

1984

The President's Spouse : Volunteer or Volunteered

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THE
PRESIDENT'S
SPOUSE



VOLUNTEER
OR
VOLUNTEERED

Joan E. Clodius — Diane Skomars Magrath
Editors

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ASSOCIATION OF STATE UNIVERSITIES
AND LAND-GRANT COLLEGES
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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 84-60756.

LB 2341
.P66
1984



This book has been written for spouses and by spouses representing our great public universities. The institutions they represent are unique in higher education throughout the world. Each writer has generously contributed and shared her limited time to this endeavor. Each writer has exemplified her personal commitment to the "public good" for the institutions they represent. May their endeavor and sharing be insightful and helpful to those who succeed them.

—THE EDITORS

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FOREWORD



On February 17, 1981 the Executive Committee of the Senate of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges approved the establishment of a standing Committee of Presidents/Chancellors Spouses to begin functioning immediately as a formally recognized part of the Association's organization and structure. It is possible to underestimate the importance of this event, but to do so would be a grave mistake for the many reasons that you will find in these pages.

We also believe this event is a significant first in that the chief executives and other administrative officers who make up this Association have served notice that they consider the program areas represented by spouses to be highly important in the executive branch of these research-intensive public universities that comprise our membership.

The publications of the Association include books, monographs, articles, and brochures representing the interests and efforts of Divisions, Councils, Commissions, and Committees. It is a pleasure to introduce the present volume in that tradition—representing, as it does, some of the subject matter and issues considered by the Committee on Presidents/Chancellor's Spouses. We hope it will find a large audience, both within the academic community and outside wherever the spouse in an official role is taken for granted, for there is much written here that deserves to be shared.

ROBERT L. CLODIUS
President
The National Association of
State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

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CHAPTER I



WHAT THE
SURVEY REVEALED



Diane Skomars Magrath, University of Minnesota, has two partnerships: one with President C. Peter Magrath, in which he pays her a salary (from his personal income) for University public relations and entertaining functions; her other partnership is with Jane Hanger Seeley, with whom she shares a position as Executive Director of the Minneapolis Council of Camp Fire, Inc. She is an avid photographer, and her exhibition, "Travels With the President," opened at the Minnesota Governor's Residence and toured the state in 1983. The Magraths married in 1978 when Diane was the University's Student Activities Center Director, and together they have two daughters, Mo and Valerie.



Dr. Roger Harrold is currently the Associate Director of the Student Organization Development Center and Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota. Harrold has conducted extensive survey research in the areas of student leisure interests, college unions, intercollegiate athletics, and organizational needs. His primary contribution to this book occurred through the design, administration, and data analysis of the Survey of Spouses.

INTRODUCTION



by Diane Skomars Magrath and Roger Harrold
University of Minnesota

The time seemed right. It was 1983 and higher education in the United States had been well served by the spouses of campus presidents and chancellors. (Hereafter, the term “president” will stand for both “president and chancellor” and the spouse will be referred to as female since, by and large, she is.) Weathering the years of campus protest, political change, the women’s movement, and budget crises, the married partners of campus presidents had delivered critical consultation to their husbands, created homes and family environments despite the pressures and demands of public life, volunteered countless hours for their institution and in their community, and often pursued professional goals, career choices, or outside work. At times, the personal price was high. Who are they? How have they managed their multiple roles and remained true to themselves? What does the future hold for these spouses? The time indeed seemed right to explore these and other questions related to the subject of the contributions and the choices of the partners to presidents at institutions of higher learning.

Background

The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) created the Committee of Presidents’ and Chancellors’ Spouses in 1981 in a step that typifies the progressiveness of the organization. This higher education association, a coalition of 144 state universities and land-grant colleges, recognized that the issues and problems involving presidential spouses comprise a story in itself—a story of the job and role of the relationships that must be managed, of the spouse as a person, and of future trends for the spouses of university chief executives that seem to be emerging. To provide contemporary insights into these matters, the University of Minnesota agreed to conduct a survey of the spouses of presidents and chancellors of NASULGC member institutions.

Our review of the literature revealed quality but not quantity. Although several articles and a few books addressed the issues of presidential partners, we

chose to focus on books written by spouses themselves. Muriel Beadle, Marguerite Walker Corbally, and Jean Alexander Kemeny each wrote a significant book on the subject of the life of the president's spouse. We are indebted to Muriel Beadle for her book, *Where Has All The Ivy Gone?*, for its insightful view of the complexities of institutional governance as well as for the candid review of her experiences at the University of Chicago as "first lady" during the 1960's. Her well written memoir, which included her own philosophy of the presidency and spouse partnership, suggested a supportive attitude that many spouses have held dear:

"A university presidency can similarly absorb all one's time and energies, and it is an advantage if both husband and wife are equally committed to it. George and I never agreed absolutely on the degree to which we should practice nose-to-the-grindstone versus self-indulgent activity, but our attitudes were similar enough, praise be, so that we never wasted our energies arguing about how much of our time the University should command. . ." (Beadle, 1972 pp. 62-63)

In 1977, Marguerite Walker Corbally of the University of Illinois wrote a landmark book, *The Partners*. For the first time, a knowledgeable practitioner employed the methodology of social science to explore the dilemmas involved in being the president's partner. In her treatise, "Betty" Corbally succeeded in identifying the simultaneous roles, the various job functions, the price one pays for the "perks" and the myriad of relationships the spouse has with a diverse constituency. In *The Partners* she commented on the relationship of the couple who form the partnership:

"In many cases husband and wife are forced into a working relationship unlike any they have experienced before. Even if they enjoy working together, they may find the isolation and the intensity of their relationship emotionally exhausting. Though each may be busy with separate activities and each is independent and resourceful, the couple are apt to find themselves totally dependent on each other for human contact and communication they used to find with friends, relatives, and colleagues. "When a couple have a strong commitment to each other and to the husband's work, their relationship will still be subject to stress from the demands of his job. . ." (Corbally, 1977 pp. 16-17)

The editors of *The President's Spouse* acknowledge the use of Betty Corbally's survey as a source of inspiration and guidance in formulating their survey; they appreciate her generosity, consultation, and support of their project.

It's Different at Dartmouth, written by Jean Alexander Kemeny in 1979, is a highly entertaining book that graphically describes the pressures and demands of the role of the president's spouse. The Dartmouth memoir is especially appealing to presidential couples because it captured the truth of Jean

Kemeny's situation in a humorous vein. And humor, after all, is one of the safety valves for people in the job of the president and partner. Here are some of Kemeny's comments on the partnership:

"The 'support role' has been a tradition. Wives of public figures, wives of college presidents, have been expected to be an uncrumbling, uncomplaining column of strength. But the 'support role' has expanded into one of increasing personal responsibility, and love has become a many-pillared thing."

"As life has become more complex, so has the job of the university president. He has to deal with an almost infinite number of problems that didn't exist a generation ago. And each year the problems multiply." (Kemeny, 1977 pp. 30-31)

As good as the Beadle, Corbally, and Kemeny books were, there were but three. The motivation for *The President's Spouse* was, therefore, rooted in the fact that the amount of writing on the subject was limited, and that an important earlier survey (the 1977 Corbally study) needed updating. In addition, it was anticipated that, since spouses were asked to identify and articulate their needs, the book would help people who work with and need to understand spouses. This study, therefore could lead to a greater awareness which could in turn lead to improved working relationships among the spouse, president, board members, and other constituents. Beyond that, NASULGC recognized that, as a group, campus spouses hold unique and privileged positions of influence that can have a direct bearing on the campuses and the communities they serve.

The Chapters and Authors

This book has five chapters with a total of 13 essays and an epilogue. The first chapter and essay is this review of the survey. The second chapter is devoted to "Job Functions and the Role of the Spouse" focusing on an overview of these spouse functions and roles. There have been, and currently are, so few such spouses to presidents relative to the total population that it is no wonder that the role of the spouse is by and large unknown, ignored, or misunderstood.

Karen O'Neil of the University of Wisconsin System answers the question "What is it like to be the wife of a university president?" which, as one spouse has put it, "is a little like being a fiddler on a roof." Adele McComas, Mississippi State University, explores the partnership with the president and how it works for some. As the survey reveals, the marriage itself seems to be at the core of the success of the partnership. We chose to include the partnership with the president in this chapter because it relates directly to what the spouse accepts and performs in her role.

The idea to single out one very specific role, that of fund raiser, came from a program of the Spouses' Committee of NASULGC by Deborah Toll, University of Maryland, the author of another commentary. Spouses have often been reticent about linking the work they do in entertaining and public relations to the reality of financial donations and yet, as Deborah Toll describes it, a link exists.

Chapter Three examines the "Critical Relationships of the Spouse," and in her essay Vera Olson, University of Missouri, analyzes the delicate relationship between the president's spouse and the governing board. One of her compelling assertions is that volunteerism can be an important basis for understanding between the spouse and the board members because both give so freely of their time to the institution. In addition, since spouses and board members have considerable contact with each other, the spouse can contribute additional understanding to the President's relationship with the board.

Another delicate situation exists between system and single campus heads and their respective spouses. Judy Ikenberry of the University of Illinois carefully explores the myth and the reality of these relationships and offers sound advice. Community relationships are explored by Beatrice Chaikind Ross Winkler. How Bea built a sense of community involvement with her campus, the University of Cincinnati, is an inspiration to all spouses. Finally, but perhaps most critical of all, are the family considerations of the spouse. "Our main concern is for our children. We feel they might have lost out somehow, living in a 'fish bowl,'" one survey respondent told us. Polly Davis, of the Oregon State System of Higher Education, considers the implications of the presidency of the entire family and gives the reader humorous insights into the Davis family.

The fourth chapter is "Myself as the Spouse of the President/Chancellor." Ina Fitzhenry-Coor of the University of Vermont focuses on the importance of self-identity of spouses in her essay. This important chapter grew out of her presentation at a Committee of Spouses' session at a NASULGC annual meeting and our growing interest in who we are as people and how we survive in these jobs.

The concept of duo careers is the subject examined by Carolyn DiBiaggio of the University of Connecticut. One of the founders of the NASULGC Spouses Committee, Carolyn herself has held two positions at her university—one as the partner to President John DiBiaggio, and one as a Specialist II in Extended and Continuing Education Program Development, specializing in women and government. In another essay in this chapter, Kim Burse of Kentucky State University describes her role as partner to her husband while maintaining a commuting, full-time position in her own field. She shares with the reader

what the first year was like on her campus. Veteran spouses who have gotten “used to things” can easily forget the initial agonies and ecstasies of the role.

Finally, the topic of remuneration for spouses completes this chapter as Sue Young, UCLA, explores one of the hottest topics of debate among partners of presidents. Do we believe that reward, respect, and credibility are fulfilled through the intrinsic rewards of the partnership or should they also be fulfilled through remuneration?

“The Years Ahead,” the final chapter of *The President’s Spouse*, is written by Joan E. Clodius, co-editor of this book and partner to the President of NASULGC, Robert Clodius. She considers what the future holds by characterizing three different concepts of the spouse and she poses what the dilemmas and values are for each. Joan makes a strong case for role definition and clarification—even job descriptions for the spouse. “The Last Word” offers a humorous commentary by Chancellor William E. Davis, the spouse of Author Polly Davis.

These 13 essayists tell the story of *The President’s Spouse*. The authors are as different from one another as are the presidents from each other. They hold in common an incredible dedication to their college or university, to their mate and family, and to the belief that spouses need clarity of expectations, support, and choices to survive on campus. The decision to write a book collectively, using a survey to generate contemporary perspectives of the spouse for the writing effort, was an attempt to suggest that no single point of view can capture the diversity of experiences and insights of the president’s spouse. And the very process of using multiple authors to write the book was the most rewarding experience for the editors. The epilogue by David Riesman of Harvard offers a unique perspective by one who has devoted considerable time and attention to campus presidents and their spouses. The editors are indeed grateful for Dr. Riesman’s critical insights.

The Results of the NASULGC Survey: A Summary

On March 29, 1983, 138 surveys were mailed from the University of Minnesota to the spouses of presidents or chancellors who are members of NASULGC. The survey contained 109 questions grouped into the following sections: 1) Your Community; 2) The Campus You Serve; 3) Your Home; 4) Your Family; 5) Your Role and Job with the President/Chancellor; 6) Yourself and; 7) Future. A total of 104 surveys were returned by May 27, 1983, for a response rate of 73 percent. Many of the open-ended questions were coded for subsequent computer analysis. These items, in addition to all of the coded (numbered response categories) items in the survey, were keypunched for

analysis on the University's Cyber 74 computer. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to generate frequency distributions of all items, and selected items were cross-tabulated using Chi-square analysis to determine statistical significance. Some of the significant results follow.

Community and Campus

Most of the respondents tended to live in the Midwest (25 percent) or in the South, Northeast, Southwest, and Southeast (between 10 percent and 14 percent each). Fewer live in the West, Mountain region, or noncontinental United States. Forty percent of the spouses dwell in "small community" locales and 32 percent live in urban settings. Information about geographic location and the size and type of community in which one resides is important because it can affect the opportunities available for both volunteer and paid work and, perhaps, suggest life style choices.

Most respondents described the role of the president or chancellor as the "head of a single campus" (36 percent), or the "head of a single campus of a multicampus system" (32 percent). Clearly, two-thirds of the respondents do not have multicampus duties. Ninety-eight percent of them indicated that their campus is "public," with the majority (59 percent) having student enrollments of 20,000 or more. Fifty-eight percent of the student populations live on or near campus. Sixty-three percent of the institutions represented are a century old or older.

Home and Family

Eighty-five percent of the survey respondents live in an official house. More than one-half of these residences are located on campus, and more than half are over 50 years old. Ninety-six percent of the respondents own at least some of the furnishings, and almost 70 percent pay for replacement of private furnishings. Two-thirds dwell on three acres or less and live in homes of 12 or more rooms (68 percent). Official residences are generally sufficient for entertaining, according to three-fourths, and 82 percent agree that the residence meets the needs of the family.

Children are a major part of the lives of the spouses. Three-fourths of those surveyed have or have had their children living with them while the mate was president or chancellor, and respondents report that the greatest advantage for those children is the opportunity to meet interesting people and to be part of the campus. More frequently stated disadvantages include having no privacy, little family time, and the problem of high visibility.

Role and Job

Most spouses are very clear about what they have accepted as their responsibilities. The majority function as hostess, supervisor of staff and maintenance, entertaining coordinator, director of the official house, food arranger, campus correspondent and representative at national meetings, tour guide, community leader, and all-around public relations person. Seventy-five percent of the respondents report that they entertain more than 1,000 people each year in the official residence, with 45 percent hosting 2,001 or more guests. In general, the spouse or family issues work instructions for the interior of the official house in such areas as major repair work (56 percent), cleaning (77 percent), decorating (80 percent), security (60 percent), arrangements for (67 percent) and scheduling of (80 percent) the house for events. (Other university and college personnel give instructions for work outside the house related to snow removal (58 percent) and yard work (50 percent), with the house manager and other personnel sharing the issuance of maintenance work (28 percent to 25 percent respectively.)

With respect to "who does the work," in all categories of official work, other university personnel clearly save the day. The only exception is with decorating, in which case 35 percent of the decorating is performed through private contractors. The university almost universally pays the bills related to official house work.

Not surprisingly, spouses generally do not enjoy the routine functions (arranger of food, correspondent) or administrative functions (supervisory, director of official house). Thirty-seven percent indicated they do not have adequate secretarial staff. And when asked which arrangements regarding official house work were not satisfactory, the two most frequent answers given were "dealing with unqualified staff" (21 percent) and "having to 'nag' to get the job done" (11 percent). But they do enjoy representing their institutions at national meetings and alumni gatherings, and overwhelmingly enjoy being the hostess at events. Almost one half of those surveyed give their institution 21 or more hours a week, with 1 out of 7 donating over 40 hours per week. Those who also accept community leadership roles are generally pleased to do so.

With respect to qualifications for the myriad roles assumed by spouses of presidents and chancellors, 53 percent of the respondents said the most important qualification is to enjoy people. As for training or preparation, respondents cited "all previous experience" (26 percent), "previous experience on the current campus" (17 percent), and "previous experience as the spouse of a campus administrator" (12 percent). Ironically, although one-half of the presidents or chancellors and spouses have previously served at another institution,

for 72 percent their current position is their first chief executive position. Seventy-one percent have served seven years or fewer in that position.

It is clear that the presidencies and chancellorships of the major institutions represented in this survey are unique positions with little opportunity for previous related experience, educational training, preparation, or even meaningful job descriptions. Similarly, the spouses of these administrators have had little opportunity for previous related experience, educational training, and preparation. Still, only four percent of spouses surveyed had a written job description, only half of the spouses were included in the interview process when the governing board members considered the president or chancellor for the position, and a revealing 88 percent answered "no" to the question, "Did anyone at the institution explain the expectations of your role and job as spouse of the president or chancellor?"

Although nearly 30 percent believed that a job description would have been helpful, and 84 percent believed that the spouse should be included in the interview process in order to learn expectations of the spouse and to present a "partnership of two people," spouses learned what was expected of them on campus by on-the-job training (34 percent), observing others (19 percent), predecessors (15 percent), and common sense (11 percent). Indeed, for chancellors or presidents, many of whom are "first timers" on the job, their partnerships become even more critical in terms of survival and growth. And yet, 95 percent of the spouses surveyed indicated that there is no job evaluation other than that given by their mate; 98 percent have never been asked to submit a review of their activities and roles by the governing board. (Interestingly, about 20 percent wished they were asked for such a report.)

The responses to the questions about roles and preparation suggest the spouses are employed in unique positions for which it is difficult to prepare. Obviously, college and university governing boards need to be clearer with spouses about role expectations and the job of being a campus spouse. Perhaps because they themselves could not benefit from relevant previous experience or a thorough orientation as to expectations, the spouses were generous about giving advice to those who might assume their role. Of the 80 percent who responded, the most frequently mentioned advice was "to be yourself." Others suggested carving out personal time, getting your own career, making sure of expectations at the time of the interview, fully understanding the budget, setting priorities, hiring your own staff, keeping files, and talking to other experienced spouses.

As to insights into the inherent frustrations, spouses included worrying about the effects of pressure on the spouse, the limitations on time available for

spouse and family, the unpredictable demands on time that take precedence over their own activities, too little time for their personal pursuits, the separation of "official life" from one's personal life, the lack of personal privacy, and time for friends and relatives. They often feel isolated from others because of their spouse's position, resent the criticism their spouses inevitably attract, worry about high personal overhead expenses, and the fact that their way of life has been altered (out of control), and they often feel frustrated by having responsibility without authority.

Their concern about the president or chancellor is the single greatest frustration they face, which suggests unusually close partnerships. In fact, when we inquired about the best aspects of the spouse role, the three most frequently mentioned were: 1) the opportunity to meet interesting people; 2) the ability to participate in a partnership with the president or chancellor; and 3) the opportunity to travel for the institution nationally and internationally. The participation in a meaningful partnership was mentioned more frequently than any other aspect except the opportunity to meet interesting people. As one spouse suggested, "President/President's spouse is a job we can do together. . ."

Ninety-eight percent of the spouses do not receive a salary. Of those spouses not receiving a salary, eighty percent do not believe they should be paid, because they like the volunteer aspect of the work and would consider a salary to be a mandate to perform (50 percent); 25 percent accept the work as a marital duty "which I do happily." Of the 20 percent who believe spouses should be paid, the "mean" salary suggested was \$19,000, with 59 percent suggesting it should come from general university funds.

Self and the Future

Ninety-nine percent of the spouses surveyed were female. Almost one-half (48 percent) are between the ages of 50 and 59 years (with 34 percent between 40 and 49 years, and 15 percent over 60 years of age). Ninety-five percent have never been divorced, suggesting strong, stable partnerships, and 55 percent are part of a regular physical fitness program. Eighty-five percent have a B.A. or B.S. degree or more, 11 percent have earned doctoral degrees, and 15 percent are currently enrolled in an educational program, predominantly part-time.

Seventy-seven percent of the spouses participate in a long and impressive list of volunteer community activities, with more than one-half donating five hours or more per week. Volunteer commitments include church work, foundations and boards, musical associations and arts councils, nonprofit organizations, youth development groups, hospitals, drives and social service agencies, teaching, counseling, schools, restoration efforts, public television, Planned Parenthood, and such organizations as the League of Women Voters.

Interestingly, almost 30 percent work for pay outside the role of spouse. Averaging 25 hours per week, 73 percent work 20 hours or more per week. Motivation to work outside the partnership includes the following (the percent of respondents checking each motivation is indicated in parentheses):

1. self-fulfillment (83 percent)
2. independence (69 percent)
3. intellectual stimulation (69 percent)
4. utilization of professional training (65 percent)
5. association with different people (65 percent)
6. income (55 percent)

Forty-two percent of the spouses were professionally involved in their field of training prior to their mate's selection as a president or chancellor. One-half worked full-time and their professions were enormously varied and included writing, teaching and administration, work as artists, opera singers, computer programmer analysts, CPAs, professional development officers, and registered nurses. Fifty-eight percent of those spouses who were professionally involved continued some professional involvement after they became partners to a president or chancellor.

But working for pay outside the partnership requires juggling time, priorities, and responsibilities, and an ability to overcome some (perhaps) obvious obstacles. The following comments call attention to the obstacles spouses had to overcome to secure and maintain their job outside the role of spouse:

1. Scheduling.
2. Proper management of time and proper rating of priorities.
3. Many, not the least of which was role as president's spouse. It seemed to reduce credibility as an academic and serious researcher.
4. Maintaining a high energy level.
5. Criticism by certain members of the Board of Trustees and certain politicians and others of the University community . . .

Clearly, working for pay outside the partnership requires balancing time, priorities, and responsibilities. Some spouses reported they schedule as far in advance as possible, delegate, train helpers, work out careful organization, and set priorities. "But," said one respondent, "my role as the President's wife still comes first."

Some chose not to continue to work outside the partnership. Lack of time and family responsibilities were cited most frequently as the reasons, but some also volunteered the following comments:

- Trustees said no! My duties were too numerous.
- I commuted for six months 110 miles per day. I became very tired of the long drive.
- I'm not a super human. . .

Seventy-five percent reported they were satisfied with the decision not to continue working.

The partners have made some attempt to plan for their financial futures: One-third of the respondents have savings plans, nearly one-fourth participate in self-initiated retirement programs, and one-fourth have purchased property. Only 13 percent have no financial plans for the future. Although more than half of the institutions provide pension plans, more than one-fifth of the campuses have no such plan for their chief executive officer. Some special arrangements, however, were mentioned, such as "President Emeritus" status with office and secretary when the person steps out of office.

A Spouse Profile Emerges

There emerges from the survey findings a general spouse profile. The "typical" campus spouse is female, over 50 years of age, and in a stable marriage situation. She is in a regular physical fitness program and is well educated. She probably does not work for pay outside the role of spouse, but gives her institution 21 or more hours per week and donates five or more hours per week to a wide range of community volunteer work. Her husband previously served at another institution, but his current presidency or chancellorship is his first and the institution is public. More than likely the position does not have multicampus responsibilities.

The spouse lives in an official house and accepts a multiplicity of responsibilities including the work of hostess, supervisor of staff, entertaining coordinator, director of the official house, food arranger, campus representative at national meetings, campus correspondent, community leadership roles, tour guide, and general public relations person. She might or might not have been included in the governing board interview process, but strongly feels she should have been. No one explained her position or the expectations of her role; she learned through on-the-job training, observing others, talking to predecessors, and by common sense. She enjoys the role of hostess and representational work, in large part because she enjoys people in general. Her greatest concern is for the president or chancellor, the pressures he experiences, and the lack of time with him and her family.

This profile, it should be noted, generally supports the findings of the 1977 Corbally study in the areas where comparison is possible. (The Corbally study

included many more private and smaller institutions than the NASULGC study.) Nevertheless, the 1983 survey reinforces the assertion that spouses continue to work hard on campuses across the country, want choices as to the extent of their involvement with their partners, and are beginning to assert themselves in areas of their own careers, possible remuneration, and the expectations of their role.

Significant correlations were revealed when certain variables were cross-tabulated:

1. The higher the degree a spouse has earned, the more likely she or he will be employed outside the campus role.
2. Younger spouses have stronger feelings about the lack of personal privacy. They are more likely to be frustrated with the sense that their way of life is altered and out of control and that they spend too little time with their family.
3. Of the four who have written job descriptions, all are under 50 years of age.
4. Younger spouses enjoy editing the president's or chancellor's speeches and being public speakers more than older spouses.
5. Older spouses enjoy being the director of the official house and supervising the cleaning person more than younger spouses.

Conclusion

The authors of this introductory chapter wish to conclude with two quotations. The first is from a spouse who chose not to complete the survey.

"This is just one of the many time-consuming things I'm asked to do as the president's wife, which I resent. I am his spouse, not his business partner and do my best to keep up the home front and family he's too busy to have time for anymore. I do as much as I have to to keep peace, and as little as possible to keep my sanity."

The second spouse completed the survey, and then added her own perspective:

"This has been a more difficult survey to complete than I anticipated. In many ways it has caused me to reflect upon aspects of my role that I best tolerate by ignoring—or at least by not dwelling upon them very often. I do deeply believe that this is one of the least understood and least valued roles in American culture today. Yet the time and effort given by most spouses is astonishing in its magnitude. And the price each of us pays in our own individual ways, through poor health, strained family relationships, loss of friendships and career, is often great. I also deeply believe that a wife needs to maintain elements of her private, personal identity that are not compromised by the role. How to do this easily,

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honestly, and effectively, I do not know for the role is ever present, persistent, and often an unspoken set of expectations. Because of the silence and ambiguity, one often does not realize that she has erred until it is already too late. It would be at least a beginning if there were greater openness on all parts during the interview process: by the board, the university leadership, the president-elect himself, and the spouse, as to what is expected and what is possible, given the circumstances. Once that is clarified, a just compensation should be an automatic part of the process and it should be negotiated with the dignity and respect for the person and the role."

We hope that this book helps all who care about America's colleges and universities to think through for themselves the questions and issues so forthrightly raised by these two spouses and by all spouses who participated in this survey and project.

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CHAPTER II



JOB FUNCTIONS
AND THE
ROLE OF THE SPOUSE



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A DAY IN THE LIFE: SOME REFLECTIONS



by Karen E. O'Neil

What is it like to be the wife of a university president? I have been asked that question with some regularity since I became one several years ago, and while I have developed a series of stock answers, I am always tempted to say, "Want to know what it's really like? Let me tell you about last Wednesday," or Thursday or Friday, or whatever day I'm currently struggling to recover from.

This week it was Monday. Let me tell you about it. Monday begins at 6:30 a.m. when my hardworking partner—The President—awakens me with a cup of coffee and two minutes of conversation before he heads off to the office on his bicycle, a means of transportation (weather permitting) he refuses to forego despite its unpresidential demeanor. I muster four children out of bed and through breakfast before our housekeeper arrives at 7:30, help head the search for the sneakers, backpacks, homework assignments, and correct change required for bus, lunch, field trip and diet yoghurt which are the stuff of life for those between the ages of 6 and 15, and look longingly to the three hours I've set aside for myself to write a speech which seemed like a good idea at the time I agreed to do it, but now feels more like a heavy burden.

So far, so good—until I glance out the window. As if as an omen of what sort of a day this will be, lightning flashes, thunder booms and instead of finding myself behind the typewriter at 8 a.m., I am behind the wheel of the car, depositing four children at three different schools.

8:30 a.m. I answer the three phone calls that have accumulated since I left the house, give instructions to the housekeeper about how things will need to be organized for the event we plan to host in the evening, and repair to the study. One more pause for a call to the office and some business conversation with the President, a ritual we have developed to assure that we will have at least one chance a day to talk privately, without interruption, and while there is no danger that either of us will fall asleep in mid-sentence. Three hours have

now become two. The general noise of furniture being moved downstairs tells me that the university crew has arrived and preparations are underway for the evening. I relax and get to work.

11:15 a.m. I emerge from the study just in time to check details for the evening and get downtown for lunch. This is not to be my day. Our helpers have arranged the house for a sit-down dinner for 50. We are not having a dinner, but a meeting and a reception for 75. It is too late to call back the movers, so our tiny but heroic housekeeper joins me in re-arranging all the furniture, including five tables, each of which weighs more than she herself does.

12:30. I arrive at lunch both late and frazzled, but my companion, a legislator who manages at once to be both a dear friend and one of our University's most loyal advocates understands without explanation, which is, of course, one of the reasons she is such a dear friend. We cover in record fashion children, families, professional aspirations, and the current status of legislation affecting the University. The news of the children is good, the news of the legislation is bad, the professional aspirations—although present—are temporarily on hold. I am back in the car and just in time to drive for swim team, trumpet lessons, the makings of a Halloween costume, and a pair of shoes acceptable both to a teenager and her mother, and the few things I've forgotten to pick up for this evening's reception. Home just in time to put together a reasonable semblance of dinner before activities commence again.

6 p.m. On Monday afternoons, the President puts aside his administrative responsibilities in order to exercise his professorial skills, and we try hard to see that this once-a-week teaching stint culminates in something resembling an orderly, family meal. Preparations are interrupted only once, when a six-year old cry of distress tells me that the toilet is overflowing. Too late to find the plunger, I make a quick decision that the other seven bathrooms available in the gracious public residence with which our university provides us will have to suffice.

Dinner proceeds apace. The Professor is so pleased with his successful class that I decide to forego passing along the gloom I have garnered at lunch, although it is doubtful that I will be able to make myself heard amidst the general uproar in any case. I quickly check the house, remove three chocolate chips and a rolled-up copy of *Mad Magazine* from one of the remaining seven bathrooms and prepare to meet our guests.

8:00 p.m. All is well. Since the meeting is of a women's organization I will do the greeting alone, giving my husband a rare and welcome opportunity to spend the evening with the children. The house looks beautiful, the chairs are in their

proper order and the guests seem pleased to be here. Unfortunately, no one has informed me that among them will be a generous university friend who has just donated an elegant tea service for use in the President's House. Predictably, it is not the service we are using this evening. I cannot bear to disappoint her, so while our visitors assemble for the meeting that will precede refreshments, our evening helper and I join forces to quickly rearrange the table, finishing our task just in time for me to offer a few words of greeting to the group.

I repair to a quiet spot on the stairs (an overflow crowd has consumed all the chairs) and try to collect some energy for the social part of the evening. My brain is awash with effort to concentrate on the words of the speaker, conjecture as to how bad the bad legislative news is, concern as to whether I've really done justice to this morning's writing project, and the burning question of whether harm can come to a ten-year-old if he paints his arms with glow-paint for Halloween. And this is only Monday.

What does it mean to be the wife of a university president or chancellor? For me, some of all of the above, I suppose. And for my peers, something else again. Indeed, there are no two of us who experience in quite the same way the role in which we find ourselves. In fact, if there is one thing that is most striking about coming together with a group of university presidents' wives, it is to be found in what a varied lot we are. These days there are probably as many ways to define the role of president's partner as there are women who fulfill that role, communities and institutions they represent, and partners who have brought them to it. We differ in background and in training, in age and experience, in professional commitment and interest. Some of us are involved full time in activities generated by our husbands' institutions, and some of us devote full time to our own professional or volunteer pursuits. Others of us struggle to keep in place university activities, personal undertakings, and family responsibilities all at the same time. Yet we find in one another a community of interests and life experience which gives us a sense of comradeship and mutual understanding which transcends our differences.

Few of us would doubt that our activities do in some sense constitute a job; and there is some curiosity in that fact. After all, one is not a university president's wife as an independent fact of life, but as a circumstance of being married to a president. It is not a position to which one is elected or for which one is even individually selected. Only half of the wives of presidents currently in office were even interviewed before their husbands were appointed, according to the survey of spouses at NASULGC member institutions. In only a very small number of institutions does the job bring with it a description of responsibilities; in fact, the overwhelming majority of spouses find that no one

at the institution ever communicates to them directly either responsibilities or expectations for them. And yet those of us who find ourselves in the role of married partner of the president have little doubt that responsibilities and expectations do exist, and that whatever our individual accommodations to them, they will have implications for us and for our choice of activities. And, remarkably again, we are a strikingly satisfied lot, occasionally frustrated by our lives, but far more often than not, finding in them opportunity for activity, for service, and for personal growth which is both exciting and unique.

All of us who function in this role do so as the second person in what has traditionally been considered a two-person career. To be that second person at a time when expectations for women are rapidly changing, when the title "the wife of" no longer carries with it a complete and satisfactory identity, presents a special challenge for those of us who find ourselves exactly in that position. As public partners we are subject to a unique challenge, a challenge which takes place around the demands and expectations of the partnership, on the one hand, and the private needs, goals and expectations we have for ourselves as individuals, on the other. To be sure, everyone who functions as part of a marriage partnership needs to balance individual and jointly held goals. But when married partnership becomes public partnership that balance reaches crucial importance. Public partnership carries with it strong pressures, again a stronger and more clearly defined identity than might be necessary in an ordinary situation. It is those conflicting needs—support of the partnership, on the one hand, and a strong sense of self, on the other, that lead to the basic dilemma of public partnership, a dilemma which gives those of us who are such partners the common ground we find among ourselves. Each of us faces the central challenge of how to be a partner while remaining a person, and while each of us may make an individual accommodation to that challenge, it is one we face together.

Just why this should be lies in the special nature of the life that university administration brings with it and the kind of person who seeks that life. A university president or chancellor, in most instances, not only has a more than average commitment to public service, but is willing to make great sacrifice, often personal, in order to carry out that commitment. Such a person is willing to make a far greater commitment to work than is the average person. For most heads of educational institutions a sixteen-hour work day and a seven-day work week are not uncommon occurrences; work is rarely, if ever, out of mind. University administration further means being away from home a great deal of the time—speaking, meeting, representing, evaluating; it is a kind of work which requires if not continuous, then very frequent, travel and many, many evening commitments. Some of these involve the spouse, but certainly not all.

It is a uniquely public life. A university president is seen quite literally as the embodiment of his or her institution. He is directly answerable to his constituents, whether at home or in the office, and in some very basic sense is seen as belonging to them. A fundamental part of a president's work, in fact, lies in making known his views publicly and in publicly influencing the views of others. Finally, it is a role which bears great responsibility and stress which cannot easily be turned off at the end of the day or the week. It is a kind of work which carries with it difficult decisions, difficult interpersonal relationships, difficult public exposure, and these add up to a kind of pressure which can rarely be far from mind.

What are the implications of this life for the partner of the person who leads it? I would suggest that what is created for her is a paradoxical situation, a situation which calls upon her on the one hand to be more independent and resourceful than she might otherwise be, but at the same time creates a kind of dependence and a kind of reflected identity which sometimes makes independence difficult to achieve.

Marriage to a man who is deeply preoccupied with his work, who is frequently absent from home (or who may be psychologically absent even when he is physically present) requires a wife who is capable of being highly independent, able to function on her own, competent to assume more than an ordinary share of the burden for household and family management. If she lives in a public residence, and the great majority of presidents and their families do, supervision of that household may be especially complex and challenging. Further, partnership with such a person requires that a wife recognize that her life, and in some instances the lives of her children as well, will, like her husband's life, become public. She, too, will be seen to some extent as the embodiment of the institution. What she says, how she looks, where she goes may be scrutinized in these ways. She must be prepared to deal with the press, sometimes friendly, sometimes not. She must accept the fact that her husband's activities will be regularly reported upon, and indeed, she will be frustrated when they are not; and she will not have much of an outlet for her frustrations if what appears on the 6 and 10 o'clock news and in both the morning and evening newspapers are his defeats rather than his triumphs. She may be called upon to represent her husband to his constituent communities, either directly or indirectly, whether that means welcoming a group to campus, attending a public function, or simply remembering to be friendly to everyone she sees at the supermarket because if she doesn't know them, they are more than likely to know her. She will have to learn to hold her tongue, even when she knows the untruth of what she hears. She will have to accept the fact that even her own private rela-

tionships may be colored by her husband's position, that others may make assumptions about her life—of opulence, of glamor, of privilege that may be far from accurate.

She will have to be prepared to deal with all of this whether or not she participates actively in his presidency. Indeed, she may be intent upon pursuing a career totally independent of his, and for which she is eminently well qualified only to find that she may still be subject to a kind of criticism which says that she would not be in her position unless her husband was in his. It requires a strong and self-confident person to deal with such a life, to be prepared to withstand the brickbats as well as to enjoy the kudos, to keep her perspective and remember who she is, to do well all that she is asked to do. Add to this mix now the size of the job, its pressures and stress, its real importance in the eyes of the world. Again, I would suggest that it requires an independent and resourceful person to help her spouse keep his perspective, to depressurize at the end of the day or of the week, or help him work through the problems that he faces and the tough decisions he needs to make, to do no more sometimes than listen, and to remind him that if theirs is indeed a partnership, he is but one member of it.

But at the same time, there is another side to the life of the university president's wife, a side which in some ways works against the qualities one needs to deal well with it. At least some of the signals which come her way bespeak dependence rather than independence. At least some of what her life entails bespeaks a reflected identity instead of a strong and independent one. How much time has she left for independent activity and pursuit when she is asked either directly or by default to assume more than the average amount of responsibility for home and family? How much freedom is there to explore and pursue personally fulfilling opportunities, whatever they may be—professional, volunteer, recreational—when so much time is consumed by her partner's career? What happens to independence and a sense of identity when a great portion of time is spent in attending functions simply as a spouse? What happens to her own personal relationships when others begin to see her as a conduit to her husband? What happens to a sense of self when there is little time to nurture it? And yet without it, where is the strength and energy to be found to meet the challenges a life such as hers requires? How can she help her spouse regain perspective if she has none of her own? How can she withstand the pressures of a public existence or assume the added burden of being, at least occasionally, both parents let alone one without some independent and self-confirming activity? And perhaps most important, what happens to partnership if all the stresses and strains of one's experience direct the activity and

energy of both partners towards furthering the goals of just one of those partners?

The real challenge of public partnership—the task which faces each of us who find that a private marriage partnership has by virtue of our husband's career choice assumed a public dimension—lies, then, in resolving that central dilemma. If we are only partners, what happens to us as people? If our own sense of self and our activities are crowded out, what happens to the self-esteem all of us need to meet the challenges we face? We hear much these days that would indicate that the expectations for the two-person career have given way as the assumptions on which it rested have changed. To be sure, those assumptions—that the second person in such a career would invariably be a woman and that no other career opportunities would be available to her—are no longer valid today. But perhaps equally important in the redefinition of the two-person career may have been the fact that it rested on a false premise. The two-person career defined a partnership which may not really have been partnership at all. It was not voluntary: it took for granted the wife's participation. It did not take into account two sets of equally valid goals or aspirations, nor did it envision equal needs or interests. It was a career pattern which simply assumed that the needs of one partner could be met by fulfilling the needs of the other, that vicarious satisfaction was real satisfaction.

Most of us who find ourselves in the position of public partner today would reject such a definition of partnership. And yet finding a workable balance between the needs of the partnership, on the one hand, and our own individual needs, on the other, remains a constant challenge. Surely it would be an unusual person who did not experience at least some frustration in a life situation in which all of her activity and energy were directed towards furthering the goals of another, even of someone she loves—who did not resent, at least a little, rarely receiving the direct satisfaction of recognition for her very real part in a job well done. Yet the other extreme, abandoning the demands of the partnership altogether, presents its own series of problems. The two-person career developed in the first place because the size of the job and the demands it entailed were simply too big for any one person to successfully fulfill alone. The two-person career truly demanded the energies and services of two people because both were needed to carry out the job successfully. Even if the other assumptions behind that traditional career pattern no longer hold true today, nothing has happened that makes the job of university president or chancellor any less complex, demanding or overwhelming in size than ever it was. Size does not diminish because one partner chooses to ignore it, nor will the stresses and strains the job brings with it disappear because only one person is left to

experience them. To be sure, many of the tasks that were once the exclusive province of the president's wife can be carried out by paid staff. But the potential for mutual collaboration and support between marriage partners is after all at the heart of that partnership, and few of us would find it either feasible or satisfying to abandon that mutuality completely.

So the dilemma remains with us. And it is in its continuous reworking, in the constant shuffling and reshuffling of individual and jointly held goals that those of us who are public partners today find our mutual rapport and our support of one another. Our solutions are as varied as we are and as singular as the institutions of which we are a part. But we are well aware that we are a unique and fortunate generation. We are perhaps the first generation of women who have truly experienced a choice in making our private accommodations to our public roles, who are truly free to decide how much of our time and energy we feel comfortable in investing in the public part of our lives, and how much time we need to reserve for ourselves and for our own independent activity. If we are by and large an enthusiastic and satisfied lot, if we feel privileged and fulfilled in finding ourselves in a position to offer our energy and intelligence to the institutions we serve along side our husbands, it is surely in large part because of our recognition that how we fulfill that commitment is a matter of choice. Whatever frustration we may experience as a result of the fact that our institutions rarely communicate to us directly their expectations for us, we are well aware that what we gain by this silence is the crucial opportunity to define our roles for ourselves.

We do not arrive at that choice by accident. Our predecessors paved the way for us by sharing some of the constraints they experienced at a time when their contributions were too often taken for granted and too rarely recognized. Our institutions have responded to our needs by offering us staff support when we have needed it. And our own partners have frequently acted as our advocates, both in helping us protect our time and in calling attention to our contributions. And nothing has been more crucial to our growth and development than the opportunity afforded us by organizations such as the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges to come together to share our experiences and concerns and to develop a network of colleagues to whom we can turn for both information and support.

And so as I sit on those stairs on Monday evening, understand that this is the place where I have chosen to be. To be sure, I am tired. To be sure, I have different plans for Tuesday. But I am comforted by the thought of my colleagues from Maine to California whose feet are probably aching, too. I am cheered by the thought of my predecessors who have recognized, as I do, that there have

been far more satisfactions in the day just passed than there have been frustrations. After all, I have had the real pleasure of welcoming to our university home a group of people who are glad to be there. I have exercised my brain independently, at least a little. Each of those children has been kissed at least once. And I have the deep satisfaction of knowing that somewhere on the third floor that hardworking partner of mine—the President—is enjoying the luxury of being prodded by his young son to wake up and finish reading a story. If I wonder, now and then, where I will find the energy to gain my feet again, I am reminded of an adage shared by all my peers, by each of us who has the unique good fortune to find herself in the role of public partner. After all, we know it to be true that “a common woman is as common as a common loaf of bread . . . and will rise.”



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Mississippi State University." She writes, "We have two children—Cathleen, 19, and Patrick, 17." She holds a B.S. degree in biological sciences from Miami University of Ohio and she gained another B.S. degree in nursing from Case Western Reserve University. She has served as a staff nurse in the Department of Neurosurgery at Ohio State University and in the U.S. Public Health Migrant Grant in New Mexico.

THE PARTNERSHIP AND HOW IT WORKS



by Adele McComas

The partnership with a college or university president or chancellor is a partnership in one of the most unique roles two people can experience. When one says my spouse is a president (chancellor) of an institution of higher learning, it initiates more questions than it answers. Each presidency is different. Our role is determined by size, complexity, focus, priorities, and geographical location of our institution. It is influenced by the size and character of our urban or rural community.

A broad definition of the role is given by Joseph A. Kauffman. He sees today's president as providing "leadership to keep all concerned, both inside and outside constituencies and forces, keenly aware of the central purposes, values, and worth of the higher education enterprise." He states that "institutions were created to protect and transmit something of value to people."

A more specific definition of the president's role is added by each institution. During the interview process we can gain insight into the expectations from trustees, students, faculty, alumni, and the community. Our role is also influenced by the traditions, practices, and expectations of the previous role occupant.

The partnership with a president of an institution of higher learning can be a most exciting, challenging, and rewarding life for a spouse to experience. It also is a role in which some stress and frustrations are experienced. There is a great challenge in carving out our role with our partner, and we each do it in our own way.

After reviewing the literature we can conclude that there is no definition of the spouse's role or job description that will apply to all. Marguerite Walker Corbally in her book *The Partners* states, "It is next to impossible to describe the 'job' of the president's wife without understanding the sense of partnership felt by couples and their perceptions of her place in that partnership."

When and how does the spouse fit into this new partnership? It is difficult to define or predict role behaviors, thoughts, and experiences that may serve as a

beginning. How can I tell someone else how the partnership works? I am aware of my lack of expertise to speak to this. Maybe I can best do so by sharing some thoughts and experiences from our partnership. I bring to this an appreciation for how much there was for me to learn, some from other people, some from trial and error.

If I am to be a full partner in this role, my husband must first see me as capable of fulfilling the expectations this partnership has for me. I feel this was our partnership in all of my husband's previous roles in teaching and administration. My support comes from his saying "we." He includes me and is sensitive to when he obligates my time and efforts. There have been times during his career when I have been employed full-time or part-time with my own profession. I find being involved with him in his role as president and with our two children no longer allows me time to pursue a career, but this has proven satisfactory. I have always been included in my husband's work by him, and his support allows me to be creative in my own way in my spouse role.

In our partnership we meet many social demands in hosting and participating in a broad range of functions. While we are dedicated to helping our guests enjoy themselves, we attempt to have a purpose which will provide overall benefits for our university. We are about the business of encouraging support for our institution of higher education, to increase the quality of experiences for faculty and students. We seek assistance from legislators, alumni, prospective donors, community leaders, and special guests. There are a variety of ways this can be approached, and we find most of our entertaining is in our official residence. We like the more personal atmosphere that a home can provide. We will entertain approximately 2,000 people a year in the president's home. Some groups will be as large as 200-300. This means that at times it becomes more impersonal. Our vice presidents, deans and their spouses are often generous with their time in assisting us to create a more personal atmosphere. This has been especially helpful with our new student orientation programs when we have open house for the parents, and when we have faculty receptions.

We work closely with the director of our development foundation in fund raising, and while my husband is involved with the details of the gifts, contributions are never requested in the home. We focus only on acquainting donors and potential donors with our university and its people resources.

We like to include faculty and students on a guest list when it is appropriate. Frequently we will host a luncheon, dinner, or reception at the special request of faculty who are having programs and speakers. It is our option if we wish to do this in the home or in other facilities on campus.

The size of our university allows us frequent contact with student groups. We

respond to their requests whenever we can, but are careful not to let our assistance become "tradition." This keeps student activities theirs. We find students appreciate our efforts to respond. The past two years, the campus Greek organizations have held a barbeque on the back lawn with 500 students attending each one. Our request to them was to park in a lot near the residence and to leave the lawn in the same condition they found it. These requests were met so well this may become tradition!

We find our responsibility for entertaining enjoyable, not only because of the assistance we receive from within the university but because we enjoy the people we entertain. We meet so many who enrich our lives and are receptive to the goals and needs of the university. We work to provide a warm, relaxed atmosphere so people can be comfortable in the home and with each other. My husband has the wonderful ability to always remember everyone's name. This is more difficult for me, so while he is making the most of the introductions, I focus more on maintaining the environment and schedule. We appreciate the formal environment the home provides for us and have added our own ideas which help to make it less formal at times.

When we have needed new china or furnishings for the home, I am most appreciative of my husband that he handles these requests. It becomes a request that would be "helpful to the partnership," not one "the spouse would like." He feels it is important for him to sensitize members of the staff in decision-making positions to the needs that come with the responsibility to entertain. Attention must be given to upkeep and furnishings replaced as necessary. This is not only helpful to us but will be helpful to the next occupant. Recently a generous donor to our development foundation identified \$40,000 of the gift to be used for furnishings in the president's home. He obviously recognized the important role that the president's home plays in the social and educational life of the university.

While we are in a partnership where support for others is expected from us, we also receive support from so many who love their university. Through our partnership we have developed a special "family" relationship with many alumni and members of our development foundation. We frequently attend weddings and other family events when invited. We find these friends are reinforcing and encouraging to us during stressful times.

One of the most supportive people to us is a skillful receptionist. Her understanding support often contributes to our partnership running smoothly. On Friday she sends a copy of my husband's schedule to me for the next week, indicating the times I am involved; these times have been previously confirmed with me when invitations were received or arrangements made. During very

busy times my husband and I may know each other's thoughts and concerns, but the communication concerning events and facts about them decreases. She is aware of this and may call to remind or inform me as to details.

Communication plays an important part in the partnership. The spouse is dependent upon many others to have all the information needed to carry out her duties. It has been helpful to me to receive copies of letters and invitations involving both of us. Many times I will receive copies of correspondence, pamphlets, or other materials from the president's office and other offices marked "for your information." In turn, I share information with them that may be helpful.

As I visit with others in my same role, I find each has developed a system of communication that works for them. Ways of communicating vary with how involved the spouse is and the structure of the university. Most have a designated staff member in the president's office responsible for communicating with them. Some have a staff member in the home who can assist. A few also work closely with designated persons in the alumni and development foundation offices. Guest lists for events sponsored by these offices can be helpful to the spouse.

As partners, the most noticeable change the presidency brought to our lives has been that there is no one close to us who shares our same role with the same concerns. We do not have anyone readily available with whom to exchange thoughts as to how we meet specific responsibilities. This isolation and the stress that comes with the increased demands on our time and effort have contributed to the development of a very close partnership. We are each other's confidant, supporter, friend, and critic. Being a critic is necessary, too, for there may not be those who feel free to be our constructive critics. There is so much we share only with each other. We find it is important that I have been informed about the major concerns of the office, as we frequently receive phone calls at the residence, and when my husband is not there it is important that I know the urgency of the call.

People around us soon become aware of how much we share with each other. I become sensitive that what I say might be interpreted by others as representing my husband's thoughts and opinions. This helps to determine how I become involved in community activities. It is important for me to make my interests clear as community organizations and clubs frequently request the support and involvement of the president's wife. I select community activities with greater care because of the limited amount of time I can give to them. I choose those of interest to me where I feel free to express myself.

In our community, there are frequent requests from groups and organizations

to meet in the president's home. Our guideline is to allow these groups the use of the home which have membership accessible to most individuals within our community. We can in this way reflect our support for that which contributes to the quality of life for all in the community.

There are many concerns that bring stress to the partnership. The most stressful we have experienced involved the emotional aspects of losing seasons in Southeastern Conference football. During these times it is impossible to protect other members of the family, as they, too, answer the phone and hear comments. Such stressful occasions cause spouses and children to depend on each other more for reinforcement and support.

Stress comes when there are budgetary difficulties. There may be needed and justified expenditures for the president's home, but these will have to be minimal during a poor budgetary year. Stress is experienced when legislative efforts indicate there will be inadequate budgets, and faculty are apprehensive as to how this will affect their salaries and departmental budgets.

Occasionally, our board of trustees sets priorities or assigns roles that can cause stress among institutions and between an institution and a board. We attempt to meet this situation by not personalizing the decisions made and we seek to maintain good relationships with board members and their families.

Stress can occur within the family. We involve our children in university activities but have learned this can easily intrude upon their own activities. We attempt to protect them from the situations that cause us stress, unless it is unavoidable.

We live in a lovely two story official residence on a beautifully landscaped seven acres at the edge of the campus. Yet, just being here means we are at work. We bought a small home in the country with three acres of land and much privacy. My husband has a large garden which he says is his "golf." During the winter we will frequently build a fire in the fireplace, read, or watch television. There are those rare times when we have someone drop by for a hamburger. Our children frequently use it for their activities. I am becoming more protective of family time away from the campus. This is as important to our children as it is to us, as they also must cope with the increased stress the presidency brings to them, as well as the many opportunities.

Along with the unique challenges this partnership brings to us, we find it also selects our friends and does so much to dictate how we use our time. Realistically we have come to realize that it is difficult to separate our personal time and lives from our official responsibilities.

Along with these many challenges, our university life brings associations with the finest people possible. Our university community provides a variety of

social and educational opportunities. It provides a healthy and safe environment for our children and good local schools. There are the numerous intellectually stimulating activities. We find our lives greatly enriched by the people and the experiences we share.

The role is diverse and complex and no *one* of us can have all the answers as to how the partnership with a university president works.

If, as spouses, we continue to work together, listen to each other, share with each other, we can all become more effective. Each partnership has its unique challenges and makes its unique contributions to the purposes of higher education.

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Deborah Toll, wife of John Toll, now president of the University of Maryland, has been giving parties to promote universities for 14 years. A native Long Islander, she started when her husband was president of the State University of New York, Stony Brook. Deborah is a graduate of Wellesley College and the mother of two small children. She is a writer/researcher with an interest in international economics and finance. She has worked for Condè Nast, Business International and for Alvin Toffler, the author of *Future Shock*. She serves on the boards of arts organizations in both Washington and Baltimore.

THE ROLE OF THE SPOUSE: ENTERTAINING AND FUND RAISING



by Deborah Toll

William Randolph Hearst once invited Will Rogers for the weekend at San Simeon where a large company was assembled. Mr. Rogers was warmly entertained, and the next week Hearst received a large bill. He called Rogers and said, "I invited you as a guest!" Rogers replied, "When people invite me as a guest they invite Mrs. Rogers, too. When they ask me to come alone, I go as a professional entertainer."

Important prospective donors to the university are often, like Will Rogers, firmly committed to marriage. Both husband and wife usually attend ball games, lunches, alumni events, and dinner dances. Often both parents help their children decide where to go to college. No one is more devoted to the university than a married couple who met while attending the university. They consider themselves part of that large, warm, aggregate—the university family. This sense of family can be decisive in the amount of money the university raises.

The new president's wife may find herself without preparation plunged into the social milieu of alumni, donors, faculty, and university friends. She may go out night after night to social events with virtual strangers. Her presence can help to make the evenings social rather than official business. Conversation with her affords those strangers a measure of the university president. She will be invited by people she likes and admires to beautiful homes and she may wish to invite them in return. Other couples met in the university environment may become close personal friends. Tempting opportunities to help the university by becoming acquainted with groups previously indifferent to the institution will arise, whether in the form of an invitation to play tennis or go with some music loving members of the legislature to the opera. She may join a board or a committee or otherwise be drawn into the company of the invariably well dressed, highly organized, successful achievers who comprise the university's elite corps of volunteers. From bank presidents to community leaders who head benefit committees, these volunteers convey that nothing is too much to ask of them if it is for the university.

If the spouse has a demanding career of her own or is ambivalent about her role, university social life alone will present a time and resource problem. When she should be at the keyboard of her personal computer, she is standing at the closet choosing an outfit for yet another three party evening, one part of which is "black tie." She may find that it is possible to go out every night of the week "for the university," and after some years of such social networking decide that not a single evening was wasted or extraneous to what she perceives as the university mission.

This effort, which includes board memberships, lunches, teas, development swings along east and west coasts, evenings with potential donors in cities 150 miles away and basketball trips where alumni gather, may total between 20 and 60 hours a week. The weekend of Friday night, Saturday and Sunday with one's husband can result easily in spending a total of 20 or more hours fielding for the university. Vivian Shapiro, wife of Harold Shapiro, the President of the University of Michigan, remarks: "getting up the energy night after night to meet people who are strangers can be exhausting."

Here it is interesting to note that in the 20 top universities that raised the most money in 1981-82, only four presidents' spouses worked full time. Five spouses work part time for pay but spend the majority of their time on the university. Lucy Hackney, wife of Sheldon Hackney of the University of Pennsylvania, spends roughly 25 hours a week as a practicing attorney and 40 on university work. Among the full time working spouses were those at Harvard, Yale, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Chicago. The latter is an interesting special case because the president is female.

As the spouse goes about with her husband, she will find a lack of understanding of her role and will be asked, "What do you do?" As any first lady can testify, the importance of the partner's role, including social events, is often overlooked. Eleanor Roosevelt, with a disabled husband, became his eyes and ears around the country. She conveyed the President's interest and helped to pull the nation together by an awareness of its suffering. As she travelled, she gained a clear understanding of what could be done. All first ladies are mindful of Eleanor Roosevelt's legacy and, although their main role is to ride shotgun for their husbands, they are expected to appreciate the opportunities of their position and do good.

Nancy Reagan's press Secretary, Sheila Tate, was quoted recently in the *Washington Post* as commenting that Mrs. Reagan is in a "no-win" situation. This observation exemplifies another difficulty of the first lady's role—the ability to rise above staff. Spouses may have to counter the sense of being a

secondary, shadow identity in order to be effective in social situations where they are present because of their husband's job.

The desire to please one's husband can provide a motive for the efforts of the spouse on behalf of the university, as can the warm approval and support of important board members. If board members treat the spouse both as a prized asset and as a member of the team, she may care about the institution and speak positively about it whether she is spending full time on university work or has her own career and is spending evenings and weekends on university social life.

A sense of enjoyment and the ability to radiate personal happiness is essential to good social life. But the truest mandate to promote the institution may come from the spouse's own belief in education as the surest way to advance mankind. This motive, traditional among president's wives, leads to a sense of *noblesse oblige*, probably the most powerful and effective style of leadership for the spouse.

In any leadership role, a person is well advised to consult one's own conscience rather than rely on public opinion as a guide to action. As the wife of the president at Stony Brook, a growing campus in the SUNY System, I was cautioned by women's groups on campus not to do anything for the university. And I did very little until I was invited to tea at the home on Park Avenue of Elizabeth Luce Moore, the chairman of the SUNY board. Mrs. Moore was the child of missionaries in China as was her brother, Henry Luce, the late co-founder of what is now the Time, Inc., Corporation. She conveyed a strong sense of being imbued with the need to help one's fellow human beings. She was utterly convincing in explaining that the university presented such an opportunity to me and I left feeling I could not fall short. Judy Ikenberry, wife of the President of the University of Illinois, has said, "Society has been very, very good to me, and I want to pay it back." Expression of this motive is most effective when one is seeking funds for the university—if the spouse is enthusiastic, others will be too. (It's more than just a job).

When expectations of the spouse's role are expressed, or when the spouse herself has had experience at another university, it is easier to ask for enough resources to handle the entertaining function and its related fund raising activity.

Most presidents' wives have had the kind of experience related by Lucy Hackney. At dinner at the president's house, Lucy often seats major potential donors on either side of her. One Monday, following a Saturday night dinner, a check arrived for \$10,000 from the man who had been seated on her right with a note that he had come away with such a good feeling that the university was in capable hands he wanted to express his appreciation. Conversation at the table

that night had been only about the university and friends in common.

The periods of time spent with individual prospective donors need not be especially frequent, but these should be quality times and extended over a fairly long number of years. The chancellor of a major university campus has said that there is probably a three-year lead time needed to establish a relationship with a prospective donor before a specific request to meet a university need can be made effectively.

Kermit Hansen, chairman of the board at the University of Nebraska, says: "In my experience in fund raising two people always do better than one. That's a central technique. Something always happens to throw you off your train of thought. For example, the wife of a prospective donor may wonder: If my husband agrees to this gift, does it leave me destitute as a widow? The presence of the chief executive's wife serves to allay this concern."

Durward B. Varner, former president of the University of Nebraska and now President of the Nebraska Foundation, invites his wife to travel with him on fund raising missions with expenses paid. He considers his wife as part of the team and says: "wives are a kind of secret weapon for the university. They should never have to worry about money (for fund raising activities). We can afford to do it properly."

Hugh Cunningham, Director of Information Services at the University of Florida—which has gone from raising \$6 million to \$30 million in the 10-year tenure of its President, Robert Q. Marston—describes Marston's wife, Ann, as the unsung heroine of fund raising. Lunches and dinners at the president's house are the high points of the weekend the donors spend on campus, Cunningham says.

Fred Bennett, director of development at the University of Connecticut, has worked with four presidents and their wives on major campaigns and calls the role of the spouse "indispensable." The wife assists in identification, "cultivation" (a word used by fund-raisers; wives say "establishing friendships") and, in some cases, active fund raising programs. Most campaigns, he indicates, require at least one big west coast and east coast swing and extend over a three-year period. The campaign may include 50 to 75 meetings attended by the wife, as well as cocktails, lunches, and dinners for donors and their spouses.

For example, the campaign may try to establish organizations in 20 to 25 cities across the country. Each organization holds "kick-off" dinners and these are attended by the president and his spouse. Wives of presidents "add stability, a degree of trust in the president and help generate a higher confidence level," Bennett says. He adds that he has seldom found a presidential wife who does not enhance her husband's image.

“There is an aura of respectability about the president’s wife that builds confidence and trust,” he says.

Vivian Shapiro at Michigan is a social worker who now is spending most of her time on the university and has a special interest in fund raising. She has raised money as a personal matter to re-do the art library, but sees herself as a “strong support member” of the entire university fund raising team. Fund raising is added onto the president’s job and frequently there is less time and energy for him to devote to many details. Thus, she believes that if she did not make an effort to make people feel welcome and comfortable and ask questions about them as people, the university fund-raising effort would be more difficult—and not half as much fun. In terms of their total life, “it is a way to share, instead of being all work.”

In a major campaign, she sees herself participating in the general area of an endowment for student financial aid. She has flown to the west coast to meet alumni on a fund raising swing and entertained donors at the house.

At a large state university with tens of thousands of alumni active in the life of the area and in local government, the president’s wife and the president’s house can be centers of the establishment and there can be great variety in the university’s involvement. The topics of concern and interest can range from economic development and formation of high tech centers to attract industry to the linkage of arts groups. The president’s wife is in a position to know everyone of importance in the state if she chooses. She can organize useful combinations of people and from these combinations benefits can accrue to the University.

Judy Ikenberry at Illinois is very supportive of the university foundation in fund raising.

“When the foundation calls to ask if I will give a dinner for a prospect they have scheduled to visit, I am always delighted,” she says. “Some of our graduates have done marvelous things and deserve recognition. We develop a suggested guest list and talk about the kind of event. There will be a meal, but should it be a big dinner? We look for guests in the same area where the money is likely to go—civil engineering for example. We look for those in the community who would be pleased to be invited and are prospects for another time because we hope they will see someone who is giving and the joy it brings. We may also give a thank-you dinner. The ideal size may be 20. Guests are told whom the party honors.”

Many university hostesses find this technique useful. Sue Young, the wife of Chancellor Charles Young at UCLA—which raised \$46 million in 1982-’83—

frequently has small dinner parties for 16 guests. These are social evenings at which guests already are—or possibly might become—major donors. Sue says, “The residence provides the ideal atmosphere for getting to know our benefactors on a more personal level.”

Although many president’s wives, who regularly may have dinners for 60 and more, consider 18 or 20 a good small dinner party for a donor, there is also a place for the small, intimate dinner of only six. Vivian Shapiro believes that the most important aspect of such a dinner is showing that the president and his wife have the time for the donor. Millie Shain, whose husband, Irving, is the chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, likes small lunches when donors are in town.

She is proudest of the Bascom Hill Society professorships, which allow private donors to support research faculty. Large cocktail parties are given which permit members of the President’s Club who have already given \$10,000 or more to meet others who have funded Bascom Professorships of \$250,000 or more and are satisfied with their contributions.

Successful fund raising depends heavily on the board having an understanding of the wife’s role and the provision of adequate resources to do the job. Marie Dodd, former head of the governing board of Georgia, suggests that husband and wife present themselves at the final interview and discuss exactly what their relationship is and what the wife expects to do. Lucy Hackney of the University of Pennsylvania says that her previous experience at Tulane, when her husband, Sheldon, was president, meant that when they came to Pennsylvania, she knew what to ask for at once.

To raise funds effectively the spouse must have good conditions for entertaining. Money should not be asked for at the presidential residence, but the subject may arise anyway.

One ex-head of the University of Tennessee System said that of six gifts of over one million, five were first mentioned during evenings at his home. Home is also a place where board support can develop.

Highly illustrative of the importance of good understanding and working relationships supporting the spouse’s role in fund-raising was the “Tennessee Today” campaign of three years ago that raised \$57 million. O.B. Lashlee, vice chairman of the Tennessee governing board, says: “Most of our presidents and chancellors came up from the development ranks. We feel that makes the best president, able to deal with the legislators and alumni and help with fund raising. The search committee interviews the wife when the committee is down to the final three or four candidates, and at that time the trustees, alumni and development people have a chance to weigh in. If at the interview I felt that a

man's wife could not be an asset and could not be a part of the university, I'd vote against him because in our way of doing things—and you can't argue with success—the wife is so important."

The actual expectation—? "Well, that she will assist her husband in doing everything that he does, that she will serve as a hostess at the house, or at any type of social function, and accompany her husband on trips such as those to Development Council meetings."

And what does this mean for University of Tennessee President Edward J. Boling and his wife Carolyn? According to Mr. Lashlee, "They are the hardest working folks we've ever seen—nearly 24 hours a day, and except for two-week vacations, they give up darn near everything else."

Carolyn goes everywhere with Ed, including visits to major donors, and "last Saturday she was out at the football game in the cold and the rain with the rest of us, and acting as if she liked it," Lashlee commented. And, as a bottom line: "We have even discussed it, and I have told Carolyn there would be no hesitation on my part in recommending compensation for her. She told me, 'I feel like I am doing this because I want to, not because I have to.'"

Money for entertaining would not present any problem for Carolyn Boling, nor for Clare Mackey at Michigan State, who said when asked if they had a budget, "We have what we need." But other wives have small, inadequate houses and budgets that do not reflect the size and the importance of the university.

Regardless of the circumstances, the entertaining function is vital to fund raising. Shaping staff and resources requires both an understanding of systems analysis and the art of giving great parties. An open, active and organized approach will help establish a professional approach with the secretarial, catering, and development staff which should understand how the university raises money, gains political and press support and makes friends through its entertaining.

A quick review of every party the following day is a good idea as is a record of seating, menu, decoration, guest list, cost per head, and purpose. Even if a staff assistant and the computer in the development office keep a record, only the hostess will be able to note some of the intangibles such as: "Mrs. T. was happy to have met the governor and wishes to volunteer for a state committee." The IRS will allow tax deductions for office expense of the spouse including a computer should they not be supplied by the university.

A quick and useful system, both to remember guests at large parties at the house and to harvest acquaintances made in crowds, is to keep a stack of 3x5

roll file cards handy. It makes it easy to note names and data. These can be snapped onto the roll file devoted entirely to potential guests. Everyone has a coterie of friends, and it may be necessary on short notice one day to give a very large party. At that time, a quick call to a secretary to "round up the usual guests" may serve to bring 200 lively people to the door. Without the roll file cards it may be difficult to think just who would enjoy a particular evening, but with the card system the president's wife can develop music lists, art lists, press lists, alumni lists and so forth. These cards do not take the place of the development office's computer print outs, but they do serve on occasion to produce a useful, personal party "for fun."

The spouse who may have a full time career or part time job should be able to delegate everything she does not actually like doing, but she should retain control. Guests will hold her responsible for arrangements if her name as well as her husband's is on the invitation even though the party may not be at the president's house.

The first bottom line for every presidential spouse is to avoid embarrassment, particularly at state institutions. Flower arranging, menu planning, sending invitations, arranging car pools for guests, silver polishing, preparing hors d'œuvres, stacking away newspapers, etc. should all devolve on someone else so that the hostess is able to concentrate on the guests. She may find that her best approach to her own parties is through the front door 15 minutes before the party is due to start.

University resources may not at first seem up to this standard. At a university where a skilled fund raising program may not be fully developed, the board and the development office must be brought to this point by steady pressure. Good enough records must be kept to prove that guests have donated well beyond the cost of all entertainment.

Although she may not cook, the successful hostess must devote time and interest to the party. She will have more credibility and control than anyone else present. Especially at her own house she must know every guest's full name (yes!) and as much about the guest as possible. She must introduce everyone to everyone else if the party is held indoors. Guests will do what she says without resentment and automatically try to please her by taking up topics she has introduced. She can mix them up, set them up with glowing introductions, and see that they meet and talk with other guests. She may well remember the old Aga Khan's secret: "No guest ever feels the evening wasted if he has felt himself to have been 'brilliant.'"

Guests are flattered if they see effort has been made for them. Burning candles, a glowing fireplace, gleaming silver, flowers, and decorated food help.

Shy hostesses should remind themselves that people often are pleased just to be "out."

While she worries, guests are getting ready to plunge into discussion and need just the slightest push toward one another. In large parties extra hostesses may be appointed, usually ebullient friends who will report back and round up the lonely couple or break up a group that looks like it is standing together only because the people in it know no one else. Sit-down dinners should be arranged with place cards to avoid unseemly scrambling. Older people prefer it. Separating husbands and wives at different tables may come as a shock in some areas but is successful in promoting good conversation. The hostess may want to appear briefly at a table of strangers to make sure they have all had opportunities to meet one another.

One evening when I was feeding my children in the kitchen at Stony Brook, a Wall Street lawyer with outstanding conversational ability whom we had entertained several times at our expense telephoned. He said he wished to give the university 300 acres of waterfront property on Long Island Sound and would I please find out how to take the land, and by the way, what was that wine I had served last time?

In large institutions the pay-off from entertaining may be lost in the development office. The presidential couple may have difficulty with some brash young staff members who may ask: "Why can't all of us be invited and all the guests wear name tags so we can see who they are?" It is important that, if development staff members are invited, they describe themselves as information officers. Saying that one is a development officer at a presidential party can be like saying that one is a psychiatrist. Thereafter the conversation is never the same.

A good hostess will go far beyond staff's efforts. She will make sure that every woman's name is known, see that invitations are hand-addressed, and spend time developing foolproof seating plans.

Good relations with staff, particularly in secretarial staff in her husband's office, can spell success or failure for the president's spouse. University staff members forward mail and messages and they can provide knowledge about whether an event is worth attending. An alert staff member will relay minutiae vital to good entertaining.

For example: "The new head of marine sciences was just here and boy, is he attractive."

"Bachelor?"

"No, his wife is coming, but isn't here yet."

“Let’s put him down for the philanthropists’ dinner” (an occasion where the boards of all the local hospitals have been winnowed by the development office and members invited along with some prominent university scientists working on ‘designer genes’).

Staff can also present problems, as several presidents’ wives have testified. Hierarchical, obstructive secretaries can turn out to be possessive people who attempt to cut the wife out and have to be worked around.

It is important that the chief development officer be sophisticated, because the wrong impression of the university’s fund raising intentions can take years to overcome. For example, a comment that \$10,000 may be expected “if you go to a lunch before a basketball game ” could turn away valuable community leaders who could be of help in other ways with local power brokers.

Fund raising and entertaining at the house are subtle. Money is seldom mentioned unless the donor senses that he will receive pleasure by doing so in that setting. One fund raiser has pointed out that after buying a big item like a car, boat, or house, most people feel depressed for several days afterward, but giving money away results in a sense of exhilaration, of having done the right thing.

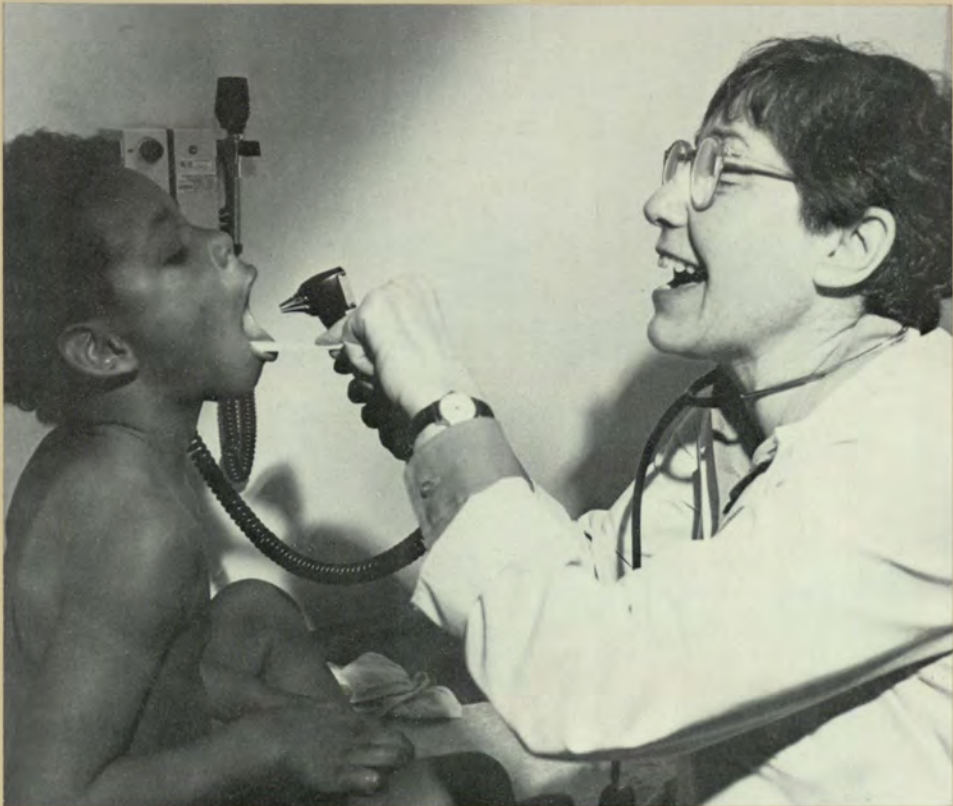
The president’s wife needs to be sensitive to this and able to respond appropriately. She also needs to know who has made noteworthy contributions because these people often become very friendly, suddenly embracing her enthusiastically in public, or putting both arms around husband and wife and drawing all three closely together. It is something special. But even with mass entertaining, a good hostess can develop at the president’s house a kind of charmed inner circle, the outer circle being the huge events that occur elsewhere on campus.

The rewards of all the effort are personal for the wife, but material for the university.

A PICTURE ALBUM



The daily activities of the wife or husband of a university chief executive officer is diversified, to put it mildly. They range through assorted separate careers, university duties and functions and, sometimes, there is time for a welcome break. As one of the presidential spouses describes it; We: 1. Pursue our own professional careers . . . Dr. Ruthellen Bloustein, pediatrician and wife of President Edward J. Bloustein of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, examines a cooperative patient;



1

2. Spend considerable time at the important tasks of arranging the presidential home for social occasions . . . Patricia Ryan, wife of President John Ryan of Indiana University, arranges flowers in preparation for a gathering in her home;



2

3. Sit on platforms at academic ceremonies . . . Mary Eleanor Jennings and her husband, Edward, President of the Ohio State University;



3

4. Sometimes manage a presidential mansion . . . Molly Bartlett, whose husband, Thomas, is President of the University of Alabama System, stands on the portico of the official president's residence in Huntsville, Alabama; (Photo by the Huntsville Times)



4

5



5. Take advantage of a break to keep up on an important physical fitness regime . . . Clare Mackey, the wife of President Cecil Mackey of Michigan State University, practices her tennis service;

6. Deliver formal addresses . . . Dolores Wharton, whose husband, Clifton R. Wharton, Jr., is Chancellor of the State University of New York System, addresses a Chancellor's Report Dinner;

7. Stand at receptions . . . Kathryn Sample, whose husband, Steven, is President of the State University of New York, Buffalo, takes part in a university reception;

6



7



8. *Oversee costume fittings for a musical performance . . . Opera Singer Mildred Posvar, wife of Chancellor Wesley Posvar of the University of Pittsburgh, adjusts costumes before a performance;*



8

9. *Take part in local bazaars . . . Jean Aldrich, wife of Chancellor Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr., of the University of California, Irvine, tries some sales techniques at a bazaar;*

10. *Cheer at athletic events . . . Libby Gardner, whose husband, David, now serves as President of the University of California System, roots for the home team at a sporting event held at the University of Utah, where her husband formerly was President.*



9



10

11. Achieve advanced degrees . . . Jerry Trabant, wife of President E.A. Trabant of the University of Delaware, registers pleasure after receiving her M.S. degree at the University;

12. Are involved in the arts . . . Nancy Silverman, whose husband, Paul, is President of the University of Maine at Orono, chats with Opera Star Eileen Farrell;

13. Stand with the president at university receptions . . . Dr. Stanley Johnson, husband of Chancellor Barbara S. Uehling of the University of Missouri, Columbia, joins her in the receiving line.



11



12



13

CHAPTER III



CRITICAL
RELATIONSHIPS
OF THE SPOUSE



Vera Farrington (Mrs. James C.) Olson is the wife of the President of the University of Missouri, a position the Olsons have held for eight years. Prior to that, they were in the Chancellor's residence at the University of Missouri-Kansas City for eight years. Vera Olson has a bachelor's degree in English and Education from the University of Nebraska. She has taught school, and is the author of two books for children. She has travelled extensively in the United States and abroad. She has been active in volunteer work on behalf of the arts at the University of Missouri. The Olsons have two grown daughters and one granddaughter.

THE DELICATE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD



by Vera Olson

No relationship is more critical for the university president than that with the institution's governing board. The president can survive difficulties with the faculty, with students, with alumni and with almost any other group associated with the university so long as he retains the support of the board, but if he loses the support of the board he cannot long survive, no matter how popular he may be with other groups.*

The president usually begins with the support of all, or nearly all, of the members of the board—and indeed one should think twice about accepting an offer which is not unanimous, or nearly so. The pressures of the presidency, however, are so great, and the conflicting demands are so intense, that differences of opinion between board and president are bound to arise, and probably with some frequency. Differences are best worked out if there is an easy, friendly relationship between president and board, and they can be exacerbated if the relationship is strained. The spouse, in addition to providing support in many areas, is critical to the establishment and maintenance of friendly relations. Indeed, how well the spouse succeeds in this will have an important bearing on the president's success or failure. The spouse will succeed or fail largely on the basis of her commitment, her personality, and her ability to relate to people, but it is important that board, spouse, and president have an understanding of the role of the spouse in the presidential partnership, and that there be some generally agreed upon set of expectations.

There are certain factors that board, spouse, and president must all recognize. As is true for the presidency itself, there is no precise, all-encompassing job description for the presidential spouse. Indeed, only 12 percent of the spouses who participated in the 1983 NASULGC survey received any explanation of the expectations of the role. It is not a career in the usual sense of the

*For simplicity I am going to use the term "president" to designate the chief executive officer who, I realize, often is called "chancellor." Again for the sake of simplicity I am going to refer to the president as "he" and the spouse as "she" even though this is not always the case.

word, nor can it be an end in itself. The role is one of support for the presidency, and it does not need to remove the possibility of a separate career for the spouse. It is a volunteer support role which, like the presidency, carries greater demands than the full time and energies that any one person can sustain. Obviously, this results in freedom for the spouse to determine her own pattern for the role, within certain general guidelines. Board, president and spouse all help to establish the guidelines and determine the role. This can be an ongoing process, but the period of candidacy provides an ideal time for all concerned to think together about what is expected. While only half of the spouses who participated in the 1983 NASULGC survey were included in the presidential search interview process conducted by the governing board, it is significant that 84 percent of the spouses in the survey felt they should have been a part of that process.

Accepting the importance of this inclusion can be extremely useful for the spouse, along with the presidential candidate, in making some thoughtful preparation for that first encounter with the board. There are questions which the candidate and spouse should have resolved between themselves. For example, what kind of support does this president consider most important from his spouse? Is it enough that she look after their children's demands and standard matters of running a household? Does he expect her to be a tennis partner available at the convenience of his demanding schedule? Does he want her to be a companion on his frequent travels, to serve as sounding board, diversion, and sometimes driver as he works or rests? Does he prefer to be accompanied by his spouse frequently when attending the multitude of university functions? Does he feel it is better to have some of the heavy social correspondence handled more personally at home than by the office staff? Does he expect his spouse to attend university and community events by herself, sometimes representing him, sometimes speaking for him? Does he expect his spouse to maintain and manage a heavy official entertainment schedule in the home they occupy?

Questions such as these must be resolved on the basis, first and foremost, of the personal abilities and interests of the spouse. Does her self-realization depend upon having her own career or professional activity? Does she prefer to spend most of her time with private concerns of home and family? Does she have a strong interest or avocation that requires much of her time? Does she loathe or love making speeches? Does she enjoy frequent contact, often in the limelight, with large and assorted groups of people? Can she happily spend many hours a week at her desk on correspondence, records, and guest lists? Does she enjoy frequently entertaining many people in her home?

The amount and extent of university budget, facilities, and staff available to the spouse is the other important factor for the candidate and spouse to determine as they consider the support role together. It is helpful if this information can be obtained from a faculty committee, the predecessor spouse, or some other source previous to an interview with the board.

Generally speaking, the members of the board of a public university are people of some substance. Whether they have been appointed by the governor or voted into office by the electorate, they are probably community, and sometimes statewide leaders. They usually represent a broad spectrum of the state's population, both occupationally and geographically. In Missouri, for example, the board has included bankers, business executives, housewives, lawyers, doctors and farmers, who have come from both the urban centers and the rural areas of the state. Most board members are public spirited citizens who understand and recognize the importance of volunteerism in America. The bond they share is a strong enough commitment to the educational institution they serve, that they are willing to devote large amounts of their time and energies to its welfare. From whatever walk of life they come, each of these individuals must be generally in control of his or her own time schedule, by virtue of the demands placed on them with their board membership. Whatever differences there may be among them in their approach to issues, they share a common goal of furthering the interests of the institution. Although most new board members have special interests in particular parts of the university, most of them soon develop an interest in, and a concern for, the total university, all matters related to all of its divisions, all of its campuses, as opposed to concern for a specific program, department, school, or campus.

It can be expected, then, that this group of leading citizens of the state who dedicate their volunteer efforts to the good of the university, may have considerable understanding of, and appreciation for, the support role of the presidential spouse of the institution they serve. For both of them, volunteerism is generally the basis for the expenditure of their time and energies. For both of them, that which is good for the institution they serve is the major justification for their efforts. The difference is that the spouse's first commitment is probably to the president and to helping him serve the university well. Given this situation, the spouse can only assume that members of the board stand ready to help her in whatever ways they can.

The other arm of the delicate balance is the spouse herself. What kind of person can the board expect to find as presidential partner? The answer, of course, is that presidential spouses are as varied in their interests, personalities, and abilities as are members of the board. There are, however, certain assump-

tions that the board might make, depending upon the age and experience of the president.

It is probably safe to assume that the presidential spouse is a college graduate who enjoys at least a basic familiarity with college life. Generally speaking, university presidents tend to be of a mature age and probably not at the beginning of their married lives. Frequently the president has served as department chair and dean or vice-president in an academic institution. Consequently the spouse probably has served in other academic support roles. This provides a valuable basis for experience, as well as for observation of the role of the presidential spouse. Many of us have had role models in our early years. Some academic spouses have concluded early that they never would, or could, fill the support role of presidential spouse. Obviously that posture either negates any presidential ambitions in a family or necessitates a change in the marital union.

Generally speaking, by the time of a presidential appointment, the spouse has developed something of a personal life style. Perhaps she devotes most of her time happily to home and family. Perhaps she is an avid volunteer in her community. Very possibly she has established a career or profession. Very probably the life style of every spouse combines some of these elements. In these times of so many options, it is important that by the time of a presidential appointment, the spouse has achieved enough self-knowledge to understand the elements necessary in this marriage for self-realization, satisfactions, even happiness for both adults involved.

The interview with the board can well provide an excellent opportunity—too frequently neglected—to establish common understandings and the basis for a sound relationship between spouse and board members if there has been some good, preliminary, thoughtful preparation given to this important occasion.

It is well to bear in mind that the board members have probably had no previous experience in hiring a university president. It usually tends to happen only once—if at all—in the terms of most board members. At the same time, this is, in all probability, the first experience for the spouse candidate to meet with a university board. It is of vital importance that both spouse and board approach this meeting with an attitude of positive goodwill, which will insure a frank, open exchange between them, and a comparison of their perceptions of the role of the spouse.

It can be expected, if board relations with the spouse of the preceding president have been congenial, that not a lot of attention has been centered on this support role by board members. Also to be expected is the board's assump-

tion that the role will function much as it has in the past, provided it has been an acceptable situation. Therefore, it is easy to understand why it is so vital at this time for the spouse to learn as much as possible about the board's perception of the role, whatever its basis may be. This is the right time to hear "how things have been done in the past," what has gone before.

This is also the necessary time for the spouse to represent as clearly as possible her perception of the role, in order that any basic differences in these perceptions can be discussed in an open, friendly manner in order to avoid future problems.

If the spouse, for example, intends to pursue her own career, this is the time that both board and spouse need to ascertain whether there will be adequate staff available to the spouse to make this possible. If both board and spouse agree on the importance of extensive official entertaining in the president's home, this is the time for everyone to make sure there are adequate facilities, equipment and household help to do this, or that they can be made available. If there are to be children living in the official residence with their parents, now is the time to make sure that the house will accommodate the family's personal needs and desires in regard to privacy, convenience, comfort, and household help. If board and spouse expect that the spouse will accompany the president to many events both within the community and afar, is there provision for live-in students or other help to "sit with" children and/or house in their absence? Will extra official correspondence and desk work requirements in connection with the presidency, such as invitations, responses, and records, be handled by clerical help at the house or in the president's office? Who is responsible for grounds and flowers for the house? What is the budget arrangement for household maintenance and help?

There are so many questions that the spouse should have an opportunity to discuss with some members of the board in an early interview in order to avoid future criticism and misunderstanding. It is important for the spouse to remember through their discussions, however, that these volunteer board members with their basic commitment to the educational institution they serve, have every reason to want to help the spouse to perform her volunteer support role as easily and well as possible. Rather than adversaries, they are allies in an exciting enterprise.

The prestige that members of the board enjoy with their appointment can hardly balance the criticism and blame they share with the president for everything that happens at the university which alumni, students, parents, or politicians do not like. To counteract this, and to furnish some reward for the hours of volunteer effort, members of the university administration usually try

to offer what they can to board members in the way of special consideration, such as invitations to special events, social occasions for board members and spouses in connection with their meetings, and any other available advantages to recognize their services to the institution.

These public and social occasions furnish the basic, direct involvement of the spouse with members of the board. Together the president and spouse must have reached agreement on what kinds of activity and effort in this direction will contribute most to good and useful working relationships between administration and board. For, after all, that is the basic purpose for the relationship between the spouse and board. Social contacts among people can very often improve working relationships. A word should be said about the importance of flexibility on the part of the spouse. As board membership and attitudes change, so may the spouse need to adjust her efforts and activities to best accommodate the immediate situation.

In the normal course of events, contact between board members and spouse can become fairly frequent and close. They are, in a sense, all members of a larger "university family." It is to be expected that the spouse may well come to feel closer to some board members and their spouses, than to others, based on common interests, backgrounds, education, or personalities that jibe. Board members and spouses may want to share with the presidential family personal special occasions such as weddings, funerals, alas, and sometimes parties or excursions.

These relationships can be close and supportive without the family of a board member or family of the president being too closely involved or concerned with the really private problems and concerns of either family. They are based, after all, on an employer-employee relationship which will probably be healthier and more enduring if, for example, the individuals involved are not caught up in working out each others' personal problems. This relationship then, is inevitably a delicate one.

It is not surprising that in the past, expectations have been assumed rather than stated. Generally, board members receive their impressions of how the spouse performs the support role from others throughout the community, area, or state. That appears to satisfy the need. For example, only two percent of the spouses polled in the survey have ever been asked to give a report to the board. On the other hand, almost 20 percent expressed an interest in doing so. Although this is a minority view, it may reflect a growing concern on the part of spouses that the board understand their roles. As we all know, what could be taken for granted in an earlier day cannot be today. Marian Oldham, a member of the board of the University of Missouri and of the Association of Governing

Boards, put it well when she told the Committee of Presidents' and Chancellors' Spouses at their St. Louis meeting in 1982: "Trustees need educating and hints as to how to cooperate with presidents' spouses." She suggested that annually boards "listen to spouses of our presidents and chancellors, review expectations, budgets, etc. in a more formal setting." She added, "We must, as trustees, recognize the great resources we have in our partner-spouses."

The relationship between the presidential spouse and members of the board can and should be a congenial, social one. It will help if the spouse has made some thoughtful preparation for the role including some consideration of the board members' attitudes and positions, as well as her own feelings and expectations of the demands of the role, along with its privileges and pleasures. It will also be useful for her to maintain some perspective on the support nature of the role, rather than try to treat it as an end in itself. The best basis for continuing, congenial relationships between board and spouse is that of a mutual good faith and trust and that both board and spouse feel positive about the institution they serve and their volunteer efforts on its behalf.

Two presidential spouses, Adele McComas of Mississippi State University and Mary Eleanor Jennings of Ohio State University, (formerly at the University of Wyoming), expressed the same general view in summarizing their board relationships in presentations to a NASULGC spouses panel in St. Louis in the fall of 1982. McComas referred to "the supportive disposition of the board members and their spouses." Jennings stated, "To sum up, my relationship with our two boards started on a positive note and thus far has continued on a positive, rewarding basis."

It seems logical to assume that this delicate relationship can be handled effectively among fair and reasonable people.



Judy Ikenberry graduated from Purdue in 1957 and went on to receive her Masters Degree from Michigan State University in 1959. Stanley Ikenberry was at Michigan State pursuing graduate studies at the same time and the two were married in 1958. Judy has served on the faculty at Michigan State and at Penn State. The

Ikenberrys have three sons and came to Illinois in 1979. The University of Illinois has two campuses—one in Champaign-Urbana and a second major campus in Chicago. Judy works with her partner, the President, and with the wives of the two Chancellors to help the University communicate more effectively with the several constituencies it serves.

SYSTEM AND CAMPUS FIRST LADIES LIVING CLOSELY TOGETHER



by Judy Ikenberry

Time was, in the not too distant past of academia, that the university president's wife stepped into an unwritten but real role as social leader of campus and community. She was expected to lead the entertainment, and serve the tea. She was watched to set a high moral and dress tone. She was expected to manage effortlessly the official residence. Virtually every campus of moderate age abounds with legends of first ladies who met the tests. Even better stories, unfortunately, are the legends of first ladies who missed the mark of the communities' expectations.

Recent history has added another complicating dimension to this already difficult role. To cope with the problems of growth and expanded enrollment and to educate larger numbers of students, many institutions established new campuses to handle expanded enrollment; in other instances states combined formerly independent institutions and campuses into "systems." Both the new system and the campus have chief executives. Thus, there can be two first ladies, or at least, two "first spouses." But who should fill the role of "first lady?" Who gives the parties, welcomes the faculty, meets foreign dignitaries and manages the official residence?

The community and the institution may have moderated their expectations of the chief executive's wife in line with the changes in societal expectations for women, but how can even this amended image accommodate more than one first lady? One need only listen to the difficult times masters of ceremonies have in introducing the two to detect the problem.

Perhaps even more important is the challenge facing the women in these positions and how they deal with their respective roles and each other.

Although tensions have obviously occurred between the campus head spouse and the system head spouse, there has been no documentation to help understand and possibly reduce areas of friction; the NASULGC study asked spouses

of system and campus chief executives to respond to areas of concern, such as:

1. Who attends national conferences? (21 percent reported some problem)
2. Who is responsible for entertaining the board, legislators, alums, donors? (16 percent reported some problem)
3. Who does the international travel? (16 percent reported some problem)
4. Who lives in the public house? (11 percent reported some problem)
5. Who entertains in relation to athletic events? (13 percent reported some problem)

These answers suggest that problems between system head and campus head spouses do exist in some instances. One wonders if campus and system respondents were willing to openly admit the extent and reality of role conflicts, expectations and tensions.

When responses to these questions about problems are divided between system head spouses and campus head spouses, differences are evident.

1. Who attends national conferences? (5 percent of the system head spouses reported problems, but 30 percent of campus head spouses reported problems)
2. Who is responsible for entertaining the board, legislators, alums, and donors? (10 percent of the system head spouses reported problems while 23 percent of the campus head spouses reported problems)
3. Who does the international travel? (5 percent of the system head spouses reported problems while 23 percent of the campus head spouses reported problems)
4. Who lives in the house? (No system head spouses reported problems but 17 percent of the campus head spouses reported problems)
5. Who hosts in relation to athletic events? (6 percent of the system head spouses reported problems while 17 percent of the campus head spouses reported problems)

The key point suggested by the data is that spouses of campus heads feel and report more strain in all five areas polled than do the system head spouses.

Other responses in the NASULGC study were analyzed for differences between system head spouses and campus head spouses. Only six questions suggested significant differences between the two groups. Four questions about accepting responsibilities of the role and enjoyment of these responsibilities brought a significantly different response from the two groups.

1. Enjoy being a public speaker? 47 percent system head spouses responded yes, while 10 percent campus head spouses did so.
2. Accept responsibility as evaluator of university candidates? 28 percent

system head spouses responded positively, but only 7 percent campus head spouses did so.

3. Enjoy being evaluator of university candidates? 31 percent system head spouses said yes, while only 3 percent of the campus head spouses responded.
4. Enjoy being editor of husband's speeches? 31 percent system head spouses reported yes, while 7 percent of the campus head spouses responded.

Another three unrelated questions brought significantly different responses with these answers showing the same trend.

1. Were you a part of the interview process when the governing board considered your spouse? 69 percent system head spouses indicated they were, while only 37 percent campus head spouses so indicated.
2. Do you participate in volunteer work in the community beyond the role of spouse to the President/Chancellor? 90 percent system head spouses said yes, while 53 percent campus head spouses responded affirmatively.
3. How many people do you entertain each year in your home? 57 percent system head spouses reported more than 2,000 while 28 percent campus head spouses reported more than 2,000.

Of the large number of questions on the NASULGC questionnaire, it is interesting the small number of questions on which there is a significant difference in the two groups of spouses. However, even though the number of questions is not large, the range of issues is broad.

More interesting, and of importance to the understanding of the system head spouse and the campus head spouse roles and problems, is the general trend of every answer in which there was a significant difference. In all questions where problems were identified, campus head spouses responded in larger percentages. In all questions about involvement and satisfaction with the role, the system head spouses answered positively much more than did the campus head spouses. In comparing the lives of the two groups of spouses, the campus head spouse seems to feel the problems and frustrations much more and seems to get less enjoyment from the role than does the system head spouse.

Another way to assess the relationship of system head spouses and campus head spouses is to talk to them individually. This has not been done by a study, but from several informal discussions with wives and among friends. It is apparent that each situation is different. Some are difficult and some quite comfortable. Some system/campus wives report functioning easily with their counterparts. Others report detailed procedures to avoid interactions which are troublesome.

"I never go on that campus without a formal invitation."

"We don't go to each others' homes or parties."

These statements and the fervor with which they are uttered indicate problems. While a problem may be caused by the differences between two personalities, the problem more likely is the result of the structure, the friction of two people trying to do their jobs but caught in a system with a tradition of only one.

Personal statements about these problems are made privately and not in large groups. The problems can be painful but the spouses are discreet. When they feel tension, they find their own ways to accommodate because they do not want to bring it to the attention of the public.

"The public does not want to hear our problems."

If spouses were to speak publicly of their own dissatisfaction it might be considered a negative factor in their husbands' job performances.

No one factor can account for all tensions between the system head spouse and the campus head spouse. Several considerations can have bearing on the tension. The history of the development of a specific system and campus is an important factor. The system may be new, while the campus may have been long established. The system wife may have to create her role, and adaptation may be required of the campus head wife. Both must re-educate the public, the alumni, the faculty and student body, and how the spouses feel may be conditioned by how others react. Awareness of the system head spouse may come at the expense of some of the homage, support, and awe formerly given to the campus executive's spouse.

Still another problem emerges if the campus constituencies did not want the system established in the first place. The system itself then becomes the real source of friction which is reflected in the tense relationship of the two spouses. If the relationship between the system and campus administrators is strong and healthy it may pave the way for an easier sharing of the spouses' roles and responsibilities.

There is also the matter of the degree and nature of control exercised by the system and its administration over the campus. This is especially true if the degree of control is perceived to be changing. If controls are seen as strengthened, this typically will be resented or opposed. Relations between spouses can reflect the tensions. Whatever the cause, it is a pretty sure bet that if relations are strained between the administrators, their wives will not have an easy, comfortable relationship.

Another factor in the stress relationship may be the physical location of the two couples. Are they in the same town? When paths cross on a daily basis in

the presence of the same audiences—campuses, faculty, students, community, etc., tension is more likely to evolve. Spouses may also find problems in sharing physical facilities on campus for events they must hold. Things as small as reading about one another in the same small town newspaper can result in unnecessary tension.

Even when not living in the same city or town, the spouses may become actively involved in “campus turf disputes,” especially if the city or town plays a key role in the life of the state. For example, the campus may be located in the state capital or in the large metropolitan area. Overtures by the system head spouse there may be threatening to the campus spouse, especially if she is not included. She may well resent the invasion of what she considers “her” territory and may feel such activities as a threat to her role or an implied criticism. There is also the matter of confusion of the public as to who is who.

Another cause of friction can be the title of the husband. There is no national or regional uniformity of titles and little understanding of implied roles. The public may or may not understand what the title of chancellor or president means. “President” may be the system head or the campus executive, as may be the “chancellor.” Confusion in the public and campus minds as to the roles of chancellor and president spells problems for the spouse as she has to define her husband’s job before she can define her own. These two titles are the most frequently used but there are others in use, such as vice president and director, and they provide confusion for the public also.

An obvious source of friction may be the house. If the housing provisions are, or seem, unequal, there can be jealousy. Identical facilities cannot be provided, but some degree of fairness and equity in housing is important to eliminate tension between the two spouses. Apart from a sense of “fairness” is the question of function. Does the campus or system house provide the setting for the spouse to play the role as she sees it and as it has been defined?

Another problem can be covering the costs of entertaining. Both spouses, when entertaining to support the institution, need reimbursement. It is too much to expect that it be done from the personal pocketbook. More tension arises when provisions are made for one spouse but not the other.

A change of either of the executives is a factor in the stress between the spouses. It goes without saying that there should be a clear understanding of the roles of each executive and their relationship to each other. The spouses should have an understanding of these relationships. However, relationships frequently change as the people and circumstances change. New appointees have different ways of interpreting roles.

Beyond the changes in the person of the system executive and the campus

executive there are also changes in the governing boards and shifts in policies which can cause conflict. Once decentralized systems may find governing boards pushing for stronger central controls, or vice versa. This then changes the ground rules for both couples and may lead to friction. This says again that tensions between the executives may spill over into tensions between spouses.

The sometimes isolated roles of the executives at the end of the chain of command contribute also. When problems develop spouses have only their husbands to whom they can talk—no co-workers, intermediate “supervisors” or friends. Broadening the circle of discussion would likely increase, not resolve, the problem. And, too often, the president or chancellor lacks the time and understanding to help his spouse. In short, few safety valves for release of tension exist.

Some things can be done, however, to ease tensions and strains between the spouses. Communication is at the forefront of this list. The more the spouses and the two couples talk and work together, the closer and more understanding the relationship between them can become. Deliberate discussions of matters *not* job related help build strong human relationships and identify areas of common interest.

Who should take the initiative to improve communication? As in any human relationship, it may not be easy to make the first move, but the responsibility rests with both. If there has been a change in personnel, then a welcome to the new spouse by the spouse of longer tenure is a good first step. Lunch, a party, a concert, travel, or shopping together can strengthen mutual understanding. The purpose should be not to talk business or to talk about the tensions, although this can come too, but to build understanding and help eliminate unnecessary, irrational friction. A good human relationship between the spouses will not solve all the problems; it is merely a good beginning. The president, chancellor and “the system” need to help.

Spouses need time to prepare adequately for the functions in which they will be expected to play a leadership role. In many instances they will want to be a part of the early planning if their names are to be used. When planning for events is rushed, spouses may be the last to know the important details, building resentment and frustration.

As to which couple should entertain which groups, such questions need to be addressed openly by the chancellor, president and their spouses. They can decide on which of the various functions each will carry out, recognizing that the job is never really done and there is more than enough for both to do. If there is a policy or pattern of how functions will be carried out within the institution, decisions as to who does what can follow naturally. In cases where

there is joint responsibility, planning needs to be done cooperatively. Cooperation has to be the rule of the day and give and take a part of the process. There is simply no room for small, insecure egos or fragile feelings.

One key to eliminating tension is to avoid viewing roles as competitive, whether between campus and system or between the two executive couples. Cooperation for the good of the University, not competition, must be the aim or tension is inevitable. Governing boards have an important role in making this pattern evident for the total university and system so that the spouses' attitudes reflect a more basic system attitude.

In this context, the key criterion is: "Is it good for the university?"

What the spouse is trying to do is help her campus, university or system, and help her husband. How well a spouse works with the other "first lady" bears directly on these goals.

It can be said that relationships between the spouses can be tender because of the many chances for friction and the very close nature of the setting, but the most fundamental question is whether the situation is structured to foster cooperation not competition. If there is competition it can be compounded with the problem of conflicting personalities. Many actions should be taken to minimize conflict.

It is a tribute to the "first ladies" working in the educational systems of today that the frictions are not greater and the numbers of listed problems are so small. In their own quiet ways, system head and campus head spouses have found ways to contribute effectively as they support the institutions they serve.



Beatrice Chaikind Ross Winkler, better known as “Bea,” is the wife and partner of Dr. Henry R. Winkler, President of the University of Cincinnati. “Bea” is a chronic volunteer and sits on the boards of most of the arts organizations and a fair percentage of the activist organizations in her community. Dr. & Mrs. Winkler are

the parents of five children—three hers, two his by previous marriages—and they are the proud grandparents of five wonderful grandchildren. After seven years in the presidency the couple will begin their sabbatical year in July 1984, when Dr. Winkler retires from the presidency. The Winklers expect to stay in Cincinnati.

BUILDING A UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY



by Beatrice Chaikind Ross Winkler

When we married in 1973, after both of our spouses died, my new husband was the executive vice president of Rutgers University. I had been a physician's wife for 25 years and knew almost nothing about how a university functioned.

When the president of Rutgers became ill, my husband became the acting president and I suddenly found myself in the public position of partnering a president of an urban institution.

Not knowing what the rules might be, or indeed, if there were any, I adapted my 35 year history of volunteer work in fund raising and working with community groups in fulfilling my new role.

By the time the president was well enough to return to his job, my husband had received an offer to serve the University of Cincinnati as executive vice president. Since this would mean going home for him, he asked me if I could face such a move. This question deserved consideration only because I had never lived more than 38 minutes from mid-town Manhattan and my mother and my children were in the East.

We decided that this move would be good for both of us. From my point of view, it would be a great adventure for me to try and live in another part of the United States. For my husband, he would be returning to his *alma mater*.

Though my husband was interviewed a number of times, I was only invited to join him for the final interview. At that time the board looked us over as a couple, but they never once indicated that they expected anything from me.

Within months of arriving in Cincinnati, my husband was again in the position of acting president while a search was held for a new president. Finally, my husband was named the 19th president of the University of Cincinnati in December, 1977.

Now I faced a new city, a new job, and new flurry of interest in me by the local Cincinnati newspapers. For the first time in my life, some reporter expressed a desire to interview me! What and who was I to be in this interview?

I found the interview rather pleasant and non-threatening. I was able to express my ideas and to get the idea across to the reporter that I felt partnering a president would be both stimulating and pleasurable.

In reading through the NASULGC survey results, I find that I was not alone in having the community suddenly take a complete interest in everything I did. It seems that partnering a president of an institution such as the one we represent, means a public scrutiny of our clothing, our sense of style, our hostessing ability, our decorating ability, as well as our public availability.

It was most interesting to me to learn that I was expected to be at—and presumably to enjoy—many of the athletic events, as well as most of the social and academic functions at the university.

I was expected by our board and our community to become a recognized leader in the community and still remain in the background as a decorative first lady. I could have opinions, but they had to be expressed in such a way as not to cause the institution or the president any embarrassment. Of course, we both were expected to set a high moral and ethical tone in all of our behavior, both in the university, our synagogue and in the community.

I could do as much volunteer work as my schedule would allow, but no matter what my commitments, I was to drop everything if my husband or the university needed me elsewhere.

As a college president's wife, at least at the University of Cincinnati, I've discovered, I am assumed to have no life of my own, and certainly no conflicting obligations. I am supposed to know how to keep busy when I am not needed. I am at the beck and call of every event, whether of interest to me or not, and live with the introduction: "AND HIS CHARMING AND GRACIOUS . . ."

In fact, "AND HIS CHARMING AND GRACIOUS . . ." began to grate so on my sensibilities that when our student honor society invited me to be their guest speaker I used that title for my speech. By keeping my sense of humor, and my sense of the ridiculous intact, I have been able to keep my sense of self.

Because I have commitments to my own conscience, I have served on many community organizational committees. One that I chair at present is *The Soviet Jewry Committee* for the Jewish Community Relations Council. I have been a guest columnist in our local paper on this issue and signed my own name to the article.

I served for five years on the Planning Board of the Community Chest, which reviews the organizations and agencies that will receive money from the United Fund drive.

Even before my present experience, it had been very easy to become committed to women's issues once I was widowed and discovered that, as such, I was virtually an adult non-person in the world in which I lived. Thus, while this was therefore not a new commitment for me, it did lead to my becoming more actively involved in the women's movement in my community.

On our University campus, I discovered that we had a need for an Infant Day Care Center. This was a need that was not being filled by the traditional community centers nor those on our campus. Most day care centers begin at age two. Meeting a young professor, who was soon to need this type of care for her infant, and being asked for my help, I invited all the grandparents and great aunts and uncles that I had met in Cincinnati to an Infant Day Care Shower in the president's garden. We had our professional staff make up a list of needs—diapers, furniture, cash, etc. This list was sent with the invitations and it gave people a chance to decide how much they wanted to spend, and what they might want to donate.

We had a pediatrician, an early childhood specialist, people representing our School of Education, (they have a day care school on campus, and there is a university-sponsored center off campus for older children), a prospective male parent, and ME—the grandmother, speaking to the issue.

I explained my interest in terms of my own "grandmother day care syndrome," when I worried that my grandchildren were to be abandoned almost at birth. I watched my daughter-in-law organize and build the kind of cooperative day care center needed on her campus so that she could continue teaching while our son completed his Ph.D. I watched a baby become a socialized, sharing human being at a much earlier age than my home-raised children. I realized that Daddy was called Mommy by the day care children and I was won over.

Now with three working daughters-in-law, one working daughter, all with job, husband, children and home, functioning in their own careers while sharing the household work loads and nurturing of their children with their husbands, I at least no longer worry about "who is watching the children?"

The outgrowth of this social-civic event was a well stocked day care center, ready to open for the new quarter. The center is accessible for either parent to drop in and give cooperative time. The center board was organized from the original group that came to my shower and I have had many pleasant visits watching the center in action.

In continuing my own campus activities, I became active in our Faculty Wives Club. It has been my pleasure to help the membership understand that it is necessary for all of us actively to pursue library funds, enlarge our circles of

interest to include volunteering for the various service agencies both on and off campus, and to help our foreign-born with their English. I am now trying to convince our group that we should show an interest in cleaning up our campus and in beautifying it with more trees.

With my commitment to women's issues, I became an active participant in our "Friends of Women's Studies" group. When the director of our program approached me for help in interesting the outside community in our Women's Studies seminars, workshops and courses, I suggested a tea or a strawberry festival at the president's house.

The women who were invited represented all the women's organizations in our community—ethnic and religious, blue collar, suited professionals and housewives.

We explained that our program, with their help, would be geared to enriching the lives of all women and that the programs would attack social action topics, intellectual topics, as well as public policy as it relates to women.

Our "Friends" group has grown and flourished. We now can provide scholarship monies to non-traditional female students and we have just completed our first \$100,000 campaign. We plan to use our major fund raising dollars to help bring visiting professors to our Women's Studies programs.

My Women's Studies project for the year 1983-84 involved interviewing 10 women who have been successful in areas that are considered non-traditional jobs for women in Cincinnati. I have written the text, while my friend, another grandmother who graduated from our graphics design school two years ago with her second undergraduate degree, did the graphics. Her choice of a title, *A Time for Women*, features a beautiful, soft yellow rose with a long leg of thorns, a simile that seems to represent so much of my thinking—soft and lovely, but with the ability to sting!

As part of my interest in the arts, I am serving on the boards of our public television station and our Cincinnati Ballet Company. I have opened our President's House to help the opera and the symphony. We will host the opening kick-off event for Ballet volunteers at our home. We have hosted seminars and lectures on all phases of music at the President's House.

It has been a source of pride to me that our College Conservatory of Music provides a home for so many of the artists who have given me pleasure over the years. One of my greatest joys in partnering my husband has been sharing our Conservatory and its artists with our community.

Because I enjoy writing stories, I have joined a writing group of some 45 women. We meet on a bi-monthly basis and we read our stories to each other.

This reading, plus luncheon, makes a most pleasant break in an otherwise hectic life.

When it comes to entertaining, I have discovered that we average about 3,400 visitors a year to our home, which is just two miles from the campus. We give graduation brunches, freshman orientation sessions at our home, athletic and cultural dinners, and the full gamut of entertaining (both on and off campus) that seems the norm for most of my peers.

The freshmen parties were an innovation of mine. Having had all of my education in a large school environment, I know how mind-boggling an institution of some 39,000 students can seem to someone from a small community school. I never even knew we had deans when I was in college, and I feel that just possibly I must have missed something.

We try to break the university down to its component parts so that it becomes a more human experience. We feel that since my husband is always available to our students, as am I, the faculty and staff should be available to our students. Any event at the President's House means open house, and a house tour. These tours have been conducted in the past, and I hope in the future, by members of SOPHOS, a student service group that hosts the orientation program for our incoming students.

One of the more demanding aspects of my job has been the active role I have played in our fund raising programs. Though I rarely ever ask anyone for money directly, my job is to host the contact parties that lead to the major gift giving. We have just about completed a five year, \$43 million campaign that has taken us on flying trips all over the United States. We have kept in touch with our alumni by hosting special events in every city that we arrive in. During the past year, for example, we have been in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Dayton, St. Louis, Memphis, Phoenix, New Orleans, Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Miami, Tampa, Naples (Florida), Orlando, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Portland, Oregon, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. for alumni affairs—most of them one-night stands. This, of course, in addition to the usual meetings my husband and I attend in various cities from east to west coasts.

Through this outreach, and with the help of our foundation and our alumni director, we have been able to convince our friends of the excellence of our institution. During the course of this fund-raising campaign, we have flown to Mexico to receive an endowed chair, and, though all this flying may seem jolly good fun and is pleasurable to a great extent, a good deal of it is just plain hard, tiring work. We know the inside of more airports and airport motels than we know the actual cities where we have landed.

I think that most of us in our role as partners, have found that, as we reach out and touch both those in the university family and those outside organizations that make up our communities, our lives are enriched. We are all found working in our churches and synagogues, in our schools and neighborhood organizations and on every type of community board. We, the spouses, seem to provide the anchor that keeps the goal in sight, the goal of building a better community for everyone. It is with great pride that we can view our own accomplishments and it is with even greater pride that we can see our years of volunteerism affecting every area of our communities.

I feel that I can safely say that the last six years, in Cincinnati, have been wonderful years for me. It is the first time in my life that I have felt that I've had a full scale impact on the community in which I live. My contributions have been accepted and my ideas have been expanded for the good of all of us. Before this experience, my impact was momentary, while here, I hope, we are building lasting bridges for years to come.

On the other hand, after six years, I still feel that it would be pleasant to have someone besides my husband review the job that I have done. It would be even nicer if that same "someone" would supply me with enough money to pay for the clothes that are necessary to appear at so many functions. But I think I could forego this allowance and even forgive the powers that be if, just once, I received the recognition from our board that this is a two-person job even though only one person is recognized and paid.

No one ever told me what the job of partnering a president would be. I learned by observing others and through my own experience and common sense. I believe that as a group, presidents' wives must have a strong sense of self and finely-honed sense of humor, or we could easily lose ourselves to self-pity. Without such personal resources how can anyone live always in the public eye yet always in the background?

In reading our survey results, it becomes quite obvious that the greater percentage of spouses enjoy their roles and feel that their lives have been full and rewarding. It is my opinion, and the view of many of our retiring couples, that trustees of colleges seeking new presidents will have to examine more carefully the roles they expect the spouse to assume. They should be encouraged to state clearly what they expect as standards of performance in order that they not be disappointed in the outcome. And they should be prepared properly to reward that performance. It will become harder and harder to assume that because one spouse wants the college presidency, the other spouse will automatically serve.

In recent years, wives have become decidedly assertive, independent, and

THE PRESIDENT'S SPOUSE

career-minded. They do not necessarily feel that they should put their careers on the shelf for a presidential spouse. Some spouses may not accept the subservient role allotted and insist that boards establish guidelines in advance in order to bring the leadership of the university more fully into the mainstream of our contemporary world.

For my part, I have always enjoyed being the other half of our partnership. But before I die, I would like to have a name other than, "AND HIS CHARMING AND GRACIOUS . . ."



Polly (Peterson) Davis is a native Coloradoan, who received her B. A. degree from the University of Colorado. For several years she taught elementary school in various communities as she accompanied an itinerant educator from town to town. Since 1951 she has been married to a Marine officer, an English teacher, an alumni director, a college football coach, a dean of men, a university president (twice), and a state system chancellor—and still is. Her tenure as the wife of a president or a chancellor includes 10 years at Idaho State University (1965-75), seven years at the University of New Mexico (1975-1982), and two years in the Oregon State System (1982-?). She and her husband, “Bud” Davis, have five children—Debbie, an attorney; Becky, married and a doctoral candidate; Doug, a senior in college; and identical twins, Bonnie and Brooke, eighth graders. With a husband in orbit and all these kids, Polly has deferred any special activities until retirement.

FAMILY CONSIDERATIONS

Nuestro Casa Es Su Casa



by Polly Davis

From the outside looking in, there is an aura of glamour and mystery around the “President’s Mansion.” (No matter how humble and weather-beaten the old bungalow or hacienda may be, it is always “the mansion.”) I remember how as an undergraduate student or later as a fledgling faculty wife, save possibly a summons to *the* White House or the governor’s manor, an invitation to the home of the university president was something special. Small matter who the incumbent or live-ins might be at the time, it was the place and the setting that provided the allure.

Now, after almost two decades, I’ve been on the inside looking out. Typically, while I am struggling over a menu for the dinner for the Development Foundation, chaos reigns. The dog is barking (he’s chained to his doghouse for nipping a Sigma Chi fleeing from a horde of squealing Pi Phi’s). The cat has been missing for the past week (a student picked it up and took him home, thinking he was lost). The telephone lines are lit up like a pinball machine (the twins learned to dial shortly after they learned to talk). The front door bell is ringing (a student is trying to find the sociology building). The back door bell is ringing (campus maintenance is here to fix the plumbing). Then, my husband’s secretary arrives to tell me she couldn’t get me on the phone, and, in urgent tones warns me that *the* president (my husband) is bringing home some visitors from Mexico and could I please whip up a few margaritas and polish my Spanish? They’ll be here in 10 minutes. Sometimes, I wonder where all the mystery and glamour have gone.

Like the rookie interns in the university hospital, those who live in the “Big House” are always “on call.” Not only the president who is hamming it up on TV, or telling jokes to the alumni, or diagramming plays for the football coach—but also the spouse, who often is wife, mother, writer of the checks, payer of the bills, caller of the doctors and dentists, field marshal for affairs of state, smiling hostess, bartender, pet feeder, honorary member (usually without vote) of multi-community and campus organizations, and street walker for

the March of Dimes. She is the first one to laugh at her husband's stale jokes and the last one to turn out the lights after the parade of guests has departed and the food service staff has poured the cold coffee down the drain.

And how is all this accepted? Perhaps it is best summed up by a remark one of my girls made to a school chum who had asked if her mother worked. My daughter replied proudly, "No, she doesn't work. She just gives parties."

The pace is always hectic, even under normal circumstances. But if the unexpected can happen, it will. And the supple spouse has to cope. Lively and exciting events that come to mind include:

. . . The time we were entertaining the British ambassador and wife, and the plumbing backed up.

. . . Or the two students coming to our door at 3 a.m. to borrow some of our firewood because their heat had been turned off and they were freezing.

. . . Or the student demonstration in my petunia patch when my husband was wooing the legislature in Santa Fe.

. . . Or the post-commencement reception in our back yard on the day my son decided to dump a box of Oxydol into the fountain.

. . . Or the dinner party when the wife of a dean really told off one of the regents, calling him a right wing, John Bircher stuffed shirt.

Just coping demands that you be flexible. The spouse needs to be a master juggler with more hot potatoes in the air than in the oven and more happenings than time for them to happen. Establishing a set of your own priorities can be helpful. They are always changing, but at least you have that good feeling of being semi-organized. Make things happen instead of letting them happen to you.

For one thing, the president's spouse usually can write her own job description. Boards often meet the spouse in the search and hiring process. But from anecdotal conversations with other presidents' wives and my own personal experience, governing boards seldom ask her anything about how she might view the job, what her role might be or what experience she brings to this team position. Likewise, they just as studiously avoid telling her what they expect. (I sometimes wonder if *they know* what to expect). No doubt, if such taboo discussions took place, affirmative action alarms would ring and sirens would howl, and the board would end up picking someone else.

And a wife is often just as reluctant to broach the subject herself, thinking that if her husband really wants the job, she won't jeopardize his chances by a lot of pushy questions. If it's a first presidency for the family, she really doesn't

know what she's in for. If she's a veteran, she knows somehow it will all work out—in five years, or ten, or . . .

In setting priorities and adapting to the life in the “mansion,” the wife constantly is balancing family needs with the demands of the job or the university. Time becomes precious.

Most presidents I have known work 70 to 80 hour weeks—and so do their wives. The eight to five routine often just measures the office hours for old prexy. Many presidents go to the office earlier and get home later just to take care of the paper avalanche. Lunch hours are business luncheons. Dinners are speeches. Learned talks and articles are written from 10 p.m. until the wee hours of the morning. Meetings with students, faculty groups, legislators, alumni, development foundations, and civic groups demand attendance and personal attention. Even the social functions take on the air of official business. The numerous activities on a campus, from football to ballet or rock to opera, fill an already busy schedule. Many of these activities are great fun, exciting, exhilarating—and are shared by the wife.

Travel, whether around the state or to national meetings or to Washington to lobby for a grant or desirable legislation, throws an added burden on the limitations of time and energy.

But I can *always* muster the time and energy. I have a suitcase half-packed just in case someone invites me to go and there is money to pay my way. But often, travel simply means an absentee husband. (Recently, after my husband had been gone on a series of trips around the state, he called home. One of the twins answered and yelled upstairs, “Mom, it's your long distance husband.”)

Indeed, there are days and weeks when the wife of a president must wonder if she does have a husband or the children a father. She has to take over—often assuming as many family responsibilities as possible. Too often, she no longer can count on old dad to write the checks, or get the car to the garage or the dog to the vet. I used to kid my husband about looking around until he finally got a job where he didn't have to mow the lawn. But I ended up being the one who sighs, “Thank God for campus maintenance.” Otherwise I'd never get the sink unplugged or the screens off and on the windows. Which brings me to my next point—help is or should be available. Get it and use it. It buys time for more important tasks—either for the university or for your family.

Since the president's home often takes on the dimensions of a mansion, particularly when it includes not only the family living quarters but also large areas for public receptions and functions, a housekeeper is a valuable and treasured ally. Just the sheer square footage of house to maintain and keep

presentable involves systematic cleaning and polishing. When events pile up one upon the other, it often is a scramble to clean up from one function while getting ready for the next.

For one not used to having help in the home, the adjustment comes as a kind of cultural shock. When I first experienced this phenomenon, I found myself getting up at six a.m. to be sure I had the house straightened up before the housekeeper arrived to see what a mess it was. It took a long time to get into the new routine—like a week.

One thing I did feel was important, however. I thought for the children's benefit I didn't want the housekeeper to do their chores, and assigned them specific duties including the responsibility for their own rooms. This worked well with four girls. My son and my husband, however, remain both helpless and hopeless.

A big bonus for me during the seven years my husband was president of the University of New Mexico was having a cook. Not only was this a big help in official entertaining, but particularly for the evening meals for the family. Often my husband and I attended evening functions away from our home, and it was reassuring to know that someone was in charge of the meals for our young children. As with other factors, having a cook can affect the attitude of the kids. When the twins were about six, I scolded Brooke about some imperfection in her conduct, and she retorted with the usual sobs and proclaimed, "Mother doesn't love me." To which her twin, Bonnie, admonished, "Don't be silly, Brooke. Mother does too love you. She does all kinds of nice things for you, and every Saturday night she cooks you dinner."

For the really big events, I have found the university food service a tremendous asset in providing catering services. Having real pros help plan menus, set up the tables, and prepare and serve the food, not to mention policing up the premises afterwards, helps rejuvenate what otherwise might be a bedraggled hostess.

Not surprising, the president's spouse also is involved in heavy correspondence relating to the many functions and activities that come her way. Some secretarial assistance is vital, especially at peak periods—such as the numerous activities which begin and end the academic year, the holiday season, and the pre- and post-game activities surrounding big football and basketball weekends. Sometimes this help can be provided through assigning some of the tasks to one of the president's secretaries. It is a big boost to have that person working with you on a permanent basis.

Over the years, we have also had one or two students living with us, wherein we provide the board and room and the student or students help with baby

sitting both the kids and the house when we are away. We have had males, females, and even married couples sharing this arrangement. It provides a parental supplement for continuous caring—kind of an extended family concept. We were able to help some wonderful young students, and they in turn were able to help us.

All of this—living in the big house (often located in the middle of the campus), frequent guests in the evenings and overnight, legions of support troops ranging from the university plumber to the groundskeepers, and generation after generation of students who treat your youngsters like little brothers and sisters—has a profound impact on young children. Often separated from normal neighborhood relations, their friends usually are transported to and from the house—and our kids, in turn, are transported off campus. Quite often, because of the majesty of the house and the surroundings, our children are perceived as being from a rich, affluent family living in spectacular splendor. This led one of our daughters to ask, “Mother, did you marry Dad just so you could live in a big house?” Only the eldest recalls those humble residences we rented during graduate school and those early beginnings in academe. And probably only my husband and I realize how temporary this all is and the proximity of our inevitable return to the “real” world.

With the whole campus as a playground and the president’s front yard the world’s greatest site for a summer lemonade stand, one has to be ever vigilant in reminding the children that they are not special people to anyone but their parents. This I call avoiding the “My Dad is the President Syndrome.”

In this regard, one particular episode stands out in my mind. When we first moved to the University of New Mexico, the twins, Bonnie and Brooke, were 4½ years old. They were delighted with the house in the middle of the campus with thousands of students streaming by at each change of classes. Most of all, they enjoyed climbing in the tall pine trees in front of our house. It soon developed into an exciting game. Each would climb to the top of a tree. Then, waving back and forth in the branches, they would call, “Help! Help!”

Students passing by would hear these cries and rush over to the campus security across the street. A portly campus policeman would then climb the trees and bring them down. After this happened twice, he tired of the game and lectured them sternly, “Stay out of those trees or you’re going to be in big trouble.”

Brooke replied, “We don’t have to. Our dad’s the president.”

Seeing this commotion from the kitchen window, I had rushed out just in time to overhear the conversation. I grabbed the twins and hustled them into the house where I paddled them and laid down the law, “Don’t you *ever* go

around this campus or any place else telling people your father is the president.”

They got the message. Two days later at a reception for new faculty, two of the ladies were visiting with the twins. One asked, “Is the president your father?” Brooke looked at Bonnie and rolled her eyes. Bonnie, with a shrug of the shoulders, replied, “We always thought he was, but Mother says he isn’t.”

If, however, the children of a president’s family give up something by living in a fishbowl, yea, sometimes even in the eye of the hurricane—what they lose in invasion of privacy they gain in the warmth and friendship and vibrancy of campus life. They learn to become a part of a great adventure. They meet fascinating people—guests, professors, students, state and community and even national leaders. They have entrée to exciting events ranging from basketball games to the finest in the performing arts. They witness first-hand the camaraderie of dedicated people working together in a noble cause. In a state university, they learn to walk softly and not to breathe during the legislative session.

For all of the support services, they also develop a high degree of independence—how to respond as a family and as individuals to uncertainty, anxiety, and frequent and constant change in the daily routines and challenges. They learn to appreciate the quality of time together with others in the family rather than the quantity—that people can be close and loving and sharing even under stress and public scrutiny. They learn to be themselves in the center of a crowd.

Albeit, most of the appreciation of all these good things comes after they have been kicked out of the campus nest, rather than at the time of hatching and growing.

Perhaps the overriding challenge of the president’s family is how, together, they can make a house a home. And just as they must carve out private places in that home for their personal togetherness, they must carve out part of their lives for one another. But they must do this with a sense of sharing the residence and the particular frame of time with the rest of the university community.

Let me close with but one further story about the twins, whom the reader should know well by now.

One balmy New Mexico Sunday, my husband had returned from playing tennis. After a shower, he slipped into our bedroom for a nap. Being a hot day, he was clad only in his shorts. Blissfully, he went to sleep.

Dreaming away, he drowsily was aware that one of the twins was prying his eyelids open. He opened one eye cautiously, then both widely. Bonnie and Brooke were standing there, as he suspected. But he was amazed to see them

accompanied by a young lady he quickly deduced was a university coed—what with the pack on her back, the hiking boots, cut-off jeans, midriff blouse, and sun-tanned navel.

“Pardon me, President Davis,” she said demurely. “I saw these girls out front with their sign, ‘Ture the Manshun, 10¢.’ I’ve always wanted to see the President’s house, so here I am!”

My husband stood up and replied in good New Mexico tradition, “*Como no! Nuestra casa es su casa.*” (Why not! Our house is your house.)

And why not, indeed! Perhaps not under such intimate circumstances, but maybe this is what we need to convey not only to our children, but also to all students and members of the campus community by the things we say, the way we act, the way we answer the telephone or work with them in all our contacts. Make yourself at home. It’s your campus. Love it, cherish it, keep it, protect it, share it with us and pass it on with all its good and proud traditions to those who will follow you.

And in this sense, for this time, our house is your house. *Nuestra casa es su casa.*

CHAPTER IV



MYSELF AS THE SPOUSE
OF THE
PRESIDENT-CHANCELLOR



Ina Fitzhenry-Coor is one of a small number of university presidents' spouses who combines a full-time professional career with a young family and the spousal role. She holds a Ph.D. in psychology and is a professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Vermont, where her husband, Lattie F. Coor, is President. Her professional activities include research in the process of psychiatric diagnosis and in child social development, while her spousal duties range from the planning and coordination of official university entertaining to fund-raising for the presidential residence.

SELF-IDENTITY IN THE CAMPUS SPOUSE



by Ina Fitzhenry-Coor

In her memoirs, Anne Morrow Lindbergh tells of the anguish she felt when, standing in receiving lines with her husband after one of his historic trans-oceanic flights, she watched the guests, upon being introduced to her, invariably peer beyond her to the person they had really come to see.

Few university presidents enjoy the prestige of a Charles Lindbergh, but every president's wife has experienced the awkwardness of trying to converse with a guest who obviously was more interested in meeting her husband.

The university presidency has often been described as a two-person single career (Papanek, 1973), in the sense that one of the marital pair is formally employed and remunerated by the institution, while the other is not. In this case, it is the president, not his wife.* However, the implicit expectations of the spouse are such that she may find it necessary to devote all of her time to activities in support of him, his career and the campus.

While historically there is little to define this spousal role, Corbally (1976) has suggested that its components may be traced to the traditional expectations of the pastor's wife when many of our early colleges were governed by presidents who were ministers.

While the components of the role have evolved somewhat over time, the nature of the spouse's duties as hostess and her role as public consort can still easily lead to a loss of individuality. In the eyes of others, she is known as "the wife of . . ." and is assumed to derive both identity and vicarious satisfaction from her husband's accomplishments and prestige.

*To avoid semantic ambiguity in this paper, I have arbitrarily chosen to use certain terms in reference to broader categories. For example, the term "university" refers to institutions of post-secondary education, including colleges and professional schools. "President" refers to the chief executive officer of such an institution, although chancellor is the appropriate term on some campuses. "Wife" has been chosen for empirical reasons: most university presidents are men, their spouses are thus women (all but one respondent to the NASULGC Survey were women).

The pervasiveness of such situations and assumptions, as well as the particular nature of the university presidency, is such that the *self-identity* of the spouse is a timely subject for exploration.

If some kind of identity accrues from association, how shall we differentiate it from a unique and personal self definition? Some have argued that it is a "reflected identity" (O'Neil, 1982), as in a mirror image in which one is assumed to reflect the personhood of another. Others have termed it a "shadow identity" (Papanek, 1973), as though the individual remains in the shadow of the other. For many, it is a "role identity" of such pervasiveness that the individual is subsumed. Experts in this area argue that roles are not definitions, but functions that are performed through patterned tasks and duties; they are not the *total mark* of who we are (Sanguiliano, 1980).

Whatever the tentative definition of identity assumed by others vis-à-vis the presidential spouse, the long-term effects of loss of self may not necessarily be acceptable to the wife. One of the respondents to the NASULGC Survey commented: "I believe in what my husband is doing, but I do not find it a rewarding role for myself." Another stated: "Surely it is neither selfish nor demanding to want to save a part of one's life for oneself, to want to experience the pleasures of an *active* as well as *re-active* life, of a separate and complete identity" (O'Neil, 1982, p. 10).**

I am in agreement with the need for a separate identity. In the early years following our arrival at the University of Vermont, an avuncular member of our campus community invariably introduced me with the words: "We were so lucky that we got Ina along with Lattie—two for the price of one." I think only my husband knew the depth of pain I experienced from this repeated devaluation of my self as an individual.

Jean Kemeny (1979), for many years the first lady of Dartmouth and a woman of great strength and devotion, lamented:

I am not an officer of the college; I am not listed in the college directory, which lists every file clerk; I don't even have a college identification card—issued to *all* employees and students. I exist and perform very unofficially (p. 36).

It is not an overstatement, nor a sign of impropriety for spouses to desire recognition and acknowledgement of individuality. "That yearning for a singular voice—a personal identity exists in us all" (Sanguiliano, 1978, p. 19). It is *defining* and *achieving* it that is the challenge of our particular circumstances.

In the psychological literature, study of the self has variously been called

**The italics in all quotations have been added by the present author.

“self-concept,” “self-image,” “sense of self” and the “self-system.” Despite the plethora of terminology, it is possible to generate a set of assumptions about the self that can aid in our understanding of self-identity in spouses.

The self-referential nature of the concept is obvious: it includes a person’s knowledge of who he or she is, the “I,” “me,” and “mine.” Many psychologists have maintained that it is central to the understanding of human beings, their emotions and their actions (Epstein, 1973). Lecky (1945), for example, saw the self as the nucleus of the personality, with one major motive: the striving for *unity*. Some have argued that aspects of the concept of self develop over time; the impact of early socialization on its development has been widely researched (Maccoby, 1980). It has been argued that the self plays a role in the *selective integration* of new experiences into the stable central core (Snygg & Combs, 1949). Interestingly, sex differences in the sense of self and level of self-esteem may be found in experiments conducted with many different age groups (Hoyenga & Hoyenga, 1979). Some of these differences are relevant to the present paper and will be discussed later.

Rogers (1951) believed that the self included those characteristics of the individual that he or she was aware of and over which the individual *believed* he or she could *exercise control*. Thus, the self as a concept is subject to each person’s own perception and interpretation of his or her personal qualities and their value. As well, each person has a set of beliefs, perhaps biased by perception, about the extent to which he or she can direct personal behaviors and actions. Such perceptions and belief systems are specific to each individual—private, intangible and sometimes difficult to articulate.

In psychology, because we must depend upon the subject’s ability and willingness to describe the self, we would classify it as a subjective concept (Cooley, 1902). From a scientific point of view, subjectiveness makes self-identity more arduous to study, quantify and verify; however, those problems do not negate its existence and its potential for affecting the life of the holder.

Why is self-identity so important? Gergen (1971) argued that the way in which a person conceives of self will influence what he or she *chooses to do* and what he or she *expects of life*. With Erikson (1959), he contends that the recognition of *continuity* is central to self definition.

Others have contended that self-identity and its maintenance are important because threat to the core, stable organization of the self will produce anxiety and stress (Sullivan, 1953; Rogers, 1951; Epstein, 1973). If the threat to the self-concept is sufficiently severe, it may result in emotional disintegration; for example, Bender’s (1950) description of a disturbed child who screamed in terror, “I am afraid I am going to be someone else.”

Summarizing the set of assumptions posited here, we can say that self-identity refers to those essential, core elements of self perceived by the person which provide a unity of personality, a sense of control and a source of direction in actions.

Because the concept of self is a private, subjective one, it is not always easy to ferret out those elements by which a person defines herself. The NASULGC survey did not explicitly ask the respondent to describe herself in such a way that we could classify the response as her "personal identity." However, the survey did ask many questions about the respondent's avocations, professional activities, and role duties. In addition, the hours devoted to each area and the extent of satisfaction derived from each area were requested. Thus, if self-identity is implied by *actions*, *satisfactions*, and *sense of control*, we can construct definitions of self that apply to this population.

In examining the results of the NASULGC survey, we find that many spouses are engaged in activities that are not necessarily related to the role of first lady. Two major categories emerge: volunteer activities and paid employment. In both of these areas it is possible to establish an identity that is separate and unique from the presidency. However, the manner in which this comes about will differ in each category.

The spouse who enjoys volunteer activities may find a number of options awaiting her assumption of the new campus role. Many university boards implicitly expect her to participate in the community and will often recommend civic groups or secure "invitations" for her. Such commitments are seen as highly beneficial to the two-person single career and to the institution.

Seventy-seven percent of the NASULGC respondents engage in some kind of volunteer service. Their activities range from church-related activities, hospital and mental health boards, art and music groups to historic preservation. For the wife who takes pleasure in these involvements, there are a variety of satisfactions. In addition, she very likely has the privilege of limiting her schedule, thus allowing a balance of time with husband, family and campus. The range of hours devoted to volunteer work is great: while only two percent devote over 20 hours per week, nearly half of the remaining participants give less than four hours per week to these activities.

The range of service is nearly as great as the hours. An examination of the list of each individual's activities often produces an interesting cluster of related commitments. For example, participation in several health related organizations may characterize a few, while music and theatre distinguish others. It is my opinion that these clusters of activities reflect more than simple related

interests in the wife; they also reflect personalities. In so acting, spouses may make a statement about personal identity.

Volunteerism is not always the perfect solution to establishing a self-identity in the spousal role. While there are options from which to choose, less satisfying obligatory commitments often arise. Limits on hourly involvement and family privacy frequently depend upon the spouse's strength of refusal. Furthermore, while these activities may aid in the expression of a separate self-identity, the presidential wife may find that recognition "in her own right" takes a period of time, perhaps years. This may require persistent presentation of her own image and the uncomfortable knowledge that she will invariably be viewed by newcomers in the "shadow role."

Paid employment is the second major category of involvement that was not role specific. It occurs much less often among spouses and, interestingly, it is not age-related. Only 28 percent of the NASULGC respondents have professional occupations; about one-third of these are full-time commitments. Most of the employed individuals are involved in education, often at the university level. Because of the length of time required in this type of career development, we may assume that professional identity existed prior to the election of the husband as president. Further, professional identity seems to carry with it a strong sense of self-identity. In response to the survey question concerning multiple motives for continuing professional occupations, 83 percent indicated "self-fulfillment," 69 marked "independence," while 66 percent also noted "utilization of professional training."

However, unlike volunteerism, the university board of trustees is rarely willing to take an active part in the relocation of the working spouse. One wife specifically noted that trustee criticism was one of the obstacles she had to overcome in order to work. Some spouses who gave up their professions at the time of the husband's election, commented that the board discouraged their continuation of outside employment. In my own case, as a participant in my husband's final interview with the board, the first question directed to me was, "How do you plan to reconcile your professional commitments with your duties as presidential spouse?" I was tempted to reply, "With a 36-hour day."

Other obstacles noted by working spouses have included "proving" themselves professionally to new peers who viewed them as the privileged president's wife. Some respondents noted the physical and emotional drains on the working spouse; conversations with several of these women indicate that the fatigue inherent in juggling job, family and role duties has contributed to a chronic susceptibility to illness.

Despite the logistical difficulties of continuing a career, its value in self-

definition can be appreciated in the responses of spouses who gave up their occupations. When asked if the decision had been a satisfactory one, several said it had not been. Their explanations often alluded to self-identity: "I miss having my very own identity . . .," "I now have no professional identity of which I'm proud," and "Because I loved my work, and am not keeping up with my profession."

Apart from the expression of a separate self-identity through volunteer activities or professional commitments, we are compelled by the results of the NASULGC survey to consider the spousal role itself as a form of identity. Without exception, the respondents indicated that they gave numerous hours each week to the president's institution and its constituencies. While half of the respondents gave at least 20 hours per week to this role, over fourteen percent devoted more than the standard work week of 40 hours. Some of the spouses noted "a sense of accomplishment" in the role; others mentioned a feeling of "fulfillment." Thus, we cannot overlook the possibility that a sense of identity exists, whether or not it is a reflected identity.

One of the most interesting results of the survey was the refusal by most respondents to desire payment for their spousal responsibilities. Of the 80 percent who did not want a salary, half of them saw the role as a volunteer service while another quarter felt it was a marital duty. Less than one-third of the spouses felt it would be helpful to have a job description.

These kinds of results are in contrast to the common sociological contention that the legitimacy of a position may be found in its definition and acknowledgement (Papanek, 1973). It is generally accepted that presidential spouses occupy one of the most demanding yet poorly defined positions in modern society (Corbally, 1976). Why then, we must ask, do most spouses in this sample decline definition and acknowledgement?

Further examination of the survey results indicates that spouses engage in an array of responsibilities and activities; most of them centering about the coordination of entertaining and the supervision of the official house. Interestingly, according to their responses, far more spouses "accept as their responsibility" these activities, than "enjoy doing it."

The perception of the role as a "service" or "duty" and the interpretation of specific activities of the role as "responsibilities" are similar psychological traits. To help us understand why so many wives have this point of view, we should turn to the psychological literature.

Authors of a number of recent studies have tried to explain woman's tendency to define herself in terms of husband and family. Several have viewed this disposition as a product of developmental socialization. Best known is Erik

Erikson (1950), who has described eight stages of psychosocial development. The fifth stage, ordinarily occurring during the late teens concerns the establishment of a sense of self-identity. Theoretically, the resolution of this crisis equips the adolescent for the adult activities of autonomy and industry. This, in turn, prepares the individual for the resolution of the next stage, the establishment of intimacy.

Some developmental psychologists have argued that the sequence from identity to intimacy expressed in this model may well be reversed in females (Douvan & Adelson, 1966). Erikson (1968) has more recently agreed with this reversal. He suggests that the young woman holds her identity in abeyance as she contends with the crisis of intimacy, meeting and marrying the man by whose name she will be known. This contrasts sharply with the impact of marriage on the male (Kimmel, 1974) in which marriage is merged with a vocational commitment and may be construed as an additional manifestation, but not a definition, of his masculinity.

Iris Sanguiliano (1980), a psychoanalyst, argues that the outcome of such reversal of stages in females may have serious effects: "In women's life journey, the striving for union precedes and postpones the labors of a personal identity, and sometimes sends it underground" (p. 43). Thus, the search for self-identity may begin much later for women—or not at all.

Carol Gilligan (1982) suggests a fusion of the tasks of intimacy and identity in the Erikson model as it relates to women: "Intimacy goes along with identity, as the female comes to know herself as she is known, through her *relationships with others*." (p. 12).

A distinction should be made in the form of identity ascribed to women by these scholars and the form of self-identity prescribed by them and defined earlier in this paper. Self-identity is truly personal and unique to the individual, a concept of self over which the individual exercises some control and senses unity and continuity. The identity which describes these women who combine it with intimacy is a *reflected identity*—an identity through someone else.

The tendency to rely on the husband's identity becomes increasingly evident as the husband moves toward success as an executive. For example, an acquaintance of mine whose husband eventually served as a college president, related the following story about a regional conference of academic deans that they had attended together:

The wives of the group of 25-30 deans met separately for an informal meeting during the initial day of the conference. As a way of getting acquainted, the group leader suggested that each of them introduce herself

and her activities without reference to her husband or his role. To the astonishment of all, only one of the women was able to do this.

Carol Gilligan has explored the development of the separate paths of males and females' concepts of self in her perceptive book, *In Another Voice* (1982). She attempts to determine the source of those enduring qualities in women that are associated with human relationships; those qualities that seem to override the need for separation and independence. Gilligan agrees with Chodorow (1974) that these characteristics may be traced to the bond of attachment existing between mothers and their children. Because of sex-similarity, little girls may continue to exhibit a concern with relationships, while this characteristic tends to diminish over time in little boys as they establish a sense of male sexual identity. Thus, while separation in relationships can begin early for males, it may continue indefinitely for females and become a criterion for self-evaluation: ". . . women not only define themselves in a context of human relationship but also *judge* themselves in terms of their ability to care" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 17).

Adult women interviewed by Gilligan show an array of characteristics that are associated with the maintenance of human relationships: an extremely strong sense of responsibility to others, fear of the possibility of omission, dependence upon caring relationships, and perpetuation of those relationships through self-sacrifice.

These tendencies are well illustrated by one of Sanguiliano's (1978) female patients:

I still feel there is a big difference between how men and women look at the relationship. Last night I said to [my husband], if I work my whole life to get *the* book of poems out and I was called to win a Pulitzer prize, and you were laid up, I would look first to be with you! Somewhere I really feel that . . . I somehow wouldn't leave you lying there even to go get my most important thing (p. 84).

The same kind of commitment and responsibility may be seen in responses to the NASULGC survey:

Said one spouse in response to the question of how she juggled outside employment and home duties: "My role as the president's wife still comes first."

The greatest single source of frustration in their role was "worry about the effects of pressure on the spouse."

Another commentary on the striving for autonomy and self-identity may be found in a provocative sequence of steps proposed by Jane Loevinger in her post-conformist developmental stages (1970; 1976).

Based upon the responses of over 2,000 women to a sentence completion task, she describes several adult stages that are relevant to our discussion. The first of these stages, interestingly, is called Conscientious; appropriately, the greatest concerns of this level are responsibility and self-sacrifice. The next stage, Autonomy, may be described as modulating an excessive sense of duty through the realization that others (including one's family) have a responsibility for their own destiny. Finally, the establishment of a unique self-identity within the context of one's human relationship becomes the primary concern of a stage called Integration. The step-wise nature of Loevinger's model is appealing in the implicit assumption that these concerns arise and are dealt with in a sequential fashion. It suggests that one must resolve a *series* of natural concerns in the search for self-identity. On the other hand, it also reminds us that each of these stages share in common a relationship between the individual and others—something often called "the self in the social context."

As Loevinger's research is descriptive of the search for self-identity, Gilligan's work is prescriptive, and I think it is particularly applicable to the president/spouse relationship. Far from being a radical feminist, she is an astute observer of the deficiencies of an environment in which *one* bears the identity and is the achiever while the *other* bears the responsibility for relationships and is the nurturer. She advocates the expression of these qualities in *both* men and women. Women need not lose their ability to care in order to express a self-identity; likewise men need not abdicate their achievements to engage in nurturing relationships.

Given our socialization (as well as a possible genetic tendency) to be especially sensitive to human relationships, the question for many women and, I would argue, particularly university presidents' wives, is how to define the "I" within the "we."

This can be a frightening question. Queen & Rose (1981), counselling upper-middle class women who had committed their adult lives to husband and family, discovered that a hidden agenda in many group discussions was the lack of sense of self. But many of the women felt the acquisition of a separate identity would come at a high cost and be potentially destructive to their familial relationships. In one discussion the following exchange took place:

'I don't want to be separate from my husband and family,' said [one woman]. 'That's not what separate means,' said [another]. 'Separate means having a personal autonomy, finding out who you are and following it through.' [A third woman] brought it close to home when she said, 'Isn't that what you've encouraged your children and husband to do? Why not give yourself some of your own good nurturing?' (p. 132).

Gilligan (1982) reinforces this need, saying, “. . . the language of rights underlines the importance of including in the network of care not only the other but also the self” (p. 173).

While the demands of the role of presidential spouse can require full-time attention, there are some pragmatic considerations for establishing a separate self-identity. Given the increasing rate of divorce in the general population and the actuarial data of shorter lives for men (particularly executives), a wife stands a fair chance of finding herself without a “spousal-role.” Given the brief tenure of most university presidencies, dependence upon the role to define herself and her time may be a short-lived portion of the spouse’s adult life. Then what? Self-definition during a period of anxiety and stress? That is not a desirable option.

In response to the NASULGC survey question “What advice would you give to your successor?” the most common response was “Be yourself.” Excellent advice if one truly knows oneself *and* can express that identity. Too often what we do know is not easily stated and more often we are *not* asked to state it.

The process requires not only our own introspection, the searching and creation of a unique identity, it also requires circumstances in which freedom to express that definition is invited and respected.

In that sense, others, as well, are responsible for the self-identity of spouses—for nurturing the opportunity for her self-expression—whether that identity is through avocation, volunteer work or professional activities.

Who are the others who are responsible for this? Most importantly, I think the board of trustees of the university who are interviewing potential presidents are responsible. It is only a beginning to invite the spouse to join the interview process. An essential step is permitting her the freedom in a supportive setting to express those commitments that are uniquely her own. Hearing her choices with respect and with a knowledge that she should be aided in the retention of her own identity is a goal that must be actively acquired by most boards; historically it has rarely been part of the protocol.

Just as salary and fringe benefits are an open part of the bargaining between president-elect and the board, opportunities for continuation of the wife’s personal activities should be part of the discussion. And I do not refer to “theoretical” or “possible” opportunities that may leave the spouse in limbo for years, but concrete ones. All of this assumes that the board must be willing to act on her behalf, as well as his. All of this assumes, as well, the possibility of less role-oriented time from the spouse; the board must be willing to shoulder the responsibility of permitting the hiring of staff (such as secretarial or housekeeping) to aid her in the realization of her own self-identity.

Secondly, the husband as an integral part of the bargaining process, should be aware of and supportive of the wife's personal interests and commitments. He, too, has a responsibility to defend the continuation of those involvements that she cherishes. In case after case, failure of the husband to support his wife actively at this critical moment in the election process has resulted in the oversight of her identity. And if it is indeed a *partnership*, as some observers suggest, it must be mutual.

Finally, the community in which the wife lives (both town and gown) must share in this responsibility as well. The tendency to flood the newcomer with requests and obligations (many based upon the style and commitments of the previous president and spouse) denies her the right to establish a unique personage. Sensitivity to limits of time and energy and the desire for privacy are not ordinarily characteristic of university communities. This sensitivity should become a part of the supportive environment that encourages the presidential wife to be her own person, in her own right.

And so, what of self-identity in university presidents' spouses? I think it must be self-determined and individual in its manifestation. I think it must reflect the unity and continuity of a person's life who, for a time, will function in a very unusual and demanding situation. I think it should permit that person to grasp the meaning of her past and the potential for her future. And I think it *can* be attained in the public-private context of the role if others respect these rights. As Gilligan (1982) states it so vividly:

The experiences of *inequality* and *interconnection* . . . the vision that self and other will be treated as of equal worth, that despite differences in power, things will be fair; the vision that everyone will be responded to and included, that no one will be left alone or hurt. These disparate visions in their tension reflect the paradoxical truths of human experience—that we know ourselves as separate only insofar as we live in connection with others, and that we experience relationship only insofar as we differentiate other from self (pp. 62-63).

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DUO CAREERS



by Carolyn Enright DiBiaggio

As the title of Jean Kemeny's book, *It's Different at Dartmouth*, indicates, there has been an encouraging shift in perception of the role of the president's wife by the academic and public communities at Dartmouth. At the same time many other spouses have recognized a "subtle revolution" occurring in their own consciousnesses regarding the search for redefinition of identity and career roles. In general, women today are questioning and reassessing their roles; they have become more vocal in their commitment to personal careers and markedly more independent. A change in women's role status should be anticipated, and it will surely have an effect on the spouse of the university's chief executive and her role in the institution.

This essay speaks to the career of the university spouse in three different terms. The first, and most prevalent, is the "two-person career" in which two married persons contribute to the development of a single career—that of the university chief executive. (This may otherwise be known as "two for the price of one.")

The second concept is that of "dual careers" in which two married persons follow separate and independent careers. In this case, the spouse does *not* engage in the duties and responsibilities ordinarily associated with the role of the wife of a university president.

The third term is the concept of the "duo-career" in which the spouse, in effect, maintains two roles simultaneously—an independent professional career as well as her duties as the wife of the university president. In a sense—in this latter case—she engages simultaneously in the development of both her own professional identity and in the career achievements of her husband.

The two-person single career is the path that most university presidential couples follow. Historically, the female spouse is thrust into a role that lacks definition and embraces multiple expectations, both formal and informal. As others have pointed out, it is rooted in our history in such scenes as the pioneer woman standing with her man as they forge a life together in the wilderness. Or, the pastor's wife who serves beside her husband in ministering to the flock.

The latter image applies as well to the early period when college and university presidents were pastors. These women participated in their husbands' occupations and enjoyed their achievements vicariously since there was no direct acknowledgement or remuneration.

Jean Lipman-Blumen, a renowned sociologist, is the creator of the concept of "vicarious achievement," an oxymoron which perfectly embodies all of the ambivalence and ambiguity associated with the "two-person single career." "A vicarious achievement ethic is the underlying mechanism whereby women are channeled into indirect achievement, low status, occupational roles. To experience achievement satisfaction through the accomplishments of another individual . . . is the essence of the vicarious achievement ethic" (Lipman-Blumen, 1973, p. 1).

The reasons for the two-person single career, other than the historical ones, are rooted in a view of the appropriate gender role of women as well as a belief that it benefits the institution. Universities communicate certain formal and informal expectations to the wives of their chief executive officers. These expectations serve to reinforce the commitment of both husband and spouse to the institution. In particular, they convey role behavior imperatives to the wife that are seen as highly beneficial to the organization, especially since they involve no salary cost.

The spouse who responds to these multiple role demands puts her own self-image at great risk; she may see herself as only an extension of her husband, having a kind of reflected identity. By and large, traditional gender role definitions have accustomed wives to taking this risk. Discomfort with this traditional, one-dimensional role of the vicarious achiever may be seen, however, in the following listing of greatest frustrations experienced by two-person single-career spouses in the NASULGC survey:

1. Worry about the effects of pressure on the spouse
2. Too little time with spouse
3. Too little time with family
4. Unpredictable demands on time which take precedence over own activities
5. Too little time for own pursuits
6. Impossible to separate official life from personal life
7. Lack of personal privacy
8. Lack of time with friends and relatives
9. Isolation from others because of spouse's position
10. Subjection to criticism of spouse by others
11. High personal overhead expenses

12. Way of life altered (out of control)
13. Having responsibility without authority

Initially we find that items 1 through 3 are strong indications of the stresses and pressures on the personal relationship—the marital partnership. Secondly, we note that the complaints listed on items 4 through 13 reflect precisely those characteristics required of reflected identity. Thus, the personal consequences of the traditional, vicarious achievement spousal role and those traditional expectations with which the survey respondents express frustration, are precisely those which most inhibit the development of individual identity.

Even for those contemporary spouses who choose the traditional option of “two-person single career,” concerns were voiced and pitfalls enumerated in spouses’ responses to the NASULGC survey. One such is typical:

I would particularly like to have credit for performing a job in terms of the need for future positions. “Wife of the President” is not something one can use on questionnaires, so it sounds as if I have done nothing.

Within the university setting and within the presidential family, we find few cases of “dual careers” as it has been defined in this paper. By this term, we mean separate and independent careers *without* the duties ordinarily associated with the spousal role. There are isolated cases among wives of presidents of *private* universities in this country; however among members of NASULGC the only cases of this type were male spouses. These two men, when questioned about their roles, indicated that they had their own high-level professional careers which they pursued full-time. Neither engaged in the traditional duties of the presidential spouse, such as supervising the official residence or coordinating social events. Those duties were completed by university staff members who had been hired expressly for those purposes. The only component of the traditional campus partnership that was maintained was an occasional public appearance (as spouse) at some campus events. Even then, it was “to please her” rather than to expressly contribute to the career development of the chief executive officer.

As one male spouse in the NASULGC survey expressed it:

I do *not* play a role as spouse of the president. There are not official or unofficial responsibilities that I have assumed . . . The president and her staff direct *all* social functions as well as the care and maintenance of the president’s house. My professional career is quite separate from that of my wife’s. Events that I may attend are selected on the bases of the pleasure of her company and the personal enjoyment I may receive (e.g. athletic event). All spouses should try to be supportive—that is my only self-imposed responsibility.

The "dual-career" literature in sociology has explored the question of what happens when both husband and wife seek and have demanding careers. What are the resulting dilemmas, problems, and career patterns? Much of the literature attests to the fact that women have made great sacrifices and have given up social and community affairs in order to participate in their intellectual and professional pursuits.

When the woman who pursues a paid professional position also holds the job of presidential spouse, the frustrations and demands are vastly intensified. Not only must she overcome a generic societal unease with her professional career, but she is responsible as well for a range of spousal duties which are neither defined nor even acknowledged.

Almost 30 percent of the female NASULGC respondents work for pay outside the role of spouse, with the average hours per week being 25. Of those who work for pay, 73 percent work 20 hours or more per week. Of the employed spouses, 58 percent were professionals employed in their field of training prior to their mate's selection. Of those spouses professionally involved prior to their mate's selection as president, 59 percent continued their professional involvement following that selection. The results of the survey make it clear that these women also willingly assumed all, or some major part, of the spousal role. Thus they carry on two careers simultaneously, as a "duo-career."

Women who are both partners in the two-person career and committed to independent individual careers have created a new hybrid career style which I term "duo-career." The duo-career phenomenon has evolved through the "two-person career" and, when combined with the "dual career," creates a synthesis of expectations and demands of "dual-career" with those of the "two-person career." It is a concept that best describes the kind of career style of my own personal experience.

Moreover, the frustrations in defining and maintaining a "duo-career" were described by survey participants as follows:

1. Recognition that I be paid for work done even though my husband is university president.
2. Reduced credibility as an academic and serious researcher.
3. Promise from system president that he would make every effort to see that I was given an opportunity to be interviewed and that department's hiring efforts would not suffer if they hired me before my husband accepted position.
4. Scheduling.
5. Proper management of time and proper rating of priorities.
6. Maintaining a high energy level.

7. Criticism by certain members of the board of trustees and certain politicians and others of the university community.

Yet, a significant number of female spouses choose the difficult path of the double career. Why do they make this decision? According to the NASULGC survey, motivation for those working in a separate career outside the spousal role includes the following:

1. self fulfillment (83%)
2. independence (69%)
3. intellectual stimulation (69%)
4. to utilize professional training (65%)
5. to associate with different people (65%)
6. income (55%)

Among incentives reported by survey respondents, self-fulfillment was ranked the most important and independence and intellectual stimulations together ranked second. Respondents described personal motivations in the following ways:

To be a creative person in the area of my expertise.

I have always worked and I could see no reason to stop. I have my self-development to consider as well as my husband's.

I love my work, which is why I'm going back to it. I am also a better wife, mother and person when I'm working because I'm completely happy—as my family will attest. I would not be happy or fulfilled if I just had work and/or family or husband. But by the same token, I do not feel completely happy or fulfilled with a family and husband and no work.

I enjoy my job as president's wife very much and I wouldn't trade it for anything. My husband and I are extremely close so this job has a big advantage for us in that we can do it together. However, I can't wait to get back to surgery—my special world.

I think we all need something special for ourselves, be it a job outside the home, volunteering, or pursuing a special talent or interest. I feel this even stronger since I began doing this job. It is easy sometimes to lose your own identity, control over you and your family's life and your own sense of worth. It's hard being married to someone a large group of people view as king.

Karen O'Neil, spouse of the president of the University of Wisconsin System asserts: "There is an inherent tension in lives such as ours, a tension which takes place between the demands and expectations of the partnership in which we find ourselves . . . and the private needs, goals, and expectations we have for ourselves as individuals . . ."

Therefore, what motivates many spouses to commit themselves—in the face of these inherent tensions—to “duo-careers” is what Ina Fitzhenry-Coor reveals when she states that most spouses had been educated and professionally trained long before the appointment of their mates to presidential offices. As an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Vermont, and also spouse of that university’s president, she notes “For most of us involved in duo-careers, our training preceded our husbands’ appointments as presidents, so it is part of our ongoing careers.”

In this regard, Kim Burse, wife of the president of Kentucky State University, writes:

There were plenty of people who took for granted that I would simply quit my job and allow my career as C.P.A. and financial analyst to come to a “screeching halt” It was, in fact, assumed that I would sacrifice and forget all I had worked for to accept a role as “first lady.” . . . Shocked were many when I informed them that I had no intention of quitting my job!

Anne Wexler Duffey, who was an assistant to President Carter and now heads a Washington, D.C. consulting firm, is also the wife of Chancellor Joseph Duffey of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She reveals the compounded demands of the “duo-career” lifestyle of presidents’ spouses when she states her perception of it: “. . . a lot depends on what point in your life you’re doing what we’re doing. When Joe came to work at the University, I already had a thriving business in Washington. It didn’t make sense to give it up. There was no question of that.”

Although a portion of the professionally employed NASULGC respondents range in their careers from chief executive of a consulting, public affairs firm to a physician and a museum curator, most are involved in education.

But since the majority of employed spouses are involved in education, it is important to underscore the fact that many universities and colleges are often isolated from major cities and their larger number of job opportunities. This presents a dilemma to the professionally-trained spouse.

She can choose to commute, however, as Anne Wexler Duffey does between Washington and Amherst; or she can attempt to find a position in a neighboring educational institution (if that option is available) or, finally, she can establish herself professionally at the same educational institution which employs her husband as chief executive officer.

I have found the benefits of the latter choice to be obvious and real: the opportunity to work closely with the partner; the intellectual stimulations and cultural opportunities; keeping a young mind through involvements with

students; the knowledge of the institution from the perspective of a professional, and many other advantages.

However, the spouse who elects to work on the same campus also encounters many disadvantages, the most important of which is the issue of identity. As one spouse stated in a telephone interview: "The necessity of facing the whole issue of how to maintain a separate personage within the two-person quality—not the president's wife in occupational settings—but the president's wife in appropriate settings."

Reverberations of this abound and may be deeply felt by the spouse employed by the same institution as the president, with very unusual ethical problems. For instance, should the spouse be excused from departmental and other meetings if anything "delicate" is to be discussed or if reactions to university policy, etc., are going to be voiced? Confidentiality is a crucial concern.

Notwithstanding the previously mentioned benefits of a professional relationship in close proximity to the president, there exists the potential for tensions as a result of two careers in the same institution. Additionally, there is the problem of establishing oneself as a separate professional in the eyes of one's academic peers, coupled with the ambiguities of the whole issue of friendship. As one spouse revealed: "If I begin to have a friend in the university setting, I am invariably heading down the road to being used," and: "Perhaps if I were at another university, I could have a close professional friend because there would be no personal gain."

Consequently, the spouse employed at the same institution as her partner comes to the realization that her power base and her vulnerability are one and the same.

Those who have experienced the dilemmas of "duo-career" at the same institution which employs the president have gained great insight into the institution that would not have been possible if only the spousal role had been chosen. These spouses can confirm the professional involvements, satisfactions, and successes that they have experienced. However, one of the obstacles that remains is the fact that no matter how professional and well-intentioned the participants of academe are, the awareness that a "duo-career" partner is also the spouse of the president is never totally forgotten.

But there are generic societal pressures felt by all "duo-career" spouses. There is the strain of accommodating two disparate professional paths within a marital partnership. And beyond that—for presidents' spouses—there is an often implicit but usually pervasive lack of support from the governing board and the institution for recognizing her need for personal and professional

identity. In recruiting a president, the governing board should be fully aware of the advantages of an engaging and competent spouse.

The spouse of the chief executive officer of a university who desires to fulfill her independent career aspirations faces multiple obstacles because of the demands and expectations of the "two-person" career in which she is involved. Moreover, universities continue to lag behind the times in gender-role perception, refusing to confront and assimilate this significant societal change.

In a telephone interview, one spouse observed: "The universities are certainly far behind the curve in having (spousal) expectations that are absolutely unreal."

An obstacle to the promotion of the partnership, as well as the continuation of a "duo-career," is often the board's refusal to consider the spouse's identity and needs. In a telephone interview, another presidential spouse stated that she thought this was the source of multiple problems and stresses in the partnership. She indicated that the board had not even afforded her the courtesy of an interview—"it's such a slap in the face . . . this is a blatant indicator that they view us as non-entities—non-persons."

In the entire NASULGC survey, 97 spouses responded that they did not have a written job description. Fifty-three affirmed that they were part of the interview process when the governing board members considered their spouses for the presidency; however, 46 were not afforded this important opportunity. Ultimately, 82 indicated the spouse *should* be included in the interview process for a variety of reasons:

- To learn the expectations of me.
- So that the board can learn my expectations.
- So that I can judge the job.
- So that the board can judge me.

Beyond the governing board's traditional shortsightedness in failing to respond to duo-career issues initially, there is, as well, the failure of the university community to respond to, or come to terms with, its unexpressed expectations and conflicting needs of the spousal role. This is a very basic and constant challenge to both private and public aspects of the presidential partnership.

Traditionally, the governing board's inability or unwillingness to articulate its expectations of the spousal role, coupled with the university's disregard or avoidance of the spouse's need for personal and professional identity, have stymied the spouse's freedom to pursue both personal and professional goals.

As Thompson and Thompson noted in a 1983 report in the *Journal of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities & Colleges*:

. . . The spouse might want a career of his/her own and be unwilling to assume the traditional role model normally associated with the companion of a president . . . Thus, there would be a reluctance on the part of a career-oriented individual to relinquish professional ambitions and a high salary . . . Some colleges and universities might find themselves in a situation in which they cannot expect to pay for the talents of one person and get the second to perform—without pay—in the accustomed manner. The one-for-the-money, two-for-the-show combination of human resources could turn out to be a vanishing breed (Thompson & Thompson, 1983, p. 44).

At the same time it would be an injustice to these intrepid women who sustain a duo-career, to overlook their insights concerning its management. Survey respondents noted that they schedule as far in advance as possible, delegate, train helpers, organize carefully, and establish priorities. Clearly, this reflects the need to divest some of the more routine responsibilities of the unacknowledged spousal role. Here the governing board can be of extraordinary aid in providing the staff structure to make a duo-career possible.

Other concerns must be attended by the presidential couple themselves. As Anne Wexler Duffey puts it: "We pursue our careers in different places—elements of commuter marriage—integrating totally separate lives with totally separate interests. It takes extra work—little tricks such as when I fly into Hartford, he sends a car to meet me, and his secretary puts five issues of the daily campus newspaper in the car for me to read so that I know what's going on.

And ultimately the campus must share in an understanding of the innovative and pioneering steps of the duo-career spouse. Happily, one respondent reported: "The university community has been terrific—there has never been any question or hint of concern or disapproval—I have enough presence here as a hostess so that they're satisfied," and "The university has been extraordinarily supportive."

Thus, the responsibility for confronting and resolving the multiple demands of "duo-career" lifestyles rests not only with the presidential partnership, but also with the governing board and the institution.

That, however, is not to ignore the pain and pleasure of the here and now so poignantly stated by one of these women: "You know, being a president's wife is a little like being a fiddler on a roof."

In summary, then, it appears that "dual-career" and "duo-career" lifestyles for presidents' spouses are making a new mark in contrast with the traditional "two-person single career." This evolution shows heartening concern for

recognition of the partnership and its needs, as well as what many see as the need for gender redefinition and promotion of a new androgynous career ethic. The assumption that governing board recruitment of a president inevitably brought the institution "one for the money, two for the show" may still be unspoken, but it is no longer unchallenged.

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MY FIRST YEAR



by Kim M. Burse

In retrospect, my initial year as a spouse and principal adviser to a university president began on a May evening in 1982. My husband, Raymond M. Burse, and I agreed he should accept an invitation to become one of the nominees for the position of interim president of Kentucky State University (KSU) in Frankfort, Kentucky. The 96-year-old KSU encompassed a single campus with 26 buildings and approximately 2,300 students. Its legacy included a rich and distinct heritage which encouraged the attainment of excellence in scholarship and the development of a sense of obligation to contribute to the intellectual, cultural, spiritual and economic growth of the community.

Our decision indicated Raymond would change careers. Therefore, we would have to part with the quiet sort of life we knew and join the ranks of those in the public eye. Hence, we would leave our newly-decorated 40-year old home in Louisville (60 miles from Frankfort), a major segment of my immediate family and a whole host of wonderful friends.

On the other hand, my husband and I at very early ages (Raymond was 30 and I was 27) would be given the opportunity to share in the further growth and development of Kentucky State University and become a part of its everlasting contributions to future generations. For all of our working lives, both Raymond and I had been submerged in the business and corporate worlds—Raymond as a practicing attorney and I as a CPA and financial analyst. We were truly fascinated with the kind of bubbling excitement associated with being a part of university life. We considered the university environment intellectually and culturally stimulating, and a fantastic place to meet a diverse group of people. Yet the overwhelming reason for our wanting to become a part of the university was to help students in their pursuit of a quality education.

Our dilemma was typical of numerous couples who each year toil over the university presidency question. For the majority, the positive points more than outweigh the negative ones. Our decision was a joyous one, and it marked a great turning point in our lives.

The Perception of My Role

The news spread like a wild fire the day the Board of Regents announced their decision. Coverage of the decision won wide attention on radio, television and in newspapers across the state. Everyone I saw for weeks after that point offered their congratulations and best wishes for us both.

It was not until weeks later that it dawned on me that I had not been formally included in the interview process surrounding the selection of the interim president and spouse. Another glaring absence was the lack of explanation by the Board of Regents of my role and job as spouse.

Even though we were in the age of the liberated woman, the Board of Regents, like many other university governing bodies, had not yet recognized the efforts of the spouse and the tremendous role the spouse plays in conjunction with the president. The lack of awareness on their part implied they had only limited expectations of the spouse.

Evidently, the only expectation was that the spouse would accompany the president to all university events—official and unofficial—with a smile. Many would describe such a role as one for an “ornamental spouse”—one who is seen but not heard; present but not useful.

I, on the other hand, expected far more from myself and had no intention of being “ornamental.” Even if I had to create my role, it would be one that reflected my style and high standards of expectation. My role would be complementary to that of the president and together we would form a partnership of two people.

Nonetheless, before we agreed my husband should accept the interim position, we discussed and concluded that I would (only if I wanted to) retain my present position as a financial analyst for Humana Inc., in Louisville.

During the period of intense publicity, very few people (only my family, close friends and cohorts at work) expressed any interest in how this change in my husband’s employment would affect my career and present position.

There were plenty of people who took it for granted that I would simply quit my job and allow my career as a CPA and financial analyst to come to a “screeching halt.” The B.S. degree in accounting, as well as the CPA certification I had obtained, were totally disregarded. It was, in fact, assumed that I would sacrifice and forget all I had worked for to accept a role as “first lady.” Most would giggle and ask me, “When are you going to have your first tea party?” Very few were aware of the responsibilities, time commitments or daily routines of the “first lady” on campus, but this really did not surprise me.

Shocked were many when I informed them I had no intention of quitting my

job! A few even gasped when I added the drive to and from work would be 110 miles per day.

Since we had no children and the size of the student body as well as the campus were relatively small, I knew I could give my “all” to the university on a part-time basis and still maintain my full-time job. I felt the quality of time spent on university matters was far more meaningful than the quantity of the time. Dedication and commitment were on my side.

Many spouses are faced with the dilemma of role description and professional involvement following the selection of their mate as university president. A significant amount of soul searching takes place the first year after the selection. Yet, the results of the first year are so strongly dependent on the choices we made.

The “Mrs. Burse Syndrome”

The official welcoming reception was held shortly before we moved to town and will always be remembered as the event marked with a sea of faces. *It was truly wonderful!* Unfortunately, this event also marked the beginning of the “Mrs. Burse” or “president’s wife syndrome.” I became aware that the university staff and the university community initially could not have cared less about me as an individual. Few, if any, even wanted or cared to know my first name. All that mattered was that I was the president’s wife, Mrs. Burse. It was as though I was expected to be a mirror, reflecting odds and ends of my husband’s thoughts without having any critical input or making any judgments of my own. My uniqueness as a human being was not even considered.

Past activities of previous presidential spouses on our campus seem to have been limited to attending meetings, banquets or other campus activities which really never required meaningful participation (i.e., introducing persons listed on the program of an event, making presentations of awards or acting as a guest speaker).

Initially, this type of mentality disturbed me but, deep, down inside, I was convinced that hard work—and time—would work to my advantage.

Our New Home

Described as a “dream house” by many of my friends, the official University House is truly beautiful. The entire first floor of the home is furnished by the university with the upstairs reserved for the president’s family. The house is less than 10 years old and is located on the far side of the campus which is somewhat isolated from day to day activities.

Many official university houses are located in the heart of the campus. These houses, typically, are over 50 years old and they serve as center points for fund raising and entertainment activities.

Moving into an official university house is always difficult because it requires a meshing of the presidential family's belongings into a prearranged setting. Major furnishings are generally provided in the public areas, but final decorative touches are always missing.

Thus, one of my first tasks as spouse of the president was to complete the decoration of the house. Normally this is a necessary requirement because all "first families" find a need to mold their homes into an environment which reflects their tastes—if only in a small way. Typically, 500 or more guests per year are entertained in these official houses, therefore, the need is to make them hospitable as well as representative of university history and tradition. We assume the awesome task of decorating, even though in some cases first families are new to the area and have very little knowledge of decorating services available. A saving grace can be the university staff assigned to the house. They combine links from the past and to the future.

The First Football Game

The first home football game was one major event on campus where there were numerous students, faculty and citizens from the Frankfort community. It was a memorable event even though we did not win the game. We had been to several college football games before, but there was a distinct difference in observing a game as an unattached spectator and in observing as a university presidential couple. We carefully observed every event that occurred that day. Similarly, I felt we were also watched ever so carefully. Everyone was curious as to how the new presidential couple would conduct themselves at a football game.

I hope we did not shock too many people with our spontaneous bursts of applause and cheers when the tide of events flowed positively and grumbles when they were reversed. We also openly expressed our pleasure and delight with the marching band during the half-time performance. By the end of the game, I was sure the crowd regarded us as average football spectators, and from that game forward there was never really a question about our ability to "act normal" at a football game.

My Growth and Development in My New Role

Subsequent weeks were filled with endless banquets, receptions and speaking engagements for the president which required my presence. My role as spouse

broadened as I assumed duties such as hostess, supervisor of the house staff, co-director of the official house, and campus representative. At that point, I still had not received any directions from the board of regents, thus, I continued to use on-the-job training as my major information source.

My days started abruptly, at 5:45 a.m., Monday through Friday. The commute from Frankfort to Louisville took approximately one hour and 15 minutes. I constantly used my lunch hour to run errands and wrap up loose ends related to our move or to the decoration of the campus house. On occasion, I would find time to grab a bite to eat, but that mainly consisted of a cola drink and snack crackers. I was not overly excited about eating lunch anyway, since evening meals generally included banquets of some type.

More times than not, I left the office exactly at quitting time because of the constant need to attend an event on campus later that evening. Somehow the president and I always arrived at most events exactly on time or with plenty of time to spare.

As time progressed, I became an expert in small talk as do many spouses of university presidents. All of us become very socially inclined as we develop communication skills and diplomatic techniques which may not have otherwise emerged. In addition, we learn to endure practically any event no matter how boring.

The various events on the university campus offered a fantastic opportunity for me to interact with a variety of people, participate in a whole host of interesting activities and become involved in decisions which truly made a difference to the university. I was a working consort with my husband and was loving it every step of the way. Together we were a unique team dedicated to serving a great university.

Nonetheless, the other side of the coin had to be examined: the effect of the university life on our marriage and homelife during the first year.

There were many meals eaten alone, many discussions about the ranking of my priorities and where the university fell in that ranking, many evenings spent alone, many nights interrupted by phone calls regarding the university, constant scheduling and cross-referencing of schedules, unpredictable demands on our time which took precedence over our personal activities, and event after event. University life was strenuous to say the least.

To add to that stress was the awkwardness of making true friends. In the back of my mind was the thought that some people would be friendly only because of my spouse's position. Similarly, there was a fear of being used by someone to extract information regarding the university. Unfortunately, everyone became suspect until enough time passed for me to feel comfortable with my sur-

roundings and the people I came to know. I later made many warm and lasting friendships, but during the interim, old friends were considered a necessity for mere survival.

We as spouses learn to accept quality time and become “touchy” about the free time we have for ourselves and with our spouses. Busy schedules become the norm to fill voids created by the lack of time spent with our partners in marriage. University life is demanding, indeed, but we learn to endure. We look at the environment as a challenge to be mastered and we concentrate on the positive aspects. Our commitment to our spouses and the university keeps us “ticking.”

The Changing of Jobs

Luck was on my side during the first six months after our move. During that time period, my work load remained steady and did not require very much overtime. Nonetheless, after Raymond had been selected as the permanent president, I realized a decision had to be made regarding whether or not to remain in the job I held.

The decision process created a great deal of anxiety because it involved a reexamination of personal goals and priorities. I realized that there were numerous events, activities and causes with which I wanted to be involved; however, there were only 24 hours in a day and only one of me. *I had to make a decision.* My self-fulfillment, independence, intellectual stimulation and future career were in question.

I had been engaged in a juggling act for the last six months which was draining my energy bit by bit. Thus, I decided I could maintain my personal goals by accepting another position with the Kentucky State Government located in Frankfort, my resident city. This change would afford me the opportunity to maximize the time I could spend with my husband and take part in other outside activities of personal interest. I chose to change and it has proven to be for the better.

As a result of the change in jobs, I was able to carve out a small, but important amount of spare time. I was able to enroll in an evening class in elementary Spanish—something I had always wanted to do. The class allowed me to achieve two objectives: (1) It allowed me to learn Spanish and, (2) it allowed me to become one of the university’s commuting night students. The opportunity gave me insights into the campus as viewed by our night students and this became a valuable asset in later months.

Another exciting part of my first year on campus centered around the organization of the Kentucky State University Women’s Club.

It was a shocking surprise to learn that the university had never had such a club in the past. Therefore, I called a small group of women together to help me develop proposed objectives, bylaws and a constitution for the club. In addition, we planned an informational reception for those interested in forming a women's club.

The organization of such a club drew some skepticism, because it represented a new endeavor. I was quite pleased at the final turnout for the reception and with those who have continued to participate. I felt a great sense of accomplishment when the club became an official group on campus and it proved to everyone that new endeavors could be successful as well as make tremendous contributions to the university.

I am sure all spouses of university presidents find a particular interest on their campus to which they contribute a great amount of time and effort. Those items of interest always become true success stories for the university. Thus, the effort and commitment generated by the spouse for these projects offer more proof that the university really does get two for the price of one!

The Closing of Our First Year

Graduation marked the end of the primary segment of the school year. Administrators, faculty and staff came together on graduation day for one of the most beautiful and meaningful ceremonies held during the year. The payoff for each student's four-to-five-year effort became apparent on that day. The graduating students' faces passing by us, one by one, became an unforgettable sight. The thought that our partnership efforts directly and indirectly affected the educational experience of those young people gave us a warm glow. For this was the reason for our efforts and sacrifice.

After graduation ceremonies were concluded, vacation became the next item on our agenda. The prior 12 months were run with full steam ahead and, thus, it was time to unwind and review the past year's activities as well as plan for the upcoming year.

Our first year was truly exciting and it produced a definite change in our lives. The change, as well as our new roles, became integral parts of both our lives. During that first year, the university learned that it had a unique *team* at the helm. The university community no longer thought of me as someone to be seen but not heard. This allowed me to put to rest the "Mrs. Burse Syndrome" once and for all.



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Active in many university and community organizations over the years, Sue Young has a B.A. degree in political science and is pursuing further studies in linguistics.

THE QUESTION OF REMUNERATION



by Sue Young

Over the past few years, the topic of the desirability of remuneration for the performance of duties by the spouse of a university president or chancellor* has been discussed many times in academic circles. The growing interest has prompted the inclusion in this book of an essay on the feasibility and desirability of such remuneration. Here the spouse referred to is the female because the dominant force of university heads is still represented by men and because the services provided are those most normally associated with the spouse/wife rather than the spouse/husband. Much of the supporting material of this discussion is derived from the "1983 Survey of Spouses of Presidents/Chancellors Who Are Members of The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges." The conclusions are based on 104 survey responses from a total of 138 surveys distributed.

Until recently, the subject of remuneration would probably not even have been considered in a book about university presidents' spouses. There has been a long-standing tradition of a certain status afforded the president's wife, but there has been little formal acknowledgement of her responsibilities and power. Remuneration has evidently been considered unnecessary or inappropriate for someone in her position. It has been expected that she would graciously volunteer her time and talents in the pursuit of her husband's goals and accomplishments. His successes would be her reward.

Today, throughout the nation, attitudes toward volunteerism are changing. More and more women who previously had performed in various volunteer roles are electing to enter the work force. In some instances they are abandoning their volunteer work altogether; while in the arts, in hospitals, in the field of politics, to name a few, many jobs previously reserved for volunteers only are being changed to paid staff positions. To a great number of women this development has meant financial independence and a rise in self-esteem. This 1983 survey of NASULGC spouses indicates, however, that the desirability of

*Used interchangeably are the terms president and chancellor since either refers to the chief executive officer of the campus or system.

this trend from unpaid to paid is not shared by all women. To the majority of those university presidents' wives responding in this survey, remuneration for their particular position was not an attractive option.

For 20 percent of the spouses surveyed, however, now did seem the proper time to consider the feasibility of offering payment to university presidents' spouses for the services they presently perform on a voluntary basis. Someone does have to do the things a president's wife does. There is not a university presidency in the nation that is a one-person job. Whether or not a wife exists, someone is performing the vital administration of social events. Should there be public acknowledgement that a necessary and valuable job is being done that, were it not for the free labor of the spouse, would have to be paid for?

There is no question that the university powers-that-be want the very best representative in their president's wife. After all, she is the campus's official hostess; she represents the institution wherever she goes and whatever she does, even when she would rather be a private person; she makes decisions about entertainment and house expenditures involving many thousands of dollars based upon her tastes, her instincts, her needs, her abilities, her sensitivities to the campus and the community; in her role as a non-employee she often serves as supervisor, mentor, and trainer of paid university employees; she frequently holds the key to opening up the proper environment for major university fund-raising activities in her home.

Why is it, then, that 80 percent of those surveyed did not believe that they should be paid for their work as spouses? In enumerating some of their specific reasons for rejecting remuneration, the key word used in the survey responses was "flexibility."

If paid, I would lose what little flexibility has been retained; the president/chancellor salary should be high enough to cover services of the spouse.

Remuneration is inappropriate concreteness for what must be a flexible situation.

I have more flexibility for my private life as wife and mother without salary.

I am not interested in working for the university as a paid employee as it would lessen my flexibility of choices.

Other spouses were specifically concerned with the budget difficulties currently being experienced on their campuses, and, therefore, rejected the idea of their being paid for their services.

One wife said, "I view my responsibilities, in part, as an opportunity for service to my husband, the university, and the state. However, I would have

preferred the opportunity to volunteer my services, rather than service being mandated." It appears that some wives felt that they had had no voice in the matter of whether or not they wanted to perform the full-time duties of a university president's wife. Even under this condition, however, most still preferred not to be paid.

There obviously are many problems with this concept of being compensated for work being done because it comes with one's spouse's position. It would be a radical change in the life patterns of some wives to consider being remunerated for something they had always done out of a sense of partnership and devotion. The interjection of a salary might bring about a re-ordering of priorities with possibly far-reaching consequences in their personal lives.

From the information supplied in the survey responses, a composite of a president's wife would be that of a woman over 50 years old and in a first marriage. In addition, she would be a college graduate and not professionally involved prior to being the president's spouse. At least for the present, this picture represents the majority of those surveyed for whom the time seemed not right to make a decision toward such a radical change as that of receiving remuneration for their services.

Why, then, is there a growing awareness that "two for the price of one" is becoming less acceptable? I once heard this phrase from a university president who was paying tribute to his lifelong partner on the event of their retirement. She had been involved in a most intimate way in his entire career, and he considered the university fortunate, indeed, to have been clever enough to hire only him and yet reap the benefits of her services, too, for all those years.

Recent events have forced us to become aware of the spouse's role. As an example, more and more women are becoming heads of universities. This has brought into focus the fact that when there is no wife (for a male spouse would not be expected to perform the duties which fall upon the female spouse), provisions must be made to hire one or more persons to assume the wifely duties of managing, hostessing, planning, budgeting, training, and supervising. Paying someone to do this work also occurs when there is a bachelor president. And there is an increasing practice of husband and wife separate careers being carried on simultaneously. In the survey, approximately 10 percent of the spouses are employed full time. In some cases this means that they have no time to give to the duties of a president's wife, and someone else is hired to carry out these functions. In other instances, they diligently try to excel at both jobs, sometimes to the detriment of their outside paid position.

On another front, the growing divorce rate in the United States has forced women in general to take a better look at how their lifetime is accounted for.

Having to enter the job market when one has devoted her life to non-paid work, brings on the painful realization that past performance not monetarily rewarded is performance not highly valued by prospective employers. This is an employer attitude that some people are valiantly trying to change because volunteer work many times is performed at the highest level and requires a great deal of skill.

Unfortunately, a president's spouse is not immune from being divorced, or widowed. Capable and intelligent as she is, she might find herself in the position of having to prove her high-level managerial skills to the job world. As one wife put it in her survey response:

I would particularly like to have credit for performing a job in terms of the need for future positions. "Wife of the President" is not something one can use on questionnaires, so it sounds as if I have done nothing.

The results of this survey show that 96 percent of the spouses do not now have a written job description. For many, this is deliberate, and is necessary for them to maintain their flexibility. For those who are considering either the possibility of remuneration for the job of president's spouse, or the possibility of documentation of experience for gaining outside employment, a written job description would be necessary. Until their responsibilities are formally spelled out, few spouses can expect to be taken seriously in a bid for recognition of the professional level of their services.

For all of us, change is frightening. From the wife's point of view, being remunerated for her position could cause changes in relationships with her husband, the staff, friends, members of the university governing board, and with those serving the campus in a volunteer capacity.

By receiving payment for her activities, a wife would, in principle at least, have become an employee of her husband. Somewhere along the line he probably would have been involved in negotiating the amount of her salary. Subsequently, her work would have to be evaluated, and her husband, perhaps, would be in the position of being loyally, but uncomfortably, defensive of her performance. What had previously been a private discussion between married partners would have become a semi-public evaluation. The survey results indicate that 95 percent of the spouses have never been evaluated. It seems that most spouses perform their tasks exceedingly well but find the demanding situation acceptable only because they are not told what to do and are not put in the vulnerable position of being formally evaluated by others.

If the wife were to be remunerated, her role in the interview process would likely take on larger dimensions because the search committee would be

focusing on her talents as well as those of her husband. As of this 1983 survey, 47 percent of the spouses had had no part in the interview process when the governing board members considered their husbands for the presidency. Only 12 percent had had anyone at the institution even explain the expectation of their role as spouse before their husbands were hired.

It may well be that no one *can* explain the wife's role ahead of time because of the overwhelming focus which is put on the president's role and because of the assumption that it is his show and, therefore, up to him to know his wife's capabilities. Because of her husband's expectations, her previous experiences, her family demands, and her personal achievements, each wife would bring to the role her own special stamp, and it may be that the job must be tailored after the fact.

Remuneration for presidents' spouses would undoubtedly bring about more awareness on the part of the members of the governing boards of the vital assistance many wives afford their husbands in the performance of this life-consuming occupation known as university president/chancellor. This would have the salutary effect of making the wife's contributions a matter of public record and would afford her more job security in the future. However, the larger the acknowledged role of the wife, the more her personal attributes would have to be considered in the interview process, and the less control the presidential candidate would have over the criteria upon which he is to be judged for his position.

The change from volunteer to paid spouse might also have an effect upon relationships with other volunteer workers on campus. There are, after all, the wives of vice-chancellors, vice-presidents, deans, and others who perform frequent hostessing functions for the university. Where does one draw the line as to who should be remunerated for these services? Is remuneration only for the official hostess in the official residence? Does the full-time aspect and the level of the job make the difference? No other spouse within the university community has the large constituency of the president's wife—a constituency consisting of all faculty, all students, all alumni, all staff on campus, and a wide spectrum of the community. This makes comparisons difficult.

Every university is aware that the spirit of volunteerism is an important aspect of its development programs, sometimes involving hundreds of alumni and friends in various support groups, councils, and advisory boards. Without these volunteers, universities could lose many of the vast resources that they have in their alumni and friends. Frequently, women volunteers look to the president's wife as a role model. They identify with her generosity in giving of her time. The more she participates in their activities, the better they feel

about themselves. What happens to these relationships when the president's spouse is no longer a volunteer? Does such a change jeopardize the status which volunteer alumnae now perceive themselves to hold?

These questions are not easy to answer. This survey showed only four instances in which the president's spouse was now actually being remunerated for her position as wife of the president. How long these salaries have been in effect and what repercussions they have brought about were not revealed. With time, we will have more data to assess the impact of these truly pioneer experiments, but for the moment we can only surmise what changes they might effect in university relationships.

If we were to assume the feasibility of remuneration for the president's wife, there are the questions of how much and in what way she would be paid. No two institutions operate in the same way. No two presidents' wives have the same needs. Therefore, there would be a wide range of individual adaptations necessary.

According to the survey, of the 20 percent of wives who thought they should be paid, over half believed their salary should come from general university funds. A little over one-fourth thought they should be paid from general foundation funds (that is, funds which arguably would be unavailable for general university purposes). The remaining spouses preferred to share the president's own salary by having it in two parts, reflecting one payment to the president and one to his wife.

The amount of salary suggested varied widely, with 40 percent saying that they should be paid \$30,000 or more a year, and 24 percent thinking the amount should be \$12,000 or less. The other responses fell somewhere in between.

It is clear that even with those who are certain that they should be paid, the question of how, by whom, and how much varies greatly. However, the fact that some presidents' spouses are now being compensated for their services (ranging in amount from \$2,000 to \$30,000 annually), indicates that when it is considered necessary for the well-being of the university, a way can be found to arrive at both the proper source and the proper amount of spousal payment.

One conclusion to be reached from this study is that for the overwhelming majority of the wives surveyed, there is a need to protect the *status quo*—to say to the world, "I am proud to volunteer my time. It makes me feel good to know that I can be of help to my husband. Placing a monetary value on my services would add strain to an already demanding job. It is only because of the flexibility my life has as a volunteer that I am able to keep my husband, my

family, and myself happy, while at the same time giving my best efforts to the university and the community.”

Another conclusion to be drawn from this discussion of remuneration, is that there is a need by some spouses to change the system—to say to the world, “I believe that this position, which I have assumed by virtue of being married to my husband, is a full-time career which draws upon my considerable skills and talents and for which I should be adequately compensated. I need this recognition for my self-identity and proof to the outside world of my contributions to the university for the time that I am here.”

In the survey, one-third of the wives under 50 years old felt that remuneration was desirable, as compared to a little over one-tenth of those 50 and over who felt the same way. As pointed out earlier, the majority of those surveyed was over the age of 50. This might indicate that a future trend will be toward desiring remuneration as older presidential partners retire and younger couples assume leadership. Whether the spouse is paid separately or whether the president’s salary is increased sufficiently to reflect his wife’s contributions, are arrangements which might best be handled when one is entering the presidency. For those already in the position, the upheaval of change might be too overwhelming to tackle. As one wife wrote, “Even if it were possible to be paid for my services, I would not accept it as my self-respect would be lessened.”

Perhaps, however, the time has come to put away the *automatic* arrangement of two for the price of one when hiring a university president and his partner. Perhaps we are in a period of transition in which the role of the presidential spouse can be individually defined and can either retain its traditional volunteer status or can make the change to paid professional.

The mere fact that this topic is being discussed here and now is a tribute to all spouses of presidents and chancellors. The commitment that they have shown throughout the years deserves recognition. The message is clear: A vital job is being done. If, as a result of this publication, university governing boards across the nation become more informed on the role of the partner’s spouse, they could act to see that future presidential appointments carried with them the choice of whether or not remuneration was in order for the president’s partner.

CHAPTER V



THE YEARS AHEAD



Joan Elizabeth Clodius received a B.A. degree in Far Eastern History from the University of Washington in 1949 and, thereafter, has participated in a richly interwoven life of partnership with her husband in a full range of domestic, academic and administrative activities in higher education both in Madison, Wisconsin, and overseas. Joan moved to Washington, D.C. in 1979 when her husband, Robert L. Clodius, was named President of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. And she now serves as staff liaison for the NASULGC Committee of Presidents and Chancellors Spouses.

THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE



by Joan E. Clodius

My spouse tells me that no self-respecting, modern-trained social scientist would touch this title because it involves extrapolation from what is ideally a longitudinal study for which we have only a single year's set of data drawn from a specific survey instrument. My thought here is that he may be right, but on the other hand economists aren't doing very well these days, and we historians know that the past is prologue. By studying the present, by relating it to the observations of the past, we can make some informed judgments about what the future may be like. Another thought here is that the future will probably be very much like the present, and the more near-term the future, the more it will look like the present. Our interest, then, should lie in the next decade or two, a time long enough for changes to take place and short enough to relate to the present.

Having told you that my method will be to make a projection from the present into the next decade or two, I need to characterize the present and shall do so based on our own survey and the writings of Riesman, Corbally, Kemeny and others. There are basically three different categories of spouses in the NASULGC world with one category containing persons of two groupings that have quite different attitudes toward their role. The three categories are as follows:

1. *Two for One.* The board hires and pays a chief executive officer and the spouse is thrown in with the deal. The closest analogy outside the academy is the spouse of a minister, as some studies suggest, but I also believe it is true of spouses of principals in all positions having high public visibility and endowed with large pieces of public responsibility and trust, such as ambassadors in the foreign service and members of Congress. Within this category there are two groups. One portion is made up of those who like the arrangement, or at least go along with it. The other is made up of those who don't like it, fret about the conflicts and frequently resent the role.

2. *The Separate Career.* This characterizes the spouse who has a separate job and carries the obligations, responsibilities and salary that go along with it. Being married to the university chief executive is parallel to the job and career.

The “other” jobs which derive from being married to the university may be handled in part—or entirely—by the spouse or are handled partially by someone other than the career spouse.

3. *The Professional Manager and Partner.* This describes the spouse who, finding the amorphous nature of the role, defines it in terms of duties and responsibilities and moves to establish its professional dimensions and her role as the partner of the chief executive. There is much here that is in common with category 1, the major difference being that category 3 gives explicit definition and professionalism to the role and to the function. In that sense it might be called a “two for two.”

There are substantial hazards in trying, thusly, to categorize and describe the variation that exists among spouses because no one individual person is likely to fit exactly among spouses because no one individual person is likely to fit exactly into a category. Yet, each spouse who reads this will try to figure out, “where did she put me?” The relevant questions are—Where did you place yourself? Where would you like to be?

It is terribly intriguing to realize that the answer to the question of the university spouse role in the future lies here in the present. All of the persons who will be the active decision makers as to that role are now alive and most are functioning as mature adults. Those now active in the over-50 age groups will have their places taken by the under-50 cohort. Regents and trustees whose service is terminated in the next decade or two will be replaced by currently living men and women. We just don’t know who they are and what they think about the job of university spouse.

But we can do a bit of speculation about governing boards in state universities and we can make some assumptions. We can speculate that the composition of boards will modify to include more women as members. Thus, we can expect there to be reflected on the board an awareness and a better understanding of the role of the chief executive officer’s spouse. We can assume there is no lessening of the demand for “accountability” on the part of the state for its public officials. This means getting job descriptions down in writing, allocating funds and resources to support the enterprise and checking after the fact to see that things are going well. These two things—a speculation and an assumption—suggest a climate of receptivity, or, if not receptivity, a climate of non-hostility to a clarification and definition of the functional area heretofore dumped on the chief executive officer’s spouse.

We should also realize that most boards do not take up subjects as a matter of original jurisdiction. Most prefer to think of themselves as policy boards rather than being administrative and managerial. Unfortunately, we all have heard

horror stories of meddling, but since the model aspires in the direction of policy, let us assume that the board hopes to be responsive to matters brought before it by the university administration.

The relevant question is what will the university administration propose to the governing board about the definition, responsibilities, roles, financial support, support help, compensation, etc. for a job that simply must operate out of the chief executive's office. In those institutions where the discussion has not taken place before, it will not be easy. The university chief executive officer deals with scarce resources and this next decade is not likely to be one of generosity from state sources. The chief executive officer is surrounded by competing demands—from academic departments for teaching and research, from the library, from student activities and affairs, from extension and public service, from university relations and public affairs, and from his own office as well. If more funds are added to support the spouse's role, less funds are available for the College of Arts and Sciences, and this is true whether old money is being reallocated or new appropriations come from the state for educational and general expenses. In the mind of the chief executive it may be just a bit easier to ask his spouse to continue to make sacrifices for the university than to ask it of the academic deans.

Furthermore, there is an attitude, unfair and unjust though it may be, that supporting the chief executive's role by supporting the spouse's role and making her more effective as a partner is somehow unethical when done with public funds. The chief executive senses this, even if it hasn't shown its ugly face. In my observation these stories and rumors can range from malicious gossip to disparaging remarks about the spouse, to signs of disaffection with the way the university is being run and lack of public support for the institution.

Attitudes are difficult to change, and they change slowly if at all. This is reason again to give specific content to the responsibilities, expectations and specific financial support to the role of the spouse as manager and partner. When this is done, we can expect better understanding, better acceptance and better support for that role into the future. Timidity about endorsing an activity about which there has been controversy will disappear as a strong positive image of virtue emerges.

The good news for the university is that at last recognition and definition may be given to a job that heretofore was undefined and untitled and underfunded, yet everyone knew existed and had to be done. The good news for most spouses is that here, at last, is a job description, a set of expectations and a listing of resources available. The bad news is that all three may be unrealistic for what needs to be done, or that the spouse and the job may not be a good fit.

Lack of goodness of fit may range all the way from the spouse personally being unwilling or unable to assume some or all of the university job to an almost complete lack of resources for the spouse to work with.

It is difficult to make any judgment about the future in these matters. A remarkable finding in the survey was the great variation that was reported by respondents both as to themselves and their roles. One might expect as the university job is described and characterized in a set of expectations, there would come some commonality in the specifications and the variation would be reduced in the future. This possible reduction in variation on the job side then must be set off against the remarkably consistent advice given among spouses "To be yourself." "To thine own self be true."

My economist husband tells me that labor market analysis may be useful in understanding this apparent contradiction. It would be relatively straightforward for a job analyst to write up a job description with tasks, duties and responsibilities tied to the chief executive's office. The description might include such things as directing programs at the official university house, planning and executing official entertainment at the house, supervising a house staff for cooking, serving, cleaning and maintaining the residence, representing the chief executive in a protocol capacity both on and off campus, and carrying out other general and specific public affairs functions. The job would be given a title (such as special assistant), a salary range would be established, and the university personnel office could advertise the job in the prescribed manner and list the qualifications and experience sought in applicants. After the applications are received and evaluated, references checked, interviews conducted, the personnel office would offer the job. Presumably someone would accept and the position would be filled.

This approach has the virtue of establishing that there is such a job in the institution, that it has objective validity in its own right, and that compensation is appropriate and expected. Indeed, isn't this the case where the chief executive officer is a single or married female, or a single male? Someone is hired or a current employee is used in some category to execute these essential university functions.

This approach may be somewhat flawed on the supply side when the obvious candidate for the job is the spouse of a married male university chief executive because the labor market does not recognize the uniqueness of this spousal role. This is what makes its definition so very difficult, but not impossible, when set in terms of expectations. That board members already have clear expectations for the spouse is seen in Deborah Toll's essay reporting on Tennessee.

A precautionary note is in order. There are disadvantages in getting every-

thing rigidly defined in terms of specific tasks, duties, and responsibilities, especially if it were meant that the spouse is to get the job. Again, the survey points out the great many ways that spouses modify, adapt, alter, adjust and juggle in order to cope with the many circumstances in which they find themselves. To accommodate to the variation we find among spouses on the labor supply side, and to accommodate to the great variety of circumstances that are found on the university side, one must write job descriptions with a great deal of sensitivity to the circumstances and a great deal of flexibility in what is done and how it should be done. It would be possible to write a flexible job description in terms of *goals* and *expectations* rather than in terms of tasks and duties and to evaluate the incumbent relative to the former and not the latter. These expectations already exist in many cases and they need merely to be codified.

At the end of this essay is my attempt to pull together from my personal experience and conversations the various expectations expressed by spouses like myself who have thought, "Oh, if we knew then what we know now, things would have been different because we would know what to ask and what to ask for." When such expectations are set forth, there are implications for the spouses in each of our categories, and for some more than others.

Moreover, in my judgment, there are great advantages in all categories to have job descriptions, goals and expectations drawn up and made a part of the understandings between governing boards and the presidential couple.

In the "two for one" arrangement, the greatest benefit to the spouse will come in the recognition of her role and the realization of self-identity. The voluntary contribution in kind by the spouse will take on greater meaning and likely be more highly valued even though uncompensated. Those who like the voluntary role (and there are many who do) should like it better, and even the less enchanted should feel better about themselves when they see that recognition is given explicitly to their contribution.

The separate career spouse should feel greatly relieved and greatly challenged in seeing spelled out a university position, functionally related to the president's office, but not directly an obligation of the president's spouse. If the separate careerist pursues her career, it is clear that the university must hire someone else to carry out those university related obligations. On the other hand, if that university position is salaried, the careerist may choose to give up the outside job in favor of the one in the institution. But how in the world can the possibility of such an option be considered if it is not somewhere spelled out in the process of the offering and accepting of appointment of the university's chief executive?

The manager and partner spouse should also gain in having a clear statement of job, goals, and expectations. Like her "two-for-one" counterpart she should gain great psychic income from having others know and understand her role. In the event it leads to compensation there is that satisfaction as well and surely there would be no compensation for a job that could not be characterized in some way understandable to governing board members and state auditors.

A special group to gain will be system and campus first ladies who may come to know for the first time in their lives (in history?) what is expected of them individually and in respect to one another. What better basis to begin the communication that Judy Ikenberry says is foremost in easing tension and strain.

Another special group is that of the female president and the male bachelor president who stand to gain through having some spelled-out understanding with the board about how "official" functions are to be performed in the absence of the traditional, volunteer, female spouse. While the survey responses are too few for generalization, my impression over the years is that the male, separate career spouse manages to maintain his own life, but like his female counterpart, has feelings of anxiety, ambiguity and inadequacy. The male bachelor president, in the absence of a spouse, forthrightly hires personnel and delegates "official arrangements" out of the chief executive's office.

With respect to all categories, I believe it is essential for spouses to begin to think through and redefine their roles as "partners" to the president. Karen E. O'Neil has begun this by using the term "public partnership" to identify the obligations of the spouse by virtue of the fact of marriage to the chief executive. It suggests a parallelism to the marital partnership that I find attractive and descriptive but troublesome in legal and business terms. The business and professional meaning defined by Webster is: "partnership involves close cooperation between parties having specified and joint rights and responsibilities as in a common enterprise."

This fits the marital partnership and marriage contract, but the absence of partnership as far as the university is concerned is clear when one considers what happens to the spouse's joint rights and responsibilities on the public side if she becomes widowed, or the chief executive is fired. Yet, it is true that spouses have worked as partners in a common enterprise—the university—and have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to their spousal role. Only, thus far, it has been all responsibilities and no rights.

If we use a little common sense and ask the market about what can be hired and what cannot be hired, we can separate out the official or "public" from the marital—the official being related to maintaining the house, entertaining,

representation and public relations. The official or public job is one that any qualified person might hold, or the functions might be divided among a number of persons hired by the university. In practice, the job is not defined, and the functions are executed by the president's spouse. On the other hand there is the marital, legal partnership which the spouse holds by contract and carries out in the functions of nurturer of the family, supporter and confidant of the chief executive, neighborhood solicitor of causes, the link of communication to the extended family, and the other, myriad things eloquently described in this volume. At the present time I believe the only real "partnership" in the executive suite is the marital partnership and the future lies in gaining recognition for and setting expectations relative to the official functions in the chief executive's office.

In reflecting on my own personal experience and observations, in recalling scores of conversations, in considering the responses to our survey, and in drawing on the wisdom and experience of the authors of these powerful and eloquent essays, I conclude that the future holds three developments. One is increased *recognition* for the role of the spouse. The second is the *definition* of that role, and, following these, is eventual *compensation* for at least that part of the total effort which would have to be paid for by the university in the absence of a female spouse. The first is already underway and is simply a part of the increasing awareness by women and society generally of the female role. The shorthand is "consciousness raising" in the social literature, but I prefer to think of it as an adult continuing education program within the higher education family. Definition will come as we confer together, write books and articles, ask questions, analyze experiences and seek comparisons. Sue Young makes the case for compensation. It will develop more easily if the functional goals and expectations can be related to the market where analagous services can be hired and the personnel are paid. Equal pay for equal work is only fair and just.

I also believe that progress will be slow in the beginning but that acceptance will come steadily. It does not seem realistic that noble spouses will bring imperial governing boards and presidents to sign a Magna Carta, or that some profound sociologist's theory will suddenly change our world. Rather, I think that the collection of case studies and case histories such as represented in this volume will gradually bring a consensus that change is in order. The present reality is that more and more women are having careers. Spouses in the academy, from which most chief executives are drawn, are more likely to be career and job and compensation-oriented than the average or typical spouse in our survey who is over 50 and has been conditioned to accept the "charming and gracious" volunteer role. The upcoming generation of spouses will have

different lives to lead and they will be living them in a world of different attitudes and values. The guiding concepts are awareness, understanding, education, fairness, and justice.

APPENDIX

In what follows I have tried to organize the topics into what may be *asked of* the spouse (expectations) and what the spouse might *ask for* from the board to assist her in meeting the expectations.

What is Expected of the Spouse?

Campus Involvement: The Gown. Is the spouse expected to be involved with the faculty in any way? To attend any service or social functions associated with schools and colleges or departments, recognition dinners, scholarship teas, faculty spouse functions, international clubs, newcomer groups, etc? Is something expected beyond mere presence at such functions?

What is expected of the spouse with respect to students, both male and female? Is she expected to visit living groups, fraternities, sororities (her own if not others), residence halls? What about foreign students, scholarship students, and other clubs representing important student interests and activities? Is she expected to have a special interest and involvement in the student union and its music, theater, and artistic activities? Is she expected to contribute to student recruitment activities and high school student visitations, pre-registration orientation for new students, and parents' weekends?

And alumni? Every year brings more class reunions it seems, additional alumni to be recognized for distinguished service, more need for increased efforts at fund raising among them, and ever larger numbers of women. What is the expected level of involvement? Is it ceremonial presence, participation, entertaining, correspondence?

What is expected with respect to the endless special events—the visit of a distinguished teacher and scholar, the retirement of a noted member of the faculty or staff or the much sadder event of death, the special programs of women's groups or other interests?

And athletic events? Is the spouse expected to attend football, basketball, ice hockey, crewing, soccer and other such events on campus? (While she sits and cheers, she may also be worried about time and energy for her own fitness program.)

Community Involvement and Leadership: The Town. What are the expectations held for the spouse, as a high-visibility volunteer, to involve herself in the community? Should she serve as an active member or board member for the YWCA, Girl/Boy Scouts, Community Chest, March of Dimes, the symphony, the local or state historical society, local hospitals, museums, special schools, and church or synagogue? Is her contribution expected to be in money as well as time? What about special commissions and projects such as those to preserve and restore neighborhoods, historic districts, historic houses and buildings, and to conserve and to beautify the native landscape?

The Residence and Entertaining. What are expectations with respect to both the maintenance and use of the residence? Where does the responsibility lie for both noting and initiating action on house repairs, routine plumbing needs, electrical, painting and decorating needs, window washing, snow removal, gardening, lawn, tree and shrubbery, tennis courts and swimming pool maintenance? Is the spouse expected to use it as a private home and also as a public place—one to be on display at various times? Is it a historic house, and what are the implications for the spouse? If it is a large house with extra bedrooms, what is expected with respect to housing and feeding official guests and visitors including board members? Is it expected that the house is to be used for official entertaining or will entertaining be in other university facilities, such as the student union or alumni house? Is there a problem with respect to serving alcoholic beverages? Are rented facilities and use of private clubs appropriate? Who should be entertained? The list might include faculty, students, campus visitors, alumni, community leaders, past or prospective donors, members of the board, the governor and legislative leaders, commencement speakers, honorary degree recipients, and *ad infinitum*. Who expects to be entertained, and what are the board expectations about who should be entertained? What are the expectations with respect to lifestyle in entertaining? Is it down home or formal, intimate or large scale, plain or fancy, or all of these?

Representation-Official and Protocol. Do the board members have any expectations with respect to the spouse's relationship to themselves? Is the spouse expected to have only a social relationship with members—perhaps to house and feed them, to look after their spouses, and otherwise be charming and gracious? Or is she sometimes to report to the board, to undertake certain assignments, and to receive some direction? Is she expected to develop certain activities of her own such as speaking to national and state groups to represent the university, to participate in seminars and workshops of interest to the university and relevant to her competence and position, to appear on television

and radio talk shows, to cultivate the alumni, to give special attention to past and prospective donors both individuals and foundations?

Personal and Professional. It is assumed that every spouse meets the expectation of being "charming and gracious." But is it expected that she give 100 percent of her non-family time to the institution? If not, can she give her non-family time to her own professional career with full board support and without substantial loss to the university? Are there negative expectations about her trying to combine university obligations and personal interests and pursuits either full time or part-time?

Travel. Is the spouse expected to travel with her husband, or alone when appropriate, in execution of the several responsibilities she may share? A few examples include recruitment of students, meetings with alumni clubs, meetings of national associations in higher education, conferences on matters affecting the university, and representation in the institution's overseas projects, and meeting prospective and past donors.

What Resources are Available?

Basically the questions revolve around the adequacy of budget and facilities to support the activities expected of the spouse.

Staff. What can the spouse expect to have in the way of staff to take care of the residence, its repair, maintenance, etc., and the garden and grounds, but perhaps more importantly, someone who *cares* about the residence and *will see* that things are done? What assistance can the spouse expect in executing housekeeping functions such as cooking, cleaning, catering, and clean up?

Can the spouse expect the services of a secretary whom she supervises for official correspondence, invitations, cards, ordering supplies, keeping records, keeping accounts and coordinating events and schedules? Can the spouse expect the services of a "go for?" Someone is needed to run errands, buy supplies, make and receive calls and, when necessary, provide child care if there are children in the home.

House and Facilities. Is the house safe and secure? Is it adequate as a family home and as an official residence without remodeling, or providing separate houses? Are the kitchen and pantry large enough? Are there adequate dishwashers, cooking equipment, food processors and mixers, cooking ranges and ovens, refrigerators and freezers, washing machines and dryers? Are the accessories adequate in terms of china, glassware, silverware, table linens, and linens and towels and blankets for guest rooms? Are there adequate numbers and kinds of tables, chairs, beds, nightstands, closets and storage space? What part of

these furnishings and accessories may the spouse expect to come from the university and what part from family resources? Who carries and pays for the insurance on personal and household effects in the official house? Is there a schedule of periodic major cleaning, redecorating and replacement to remedy the ravages of time and entertaining? (There should be.)

Other resources. Is there a university foundation supported by non-tax money with funds available to the spouse or husband that can be used for legitimate needs not otherwise funded, such as a gift to a foreign official or flowers to a prospective donor? Might it include spouse's travel to university related events? Purchase of alcoholic beverages for entertaining as well as candles and flowers? And perhaps more controversial, assistance with a wardrobe that is directly related to university appearance?



What personal qualities are expected of a president's spouse?

THE LAST WORD

William E. (Bud) Davis
Chancellor, The Oregon State System of Higher Education

Above and beyond such routine expectations of being free from suspicion like Caesar's wife or attracting lasting loyalties like the Virgin Mary, the president's spouse should reflect other strong personal characteristics.

Those in academe will be looking for traits that strengthen the academic mission, such as the intellect of Eleanor Roosevelt, an appreciation of research like Madame Curie, and the ability to raise funds like Lady Bird Johnson. In the give and take of campus power struggles, it would also help if she had the political savvy of Golda Meier.

The President's spouse must be versatile—equally adept at supporting the arts like Joan Mondale, or engaging in locker room chatter like Phyllis George.

Communicative skills rank high on the list of attributes—things like drawing people out like Barbara Walters, handling massive correspondence like Ann Landers, or deftly turning a phrase with wit and humor like Erma Bombeck.

Appearances are also important—little things like presiding over affairs of state like Queen Elizabeth, while managing affairs of state like Margaret Thatcher.

She must have Jackie Kennedy's flair for redecorating old presidential residences while maintaining the wholesome hominess of Little House on the Prairie. She must serve simple, sumptuous banquets like Cleopatra's reception for Marc Antony on a Mrs. Colonel Sanders' southern fried chicken budget.

Her wardrobe, like Nancy Reagan's, should reflect style and elegance and appropriate frugality.

In times of crises, she must maintain the majestic calm of Greer Garson's Mrs. Miniver, the combative spirit of Joan of Arc, and the healing instincts of Florence Nightingale.

Like the Biblical Ruth, she must go when it's time to go, and stay when it's time to stay.

When little people are involved, she must be skilled at changing diapers, wiping noses, braiding hair—or mending clothes, minor wounds, and bruised feelings—in short, an expert in Erma Bombeck's "Second Oldest Profession."

She must be willing to eat a lot of meals alone (or with the children or the housekeeper), say warm and cheerful goodnights over the telephone, and stoically subordinate celebrations of birthings and birthdays, anniversaries, and other personal events to the campus calendar. All the while, she also is spreading herself thinner than United Way in covering the community, and logging more hours and miles than a marathon runner preparing for the Olympics. And, like a lady weight lifter—she must be durable.

In summary, the *perfect* president's spouse may be as hard to find as a college president who can walk on water.

But appreciated—you bet. Recently, an admiring president said of his spouse, "My wife is an angel, she's always up in the air harping."



(Footnote: If the president's spouse is a he, then someone will have to rewrite the book.)



EPILOGUE



David Riesman has established his reputation as a distinguished lawyer, sociologist and educator. He received his early education in his native Philadelphia and received his A.B. and LL.B. degrees from Harvard University. He served as a law clerk under Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis and practiced law in Boston before becoming a professor of law at the University of Buffalo. He also has served as a visiting research fellow at Columbia University and deputy assistant district attorney for New York City. Later he served as professor of social science at the University of Chicago and, in 1958, was named Henry Ford Professor of Social Sciences at Harvard. Among his published works are *The American Constitution and International Labor Legislation* (1941), *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (1950) and *Faces in the Crowd* (with Nathan Glazer, 1952). Although emeritus, David Riesman continues to supervise doctoral dissertations at Harvard Graduate School of Education, primarily when these deal with higher education, a subject area in which he has concentrated his research in recent years. He has been elected to memberships in the American Philosophical Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Education and the Century Association. He also is the holder of many honorary degrees. David Riesman is married to Evelyn Hastings Thompson, a writer and critic. They have four children and two grandchildren.

REFRACTIONS AND REFLECTIONS



By David Riesman

The existence of this volume testifies to two entirely unrelated strains in contemporary academic culture. One strain rises from the women's movements of the last several decades, whose intellectual and consciousness-raising bases have often been located in major university centers, unevenly influencing educated women (and of course to some degree men) in those centers and beyond. The other strain arises from the diminishing quality and effectiveness of academic leadership in a period not only of relatively declining budgets but also of the diminished authority of leadership in general. There are many aspects to that decline which are unnecessary to rehearse here, such as the greater demands for pre-audit as well as post-audit accountability, the growing impact of federal regulations, the rise, especially in many large states, of faculty unions embracing state systems, the rising tide of litigiousness, and the demands by organized interest groups for participation that often amounts to a virtual veto over the executive's room for maneuver. Many of us retain an heroic image of presidential leadership, and scan the horizon in search of college and university presidents who will use the "bully pulpit" of their positions to speak to salient national issues as well as to inspire their institutions intramurally. Many major institutions have been discovering that it is not easy to persuade capable individuals to assume a major presidency in the face of the mounting pressures on the president and the spillover of these onto the presidential family.

These expectations and tensions prevail widely across the academic landscape. However, the presidential spouses who have contributed to this volume, both in answering the survey submitted to them by NASULGC and in the chapters of the book, frequently face dilemmas which are not characteristic of the presidential partnership everywhere. The rapid growth of state systems has created a constellation where both a campus presidential couple and a system chancellor couple preside in the same community.

Particularly in situations where the system head has moved up in the first instance from the major flagship campus (as at Wisconsin and Illinois, and also

Texas, Texas A&M, and Chapel Hill), the two cooperating but competing couples must walk warily, not crowding one another by their respective social enterprises, especially since they almost inevitably crowd each other in terms of authority and influence. Which presidential couple is to host the significant parties for regents, the governor, and legislators, influential alumni and already courted donors at the home football games? Which president is to preside over the commencements of the constituent institutions, including the flagship campus once proud of its precedence and hence of that of its presidential/chancellor partners? These issues are implicit in Judy Ikenberry's essay, with its recognition of all the factors of history and precedence, negotiation and protocol. In these matters the tact and sensitivity of the wives of course are of great importance. Three spouses of heads of major systems are among the contributors to this volume: as just mentioned, Judy Ikenberry, Polly Davis, and Karen O'Neil. O'Neil illustrates by a "day in the life" from an archetypical diary of the partners the kinds of pressures both campus heads and system heads may be under; she describes the many days when the pair return from a survey trip hastily to change clothes to speak to an alumni group, steal a glimpse of the children, and prepare for a reception for several hundred guests—every one of whom will expect to be recognized and known by name. It is possible that heads of major systems, such as the O'Neils at the University of Wisconsin, have an even larger diet of travel than would a typical campus head within the system, some of whose external relations can be handled at the system level.

Indeed, one of the ironical problems of the presidential partners is that their positions appear to many non-intimate observers to be comfortable and even splendid. In those towns where the university is both a principal employer and "the main game in town," the president's spouse is socially and politically the "first lady" of the community. While her responsibilities grow incrementally and sometimes invisibly, her perquisites may appear lavish to many academics, staff, and townspeople. One of the concerns registered in responses to the 109 questions of the survey is the wear and tear on the wives' clothes resulting from the enormous amount of entertaining and socializing the partners engage in on behalf of the institution. The survey responses indicate a variety of entertaining which is not only staggering in quantity but in the demands it puts on the spouse for being present: many of the spouses log from 2500 to over 4,000 persons a year passing through the house that is hardly a home.² Several questionnaires reveal that the presidential mansions inherited by the current partners have become inadequate for the expected amount of entertaining: the kitchen may be too small or poorly arranged; the halls too narrow for post-prandial traffic; the bathrooms insufficient. Yet we can also learn from the spouses that few things excite as much animosity on a campus where there has been considerable

retrenchment as any seemingly luxurious expenditures for the presidential house, its furnishings (often subjected to rough treatment by careless or inebriated guests), or indeed any overt expenditures aimed at making the life of the partners healthier and more comfortable, such as the installation of a tennis court.

The questions in the survey cover many aspects of the role of hostess, of facilitator of campus events, and occupant of a sometimes showcase house. The survey also covers the work done in fund-raising and in community and alumni affairs. There are questions on support or, quite often, the lack of support or clear lines of support for the maintenance of the house, the provision for events, the secretarial help that comes in so handy where it exists—though as one spouse observes, an invitation from the presidential spouse is quite a different matter from an invitation sent by a secretary. There is a place for spouses to note the cost to them of babysitters and other child care which they can no longer provide and for which the university may not have any substitute; for the wear and tear on personal furnishings provided for the presidential domicile; for the career opportunities delayed which may make resumption of a career in a post-presidential phase more difficult. What stands out, less in the survey returns than in writings by spouses, is the major task not easy to describe in a contract: namely, helping to sustain the president in the face of the stress and frequent hostilities with which he must try to cope. The loneliness of the presidential position comes up over and over again in autobiographical comments. Single presidents, including a number of single and divorced women presidents, if they cannot find—and often they cannot—an appropriate and knowledgeable confidant (as members of Catholic religious orders sometimes are able to do within their religious communities), must have even stronger character than other presidential leaders.³

Altogether, it becomes clear that over the years, the responsibilities of presidential spouses have grown incrementally. The obligations they have in the way they entertain, for the purpose of supporting the institution both in the locality, among alumni, and outside, are conducted under the eyes of ever more critical audiences. In many ways, the wife acts as the person who “humanizes” the presidential office. She is often also the person who must be invisible in protecting that office by tactfully handling reasonable and unreasonable demands and expectations that constantly beset that office from many constituencies. Presidential partners have learned to eschew self-pity in public, and of course there are immense differences among them as among the rest of us in the degree of vulnerability to psychological wounds and to the frustrations of managing what at times seems an impossible schedule.

In her introductory chapter, Diane Skomars Magrath notes that the spouses report that dealing with professional university staff is often the most unpleasant aspect of their tasks. Adele McComas also states in her essay that the least enjoyable task for the spouse is supervision of staff.⁴ In Karen O'Neil's account of a typical day, reference is also made to dilemmas for the spouse created by incompetence of staff. The spouse and sometimes the president have to fill in for that incompetence. There is also the possibility of enmity from buildings and grounds and other service people toward the spouse because that is seen as a relatively safe way to take out frustrations on the job or with salary, etc. These reactions may be modified or increased depending on the qualities of the predecessor spouse, in other words whether she was less demanding or, on the contrary, more demanding and difficult than the present spouse.

There is no inevitable connection between problems resulting from incompetence of staff and those resulting from inadequacies or non-existence of staff. McComas writes that 37 percent of the spouses do not have adequate secretarial help and are asked "to perform services that would not be required of other faculty and staff within the institution."

Except in terms of the age of the spouse, there are no breakdowns in the figures from the survey, and none which enable the reader to differentiate among types of institutions from which the reports come. For example, some of the less affluent institutions may not provide much secretarial help for anybody. Others may have been unionized and cut secretarial help so that the union can boast of having secured a substantial increase in faculty and/or staff pay.

The very nature of these often interpersonal issues in which the presidential spouse is involved puts into question the spousal role itself from the point of view of the contemporary revival of feminist ideals and ideologies. As I have already indicated, these movements have had perhaps their greatest psychological impact on the highly educated, especially, but not only, among younger generations. While women of all social strata are increasingly in the work force, it is the women's movements which emphasize the demand for careers, rather than part-time jobs and avocational interests—careers seen as a declaration of independent selfhood. For, in one of their aspects, the women's movements are an outgrowth of a large, almost seismic shift in American values toward greater freedom of expressiveness and greater interest in becoming aware of one's own feelings and in sharing these with others.

We are apt to have a nostalgic picture of the old-time college president and his efficient and retiring spouse. If such a wife had misgivings about unused talents and unrecognized but well-fulfilled responsibilities, she not only kept

them to herself, but she sometimes kept them from herself. In times when divorce was virtually unheard of, almost impossible to obtain, and severely sanctioned socially, even the most abused spouses generally accepted their fate.⁵ As we have been reminded by some excellent historical writing encouraged by the current interest in women's studies, only occasionally did wives prior to the First World War have sufficient training for a career and sufficient independence from judgments by kin and friends, to leave husbands who provided economic security and the umbrella of their own social status.

Of course in that earlier period presidents were often clergymen. And there remain many parallels between the president's wife and the pastor's wife. Both are supposed to believe in their husband's cause, be it parish or academy or some combination of each. Dedication to tasks of nurturance, unspecified but no less serious for that, has also been expected of them and generally available. Both derive their status primarily from their husbands.⁶ Both are supposed to be examples of conduct, not necessarily the most conservative, but surely sober, not spendthrift, in no way exposed to innuendoes of sexual scandal. Pastors' brats and presidents' brats are by our mythology considered likely to be a bit on the rebellious side, but only within locally tolerable limits, and it is the spouse who is held responsible for their proper and presumably more or less studious upbringing.

Pastors and presidents have something else in common, namely, they are of necessity entrepreneurs. As Alexis de Tocqueville observed when he came to the United States in 1831, parishes were not given in the landscape: priests and pastors in the first instance had to create and then maintain and, in the American idiom, enlarge a constituency and find and sustain the wherewithal to nourish them. Of necessity, their wives had to be instrumental in the enterprise. It was the same for founders of academies and colleges. Wives in their dress and manner had to consider their image carefully. Beatrice Chaikind Ross Winkler jokes, although with an understandably sardonic edge, about always being introduced as "the charming and gracious Mrs. . . ." The charm and grace of the pastor's wife or the president's wife must be of that time and that place: i.e., that station in life and in the life cycle; in egalitarian enclaves, to be too gracious or too charming would seem pretentious, uncalled-for and "out of place."⁷

Appearance in the sense of grooming and carriage as well as of clothing—"the presentation of self in everyday life"—is a statement to outside worlds. In the age of almost compulsory expressiveness, dress in this larger sense is a statement to oneself about that self, including a statement of where one stands on the tangled boundaries between feminism and femininity. Every trip the

spouses take on university business requires a judgment as to what set of selves one will pack in the suitcases, an issue which still remains more salient for women than for most men.⁸ To some readers, concerns over clothing and over the wear and tear of travel will seem trivial. However, insensitive observers cannot appreciate that "trivia" are cumulative.

For example, the often complicated relations between the spouses of system heads and flagship campus heads already mentioned, will strike many as trivial. Thus, Ikenberry calls attention to issues not wholly in the control of either spouse: who has the bigger house, the larger budget, and more efficient services for entertaining? She notes that more system head spouses than campus spouses like to make speeches, perhaps reflecting the likelihood that most system heads have been campus heads earlier and, therefore, their spouses are more experienced. Yet the partners at the head of the system may well envy the partners on the individual campuses, who retain closer contact with the internal life of the academy, with faculty and students. In fact, a number of presidential partners have discovered, on occasion quite to their surprise, that their contacts with students, primarily undergraduates, are the least tension-filled and most agreeable of their endless round of meeting other people.⁹

My own interviews with spouses are congruent with the comments in this volume concerning the strain on the wives from anxiety concerning their husbands' physical and mental health in the face of redundant and frequently cumulative pressures. Redundancy is inevitable: it means hearing new generations of students and newly recruited faculty, new members of boards of trustees, newly elected or appointed political officials, all finding fault with the university for inattention or overattention to the multiplicity of constituencies who, varying across the academic landscape, have been given voice by an ever more participatory system of governance and an ever more populist politics.

With eye windward to demographic realities, the wives are often conscious of the likelihood of outliving their husbands. Moreover, they inhabit an academic and, at the margins, Bohemian subculture where many seemingly solid marriages break up. However, what president entering upon a presidency could imagine negotiating for the contingency that he and his wife will split up and that she even more than he will need a "golden parachute" to prepare for career entry or re-entry, and perhaps also to raise and educate the children? Presidents themselves have a hard enough time, in the absence of the "Japanese go-between" I have often recommended, to negotiate concerning their own exit, which seems hardly becoming at the point of entry. Certainly they are aware, as trustees may not be, of the relatively short half-life of NASULGC presidents, where the turnover rate approaches 25 per cent per year. Boards

may provide some assistance by increasing insurance on the life of the president, and by granting him tenure where appropriate in an academic field (including a law school). But only the most highly organized and hyperenergetic of presidents in the more sedately moving fields of scholarship can keep their hands in by teaching along with the presidential work. In a time of high interest rates and rising real estate prices, living in an institutionally provided house without an equity in a home of one's own is a sometimes unrecognized burden for the partners.

The spouse is aware, of course, of all these hazards. More immediately, she is also aware of the public and private attacks on her husband, about which she must remain tactfully silent. For example, the wife of the system head must remain mute when the campus heads attack her husband because he has not extracted enough money from the governor's budget bureau and the legislature, even though she is aware that the system head performed wonders to prevent the budget from being drastically cut, and that the campus heads are all aware of this and are seeking approval from their own faculty members by blaming the system head—and in some cases, attacking him for not publicly assailing the governor.¹⁰

This self-censorship in the face of attacks and snide private comments is not easy for wives who have been socialized in a culture which does not expect women to be passive or admire them for uncomplaining stoicism.¹¹

It is at this point that the crescent women's movements of the last two decades have intersected with the escalating pressures on the partners, resulting in a quite altered situation for presidents' wives. Some have been caught unawares by the attacks of feminists against them in the role of the woman volunteer. The attacks are never aimed at volunteers who at the same time hold full-time paid positions. Men are not disesteemed for their volunteer work as trustees of colleges, art museums, or hospitals.¹² Career women, of course, can do volunteer work without incurring the wrath of feminists if they have traditional professions in law or medicine, or work in fields such as industry and finance, engineering, or electoral politics, and in fact are now in great demand to become trustees for all sorts of nonprofit institutions. Outstanding women are besieged with such invitations, and the more obviously competent presidential spouses can sometimes prepare for a career by use of such opportunities.

At the same time, the role of the unpaid woman volunteer, the traditional housewife-and-mother volunteer for the PTA, the symphony board, the board of a college of which she is an alumna, has been deprecated by the women's movements as another subordinate and unpaid role in service to patriarchal

society. To put it more generally, all unpaid and seemingly non-professional activities which women have historically undertaken with greater or lesser eagerness are regarded as not legitimate.

To be a presidential spouse is, as the survey by NASULGC indicates, to be a pretty nearly full-time volunteer, whatever else one does to keep a previous career going or to start a new one. The degree of hostility toward that role of volunteer will vary according to the number of career women on the faculty and administration and in the surrounding locality—women who, with somewhat less pressures on them, often manage by extraordinary effort and ingenuity to combine marriage and even a child or two with a career. But even apart from the sense of antagonism toward the volunteer role, many presidential spouses hear a resonating inner voice, raised consciousness sometimes at odds with conscientiousness, which is asking “why?” during the round of planning, note-writing, committee work, and other often fragmented activities that make up their day. As one former presidential spouse observed to me, she had “volunteered” when she married her husband that she and he would, if possible, spend their lives together; she has not “volunteered” to be a presidential spouse, asking: “what kind of a shadow am I, who is (ordinarily) not even listed in the university telephone directory, let alone the roster of administration and staff? Does even my husband know all the many things I do in the course of a week, let alone the agonizing decisions to resist some imperatives of things I should do for the university, for the locale, for the planet—my family, myself?”

The papers in this book should not be expected to speak to these inner questions; they are not intimate enough for that; rather, their message to potential presidential spouses is, in effect: “Don’t do it if you don’t enjoy people.” Volunteering brings one into contact with people. Ina Fitzhenry-Coor delineates in her chapter the interaction of genetic and cultural processes that lead most women to be more sensitive than most men to personal relations, to become the ties that bind, the social glue-and-repair person. Only as both sexes age, do the androgynous tendencies emerge, so that women may become more outspoken and sharp, men more tender and ruminative. Most presidents and their partners have generally not reached that stage.

“Consciousness-raising” women’s groups often began on the more liberal campuses, and today women’s studies departments and programs are scattered through the NASULGC institutions. While *Signs* is published at the University of Chicago and the Feminist Press is at SUNY-Old Westbury, the mounting printed output from both women and men scholars in this field reaches all major institutions.

Thus, along with the rising tide of criticisms of a society which has expected

women to be the volunteers arises the implied and frequently expressed critique of the role of presidential spouse. If that role is to be given professional recognition and seen as a career assignment rather than a volunteer's commonly mandated choice, one obvious solution would be a job description and appropriate remuneration, the theme dealt with in Sue Young's essay, *The Question of Remuneration*. Along with these signs of explicit recognition of the wife's contribution, few spouses have called for the same kind of periodic evaluation of their contributions as are now commonly requested by or, probably even more often, imposed upon university presidents in publicly supported institutions. In my own research on spouses in recent years, the insistence on being paid has come up frequently.¹³ For the two editors and the contributors to this volume, the issue is a salient one. Diane Skomars Magrath observes that she is paid out of her husband's salary, thus aiming to recognize in a public way the obligations she assumes as a professional person for the university's public and community relations. Joan Clodius refers to the consciousness-raising that has gone on among many, especially of the younger presidential spouses tied to the aroused feelings of non-benign neglect of their contributions, their frequent sacrifice of independent careers, private personal interests, friendships, and, in all too many cases, family life. Remuneration for the spouse directly from the institution, which I have found in a few cases to be a new practice in several private liberal arts colleges, can of course be helpful in immediate financial terms. But its greater significance lies in allaying the anxieties that even the older and often traditional spouses harbor vis-à-vis their own post-presidential or post-marital futures: to have held a job, they believe, will make them more employable, for example, in paying executive positions in nonprofit agencies.¹⁴

Some financial problems of the spouse could be dealt with, for example, by providing reimbursement for expenses for child care made requisite by the spouse's university-related obligations, including travel.¹⁵ Insurance and annuity provisions may be arranged to benefit both partners. Awareness of the relentless social schedule enjoyed or endured by many wives could take the form of ample secretarial help, a word processor, possibly even a clothing allowance. Assistance in such indirect forms might excite less political antagonism. However, when the issue of pay is pressed, it is even more important as a symbolic issue than in terms of money which might be differently allocated for the spouse's benefit. As already indicated, to be paid for a recognized position makes evident that one is a professional. One has continued a former career or begun a new one. Remuneration may help quiet some of the inner doubts as well, such as whether the ceaseless and frequently exhausting activities of the presidential partners are of value. As Sue Young reports in *The*

Question of Remuneration, there is a need for someone to say: "I need this recognition [remuneration] for my self-identity and proof to the outside world of my contributions to the university for the time that I am here." A third of the wives under 50 years of age considered remuneration to be desirable, as compared to a little over one-tenth of those 50 and over.

Paralleling the demand for pay comes the demand for a job description, negotiated with the board of trustees along with compensation. Joan Clodius notes that such a description would make less inchoate the statement on one's post-presidential resumé that one had been a presidential spouse engaged in a large multiplicity of institutionally useful activities. Diane Skomars Magrath reports from the survey that nearly 30 per cent of spouses believe a job description would have been helpful, and many suggest that a formal evaluation would be desirable.

In an earlier era, people in high positions were satisfied with tacit understandings; today many people at all levels of society want everything spelled out in lawyer-like fashion. This may be egalitarian, but there are also many difficulties. As in reports from faculty members required by government agencies or internal auditors, one can report the quantity of effort, e.g., hours on the job. But even then, one has to decide whether hours on an airplane (or packing and unpacking clothes) would officially be considered part of the job; this might seem to be carrying things a bit far.

The aspect of the presidential wife's job that, of course, cannot be assessed or reimbursed is the emotional stress involved. Many report that the most severe stress from which they suffer stems from their anxieties about their husbands' situation. In their detailed accounts they report that their role as confidante and sympathetic critic is at once their most difficult and most significant contribution, and is one that their husbands usually recognize. In fact, presidents often say that it is support from their wives that has enabled them to endure the strains of the presidency. The wives have the additional burden that they must bear and often read much abuse of their husbands without being able to answer back.¹⁶

It is impossible to design a job description which will include these all-important functions of the partners for one another. (Reflecting on these essays, readers can readily empathize with the loneliness of the president of either sex who lacks a partner.) In pondering what kinds of job descriptions could be written and what kinds of compensation could be offered, the essays suggest that one could take account of what it would cost to have a first-rate housekeeper and also presumably someone else, perhaps a social secretary, who could serve as a hostess at the incredible array of presidential functions, for

which not only culinary and logistical arrangements must be made, but which must be planned with sophisticated knowledge of the formal or tacit purposes of the occasion, the significance of the guests and their expectations in all their status-conscious diversity.¹⁷

It is interesting that, in spite of all that these essays and other commentators have said concerning the advantages of paying the spouse and of a job description of the tasks, the results of the survey show that only 20 per cent of the spouses would like to be paid and 30 per cent would appreciate a job description, whereas the large majority would not like either of these options.

A number of wives recognize that a job description would compel them to do things that they may want to do, but want occasionally to be able to refuse. If they were to be paid, in addition to the all too realistic demands for accountability, they might fear envy and petty spite if they declined to do something asked of them by a campus group. Moreover, suppose the spouse should decide to continue her education at her husband's or a neighboring institution, whether in order to prepare to undertake or resume a career or primarily out of personal interest, by how much should the stipend then be reduced? In this unexplored area there are many such imponderables. Further illustration would arise if the spouse's stipend were not increased when general raises are given out; would this signify that she is regarded as making less of a contribution, or simply that she is dealing with an altered or insensitive board? Indeed, would the demand for pay, as a practical matter, reduce increments granted her husband in periodic formal or informal evaluations by the board of trustees? And what about a successor spouse? Even if the present spouse is not concerned about the precedent she might set for someone who may follow her, the board of trustees is likely to have such an issue in mind.¹⁸

Many feminists believe that presidents of either sex should be chosen completely on their individual merits: there should be no inquiry whether there is a partner and what support and resources a spouse might bring to the partnership. I have been investigating search procedures for college and university presidents, presently with the cooperation of Dr. Judith McLaughlin of the Harvard Graduate School of Education.¹⁹ It is evident that institutions and the search committees that more or less represent them are uneasy about an unmarried male president (but in no case to my knowledge about a single woman, whether unmarried, or divorced, or widowed), and that if a choice on individual merits is reasonably well balanced, major institutions and particularly residential campuses will prefer, as the old and now understandably deprecated saying goes, "two for the price of one." Or, in the case of wives with part-time careers, "one and a half for the price of one."

The formalization of procedures may present additional complications. Polly Davis, wife of the former president of the University of New Mexico who is now Chancellor of the Oregon State System of Higher Education, speculates that if the spouse insisted on a job description and clear delineation of tasks, “. . . affirmative action alarms would ring . . . and the board would end up picking someone else.” The wife does not want to jeopardize her husband’s chances by pushy questions. As Joan Clodius has pointed out to me, one of the objectives of books such as this one is to create a basis for the education of boards of trustees and of university officials. Presidential wives can also share such materials with one another, so that future candidates’ spouses will know both what to ask and what to ask for. In states where open records or Sunshine Laws are interpreted as requiring any interviews with the board to be public, spouses will want to be prepared and not to appear on television and in the press in ways that could be interpreted as anxious, greedy, or presumptuous.

However final negotiations may be handled, it seems to me vital to include the wife at the time that the search committee is interviewing candidates and especially when two or more finalists are brought to campus for extensive exposure to the constituencies regarded as relevant. It is shocking that, while 84 per cent of spouses believed that they should have been part of the search interview, only half were included, as Vera Olson notes in her essay, “The Delicate Relationship with the Board.” Vera Olson suggests some salient questions, “questions which the candidate and spouse should have resolved between themselves” prior to an interview, including the extent of travel which some spouses regard as a burden, while others see it as an opportunity to be briefly alone with their husbands, as well as a chance to meet interesting people and to visit interesting places.²⁰

Olson thinks that information on support, budget, facilities, and staff should be made available to the spouse from a faculty committee or the predecessor spouse prior to an interview with the board. However, the only committee that seems to me likely to appreciate the issues is the search committee; and it is my belief that search committees should stay in being for a period after a president (when from outside the institution) has been installed. Perhaps a better “transition team” could be constituted from board members, including the board’s secretary, who would be charged with specific responsibilities for facilitating the induction of the presidential spouse as well as ancillary informal help for the president whose usual channel is through the person chairing the board. Indeed, I think Olson is mistaken in believing that frank discussion with the board at the time of appointment will assure that future problems can be avoided. Many board members are likely to assume that there are tacit understandings as to the way the presidential couple should conduct themselves,

which do not need to be spelled out. Even if an attempt is made by the spouse to register her concerns, the board may not actually "hear" her. Olson reports, and so do many spouses with whom I have spoken, that relationships with board members and the latter's spouses are generally friendly but superficial.

Olson notes that it is the outspoken feminists among the responding spouses who do not want to be included in interviews at the time of the search process. She has in mind the feminists who regard any attention to the spouse in the interview process as illegitimate, though there may be some wives who are reluctant to participate because they fear that any resistance toward expectations the board or search committee might have of their own roles might prejudice their husbands' chances. As I have indicated, when the spouse is not included in the search process and in campus visits because of institutional attitudes, these may increasingly reflect reverberations of the women's movements. Search committees are likely to be alerted, by their membership and by consultants or by counsel, to the requirements and the spirit and climate of Affirmative Action in the search process itself. Correspondingly, some have concluded that to ask a female spouse to come to campus would violate the amorphous periphery of Affirmative Action, or at any rate would violate the now powerfully preserved insistence on the independence of previously privatized wives.²¹ But occasionally spouses are not brought to campus, especially in a public institution, if there is fear of criticism for the costs involved in the search. However, not to include the spouse not only may harm the chances of securing a desirable candidate, but will in some cases prejudice the initial and often crucial stages of an incumbency.

The real difficulties still lie, not in overreactions to the views of some feminists, but in the temptation of spouses of finalists to present themselves as competent in every dimension of the partners' tasks and comfortable in every possible political and social circumstance, thereby avoiding clarifications or requests for assistance from the board which might make them seem unequipped and indecisive.

While 94 percent of the spouses neither have nor wish to have a formal contract, 20 percent of spouses would be happy to be asked to present a report to the board. Like faculty who make annual reports to their chairman or dean of what they have done, they want their work, much of it unseen, to be recognized. Wives feel about the immense array of activities they undertake as presidential partners much as many newly liberated women have come to feel about housework: there is no visible product, and it must be done over and over again.²² In most presidential families, there can be little sharing of domesticity, whether of child-care or housework.

It is of course not only spouses who suffer from lack of recognition for their work, but also presidents themselves. To be sure, some college and university presidents are, like the media freaks among academic TV stars, very much in the spotlight and hunger for it. But it is rare that they receive any acknowledgement, for example, from a faculty member for whose promotion, new office or facility, or leave of absence the president has been the final negotiator and arbiter. The more distinguished the university, the more widely prevalent is the assumption that the president serves, to be sure in a formal sense at the pleasure of the board, but in a realistic sense in the service of and in any ultimate showdown, at the pleasure of articulate faculty. Many presidents also have the experience of finding board members unresponsive to their accomplishments in the face of endless difficulties, nor fully aware of the 80-hour week many presidents and quite a few of their spouses put into the service of the institution at least 11 months of the year. There is of course enormous variation in the degrees of diligence, political partisanship, and disinterested concern among board members, although one effect of Sunshine laws is to put pressure on board members to arrive on time and to appear awake!²³ In the public as in the private sector, the person chairing the board is a crucial person for the presidential partners, and the spouse of the board chairman is also likely to be a significant potential support.

Presidents frequently conclude that they are performing for audiences who come in late and are more critical than comprehending when they do attend. The NASULGC survey itself and the essays in this volume underline the extent to which their wives conclude that anything done by the president and his wife is official, taken for granted, part of the job, and therefore needs no personal response. It occurs to me that part of the lack of response to both partners is analogous to the failure to answer RSVP invitations to a function arranged by the spouse, or to write a thank-you note after an enjoyable party. But people also may fear, as some students fear to tell a teacher how much he or she has meant to them, that any courtesy or kindness would appear as ingratiating flattery.

Many of the wives, of an older as well as a younger generation, come to doubt whether fulfilling roles is fulfilling themselves, as contemporary psychological doctrine and indeed moral teaching invite and even insist that we all aim to accomplish. Ina Fitzhenry-Coor contributes a paper, "Self Identity." She is a full-time psychologist with a special interest in human development and identity, teaching and doing research at the University of Vermont, where her husband, Lattie Coor, is President. Drawing on the psychological literature, she explores some of the reasons why the female spouse of the university president is commonly described in terms that constitute a "shadow" or "re-

flected identity" rather than a strong and separate individuality. She hopes that the extensive literature on self concept, discussed in her paper, will help spouses realize what a sense of identity is and how to find it. Reviewing the responses to the survey, she discusses the degrees of constraint and control that spouses believe themselves to experience, and notes that they offer other spouses the common all-American advice, "Be yourself."²⁴ She suggests that boards of trustees should encourage the spouse ". . . to express those commitments that are uniquely her own." Those commitments, presented at the point of final negotiation, may be accepted by boards of trustees, especially if they are congruent both with emerging definitions of appropriate partnership and with the given institutional contexts. But suppose these commitments lead her, whether quietly or defiantly, to declare her intention to entertain gay liberation groups or other locally deprecated cenacles in the presidential house? Why should boards be so obliging if they have choices between a traditional couple and a "liberated" couple? Moreover, I have come across instances in which the husband may often be torn between looking after his own career and winning the job, or looking after his wife's "personal interests and commitments" and maybe losing the job.²⁵

Fitzhenry-Coor, pondering both responses to the survey and the relevant psychological literature, hopes that spouses can move beyond a reflected identity toward a "truly personal and unique" self-identity. I fear that all the injunctions that in our individual and collective wisdom we give ourselves tend to break down in specific situations, even when people are clearer than they generally are as to what is the gamut of selves on which they care to draw, some of which are revealed only as actions and life proceed. Fitzhenry-Coor recognizes that it requires reflectiveness for the spouse to act rather than simply to react. It is, I have observed, an issue that arises when on installation the partners are flooded with invitations which are at once obligations and opportunities. One intellectually and morally alert president in her first position demurred over a sponsored membership in the local upper-class country club, a membership offered to her and taken for granted as a useful as well as pleasant opportunity by the board of trustees. She inquired and found that the club was exclusive and would cut her off from others in the local community; hence she declined. Some board members reacted as if a gesture of friendship had been spurned. Both women and men have difficulty in turning down particular requests tactfully. Indeed, the more attractive the woman, and the more enviable her company, the harder it will often be to turn down requests without wounding the egos especially of brittle males.

Kim Burse, spouse of the president of once predominantly black and now integrated Kentucky State University, notes in commenting on "My First Year

on Campus" that the spouse must be "an expert on small talk." She adds in ways that will resonate in many presidential mansions: "In addition, we learn to endure practically any event, no matter how boring." The slight signs by which a spouse might betray boredom or irritation are of course minutely scrutinized by not always friendly observers on campus, among alumni and alumnae groups, and in the many extramural representational functions which the partners perform together. However, particularly the younger spouses, obedient to the prevailing cult of candor, may find it more difficult than older ones to preserve an air of unrelenting friendliness, something they might come to regard as insincere and hypocritical.

However, according to Diane Magrath's introductory chapter, on most issues replies to the survey by the older spouse in the age brackets of 55 and over are not substantially different from those of the younger spouses, although the latter are likely to have had somewhat more education, often past the baccalaureate level.

Sue Young, in her own essay, "The Question of Remuneration," observes, "Frequently, women volunteers look to the president's wife as a role model. They identify with her generosity in giving of her time." But Sue Young also is aware, not only of the assault on volunteering by many feminists, but also of the fact that many faculty members and students do not take seriously what appear to them to be merely ceremonial duties, regarding them as bourgeois frippery or even extravagance, and as not requiring the high order of sensitivity and of energy that is in fact requisite. At the same time, although herself in favor of compensation for the spouse, Young realizes that, since the wives of vice chancellors, deans, and other hostesses on behalf of the institution are not compensated (though of course they have smaller constituencies), paying the spouse might implicitly deprecate unpaid volunteer efforts of other spouses down the academic hierarchy.

These observant spouses also appreciate the fact that a spouse can be too visible and appear too helpful. I have known cases in liberal arts colleges where faculty members resent the wife because she is too friendly with students and will learn of professors' incompetence or inattention; there is a general fear of the wife who "knows too much" and who obviously has a strong sense of mutuality with her husband. This is also a hazard in those instances where the wife works on campus, as a number of wives do in the public and private sectors, and where much depends on the size and other particulars of the institution, as to whether or not even the suspicion of nepotism gives critics fresh ammunition.²⁶

For most presidents not close to retirement age, the question of when to

leave a position is both an exigent and difficult one. Some authorities believe that seven years is optimal; others use a decade as an appropriate period of incumbency, sometimes composed of two five-year contracts. I believe that even a decade can be too brief if one wants to have an impact on the quality and collegiality of faculty and staff. However, today, when many presidents in the public as well as the independent sector are in the midst of capital fund campaigns, enemies urge them to go while friends tell them that they are indispensable and must stay on. Perhaps spouses' judgment, for either sex, can be the most trusted verdict as to when enough is enough.

I would give a false impression of the survey, of the books and articles by former presidential wives, and of the essays in this volume if I focused only on the experiences both partners have of benign neglect alternating with non-benign hostility and malice. As many wives report, they meet interesting people who were not on their horizon when they were faculty couples or in similar professions. Not all the concerts and plays they attend are boring, and there are many visitors to campus whom even the blasé would enjoy meeting. There are vast differences in the quality of trustees, and interesting regional differences (as Roberta Ostar's *Myths and Realities* indicates) in the expectations for formal hostessing, and only the most uncurious would be allergic to the new milieu of the partners.

There is one support which comes up over and over, both in my own conversations with presidential partners and in these essays, and that is the meeting with others who are in the same boat. This project itself reflects a decision by the governing board of NASULGC to assign to spouses a recognized role in Association affairs which includes conducting their own programs at the annual meetings. Similar programs for spouses have been a feature also of the meetings and workshops of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.²⁷ Organizations with special concern for women in higher education, though primarily interested in promoting women as chief executives, also interest themselves in the role of the spouse, fearing that the existence of partners makes it more difficult for women to become presidents of those colleges and universities which expect to find a traditional couple.

One thing that presidential wives do not appear to be doing in large numbers is to divorce their husbands; the divorce rate of the spouses in the survey and in other surveys appears to be relatively small in comparison with groups of similar age and education.²⁸ It is still true in some institutions that a president who has an affair which results in a messy divorce will lose the confidence of his board and local support. (This is more likely to occur in smaller communities and in the South.) Male presidents also cannot "be themselves" and get away with

exposing their more raffish potential selves. Yet when all these elements of mutual entrapment are taken into account, I emerge from my reflections on this volume with the sense that these marriages have become in many ways exemplary. To be sure, few spouses have established themselves in lucrative professions and, where there are children not yet through their education, they cannot afford to leave, even if they would wish it. Many of the partners have married each other, not for money, but indeed for love, and at the same time with a mutual bet on mobility. The bet has paid off, and the discovery that it is lonely at the top comes belatedly. Ties are strengthened by the sacrifices the partners have had to make of their own private lives and even, in some degree, of time with one another. That time, as one essay puts it, becomes quality time. The close friends one has among other presidential couples and among board members or others outside of the institution (only rarely within the institution, since one is almost bound to disappoint one's former faculty friends) are intensely shared.²⁹ Marriages of presidential partners, like those of many of the rest of us, combine the camaraderie of combat veterans with mutually enhancing complementarities, interests (including privileged gossip), and curiosities.

NOTES

1. Support for my research on presidents and their families has come from the Mellon Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the Exxon Education Foundation, and the Institute for Educational Affairs. For helpful discussion of issues raised in this Epilogue, I am indebted to Joan Clodius, Marguerite Corbally, Marian Gade, and Martha and Barry Munitz.

2. The *numbers* of people entertained appear to be somewhat less among the diverse institutions, some very large and some quite small, in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities; but the number of *occasions* on which the university-provided house is used for official functions can run as high as two a week, although it is interesting to see the regional breakdowns, with New England appearing only about half as sociable in these terms (where of course private institutions still hold hegemony) as the Southwest. See *Myths and Realities*, pp. 15-24, and Figure 8, p. 21. In addition to entertaining on behalf of the university, university-provided houses are in frequent demand for community functions, including various unofficial faculty gatherings. To a lesser degree, partners who have a home off-campus (for which the institution sometimes pays part of the cost) also use their facilities for such critical and unofficial events, but more sparingly; there is more reliance on facilities at the institution itself.

3. Only in small and often denominational colleges are presidents likely to be close to individual faculty members, even if these were friends prior to the assumption of the presidency, because this would imply playing favorites among faculty. The problem of lonely eminence is most serious in the smaller communities in which so many of the major flagship and land-grant institutions of this country were originally located, in part so that youth could escape the sinfulness of city lights. In metropolitan milieux the partners can find friendship among professionals and others in the locality, including presidential partners in non-competing institutions. The predecessor couple to Sue and Charles Young at UCLA, the Franklin Murphys, found friendships among business people, bankers, publishers, and so on in the Los Angeles area—connections of which some faculty and students were naturally critical. However, while non-academic friendships may assuage loneliness, they rarely can offer understanding support because there are virtually no other positions under the same kinds of pressure as is experienced by a college president. Foreign Service officers in hardship posts and big-city mayors seem to me to offer the nearest analogy, although few are under such diurnal stress as presidents today.

4. The McComas partners have served for seven years at Mississippi State University near Starkville, a small town in the Deep South where traditions of considerateness and politeness have not given way to metropolitan brusqueness, but where it is possible that these same traditions make it the more difficult to find fault with negligent or incompetent work.

5. In recent years we have learned that there are many wives, physically as well as psychologically tormented, who out of physical fear or psychic imprisonment, do accept their condition, although there are increasing efforts to alert them to the possibilities of rescue and help.

6. In *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Edward Albee presented as realistic the notion that a faculty member could improve his situation by marrying the president's daughter. A career as a faculty member or administrator can be helped in a small degree by money, and the wife's social status and patrimony might be of marginal help in cultivating the board of trustees, but of no value—or even of negative value—vis-à-vis faculty.

7. In Roberta H. Ostar, *Myths and Realities: 1983 Report on the AASCU Presidential Spouses* (November, 1983), p. 16, an archetypical guest at a partners' party is quoted: "Did you see her Ultrasuede dress? Do you know how much Ultrasuede costs?" In *It's Different at Dartmouth*, Jean Kemeny describes the ready assumptions of the wives of trustees that she belongs to the same income class that they do, and can shop at the same places about which they enjoy telling her.

8. To be sure, male presidents are not exempt from changing expectations in these matters. One president of a small institution was told by a search consultant that, unless he was willing to shave his fulsome beard, he would not be a successful candidate for one of the major public institutions—perhaps it was not so much the beard itself that made for friction, but the kind of idiosyncratic nonconformity this individual's beard seemed to symbolize. The

man in question reacted with indignation: he might on occasion be willing to tailor his opinions, but not his face!

9. However, the frequent experience of having live-in students who can act as babysitters and perhaps occasionally as bartenders can be a mixed blessing. It diminishes even further the residues of privacy a presidential partnership can maintain.

In this connection, the comment of one contributor is striking, that, when she first had a housekeeper who came in by the day, she would try to clean up the disorder created by any lively family in order not to have the housekeeper see messy rooms. It seems likely that most of the spouses were not raised in homes where live-in servants were taken for granted—and treated as if they were friendly non-persons, so that one was not ashamed of how one looked or how one's possessions looked. To use the term of Erving Goffman, there is little backstage for the presidential partners.

10. It is a sad testimony to the realism of faculty members that many seem to prefer chief executives who publicly fight with the political authorities even at the cost of modest incremental successes. Only the fighters appear to be on the side of righteousness. To be sure, when state funds are lost in reprisal against a combative president, faculty members and others will complain about the president's too assertive "style."

11. The wives of high status men are generally aware of the pressures their husbands are under, as well as of the excitements and indeed drama of the workplace. This is so even when the men say, as is common in the corporate world but rare in academia, that they do not bring their problems home with them. Of course, they do. But in the corporate world, the wives rarely know the players as well as the issues, whereas the wives of presidents and chancellors generally know the key players, whether on the board or within the institution, and are themselves sensitive to the issues. This is why the partnership at its best is a vital and enduring one. Correspondingly, however, when the wife disagrees with her husband's position on a controversial issue, she is torn among loyalties, a situation that would not be made much more exigent if the wife held an official university position and was paid as an employee.

12. However, since the 1960's, trustees have come under attack from left-oriented groups for the fact of being in most cases middle-class and white supporters of various supposed "establishments," removed from the lives of the ordinary people in whose name radicals speak. They are also aware of the new hazard of litigation, particularly in academic settings of high visibility—litigation of such capricious outcomes that it is hard to insure against.

13. See Riesman, "The President's Spouse: The University's Added Dimension," a paper presented in the 1980 annual meetings of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, published in the 1980 *Proceedings*; revised and reprinted as "Some Observations on the President's Spouse," #11 in the Occasional Paper Series of the Center for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Virginia.

14. Bea Winkler was an effective volunteer before becoming a president's

wife, and in "Building a University Community," she indicates the sorts of contributions an experienced volunteer can bring to an urban university: a particular interest in students in general and women in particular; a knowledgeable concern for the arts, and for the quality and appearance of campus buildings and landscaping; and outreach into the Cincinnati area. Mrs. Winkler regards these activities as non-partisan and non-political. However, her longtime concern with the position of women in academe and in society, and with the women's movements, suggests that she could well have become entangled in political arguments among women's groups polarized on such issues as abortion or homosexuality. Perhaps the combination of her tact and Cincinnati's long tradition of relative tolerance, possibly in part reflecting its earlier German heritage, helped the University escape controversy.

15. There appears to be a tendency even in major institutions to recruit presidents at younger ages, who are therefore more apt to have small children too young to be away at school and college. Moreover, educated parents today realize that they battle for their children's development against all the pressures of the peer culture toward relaxed standards of work and behavior, partly legacies of the counter-culture and the delegitimation of authority. Justifiably anxious parents want to spend more time with their children, precisely at the time when the husband is facing in his work what are simultaneously the greatest attractions and the greatest pressures. That these husbands are not indifferent to their children, although they appear to neglect them, is the finding of Robert S. Weiss in a study of high-status men and their families, which suggests that these men put their families first on their list of priorities, even though in terms of time and effort they are engrossed in their work.

16. I have known a few notable exceptions, even in the public sector; there come to mind several Southern wives of unconcealed sharp tongue and bitter sarcasm. Most wives must also avoid taking, as citizens, political stands that can compromise their husbands. Although most presidents of major academic institutions, whatever their sex, are likely to be politically liberal, it did not help the late John Elmendorf when he was trying to recruit financial backing for the innovative New College in conservative Sarasota, when his wife campaigned in the state for Eugene McCarthy. See Gerald Grant and David Riesman, *The Perpetual Dream: Reform and Experiment in the American College*, University of Chicago Press, 1978, pp. 234, 236.

17. In answer to question 58, "Please describe how you include potential donors in events you control," one spouse spoke for many in mentioning the careful determination given to the appropriateness of the event and of the guest list for it, and the necessary attention to seating at lunches or dinners. I have still to see a university catering service which could manage the diplomatic issues implicit in what is said in the text, no matter how capable the service might be in terms of culinary art and room decor. In any event, most spouses realize that a presidential house will be regarded as a personal home, a statement of the spouse's taste and concern, even if she has as little to do with it as she cares, or has had as little chance to alter what she inherited as is often the case where any

substantial renovations to suit the styles of the new inhabitants would engender resentment even if not paid for with public funds.

18. Several departing spouses have written helpful memoranda, at once to the board of trustees and to their presumptive successors. Charlotte Sorenson wrote such a statement when Charles Sorenson resigned as president of Babson College and a search was instituted for his successor. Elizabeth Friend did the same thing when Theodore Friend resigned from Swarthmore College, and has since published her memo. Elizabeth Pierson Friend, "The President's Spouse," *Change*, vol. 15, no. 7, October, 1983, pp. 24-33.

19. See Judith McLaughlin and David Riesman, "The Vicissitudes of the Search Process," *The Review of Higher Education*, and "Uses and Misuses of Consultants in Searches for College and University Presidents," forthcoming.

20. This writer noted the question whether the husband expects his wife "to be a tennis partner, available at the convenience of his demanding schedule," an expectation that the Riesman partners at home and occasionally en route have had of one another!

21. I suspect that in some such instances there are discreet unrecorded inquiries to determine whether the male candidate has a spouse and whether any behavior on the part of the spouse either casts doubt on the character of the candidate himself or might embarrass the institution. Correspondingly, a spouse with cultivation, vibrancy, and energy can hardly help but improve her husband's chances of being seen as an outstanding candidate. I recall one search for the president of an ailing liberal arts college where the trustees were attracted to a rather innocuous candidate because his wife possessed obvious abilities as a fund-raiser, demonstrated in her volunteer activities; when the couple were divorced, his chances disappeared.

22. Well-educated and active-minded women resented being regarded as "mere housewives" and simply as appendages of their husbands for generations prior to the much wider diffusion of feminist redefinitions during the last several decades. That half of the wives of presidents in the NASULGC survey who did not have visibly independent careers before they became presidential spouses no doubt experienced many occasions when they felt themselves to be disregarded by assertive career women and insensitive men. (For a short story turning on this theme, see Evelyn Thompson Riesman, "Pouring Tea," *Southwest Review*, vol. 43, no. 3, 1958.) The position of presidential spouse accumulates the scope of diurnal imprisonment, while increasing exposure to disrespect from members or supporters of some wings of the women's movements.

23. Miriam Wood studied boards of trustees and their relations with presidents and with each other in ten independent liberal arts colleges in New England and the mid-Atlantic states, including some of the most notable in the country. She reports widespread dissatisfaction among presidents and among conscientious trustees with the general tenor of board performance, whether in attentiveness to salient issues on which the president seeks counsel and support, or, perhaps less commonly, in fundraising. See Wood "The Board of

Trustees of the Private Liberal Arts College," doctoral dissertation, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1982.

24. In her pioneering and admirable book, *The Partners*, Marguerite Corbally makes the same comment on the "be yourself" slogan. See Marguerite Corbally, *The Partners: Sharing the Life of a College President*, Danville, Illinois, The Interstate Printers & Publishers, 1977.

25. Fitzhenry-Coor is the only contributor to this collection to follow the common European and Latin American pattern of recognizing both partners in her name. Arthur Levine, president of Bradford College, amusingly reports in an informal memoir that, at his installation, his wife, Linda Fentiman, who has kept her own name, put that on her name tag, until she realized that people were inquisitive as to whether she was a professional hostess, perhaps a "live-in" but unmarried partner, or whatever; to clear up confusion and potential rumor, she put "President's Wife" after her own name.

Carolyn B. DiBiaggio's essay, "The Duo-Career," was received too late for me to make adequate use of an essay at once scholarly and pungent. She has surveyed the growing literature on dual-career families and the strains from which these suffer, particularly in commuting marriages. She illustrates the latter among presidential partners from conversation with Anne Wexler, the well-known Washington lobbyist and former Carter White House aide, who commutes to energetic weekends of helping her husband, Joseph Duffey, in his position as Chancellor of the flagship campus of the University of Massachusetts. Carolyn DiBiaggio contrasts the duo-career where the non-presidential spouse is pursuing personal or career interests as well as participating in the partnership, with Hannah Papanek's often cited paper on the traditional two-person career, where it is the man's career that matters. See Hannah Papanek, "Men, Women, and Work: Reflections on the Two-Person Career," in Joan Huber, ed., *Changing Women in a Changing Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973. DiBiaggio is thoroughly at home in the sociological literature, including some of the notable feminist writings of the previous generation, such as Alice Rossi's "Equality Between the Sexes: An Immodest Proposal," in Robert J. Lifton, ed., *The Woman in America*, Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1964. The essay states some of the concerns of the women's movement in a way that combines challenge and sensitivity.

26. I have known presidential wives who prefer not to learn which members of the junior faculty are at the moment waiting for the tenure up-or-out decision, lest their behavior toward a couple slated for likely departure become too constrained; of course, many faculty members fear (or, rarely, hope) that the president's wife, as an additional pair of eyes and ears, may at least peripherally influence such decisions. To be sure, the life of professionals in most organizations is complicated by the mixture of friendship and power, and by the recognition that careers will rarely follow parallel trajectories. This recognition may be one source of the desire of some professionals, in medicine and law as well as in academia, to join unions as a (frequently tarnished) symbol of cohort solidarity.

27. Attention to the role of the spouse has been featured (by Marguerite Corbally, Clark Kerr, Barry and Martha Munitz, myself and others) at recent meetings of the Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities.

28. For example, there are 15 vignettes of corporate and financial managers, ranging in age from the thirties to the fifties, all of whom have been married and five of whom have been divorced and remarried (one widower has also remarried). See John P. Kotter, *The General Managers*, New York: The Free Press, 1982, Appendix D.

29. In my own observation, the best presidents of either sex build the closest possible ties with their immediate staff, their provost/vice presidents and major deans. The group of top administrators (and their spouses if any) can become a close circle of support and sociability. However, universities are neither Japanese organizations nor IBM and AT&T, where, in the past, promotions have come from within and there has been lifelong employment, generally accompanied by loyalty. The president who encourages and helps develop an administrative team is almost bound to lose some of them who are recruited for presidencies and other top positions elsewhere—a prospect all the more likely since the president himself or herself can of course offer no guarantee that he himself will stay on the job indefinitely, for while they may be able to mute their own further ambitions, they cannot of course guarantee that they will not fall into disfavor with faculties, governors, system heads, or boards of trustees.

Acknowledgements

Our thanks to all those who have contributed their time and talents to this volume; to the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) for its sustaining commitment to making the role of the spouse more effective for the university, and the university more sensitive to the spouse, and to all spouses of university chief executives, past and present, without whose inspiration and experience we would have been unable to make this effort to bring about a better future. Specifically, our great thanks go to the authors of the individual essays in this book.

We also want to acknowledge the contribution of the University of Minnesota in this enterprise. Dr. Roger Harrold generously contributed his expertise in compiling and tabulating the survey and its results. And a special lady at the University of Minnesota—Marilee Ward—has contributed countless hours to this project and we wish to extend special recognition to her for her outstanding ability and for her never-failing graciousness. Our thanks go, too, to Martha Kvanbeck, Marilee Ward's diligent assistant.

Finally, we wish to thank all of the NASULGC staff members who have worked so assiduously to help produce this volume.

JOAN E. CLODIUS - DIANE SKOMARS MAGRATH



