumes freedom from competing responsibilities, such as family, that generally affect women more than men. In such a system, women with families are cumulatively disadvantaged" (p. 66). The idealized trajectory of a faculty career (i.e., from graduate school to assistant, associate, and full professor, in direct succession) may not describe the actual or expected career of an academic woman. For some women, the balance between work and family disrupts the standard timetable for the ideal career trajectory. In the interest of spouses, children, or personal commitments, women may extend or suspend their graduate school careers, wait to join the professoriate, or attempt to stop or slow the tenure clock (Ward & Bensimon, 2002). Such negotiations create tension for women faculty seeking to combine work and family, reinforcing the view that the two are mutually exclusive.

While role conflict, ideal worker, and male clockwork theories all paint a negative picture for women academics attempting to combine work and

family responsibilities, a fourth perspective offers a more positive view. Crosby (1991) and Barnett and Hyde (2001) encourage researchers to look at the positive psychological and material benefits of multiple roles by looking to expansionist views of the combination of work and family. The focus of expansionist theory is on the positive ways that role combinations can benefit women. An integrated and expanded view sees these roles as reinforcing and beneficial. These often over-looked benefits include added income, a broadened perspective on work and family, greater social support, and increased self-esteem (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Crosby, 1991). We use both the traditional and expansionist theories to examine how tenure-track women with young children interpret their ability to manage the various roles in their lives.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Questions

The primary research question that directs this inquiry is: How do women faculty with small children manage their parental and professional roles at research universities?

The secondary questions that guide the study are: What strategies do these women use to achieve personal and professional success in their multiple roles? What are the barriers they face and how have they responded to them? And what personal and professional supports enable or disallow them to reach their fullest potential in both roles?

Research Methods and Study Sample

The study focuses on research universities where faculty have to deal with the demands of research, publication, and external funding in addition to teaching and service. We selected the 29 women from nine different research universities to represent a range of disciplinary backgrounds, geographic locations, and level of prestige. We determined institutional prestige by limiting the sample to women at Research Extensive Universities according to the Carnegie Classification system. To capture the variability within the Research Extensive category, we looked at membership in the Association of American Universities (AAU) to identify top tier research universities. Thirteen of the 29 faculty were from AAU member institutions and the remaining sixteen were from other Research Extensive institutions. The purpose in this variation lies in understanding that not all institutions are the same and that factors like location and prestige can make the balance between work and family either more manageable or more precarious. While a representative sample is not a hallmark of qualitative research, given the sample size and variation we are confident about the reliability of our findings.

The study relies on formal interviews with women assistant professors currently making progress on the tenure track who have children between birth and age five and associate professors promoted within the past year who had children in the same age range. (See Table 1 for a description of the sample.) This sample configuration supports the ultimate goal of the study—to learn more about how faculty manage the dual roles of junior faculty life and being the mothers of young children. We identified women for inclusion in the study through campus networks (e.g., women faculty committees), campus daycare centers, provost offices, and personal contacts.

We used a semi-structured protocol to guide our interviews. Questions focused on the relationship between professional and family life, sources of support and tension, prospects for tenure, and strategies for maintaining balance. We identify the women in quotations with the initials indicated in the table.

ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

We transcribed the interviews, then analyzed and interpreted them using the constant comparative approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Our approach was inductive, and we identified common themes and emerging patterns using content analysis. With this technique "the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (Patton, 1980, p. 306). This method of analysis is appropriate since there is limited research about how women manage the tenure track and motherhood. Qualitative methods are also appropriate because the topic is rooted in women's experiences, which is best understood from the women themselves.

The data collection and analysis conformed to the highest standards of qualitative research using the common qualitative tools and techniques of triangulation, member check, thick description, and audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). We used two types of triangulation—investigator and theory triangulation (Denzin, 1978). Both of us collected data and conferred continuously about emerging themes. Our own positions as professors and mothers provided empathy and perspective in collecting and analyzing the data. Theory triangulation relies on the use of multiple perspectives to interpret data. In this study, we relied on research emerging from the fields of psychology, sociology, organizational behavior, and higher education to triangulate the data.

We conducted member checks by selecting study participants to review and analyze working themes to see if they resonated with individual experience, then incorporated this feedback into the final narrative (Janesick, 2000). Thick description was useful in keeping the analysis true to the data by quoting study participants' own accounts of their lives. We maintained an

TABLE 1

STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Area of Discipline	Initials[1]	Prestige of University[2]	Age of Faculty	Number of Children	Ages of Children
Humanities					
	MD	Research	38	1	19 months
	KSB	Research	34	1	2
	KS	Research	35	1	18 months
	AP	Research	36	2	4
	LB	Research	37	1	17 months
Social Sciences					
	CR	Research	35	1	4
	TH	Research	32	1	21 months
	SS	AAU member	33	1	10 months
	JC	Research	35	1	3
Science, English, Math, Medicine, Veterinary					
	BL	AAU member	39	2	7, 2
	SK	AAU member	41	1	8, 5
	MK	AAU member	36	1	2
	KH	Research	37	2	5, 3.5
	SL	Research	36	2	5, 1
	KM	Research	38	2	6, 2
	TRR	Research	37	2	7, 4
	CW	AAU member	37	2	10, 5
	SE	AAU member	39	1	3
	TO	AAU member	44	2	8, 4
Professional Fields					
	LK	AAU member	31	2	5.2, 2
	PWD	Research	44	1	2.75
	SC	AAU member	30	1	8 months
	SSP	Research	30	1	10 months
	PL	AAU member	38	2	3.5, 18 months
	KS	Research	39	1	4
	SW	AAU member	35	1	22
	CAW	AAU member	40	2	2, 4
	MGB	AAU member	43	1	2.5
	AH	Research	39	2	10, 5

[1]We refer to study participants by their initials in our "Findings." To protect respondents' identity, in some instances, we have changed their initials.

[2]Institutions are listed according to prestige as indicated by membership in the Association of American Universities. We identify campuses as either "AAU member" to indicate high prestige or "Research" to indicate a nonranked research university.

audit trail by keeping detailed records at all stages of the data collection and analysis.

SILVER LININGS AND DARK CLOUDS:
THE DUAL ROLES OF PROFESSOR AND MOTHER

From our analysis of the transcripts, we drew four major themes and multiple subthemes. We found commonalities among the women in the study regardless of institutional prestige, discipline, number of children, or time on the tenure track. Future researchers on work and family undoubtedly need to look at differences based on such variables, but the findings we report here focus on commonalities, since the experience of being an academic mother is one that seems quite uniform across research universities.

We label our findings "silver linings and dark clouds," for we were struck by how consistently our interviewees talked simultaneously about the positives and negatives of academic work from their perspectives as mothers of young children. Academic work is fraught with contradictions. For example, faculty work tends to be autonomous (a silver lining), but this work condition can lead to ambiguous expectations and isolation (dark clouds). We saw participants grappling with varied aspects of their roles as academics and as mothers. Our emphasis here is on individual perspectives of how an academic job lends itself (or not) to the combination of work and family.

We have organized the themes and subthemes that emerged from the data as four topics: (a) the joy of professional and personal roles, (b) the "greedy" nature of academic and family life, (c) the need to watch the clock, and (d) how having children puts work into perspective.

The Joy of Professional and Personal Roles

In spite of the many challenges all faculty face in the scramble for tenure, our interviewees reported that they found the academic profession quite satisfying. Faculty members in research universities are relatively free to pursue intellectual interests as both teachers and researchers without seeking permission or fearing reprisal. These cornerstones of academic freedom and flexibility mark the profession (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). The women in our study, despite whatever frustrations they feel about the struggles of balancing children and work coupled with the pressures of achieving tenure, find joy in both their professional and personal roles. The joy they expressed seems relatively absent from the prior academic literature on pretenure track faculty and represents a new finding worth highlighting.

The Joy of Academia. From a professional perspective, respondents talked about their love of scholarly exploration, the rewards of seeing students learn and grow, and the boost to their self-esteem that comes from having

work recognized by colleagues in the field. The joys of teaching were exemplified by the following quotation:

> Professionally, I find joy in making a good environment for students. I find joy in encouraging students to do their best and be their best, and I also find joy teaching students something that they see no use for and having the revelation of, "Well, maybe it's cool. Maybe I can see this." I like watching students learn. I'm as proud as I can be [to be] in the classroom and doing things that enhance the environment of our students. (TRR)

For others, joy comes from the research aspects of their job. One respondent explained: "I really like the work itself. It is really fun. I like writing. I love going out and giving talks at meetings" (MK). Another respondent liked

> . . . the joy of doing a research project and making meaning of people's words and trying to think about them in multiple ways and hoping that something that I have written has some value in terms of people re-thinking how public schools work or how they don't in the sense of equity issues. That's the most exciting part of what I do. (PWD)

During the discussion on scholarship, many respondents noted their gratification when others recognized their work. As one respondent stated, "I get joy from success—being recognized and for helping others . . . to be known for what I do and to be successful. I get a tremendous charge at publishing and being respected" (LB). Similarly, another respondent explained:

> I think if I have any self-esteem it comes from my job. . . . I've pursued this. I get so much pleasure out of it. At this conference that I just came from there are people who only know me in the professional capacity, so it's actually really nice because you do get a sense that it's a confirmation. I mean we're all really insecure in academia. You love the confirmation that you're doing something good and are appreciated and all of that. (KSB)

Interestingly, several respondents also noted that part of the joy of being an academic comes from being able to show your children that adults find pleasure in the work that they do. Several noted that. despite the pressure and stress of academia, being a faculty member actually makes them better mothers. A typical comment was:

> Why it is so important for me to have this career in addition to having children is I want [my child] to see that doing this [having a job] can be a good thing. It comes from my background and my parents not being happy with their work. The idea that somebody can be happy with her work is important to me. (LB)

The Joy of Motherhood. Clearly, the women in this study love being mothers and appreciate the time they spend with their children. They were almost glowing in their praise of their children and had a strong desire to spend time with their children and help them grow. Choosing a typical comment from our respondents is difficult, because each mother expressed her love for her children in such passionate terms. Nonetheless, the following quotations are representative of the joy of motherhood:

> Personally my sources of joy are my kids and watching them achieve and do things and find new things and say funny things. When my oldest was three he was big into infinity and I thought that was so cool, and we had discussions about what infinity was and the fact that whenever he started learning, he learns all these new things. I love watching him grow up and learn new things, learn about the world. (TRR)

> Joy is easy. Just seeing these little kids grow up and spending time with them. I love being a parent more than I thought I ever would. Having these two little beings totally in love with me and totally dependent on me, and totally trusting of me and sharing with me their way of seeing the world, which is so different, because I never really liked kids that much and I thought—well, I was worried maybe I wouldn't like it. Then you are stuck. But it has been great with both of them. (TO)

The "Greedy" Nature of Academic and Family Life

The structure of academic life, especially for those in their pretenure track years at research universities, has many characteristics that both encourage and inhibit women with small children. Among the most encouraging factors, for example, are the flexibility and autonomy afforded to faculty. Within limits, faculty members are free to work when they choose and to work on what they choose. Those limits, however, are important to heed. Indeed, while praising the flexibility of academic life and its helpfulness in raising a family, respondents also noted that such autonomy comes with a significant price: a workload that never ends, never having enough time in the day, the ambiguities of tenure expectations, and the expectations for working a "second shift" at home. We discuss these four themes below.

Flexibility and Autonomy. The academic literature is almost completely devoid of positive sentiments about the life of pretenure faculty members. Yet the women in our study were quick to identify the flexibility and autonomy offered to tenure-track faculty members as helpful in allowing them to achieve some sort of balance between work and family. The freedom and flexibility of academic life, according to respondents, allows them to set their own schedules and spend time with their children. This is not to suggest that the women in the study did not put in long hours on their academic

work. Instead, they recognized they had flexibility in their schedules and how they organized their days:

> The schedule I have is really a great schedule for a mother, a working mother, because I only teach my two classes; and the way our department works, you do not have to be on campus unless you are teaching your classes or unless you have a meeting that you must attend. They expect that if you are not on campus that you are writing or doing research or you are doing a presentation of some sort. It is really a great schedule for me because I can pick my daughter up earlier than a lot of mothers can—not all days but a lot of days. (SL)

Several respondents noted that such flexibility attracted them to the profession in the first place. One respondent, for example, explained: "My dad had been a college professor so I knew that the lifestyle was something that I thought would work with having kids. My dad was a very involved parent. He could be there when we needed him and he worked at home a lot" (AMH). Another respondent had observed how her doctoral advisor used the flexibility of the profession to his advantage as a parent and professor. Others talked about work schedules that could fit around their family. Respondents talked about working when they felt creative, which for one respondent meant at 4:00 in the morning and "juggling to fit it all in" (MD).

In addition to the appeals of a flexible schedule, respondents also commented on the relative autonomy of faculty life, especially the freedom to pursue topics of interest and the fact that faculty work is not subject to the strictures of reporting to a boss. One respondent's comment is typical: "Really there is an awful lot of freedom. I could be doing what I like. It's true, a huge amount of independence" (SL).

Along with flexibility and autonomy, however, comes a simultaneous understanding about the responsibilities and pressures of doing the work necessary to get tenure, especially at a research university. Freedom and responsibility go hand in hand. The following quotations are examples of respondents' understandings of the "cost" of freedom, coupled with their appreciation of it:

> It's a real privilege that higher education has for all of us, in general. No matter what you choose to do with your time as parents, you can work at night after the children go to bed, at the computer, or like I do on the weekends. It's a privilege. . . . [But] it's not a privilege to work the long hours that we do and to have the stress that we do, so it's push-pull. (PWD)

> There's a lot about it I like. Flexibility is one of the very important things that you get in academia: flexibility of when you work, flexibility of what you're working on—and it's good for a family. But it's only good if you're going to get tenure and you feel like you're achieving what you want to achieve. (SSP)

Academic work never ends. Respondents were quick to acknowledge that beyond freedom and flexibility lie significant and palpable pressures to achieve tenure and to be successful in their work life. Consistent with findings of other research on junior faculty (e.g., Boice, 1992; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996), the women in this study repeatedly asserted that academic work literally never ends and that there is considerable pressure to be productive. This is a reality for many of the women in the study, a reality that causes a significant amount of stress. As one respondent explained, "It is not like you have an 8 hour shift and, when you finish your shift, you are done. That's not the way it is done" (KM).

There are always articles to read, papers to grade, syllabi to update, and proposals to write. Work never ends in terms of quantity. Its portability is an advantage, making work conditions flexible, but it also means that the expectations of "finishing" work, whether in or out of the office, are high.

In discussing workload, many respondents discussed the flexibility as an illusion that hampers women from completing all the tasks necessary to achieve tenure. For example, one respondent stated:

> You have to put the effort in and be really competitive or you are not going to make it. Up front, in the first years, it is really important. You obviously have to spend time with your kids, but I also think you cannot be successful if you constantly take the position that I have to go to every school function, because sometimes you can't. You have to come to some compromise that you can live with where you spend time with your kids and they know that you love them and they like doing things with you. It is also very important that at very early ages to make it [this compromise] where your kids are very adaptable. (SK)

Never Enough Time. Paired with having a workload that never ends is feeling that there is just is not enough time to accomplish all of one's tasks. Repeatedly, respondents noted that they felt that time was a precious and rare commodity. As one woman explained, "It just doesn't feel like there's enough hours in the day. Part of that's my own personal time management inabilities, but part of it is because there are so many things that I would want to do and it all takes so much time" (JC). Another stated:

> The biggest thing for me is that I feel like I don't have time. I used to work so many more hours and I just don't have those hours any more. And I'm constantly struggling— . . . I mean, during those hours I feel I have so much to do. But I don't get the time to stop and think and do creative research, I'm just kind of up-keeping all the time." (SSP)

Part of not having enough time in the day is losing the personal maintenance activities that keep people sane. While some of the respondents mentioned that they personally felt shortchanged by the stresses of motherhood

and academia, many seemed to express guilt and some hesitancy in stating their personal needs. The longing for personal time—to exercise or just to think—was an important component missing from the lives of many of these women. Related to a lack of time was the guilt that these women felt about spending too little time with their children and too little time on their academic work, as succinctly captured in the following comment: "Ever since I had my son, I've felt like when I'm with him I should be working, when I'm not with him [working], I should be with him" (SSP).

Ambiguity of Tenure Expectations. Our interviewees perceived the ambiguity of expectations for tenure as one of the most significant prices paid for the freedom and flexibility of academic work. They were not sure how much they needed to accomplish or what process, exactly, they needed to go through in achieving tenure. This ambiguity created significant stress among the women in the study. One respondent referred to the tenure process as a "black-hooded affair in the forest where you don't even know who is on the committee" (SK), another described tenure as "an albatross around my neck" (PWD), and a third described the process as "smoke and mirrors" (SL). These colorful metaphors captured their negative views about the tenure process.

The ambiguity of tenure expectations and the stress it produces in tenure-track faculty is not unique to women with children (Boice, 1992; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). However, concern about gaps in one's academic record due to taking time off to have a child is a distinctive concern for academic women. A typical comment follows:

> You hear a lot on different people's views on what it takes to get tenure around here, and what they say is there can be no gaps. If that is the case, I already have a gap [because of having a child], and I am doomed. On the other hand, if people are actually more reasonable than they are reported to be, this [research] will escalate into a big enough project by the time my decision will come up in four years. . . . You can't dwell on it every day. (MK)

Academic women, unlike women in most other fields, must either avoid or explain places in their dossier where they have not produced at regular intervals. The trajectory of an academic career puts the greatest amount of pressure on a faculty member at the beginning of her career, and junior faculty feel constant "publish or perish" pressure.

Working the Second Shift. For academic mothers, one of the most time-consuming aspects of their lives and a source of significant personal and marital stress is the fact that many feel as though they work a second shift at home. While progress has been made in the realm of equity of labor for childcare and housework, the bulk of this work is still done by women, even when both spouses have careers (Hochschild, 1989). Our respondents con-

tinued to shoulder the primary responsibility for anticipating the needs of their children, a task which can be psychologically and physically consuming.

A majority of the women in this study were primarily responsible for taking care of the children and chores at home. Even though most of the women used daycare in some form or another, they usually felt that they, not their husbands, were expected to get the children ready in the morning, take them to daycare, pick them up, feed them, play with them, and put them to bed. One respondent summed up her frustration well: "I bear the bulk of the parenting role. I do everything in the morning and when it is 10 a.m. I feel I have already lived a day before I have even gone to work" (MGB). Another respondent stated that her husband works longer hours than she does, so the division of childcare responsibilities was "80% me and 20% him, and the 20% would be when I am traveling" (BL). These quotations represent the norm for the women in our study. While two or three of the women in the study described their husbands as "enlightened," in that they did an equitable share as father and partner, the majority had husbands who were personally and professionally "supportive" but had limited involvement in the second shift.

The Need to Watch the Clock

The women in this study carefully considered the timing of having children. Some had their children in graduate school, others while doing postdoctoral work, while others waited until they were in a tenure-track position. When to have a child was influenced strongly by the spoken and inferred advice of others. For many, the decision of whether and when to have children was shaped by their graduate school experiences and by their advisors' expectations of them. As one respondent explained, "I was never told that [not to have a baby] personally, but we all understood that our advisor didn't put a high value on family" (TR). Others looked at the lives of their faculty advisors and concluded, "There is no way I want that life." These findings substantiate what Rice, Sorcinelli, and Austin (2000) and Golde and Dore (2001) found about graduate students' hesitation to seek faculty positions, given their perceptions about the all-consuming nature of faculty life.

Concern about tenure combined with age was a significant factor for these women in deciding when to have a child. A typical comment, for example, came from a respondent who stated: "I was turning 30 and I wasn't going to be one of these women who waits for tenure and then faces infertility. . . . There wasn't really going to be a better time" (SHL). Another explained, "I kept putting it off until I felt like I couldn't put it off any longer because I am going to be too old to have kids" (TO). Others explained that they faced subtle and overt encouragement to wait to have children until they had earned tenure. As one woman explained:

> I can't tell you how many people I have known who got their notice of tenure and threw away their birth control pills. I saw that and I didn't want to do that. . . . If you're a woman in academia you're expected to have no kids, although you kind of are entitled to one. But . . . if you have it before tenure, that's kind of pushing the envelope. (MD)

Similarly, most respondents at least considered timing childbirth to coincide with summer breaks, although many found such precise timing somewhat beyond their control. (See Carmen Armenti's article, "May Babies and Posttenure Babies," this issue.) One respondent who gave birth in June explained, "I was very lucky with the timing. . . . What if you have a child in the middle of the semester? What do you do in that case?" (LB). In terms of timing, another faculty member explained, "I've heard stories of department chairs who will sort of call in all the young women [in the department] and say, 'Now if you're thinking of getting pregnant, try to time it so that it doesn't cut into the semester'" (KSB). When we asked what advice they would offer others, several respondents forthrightly said that there really is no good time, so the woman should just do it when she feels comfortable. One respondent stated: "I really am suspicious of the argument of 'Now is not a good time.' . . . It will never be a good time in terms of society's understanding of what women are trying to do" (KSB).

Having Children Puts Work into Perspective

Having a child and a career adds a perspective to life that, for most respondents, was absent prior to having a child. Academic work is consuming by its nature. Most of the women in the study said they felt that their time and energy was consumed by their responsibilities as professors and mothers. A child changed the way work got done and also changed their perspective about the relative importance of work in the life's "big picture."

One of the most common sentiments expressed by study respondents was that having a child altered their priorities. For many of our interviewees, their children were the number one priority. Repeatedly, study participants asserted that, regardless of the consequences to their career, their children came first. They frequently expressed these ideas as advice to graduate students or others who might follow in their professional footsteps. One respondent suggested, "A family is going to be the most important thing in your life and you can't let concerns about what others think determine that. I would say, 'If you want to have a child, even if it means you are going to lose a particular career option, if that's what you want, go for it'" (KS). Others phrased the issue personally:

> No matter what, [my child] has to come first. And, you know, sometimes I have to make some hard decisions, and I manage it. . . . I think that my career

is important, but my role as a mother comes first. Ultimately, that's what matters. (MD)

Having a Child Makes You More Efficient. Interestingly, many respondents in this study claimed that having children made them more efficient and organized—a silver lining. This finding supports Bellas and Toutkoushian's (1999) more quantitative study that having children does not contribute to a lack of research productivity. According to one respondent, "Clearly having [my child] was a major change in my lifestyle and how I dealt with things, and made my hours change significantly, for the good and bad. The good was I had to become much more efficient; the other side of it is that I live within my hours at work" (TH). In offering advice to women on the tenure track who are contemplating motherhood, one respondent spoke to the efficiency issue: "First, I would say just back up and say, 'It can be done,'—if it is important enough for you and you prioritize your time well enough. You have to be good at utilizing your time effectively. It can be done [but] it's not going to be a nice steady road" (KM).

Similarly, nearly everyone described being "workaholics" before having children, a pattern that they had to abandon. One woman explained that she now works forty hours a week because that is when she has childcare. She continues, "Compared to the number [of hours] I used to work, forty is nothing. You don't realize how much you were working until you are restricted" (SSP). In fact, respondents typically confessed that, before having children, they used to work "constantly," a phenomenon familiar to most academics in research universities (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). One respondent put it this way, "I think if we [faculty] didn't have kids we would be working all the time and we would be really burned out" (MK).

For some respondents, having children changed when they got their work accomplished. As one respondent explained:

> In the old days before [my child's birth], I tended to procrastinate and just kind of not be good about sitting down regularly. I'd sort of telescope all my writing into longer periods here and there, as opposed to a half an hour when I could grab it. Now, it's two hours when [my child] is napping—that kind of thing. You have to reshuffle your whole way of doing work. Having a child is great in many ways for your research, even though you assume it's bad. It makes you much more businesslike about when you're going to do it. (KSB)

The Art of "Satisficing." A common coping mechanism among the women we interviewed was recognizing that they could not fulfill all of the responsibilities and expectations as well as they might if there were fewer roles to play. "Satisficing," an economic term used to describe decisions that are "good enough," though not necessarily optimal (Simon, 1981, p. 35), typifies how women in the study got their work done, given the limitations of time, energy, and

resources. This phenomenon is not necessarily unique to women faculty with children; all junior faculty, and especially those on the tenure track at research universities, are constantly faced with decisions over quality versus quantity in teaching and research (Boice, 1992; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). The findings from this study suggest, however, that these pressures are compounded for junior women faculty with children and that satisficing may be more prevalent for this group.

Accompanying the concept of satisficing was acceptance of not being able to be the best all the time but being content with being "good enough." This attitude presented a particular challenge for our interviewees, given their status as graduates of top tier programs and their current positions at research universities, and in many instances, in top programs. Examples of satisficing abound from the interviews. In most cases, the women expressed some discomfort with not being the best, as they had been high achievers up to this point in their lives. Nonetheless, they also recognized that some things are worth sacrificing for others.

Not everyone compromised on the same things. For example, some compromised on the kinds of research projects they were going to accomplish. One faculty member explained:

> I'm striking a balance but I'm realizing I have to adapt my visions of how I'll work. . . . My next big project was supposed to be—and I hope it still will be [someday]—a book on a topic that would require a lot of travel to archives in Europe and really hard, difficult research topics, just very complicated topics. I've kind of shelved that for the time being. Because I feel like, with a small child, it's not the kind of topic I can pursue without travel and a lot of intensive just sitting in the library. I need a project where I can shut myself up after [my child] has gone to bed and work a few hours every night, but not have to rush out to libraries all over the place. So I've kind of come up with a different book topic for my next book. So maybe I won't contribute the greatest in the way that I wanted to. . . . But I think I'm willing to make that sacrifice. (KSB)

Other women described compromising on the types of venues in which they were going to publish, the overall level of scholarship they were going to produce, and ultimately the level of "fame and fortune" that they were going to achieve. For example, one woman stated, "I would like my son to be my highest priority. . . . I try really hard to keep it balanced, and that's why I made this decision to crank out an average amount of research and not really excel" (AP). Another stated, "I think I do a good job, though I am not going the extra [mile] to publish tons of papers. I am not going to be a star in the field because I do not have the time" (KM).

Others recommended satisficing when it comes to teaching and service responsibilities so that they would have time to produce high levels of re-

search. For example, one woman explained that when it comes to service "you can't please everybody" and that sometimes "enough is just enough" (MGB). Another stated, "I think it is very easy as a young assistant professor to want to spend a lot. . . of time on the teaching aspect of the job. But the research is so important for tenure and raises and promotion. . . . I love to talk to students but you really have to prioritize" (KH).

I Don't Need This Job. Perhaps the most extreme manifestation of putting work into perspective is these women's recognition of their options about other work. Many of the women in this study contemplated leaving academe or leaving the research university environment to pursue other professional pursuits, a finding substantiated in other research on women faculty (Perna, 2001). We were surprised at the number of interviewees who seemed quite willing to pursue other outlets for their talents. Looking at their lives and what they believed they would have to give up to gain tenure at a research university, they decided that they might not be willing to make the sacrifice, and most seemed willing to let the tenure process make the decision for them. For example, one woman stated:

> I want to do a good job at work; but for whatever reason, if it was decided that I shouldn't get tenure or that I didn't have the qualifications, then I would be fine with that and I would go on my way and find work part time in the private sector. I enjoy doing it [working as a professor] and I wouldn't, at this point, . . . say, "Okay, tomorrow I am going to leave." But if it happened that way, that would be fine with me. I feel more comfortable knowing that—for whatever reason—I didn't meet my job expectations [rather] than to feel like I missed the opportunity to have the family I wanted to. I think that's probably my biggest coping mechanism—knowing that it is not the end for me and there are other options. (KM)

In contrast, several other women stated that they weren't even sure that faculty life at a research university was what they wanted to do and that they were not necessarily willing to put in the time and effort necessary to achieve tenure. A typical quotation on this point was:

> It depends on how bad I want it, and I am not sure how bad I want it— because [of] the sacrifice to get tenure. I don't feel that right now. I am committed to teaching, but I am not sure if I am committed to staying in the academy. And, if I am, I am not necessarily sure I am committed to staying in the research university. I just don't have a very strong commitment because it really depends on, once again, how I can be accommodated, how my personal life can be accommodated. (SL)

Many of the women in the study recognized that being at a research university, and especially its prestige, plays a role in the likelihood of achieving tenure and being successful in their current jobs. Some respondents at less

selective research universities stated that they were glad they were not at the most elite institutions because those institutions created levels of pressure that would be difficult to manage combined with motherhood. For example, one woman explained that her "less selective" school was ideal because "it's the right amount of pressure on all aspects of being in academia. From the point of view of being a mother and being a professor—it's perfect." She continued:

> The trick seems to be getting not the greatest job in the world at Princeton, Harvard, Yale, but kind of a level that is manageable. . . . I think the key would be being at an institution like the one I'm at, that doesn't put such tremendous pressure on women. Maybe the women who are making the greatest sacrifices are at the highest-level institutions. (KSB)

Women who had chosen selective research institutions expressed reservations about their decision. For example, one stated, "[If I did it over] I might look at [this university] differently. I might look at [it] and look at the expectations [here] and think I really shouldn't go to such a high profile place. It would have been easier at a place with less expectations" (TO). In considering other career options, many of the women in our study suggested finding academic work at places other than research universities. Perna (2001) also found that many capable women are opting to pursue academic careers at less selective institutions so that the task of balancing work and family life becomes more reasonable. This finding points to the need for research universities who want to recruit and retain women to recognize the challenges women faculty with children face.

WORK, FAMILY, AND FACULTY LIFE:
ANALYSIS FROM THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The purpose of this study was to see how women faculty members in research universities manage the complexity of work and family. Many of our findings are consistent with what we already know about life on the tenure track for junior faculty in general—that the tenure track is a stressful time, academic work never ends, and institutional expectations for tenure can be unclear (Boice, 1992; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Looking at the results from both traditional and expansionist perspectives reinforces our findings of silver linings and dark clouds. The clouds come from the difficulties and tensions inherent in balancing dual roles. The silver lining is that achieving in both roles is possible and that having a baby can be a positive factor for women on the tenure track.

Traditional perspectives on the findings in this study show that conflicts exist between the dual roles of mother and professor. In particular, the data show that stress and guilt are likely outcomes for academic mothers given

the short supply of time in any given day, the limited time on the tenure clock, and the unending expectations of work and family. Consistent with the concept of the ideal worker, these findings are not surprising given the consuming nature of academic careers and of motherhood. Like Grant, Kennelly and Ward (2000), we conclude that both family and academia are "greedy" and all consuming. Similarly, the women in this study experienced the expectation that they ought to be married to their career (Williams, 2000a). Almost to a person, they admitting working "all the time" before having children. They also unanimously confirmed their inability to maintain pre-baby work habits, which created feelings of stress. The conflict was most acute just after a baby was born, as these women and their colleagues were operating under old assumptions (i.e., working all the time) in the face of new realities (i.e., having a baby who needed constant care). Further, the male clock theory helps explain why the women in this study were so concerned about the timing of their children. At a minimum, the tenure clock as currently devised necessitates that women consider the implications of when they have their children and heed the gaps in productivity that childrearing can produce.

Our findings are also informed by more expansionist theories that move beyond the binary and oppositional view that work and family roles are in constant conflict. An expansionist view of work and family supports the notion that assuming multiple roles is beneficial (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). Crosby's (1991) concept of role integration is particularly apt in describing how the women in this study conduct their careers with a realistic perspective about what is possible to achieve in any given day. The general and most important finding of our research is the unanticipated benefits of multiple roles for junior women faculty with children.

The findings suggest that these benefits manifest themselves for academic women in two ways: buffering and an expanded frame of reference. Buffering is a moderating process which suggests that the "negative effects of stress or failure in one role can be buffered by successes and satisfactions in another role" (Barnett & Hyde, 2002, p. 786). The women in our study used buffering to provide respite, perspective, and self-esteem (Crosby, 1991). Women who have children buffer themselves from the stress and the consuming nature of the academic career because they simply have to. As Crosby (1991) notes, when stress accumulates in one sphere, respondents were able to buffer themselves by focusing on the other sphere. Movement back and forth between spheres gave the women in the study a sense of "time out" which provided temporary respite from the stress and tension of one sphere. As professional women, the academic accomplishments of these women buffered them from consuming stresses at home. They repeatedly mentioned the gratification of getting published and being recognized in their fields; these achievements put their children's temper tantrums and household

chores into perspective. In turn, the presence of a child buffered women from the harsh realities at work. This was particularly clear for the three women in this study who were denied tenure at earlier points in their careers. Having a child immediately put this check to their careers in perspective and protected their self-esteem. As one of these women said, "If I postponed having kids I wouldn't have tenure *or* kids. At least this way I have kids and I found another [tenure track] job" (AMH).

Being engaged in multiple roles provided a broader frame of reference as "multiple-role holders have many more opportunities to get perspective on their ups and downs that do single-role holders" (Barnett & Hyde, 2001, 788). The women in this study used their multiple roles to keep the rigors of the tenure track, the ambiguity of tenure expectations, and the consuming nature of academic work in perspective. When they were unable to produce at high levels or when needing to "satisfice," their child provided perspective and justification for doing so. A broader frame of reference also helped women in the study transcend fear of failure about tenure decisions. In the interviews, we were struck with the equanimity with which women spoke about tenure and the possibility of not achieving it. They had a broad perspective about the options of pursuing other careers or finding academic work at other institutions. Study participants hold terminal degrees from top-tier research institutions, thus leaving them equipped to pursue other options if they fail to earn tenure in their current positions.

Still, the findings made it clear that the balance between work and family is very delicate. When either work or home life is threatened or added to (e.g., a child is sick, parents are ailing, a paper is due) disequilibria, stress, and nonproductivity are likely. The quality of the faculty role is crucial in enabling faculty to function at optimum levels in all their roles (Crosby, 1991). If a faculty member is in an untenable work situation, it is harder to reap the benefits of integrated roles. Faculty role quality hinges on their opportunity to vie for tenure in ways that allow them to function fully as an academic worker and also as a mother. When the university calls upon faculty to make an unhealthy commitment to their career within the confines of a tenure clock that is finite, ambiguous, myopic, and all consuming, role quality diminishes.

In light of the positive aspects of multiple roles when role quality is present, higher education needs to be cognizant of policies that can make the work situation more positive. As such, campuses need to continue to examine the existence and use of parental leave policies for women and men and explore options for tenure-clock modifications to accommodate gaps associated with childbirth. Our policy recommendations, based on these findings, are not about eliminating tenure. Rather, we call for institutions to look at aspects of the tenure track that can make it appear insurmountable for new or prospective faculty. For women faculty with children in

particular, administrators need to address the limitations of the tenure clock. Such modifications as part-time options, clock stops, and tenure-track extensions would help women faculty negotiate the rigors of tenure and the challenges of motherhood in ways that are integrated instead of in conflict.

As we move into the future, faculty and administrators need to consider research and policy about the integration of work and family. In the past, higher education considered child rearing to be a women's problem, and a private one at that. Today, as the demographics of the faculty change and the concerns about balancing work and family are becoming more public, it is incumbent upon academic institutions to rethink their policies. Understanding the experiences of women faculty with small children and responding proactively to their needs will provide institutions with necessary returns on the investment that these institutions make in their faculties. It will also encourage more high-quality individuals to consider academic careers.

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