

It Is A Big Deal! It's Not Just A Dirty Kitchen: Examining The Gendered
Division Of Housework

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the gendered division of housework. Primarily, examining the relative-resource, time-availability, gender ideology and gender construction theories, as well as discussing the concepts of the 'economy of gratitude' and the 'politics of comparison'. Secondly, it explores the assignment of housework to women, and the concepts of 'the Woman Question', home economics, moral associations with housework as well as women's psychological investment in housework. Thirdly, this thesis examines several self-help books about housework and gender differences in terms of their discussion of the existing academic literature on the division of housework and gender. This thesis concludes that conflict over gender differences in knowledge skills and values, as well moral perceptions, evaluations and 'conversation styles' may explain the continued gendered division of housework.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION:

Housework¹ is a personal task upon which everyone has an opinion on, be it when, why, or how it should be done. I argue that the ideas and standards associated with housework influence the division of labor in heterosexual households. I also argue that housework is a “personal, not an impersonal activity, having nothing to do with the pursuit of a disembodied ideal and everything to do with how we define ourselves and our surroundings. We are forced to ask what is really going on when we are cleaning, and we are forced to look at our own behaviour” (Horsfield 1998: 11). For example, the partner who has higher standards of cleanliness regarding the bathroom may do this task in order to ensure it is done ‘properly’. In addition, a partner who completes the housework in order to ensure it is done ‘properly’ and promptly may do so because they attach certain values to cleanliness. In fact, Margaret Horsfield (1998: 249 & 251) re-appropriates the term ‘scrubber’ to refer to women who not only clean thoroughly and regularly, but also find it impossible to not clean a space that they deem to be dirty or disorderly. As a result of Horsfield’s findings I argue that in many cases, the partner who completes a greater percentage of the housework tends to be the woman, as there are gender differences in the values attached to housework, which in turn is due to the differences in childhood socialization and the continuation of such socialization into adulthood. I further argue that the gendered division of housework can be understood through the gender differences in these values, ideas and standards of cleanliness.

¹ I am defining housework as the cleaning/tidying tasks completed in the home. Primarily, I am using this definition as these tasks involve associations with morality or values. Secondly, cleaning/tidying tasks tend to be the domestic tasks women complete, are “routine and ongoing”, and consist of a larger portion of the overall domestic tasks (Batalove and Cohen 2002, as cited in Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010: 769). I refer to cleaning tasks as ‘housework’ for academic purposes as this is the label that has been used in academic research.

Exploration of topic and examination of the gap in current research:

I also argue that the examination of the division of housework is an important study because it is part of the broader discussion of the gendered division of labor and the 'roles' men and women are placed into within society. For example, the gendered division of housework can have a negative effect on women in both the home and in the workforce. A prime example of this negative effect is that women may experience obstacles such as the 'glass ceiling' and 'the mommy track'. The 'glass ceiling' is a metaphor that is used to define the 'invisible' obstacles that prevent women from achieving career success or development (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner 2006: 228). As a result of these obstacles their career stagnates and they 'bump their heads' on the 'glass ceiling'. The obstacles can include beliefs from coworkers and/or supervisors that women are either incapable of doing the work involved in more prestigious positions, or they feel that women are not as committed to their work as male employees. The 'mommy track' is a similar scenario in which mothers are believed to be unable to do their paid work with the same quality and level of commitment as their male and childless female coworkers. Mothers are assumed to be less serious about their jobs because they ask for flexible work arrangements (to juggle family and work) it is assumed that mothers are not interested in developing and furthering their careers because they do not focus all of their time and energy on their jobs (Schwartz 1989: 68 & 70). The time-availability and relative resource or power resource perspectives offer an explanation regarding why women tend to do more of the domestic work than their male partners.

In accordance with the rationales of the time-availability and relative resource or power resource perspectives, women tend to do more of the household work because they have more time and fewer resources to bargain their way out of doing such work. According to Statistics

Canada, women are more likely to be employed in part-time work than men, and on average, women tend to earn less money than men (Ferraio 2010: 15 & Table 202-0101). However, I argue that the gendered division of housework, the obstacles women face in the workplace (the 'glass ceiling' and the 'mommy track') and women's tendency to work part-time and earn less, are intertwined and reinforce the specific gender roles in society.

Judith Lorber (2009: 74-75) argues that women's domestic work prevents them from fully participating in paid labor. In addition, many workplaces assume that a husband's main responsibility is to his paid labor, and a wife's main responsibility is to her domestic work. Thus, it is assumed that women do the domestic work and men do not participate at all, or not very much because there is a clear cut division of labor that places women and men within specific roles and spheres of society (men in the public sphere where paid labor occurs, and women in the private sphere where housework occurs). Additionally, the ideas/beliefs about women's and men's roles in paid work influence women's experiences within the home (women's lower wages and/or women's greater 'free time' may be used to justify their greater participation in domestic work). These ideas are part of a larger set of values based on the 'appropriate' roles and behaviors for men and women. Arlie Hochschild (1989: xi) has stated that "...to look at the system of work is to look at half the problem. The other half occurs at home".

The problem to which Hochschild refers is the competing demands women face with the home and paid labor in the face of the stalled revolution. The stalled revolution refers to the stagnation of attitudes and ideas about the 'appropriate' roles of women and men despite the changes in women's lives (there has been a gradual increase in the number of women entering the workforce). Essentially, the concept refers to a societal lack of adaptation of society and men to the changing role of women – the increasing presence of women in the labor force is not being

met with a change in the attitudes and practices within society (Hochschild 1989: 12). For example, women may experience a 'stalled revolution' at home if their male partners have not modified their attitudes and behaviours regarding the 'appropriate' roles for men and women. Hochschild (1989: 13) specifically refers to men who do not do more of the domestic work once their female partners begin engaging in paid labor; they continue to believe that domestic work is still a woman's responsibility. In addition, at work, women may experience the stalled revolution if there are no or few family-friendly policies or if employees are socially discouraged from using them (they are labelled as being on the 'mommy track') or if there is a lack of career advancement for women (the 'glass ceiling' effect).

Furthermore, as a result of the 'stalled revolution', many women complete housework and childcare after they have engaged in paid labor; this concept is known as the 'second shift'. Throughout this thesis I will utilize the concept of the second shift to illustrate that having to complete all or most of the domestic work, on top of working outside of the home, is as demanding and exhausting as having to work two shifts of paid labor (Hochschild 1989: 7). I will also make use of the concept of 'backstage support'. This concept refers to the domestic tasks one spouse (usually the woman) provides to the other to help them prepare for their paid labor. In many cases, it is the man who receives 'backstage support'. For example, preparing a spouse's lunch or making sure that a spouse's work clothes are washed and ironed. Backstage support' also includes domestic tasks which are completed by one spouse to allow the other spouse to focus on paid labor (Hochschild 1989: 255).²

I argue that there should be a redistribution of housework in order to eliminate a 'full' second shift. This would involve a more equal division of housework that would, in theory, cause

² I will utilize this concept in chapter two in relation to the 'second shift'.

the 'shift second' to become less burdensome. I also base the desire for the redistribution of housework upon the ideas put forth by the theories associated with socialist feminism. Socialist feminism calls for the redistribution of domestic labor (such as an increase in the participation of men in the completion of housework) in order to improve the opportunities for paid work and to have more success in their paid work (Lorber 2005: 74-75). Thus, a redistribution of domestic work would be a step toward changing workplace assumptions about the nature of employees' home life and of the 'appropriate' roles for men and women in the home and in the workforce. This would hopefully also create more family-friendly policies as well as reduce the stigma of utilizing such policies. In turn, reducing, if not eliminating the beliefs which have created this 'stalled revolution', would allow women to balance their family and paid work responsibilities and paid work.

The gender differences in childhood socialization and the continued gendered messages women receive today regarding housework (as discussed in the gender construction 'relational element of gender' perspective) more adequately explain the gendered division of housework compared to the time-availability and relative resource or power resource perspectives (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010: 773 & McQuillan and Belle 2004: 236). For example, the relative resource and time availability perspectives ignore the influence of gender, specifically gender ideology and gender differences related to housework. These perspectives describe the division of housework as a reality which occurs due to differences in men and women's resources and time availability (McQuillan and Belle 2004: 235). I argue that the assumptions behind these perspectives are flawed; for a discussion of why women tend to have more time and fewer resources than men is not included.

To justify my larger research question, I argue that my goal to examine the values related to housework is worthwhile because it will expand upon the ideas put forth by the gender construction/‘relational element of gender’ perspective. This perspective emphasizes that men and women hold gendered meanings about housework, based on their beliefs about the ‘appropriate’ roles of men and women within the home and workforce. Individuals who hold more traditional beliefs think that completing housework is a feminine activity; thus, women should be the ones to complete it. This perspective also includes the symbolic importance of housework to women, shaped by childhood socialization regarding the traditional ‘appropriate’ roles for men and women (McQuillan and Belle 2004: 236). Traditionally, the ‘appropriate’ roles for men consist of devoting their time to engaging in paid labor, while the ‘appropriate’ roles for women include devoting their time to caring for their home and family (Brines 1994: 654). In addition, for individuals who hold more ‘traditional’ conceptualizations of the ‘appropriate’ roles for men and women, the caring responsibilities assigned to women have persisted despite their entrance into the workforce (Hochschild 1989: 15-16).

Reading about this perspective inspired me to explore in greater detail the symbolic importance of housework to women. I believe that this symbolism may not necessarily be tied simply to a traditional gender ideology because women with more egalitarian ideologies may also feel that completing housework is symbolically important. Thus, I wish to examine, in detail the socialization and historical roots of these values regarding the importance of housework.

I hope that this research will illuminate the processes that take place when couples attempt to determine who does what. I want to provide a framework for couples to understand each other better in order to have a division of housework that is agreeable to both partners and to permit for them to come to an agreement over such divisions in a more empathetic manner –

or at least allow for them to acknowledge their issues and attempt to work on them. In chapter five, I will analyze three self-help books. Two of the books, Joshua Coleman's (2005) *The Lazy Husband How To Get Men to More Parenting Housework* and Carin Rubenstein's (2009) *The Superior Wife Syndrome: Why Women Do Everything So Well and Why-For The Sake of Our Marriages-We've Got to Stop* discuss how women can have a more equitable division of housework, while the third book, Deborah Tannen's (1990) *You Just Don't Understand* looks at gender differences in conversation styles. I am choosing to analyze the third book as I contend that gender differences in conversation styles, which can lead to gender differences in perception and perspectives, can help explain conflict over the division of housework. I argue that conflict over the division of housework results in women completing housework.

Throughout this thesis, I will discuss reasons why couples engage in conflict over the division of housework. Essentially this thesis hopes to illustrate the conclusion that gender differences in a variety of factors can result in conflict over the division of housework, which results in a gendered division of housework. The goals of this thesis are to illuminate why the division of housework continues to be gendered, and why conflict occurs over housework in order for couples to be more reflexive and understanding about these factors and gender differences. Hopefully, this reflexivity and understanding will reduce conflict over the division of housework and result in more equitable divisions of housework.

Review of the current literature:

Chapter 2 sets the stage for the rest of the chapters of this thesis. The discussions and questions posed in chapter 2 provide the inspiration for the thesis and research question. Firstly I will examine the current perspectives that are used to explain the division of housework such as time-availability and relative resource or power resource perspectives. Secondly I will examine

concepts that I argue refute time-availability and relative resources perspectives such as the ‘mommy track’ and the ‘glass ceiling’. I will also discuss the concept of ‘compensatory gender display’ and the ‘U’ shaped pattern describing men’s and women’s participation in housework based on their income relative to that of their partner’s. The latter discussion will include an examination of the influence of power and dependency, as well as the concepts of ‘balancing’ and ‘status violation’ on the division of housework (Brines 1994: 654 & 682-684 & Hochschild 1989: 219-221).

The concept of ‘compensatory gender display’ is based on the idea that if a man experiences a “status violation” in his performance of masculinity, he has to engage in another behavior to compensate for this violation (Brines 1994: 682-3). The research conducted by Julie Brines (1994: 667) utilized this concept to explain the ‘U’ shaped pattern regarding couples’ salaries and participation of housework. Brines found that women do more of the housework as they earn less than their male partners, but also when they earn more than their male partners. Additionally, men seem to do less housework as they out earn their wives and the more they financially depend on their female partner’s income. These findings contradict the logic behind the relative-resource perspective; it is believed that the partner who earns more money is able to bargain their way out of doing housework, and that the partner who earns less will have less resources and will thus complete more of the housework (McQuillan and Belle 2004: 235). The discussion of Brines’ research will include West and Zimmerman’s concept of ‘doing gender’ (1987: 126), and will be followed by a discussion of more recent research conducted by Schneider (2011: 857).

Thirdly I will examine two concepts that demonstrate the need for a gendered examination of the division of housework – gender ideology perspective and gender-role

attitudes perspective. I will discuss why some tenets of the social theories of behavior more sufficiently address why the division of housework is gendered. This chapter will include a discussion of the manifestation of three types of gender ideologies: traditional, transitional and egalitarian (Hochschild 1989: 15-16). I will also utilize the insights and research of several authors to illustrate and develop my research question. The first author whom I will discuss is Margaret Horsfield (1998). Her work suggests that the gendered division of housework occurs due to the gender differences in a individual's childhood socialization of the knowledge, skills and values related to housework. Horsfield also discusses the strong impulses some women have to clean, and the ideas individuals have about dirt and disorder by quoting anthropologist Mary Douglas' (2005) book *Purity and Danger*. The former employs her interviews with women to demonstrate that doing housework can have a calming, soothing, effect on women; particularly those women she labels as 'scrubbers'. I argue that such women feel cleaning is soothing, because they are re-establishing a sense of order, as indicated in the work of Mary Douglas. In addition, Margaret Horsfield's work made me reflect on the notion that there may be strong social and psychological forces which shape women's behavior regarding completing housework.

This thesis is based on a re-examination of my undergraduate research data; particularly, I found a theme in the responses from the female participants that included comments about the completion of housework and it being necessary, as if such a fact was self-evident. In addition, one woman said that she completed the housework herself because she wanted the housework to be done; however, her husband did not feel like doing it, and she did not want to be accused of being a nag for asking too many times. Additionally, the women discussed being bothered by dust and crumbs, and that uncompleted housework bothered them. However, I believe there are

other meanings to their statements. I also argue that there are some type of moral values linked to feelings that completing housework is necessary.

Furthermore, it was after reading Pat Mainardi's (1980) piece *The Politics of Housework* that I realized that the division of housework may be gendered due to men's inconsistencies relating to gender ideology (regarding the division of housework) and the practice of completing housework. Mainardi describes how her husband agrees theoretically with an equal division of housework, but for various reasons, he does not complete his share of the housework and she ends up doing most of it. I argue that these reasons are manifestations of the influences of the gender difference of values related to housework I intuited. For example, Mainardi describes how her husband knows that she has a lower tolerance for dirt than he; if he does not complete a housework task promptly, she will get fed up and do it herself.

Moreover, I will examine the research conducted by Brenda Beagan, Gwen Chapman, Andrea D'Sylvia and B. Raewyn Bassett (2008) in the article entitled *It's Just Easier For Me To Do It: Rationalizing the Family Division of Foodwork*, which includes narratives from women who discuss why they do most of the cooking and after meal clean-up. For example, they state that family members have to be reminded multiple times to do the dishes, which can cause arguments. Additionally, when family members do the dishes, they do not complete the task properly according to the women, or they do not complete the task immediately, which irritates the women. The women also state that it is easier to do the tasks themselves rather than have to engage in conflicts pertaining to such issues.

Examining conflict over the division of housework inspired an examination of the perceptions of fairness over the gendered division of housework. This discussion will involve the

concepts of ‘the economy of gratitude’ and the ‘politics of comparison’ by Hochschild, and the ‘distributive justice framework’ discussed by Thompson in Baxter. This framework includes ‘outcomes’, ‘comparison referents’ and ‘justifications’. Discussing this topic will include the effects of ‘same-gender’ and ‘between-gender comparisons’, and the influence of gender ideology, income and leisure on perceptions of fairness or equity in the division of housework. An important insight which emerged from this exploration was that some individuals expect women to complete housework, in fact, they consider this dynamic to be ‘normal’.

Therefore, upon reflecting upon my own research, Pat Mainardi’s research, along with the research conducted by Beagan et al., I argue that the gendered division of housework is also influenced by the prevention/resolution of conflict. Women complete the housework to prevent any conflict over housework; any potential conflict is ‘resolved’ by completing the housework herself. Furthermore, I also argue that this conflict is due to the gender differences in the knowledge, skills and values related to housework which are the result of the gender differences in socialization which women are exposed to; thus causing women to be more likely to possess the knowledge and skills associated with cleaning. More importantly, however, women may have different values related to housework than men. As a result, women may be more likely to notice uncompleted housework, disorder and various types of dirt (dust, mud, crumbs, soap scum, hair). Women may also have higher standards of cleanliness, and have higher levels of discomfort with disorder and types of dirt, that may cause them to feel that completing housework is more important than their male partners do.

Thus, this project will attempt to answer the following research question: *How do the historically constructed and socially reproduced gendered values associated with housework (doing housework ‘properly’ and promptly) and the associated prevention and resolution of*

conflict reflect the gendered division of housework within heterosexual couples today in North America?

Chapter summaries:

In the third chapter I will examine the historical origins of these values related to housework through the use of several works such as Barbara Ehrenreich's (1978) *For Her Own Good: Two Centuries of Experts' Advice to Women*, Suellen Hoy's (1995) *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness*, Wendy Mitchinson's (1991) *The Nature of Their Bodies: Women and Their Doctors in Victorian Canada* and Jessamyn Neuhaus' (2011) *Housework and Housewives in American Advertising: Married to the Mop*. In particular, I will explore how women came to be assigned the responsibility of housework, through the discussion of the concepts of 'The Woman Question' and 'The Cult Of True Womanhood'. I also will discuss how women's 'nature' was used to justify their domestic responsibility, and to describe housework as a 'labour of love'. Finally, I will explore how medical experts, home economic experts and advertisers pressured women through strong moral messages to keep their homes clean.

In the fourth chapter I will continue the discussion of the history of the women's assignment and psychological investment' in housework through Betty Friedan's (1963) *The Feminine Mystique* and Jessamyn Neuhaus' (2011) *Housework and Housewives in American Advertising: Married to the Mop*. Specifically, I will discuss how housework has 'expanded to fill the time available' and the continued use of moral messages and women to sell cleaning products. Additionally, I will discuss the influence of the 'keeping up with the Joneses' mentality and the development of the dual-earner family norm we see today. Finally, I will discuss the meanings of dirt and disorder, the psychological reasons women clean and the differences in

attitudes and beliefs between ‘flappers’ and ‘scrubbers’. This discussion will involve the concept of women, particularly ‘scrubbers’ engaging in self-monitoring or self-evaluation in terms of keeping their homes spotless, due to the ‘imagined judgments’ of ‘imagined others’. I will discuss whether ‘scrubbers’ are cleaning for themselves, others, or both. I will use Mary Douglas’ (1966) *Purity and Danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*, Kathryn Allen Rabuzzi’s (1982) *The Sacred and The Feminine: Toward a Theology of Housework* and Erving Goffman’s (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.

Within the fifth chapter I will analyze three self-help books: *The Superior Wife Syndrome: Why Women Do Everything So Well and Why-For The Sake of Our Marriages-We’ve Got to Stop* by Carin Rubenstein, *The Lazy Husband How To Get Men to More Parenting and Housework* by Joshua Coleman and *You Just Don’t Understand* by Deborah Tannen. I am analyzing these texts in order to learn how the gendered division of housework (as well as gender differences that contribute to the gendered division of housework) are understood, and what solutions are proposed. These texts will provide me with examples of the type of information and perspective that non-academic individuals are receiving regarding the division of housework. I will examine the texts for the themes, concepts and perspectives I have discussed in the thesis. Specifically, I will analyze the texts’ discussion (or lack thereof) of gender, ‘the economy of gratitude’, women’s higher standards of cleanliness and women’s avoidance or ‘resolving’ conflict over housework by completing it themselves.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW:

Housework is defined in this thesis as the tidying/cleaning tasks that are completed regularly, if not daily. These tasks are usually completed by women, and need to be completed much more frequently than other non-childcare related domestic tasks. Examining housework is important, I argue that the gendered division of housework is a result of the different personal meaning men and women have regarding housework. I also argue that housework is not simply about keeping objects or space clean, as definitions of cleanliness and what is necessary vary (Horsfield 1998: 11). Thus, housework is related to how men and women perceive and judge their homes, themselves, their partners, as well as others and their homes. Specifically, it is related to one's beliefs about the 'appropriate' roles for men and women, how individuals see themselves as women and men, parents and spouses. As well, housework is related to how couples judge their relationships, in terms of feelings of appreciation and entitlement. Therefore, an examination of the gendered division of housework involves examining the various levels of perceptions and beliefs surrounding gender and housework.

In this chapter I will examine current theoretical perspectives on housework, such as time-availability and relative resource or power resource perspectives, both of which are gender neutral, and why perspectives such as these two do not adequately explain the division of labor within the home. In particular, I argue that these perspectives do not sufficiently account for the impact of gender ideology (beliefs about the 'appropriate' roles for men and women) that is involved with the concept of housework and the division of it. I will also discuss why I argue that the theories of the 'relational element of gender' and gender construction can be utilized more adequately in the examination of the concept of housework. Within this examination I will also present points on where these theories need to be refined and expanded upon.

'Gender-Neutral' Theoretical Perspectives:

My first concern pertains to the gender neutrality of the time-availability and relative resource or power resource perspectives. The time-availability perspective is based on the idea that household members have competing demands for their time, and how they may respond to the demands of household work (housework, cooking & childcare) are influenced by other commitments such as work and school. The more hours of paid labor individuals engage in, the less time they have to complete their household commitments. This perspective suggests that the household will benefit as a whole if individuals engage in role specialization. If a household member is more likely to become employed, or more likely to earn higher wages within their current employment position, the household will benefit more if the individual who has less potential for paid employment or well-paid employment fulfills the greater percentage of the household responsibilities (McQuillan and Belle 2004: 235). This perspective somewhat expands to include gender into the equation by arguing that women have a tendency to complete more of the housework due to the fact that they are more likely to be unemployed, and have the greater potential for earning lower wages than men.

A sub-concept which I argue is part of the time-availability perspective is the autonomy perspective, which refers to heterosexual marriage partners. This perspective is based on the idea that a wife's earning potential determines the amount of time that she will spend on housework. The amount of time that a wife will spend on housework may be reduced as her earning potential rises; the reduction in time can also be affected by the increased ability to purchase substitutes for her household work (cleaning staff or child care). It has also been suggested by scholars, using this theory, that wives who earn higher wages than their husbands may feel less obligated to complete household labor (Gupta 2007: 413). For example, Alexandra Killewald and Margaret

Gough (2010: 988-9) suggest that high-earning wives may be able to persuade their husbands to complete more of the household work. I interpret this data to imply that high-earning wives may do less housework than wives who earn the same or lesser amounts of money than their husbands.

This last point is also consistent with the relative resource or resource-power perspective. There is a power differential in heterosexual households because women lack economic and educational resources; thus women are placed in the position of completing the greater percentage of household tasks and also placed in a position of dependency on the income of their male spouses. In other words, women contribute fewer resources as they are more likely to be employed in part-time positions, and also, have the tendency to earn lower incomes than their male partners' even when employed in full-time positions. Therefore, according to this perspective, power in the relationship/household is awarded based on one's resources. The limited resources that women contribute are seen as an explanation for their lack of power in the household, and for their greater contribution of household unpaid labor. However, this perspective stipulates that in couples where the woman has more resources than their male partners, the housework will be divided more equally (McQuillan and Belle 2004: 235). Yet, the relative resource or power resource perspective does not include specific data or examples to demonstrate that women indeed have less resources than men.

Women in the workplace:

Vincent Ferrao (2010) confirms that men are more likely to be employed than women, and that women are more likely to be employed in part-time positions than men. Additionally, 38.5% of women between the ages of 25-44, who work part-time, do so to care for their children and for other personal/family responsibilities; whereas, only 4.9% of men of the same age are in

the same position (Ferrao 2010: 15). According to table 202-0101, produced by Statistics Canada in 2009, the average male income is higher than the average female income by a ratio of 0.688. This means that on average, Canadian women make sixty-eight cents for every dollar Canadian men earn.

Though these two perspectives present why there is a division in household tasks, they do not examine the gender ideology behind the issue properly, nor do they answer two fundamental questions: why is it that women are less likely to be employed, and why do they earn less money than men in comparable jobs? I argue that the answer to why women earn less than men may be explained by the division of labor that occurs within the workforce. According to Ferrao (2010: 21) women and men are segregated by occupation, with men being employed in more 'masculine' fields such as transportation, construction and management, and women in more 'feminine' or 'service' fields such as sales and administration. With regards to the other question, I also argue that women are less likely to be employed due to the patriarchal assumptions in the workplace, which lead to obstacles such as the 'glass ceiling' and the 'mommy track' and within the home, which lead to women providing more 'backstage support' than they receive, as well as doing more of the housework and childcare. I will now briefly describe these concepts and how they can prevent women from achieving the same level of resources and the same level of success in their careers as their male partners.

'Glass Ceiling, 'Mommy Track' and 'Backstage Support' perspectives:

The 'glass ceiling' concept was created by Alice Sargent, a Fortune 500 consultant, in the mid-1980s, and is a metaphor that describes how women remain in the same positions in their careers, despite seeking advancement. There is a glass ceiling above women's heads that prevents them from going higher up the ranks in their jobs to achieve greater career success

(Washington Post 2012). The term is described as “the subtle and barely visible obstacles in the way of a woman’s promotion” (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner 2006: 228). These obstacles include workplace prejudices against women, such as the belief that women should not be hired in higher, more managerial positions – that women should not be placed in a position of leadership. This means that women may not receive raises, promotions or positive evaluations from co-workers and supervisors.

The ‘mommy track’ concept is related to the ‘glass ceiling’ concept. The concept was re-appropriated by Tamar Lewin in the (1989) article *‘Mommy-Career Track’ Sets Off a Furor* that appeared in the *New York Times*, which was based upon the (1989) article *Management Women and The New Facts of Life* written by Felice N.Schwartz. Schwartz argued that some companies place female employees into two different categories: career-as-primary women and career-and-family women. Companies that make these distinctions are reluctant to hire career-and-family women as top-level employees. They would prefer that all employees be employees who ‘give it all’ to the company – that they give all their time and effort to the company. They do not feel that career-and-family women can achieve this goal, and thus, view women who ask for more flexible working arrangements as less committed to the company than other employees (Schwartz 1989: 68 & 70). The time-availability perspective assumes that women complete the household responsibilities because they have fewer opportunities for well-paying job, but perhaps because women complete the household responsibilities; it prevents them from working full-time, or getting well-paying jobs. I argue that this is an example of the ‘which came first scenario’ of the chicken and the egg; these two phenomena are linked, they have a co-dependent relationship because you cannot have one idea without the other. In other words, the role of women within the home is affected by the role of women in the workforce, and vice-versa.

The concept of 'backstage support', as described by Arlie Hochschild, expands on the idea that household responsibilities can prevent a woman from succeeding in the workforce. 'Backstage support' consists of the support that one spouse provides for the other by helping to prepare them for their work on a daily basis (i.e.: making a lunch, ironing a shirt, washing clothes, etc.). This support allows the other spouse to work longer hours and demonstrate their loyalty to their company. 'Backstage support' also includes domestic tasks which are completed by one spouse to allow the other spouse to focus on paid labor, for example caring for a sick child so the other spouse can engage in paid labor. The spouse who receives 'backstage support' may be promoted at work and receive a pay increase. In other words, one spouse is behind the scenes making sure that everything is taken care of at home so that the other spouse can solely focus on paid work. As a result, the spouse who receives the support is able to achieve more success in their careers. However, in many cases it is the woman who provides the 'backstage support' to the man. A woman who engages in paid labor may not receive any 'backstage support' from her male partner. In fact, she may provide her own 'backstage support' (Hochschild 1989: 255).

The core beliefs behind this concept, as well as justification for women's lack of 'backstage support' are that men's paid labor possesses greater worth than women's paid labor. As such, it is believed that men are entitled to leisure time when they are not working, as opposed to providing 'backstage support' for their female partners. Thus, women perform the 'backstage support' because it is believed that her paid work is of lesser importance. Women's provision of 'backstage support' to their male partners and to themselves results in slower career success and growth in earnings. Traditional and transitional women believe they ought to give more 'backstage support' than they receive while egalitarian women believe they should receive

the same amount of 'backstage support' as they provide (Hochschild 1989: 255).³ I argue that the continuation of the 'second shift'⁴ for women demonstrates that, regardless of ideology, women are providing more 'backstage support' for their male partners than they are receiving.

Consequently, women who provide a greater amount of 'backstage support' than their husbands, they have less time to do extra hours at work, and have a greater chance of experiencing the 'glass ceiling' when attempting to advance in their careers. In addition, if they decide they want to be mothers they may also experience the 'mommy track'.

I have provided a discussion on the questions of why women are less likely to be employed than men, and why women earn less money than men in comparable jobs. This dialogue was included to provide a platform for questioning the logic attached to the 'facts' that are presented within the relative resource or power resource and time-availability perspectives. By not attempting to explain why women may have less economic and educational resources than men it implies within these perspectives that it is an established fact and does not need to be addressed. This assists in the presentation of the gendered division of housework being seen as a given – that since it is a fact that women make less or are less likely to be employed than men, then it is acceptable for them to complete a greater percentage of the household chores because they clearly have more time, and have to do the most of the housework in order to contribute to the household dynamic. I argue that the gendered division of housework is not a given, and neither is women's lower resources (as defined by relative resource or power resource perspective), nor should they be. The relative resource or resource power and time-availability perspectives should include an analysis of its assumptions, specifically why women tend to have fewer resources (lower earnings) than men.

³ I will define the terms traditional and transitional gender ideologies on pages 24-25.

⁴ I will define the 'second shift' and discuss its influence on page 22.

Assumptions of the 'relative resource' and 'time-availability' perspectives:

I also wish to provide my perspective on the logic behind these perspectives. The time-availability perspective is based on the idea that the partner who has more time should complete most of the housework. However, I do not believe that stay-at home mothers should do all the housework simply because they have more time, or do not contribute to the finances of the household. A stay-at home mother, caring for young children, will simply not have the time to complete all the housework. Based on this perspective, it is illegitimate for such women to ask for help with the housework because their time is not spent doing paid labor. This perspective does not acknowledge the fact that childcare is work, albeit unpaid. It is presumed that engaging in paid labor is more important than any other activities, including childcare. Both activities should be valued. Thus, I argue that in such an arrangement, where both spouses are engaging in close to, if not the same, amount of work; the housework should be shared. Even though the wife is at home, she is still engaging in the labor within the home. It seems that in the relative resource or power resource perspective, paid labor outside of the home is valued more than unpaid household labor because it is paid; housework is not seen as 'real work', but as a 'labor of love' women perform for the well-being of their partners and children.⁵ I reject these assumptions, which is why I refer to housework and childcare as unpaid household labor.

I disagree with the relative resource or power resource perspective because it is based on the idea that only when a woman has equal or greater resources than her husband will the couple have a more equal division of housework. I argue that this perspective is based on two assumptions: that it is illegitimate for wives to ask for a more equal division of housework if they do not have greater or equal resources as their husbands because then their husbands would be

⁵ I will discuss the 'labor of love' association with housework in chapter three.

doing a 'greater' amount of the workload both within and outside of the home. The other assumption is that husbands will only begin completing a more equal share of the housework when women's resources match or surpass theirs.

I also disagree with the idea that resources are related to discussion over the division of housework. Regardless of a woman's resources, it is legitimate for a woman to ask her male partner for a more equal division of housework. Even in situations where husbands have greater resources than their wives, couples should have more equal divisions of housework. My logic is based upon the reality of the 'second shift'. Hochschild (1989: 7) describes the 'second shift' as the unpaid work (housework, childcare, etc.) that working women tend to do when they finish their paid work; the extra work they do once they get home. The concept is used also to illuminate the fact that housework and childcare are work, not just a 'labor of love', and that having to complete hours of unpaid work after having engaged in paid work is as exhausting and demanding as working two work shifts. For example, one woman interviewed by Hochschild (1989: 7) stated that: "You're on duty at work. You come home, and you're on duty". Ultimately, I argue that the implications of such a concept as the 'second shift' concept demonstrates that if housework and childcare are shared by both partners, one partner will not have as many tasks to do every day. I further argue that a more equal division of housework is about simple respect and kindness to one's partner; one's partner should not have to struggle with the 'second shift' and all its associated problems. I will now discuss some examples of research that suggest that the 'second shift' occurs for reasons related to gender, as opposed to the influence of time and resources.

Research regarding the 'relative-resource' and 'time-availability' perspectives:

The findings of many research studies contradict the logic behind the time-availability and relative resource or power resource perspectives. For example, Hochschild describes in her (1989) research a concept she labels 'logic of the pocketbook'; she originally believed money would be the deciding factor behind the division of housework, as discussed in the relative resource perspective – that higher-earning potential would determine the division of labor within the household. At the beginning of her study she believed that the 'logic of the pocketbook' or the power of money, would apply to both men and women. Hochschild believed that the partner who earned less would do more of the housework, despite their own desires/beliefs of how the housework should be shared. Thus, even if a woman wanted an equal division of housework, if her husband had a higher salary and his job was thus seen as more worthy than hers, she would complete the housework, despite her own wishes. Similarly, a man would perform more of the housework if his female partner earned a higher salary than him, despite his beliefs that such a division is 'gender-deviant', or deviating from the traditional roles and responsibilities assigned to men and women.

However, within her analysis she concludes that the 'logic of the pocketbook' concept only applies to men; that as a result of having a higher salary men are excused from housework but not women. Hochschild believes that men who earn less than their wives do not share the housework because they are 'balancing'. This means that if a man believes he has lost power over a woman in one area, he has to attempt to make up for it by gaining power in another area. Thus, if a man interprets a lower salary than his wife as a loss of power, he will not help with the housework, as doing so would be interpreted as another loss of power. However, Hochschild argues that the men who do share housework do so because they have nothing to 'balance'

(1989: 219-221). I argue that such men also share the responsibilities of the housework because they do not see salaries and housework as linked to power; such men may have egalitarian gender ideologies.

Gender Ideologies: Traditional, Transitional and Egalitarian:

Hochschild describes three types of gender ideologies that pertain to the division of housework – ‘pure’ egalitarian gender ideologies, ‘pure’ traditional values and transitional gender ideologies. Firstly, individuals with ‘pure’ egalitarian gender ideologies believe that each partner should have the same amount of power and that each person’s identity should be based on both the spheres of work and of the home. Secondly, individuals with ‘pure’ traditional values feel men should have more power than women, and that women’s identities should be based on work in the home while men’s identity should be based on paid labor in the workforce. Thirdly, individuals with transitional gender ideologies hold beliefs that are a mixture of traditional, egalitarian and gender ideologies that can be manifested in a variety of ways. Usually, individuals who hold this ideology believe that men’s identity should be based on paid labor, and women’s identity should be based on the home, even if she engaging in paid labor. Women are expected to complete housework on top of their paid labor outside of the home (Hochschild 1989: 15-16). These three ideologies may be better conceptualised as a spectrum, ranging from the ‘pure’ traditional to the ‘pure egalitarian’. Egalitarian and traditional divisions of housework may be the ‘ideal’ for individuals who associate themselves with either traditional or egalitarian gender ideologies. There are a variety of manifestations of the transitional gender ideology, given the mix of beliefs.

Thus, for transitional or traditional men who believe that the roles of men and women are clear cut, engaging in housework if their female partner has a higher salary than them would

likely contradict their beliefs about the 'appropriate' roles and behaviours for men. For example, in her research Hochschild (1989: 79-80) presents a couple with transitional gender ideologies, Peter and Nina. Nina earns an extraordinarily large salary, yet Nina does almost all the housework and childcare. Conversely, egalitarian men reject the 'appropriateness' of behaviours and roles assigned according to gender, and thus may share the housework. Hochschild (1989: 102-3) describes one such couple, Robert and Ann. Ann earns more than Robert and Robert is proud of his wife's salary. He feels it makes more sense for him to stay home to wait for a delivery and lose his day's wages than for his wife to do so. I argue that only egalitarian men would do more housework as their wives' time decrease/increase income due to paid work, as outlined in the relative resource and time availability perspectives. In fact, Brines' research explicitly describes why relative resources do not predict a couples' division of housework. Her research reveals that gender ideology/ beliefs about the 'appropriate' roles for men and women are a greater part of the division of housework than the conceptualization described in the relative resource or power resource perspective.

'Compensatory Gender Display' and 'Gender Performance' Theory:

Julie Brines, in her (1994) article *Dependency, Gender and the Division of Labor at Home*, discusses the dependency model which is similar to the relative resource perspective. According to the dependency model, "the relations" behind the division of labor are economic. However, Brines suggests that this model is not gender neutral; she believes being economically dependent and doing housework carry gendered meanings. Being economically dependent and doing housework is viewed as "accountably" feminine, while earning most of the family's income and leaving others to complete the housework is "accountably" masculine. Thus, Brines suggests that the link between "dependency" and housework is not related to an economic

exchange but rather from “gender relations that regulate symbolic displays of masculine or feminine accountability” (Brines 1994: 654).

Brines (1994: 682) argues that women behave in patterns related to the dependency model. However, she states that the more men depend on their wives for income, the less housework they do. She also states that men who have experienced prolonged unemployment tend to reject doing housework. Brines explains her findings by discussing the differences between masculinity and femininity. Masculinity is seen as something which man must accomplish, while femininity is seen as a ‘natural condition’. Furthermore, masculinity is seen as more than different from femininity, but the negative of femininity. Such a conceptualization of masculinity requires “ongoing behavioural proof” from individual men to demonstrate their masculinity and contains intolerance for behaviour that deviates from the perceived norm. Thus, for men who hold such a conceptualisation of masculinity, ‘status violations’ (having a female partner who has a higher salary than oneself) are seen as a threat to their identity and “compel a compensatory response”, of not doing housework (Brines 1994: 682-3). Hochschild’s (1989: 82, 84 & 88) previous description of Peter and Nina is an example of what Brines is describing.

As previously discussed, Nina has a very large salary and she completes most of the housework although she earns more money than Peter. She feels that it is a ‘gift’ for Peter to accept her large salary, that Peter is unusual for being so supportive. Nina also feels she would be asking too much for Peter to do more of the housework as he has accepted her salary. I argue that for Peter, having a wife who has a higher salary than him is a “status violation” as Hochschild describes Peter as having difficulty accepting her salary as it “[shames] him as a man” (Hochschild 1989: 83). Additionally, according to Hochschild (1989: 85) if Peter has to experience less earning potential than Nina and share the housework, it would be “two assaults

on his manhood...a line he [feels] he couldn't cross...he would feel like a failure compared to other men". Whereas, Nina feels that she owes Peter for accepting her high salary, she "[makes] up for injuring his male pride, by doing most of the housework herself" (Hochschild 1989: 88).

Killewald and Gough (2010: 987) refer to this phenomenon, which is based on Brines' explanation of her research findings, as the concept of 'compensatory gender display'. Brines (1994: 667) describes a curvilinear 'U-shaped' pattern regarding earnings and housework for both men and women (see Appendix A). This means, that as women become less economically dependent (earn more) they complete less housework. However, if their salary becomes too high (is seen as the main wage-earner or provider), women complete more of the housework – as was the situation with Nina and Peter. For men, as they become less dependent on their wife's salary (earn more), they complete more of the housework. However, as they become the main provider or wage-earner (they earn more than their wife) they complete less housework. According to the theory, the husband's share of housework increases as their wife's salary increases, but then decreases once their wife earns more than half of the family income (Killewald and Gough 2010: 989). These patterns contradict the logic behind the relative resource or power resource perspective; such a theory predicts a linear relationship between earnings and housework (Brines 1994: 660). As one's wages increase, one's contributions towards housework should decrease. Likewise, if one's wages should decrease, one's contributions towards housework should increase (see Appendix B). The concept of 'doing gender' as part of gender performance theory, like Brines' concept of 'compensatory gender display', provides additional support for the inclusion of gender in discussions of the division of housework.

Gender performance theory, which is based on the work of Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman (1987: 126) argues that individuals 'do' gender. The idea centres around the logic

that by doing housework or avoiding housework, men and women ‘produce’ their gender. Thus, “housework is not a gender-neutral activity that is bargained over, but rather is a set of actions imbued with cultural meaning” (Schneider 2011: 846). Yet Daniel Schneider, who has furthered West and Zimmerman’s work, argues that there is a pattern between earnings and housework; men complete more housework as their wives work more which is consistent with the relative resource or power resource perspective (Schneider 2011: 857). However, both the research by Schneider (2011), and Killewald and Gough (2010) does not include a question on the participants’ gender ideology or beliefs about gender. I argue that this omission greatly affects the results of their research and it may explain their seemingly contradictory results. Within his study Schneider utilized data from 2003 to 2007; whereas, Killewald and Gough utilized data from 1976 to 2003. It is possible that because Schneider’s data is more recent, his participants may have more egalitarian beliefs than the participants from Killewald and Gough’s study. Individuals with more egalitarian values may be more likely to share the housework (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010: 772). I argue that gender ideology should have been a part of Schneider’s research. The consistency of Schneider’s findings with the ‘gender-neutral’ relative resource or power resource theoretical perspective may be explained by participants’ egalitarian gender ideologies.

Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard (2011: 772) state that the more hours that women spend engaging in paid labor, the less housework they will do and the more their male partners will complete housework. Also, men who are employed in jobs that do not require long hours are more likely to complete housework than men who work longer hours. This data is an example of the phenomenon of the ‘second shift’. In her (1989) book *The Second Shift*, Hochschild attempts to explore why some women do the ‘second shift’ and why some couples share it. As previously

discussed, she utilizes the concepts of gender ideology, 'backstage support' and 'logic of the pocketbook'. However, she includes in her analysis the concept of gender strategy, which will be included in this chapter's discussion of the gender ideology perspective.

Thus far I have discussed the time-availability and relative resource or power resource perspectives in order to demonstrate that they do not adequately address the influence of gender upon the division of housework. The research I have referenced, as well as the concept of compensatory gender display and gender performance theory have demonstrated that the division of housework is not a gender-neutral phenomenon. Ultimately, I argue that the concepts of compensatory gender display and gender performance theory, and the research to which I have referred, suggest that gender, more specifically gender ideology, needs to be acknowledged, if not incorporated into any theory which attempts to explain the gendered division of housework. In fact, the discrepancy between the relationship between earnings and housework (whether it is linear or curvilinear) indicates that there may be a need for theories which attempt to explain the division of housework for both traditional and egalitarian couples. The research to which I have referred, the concept of compensatory gender display and gender performance theory have led me to examine theories which examine gender: the gender ideology and the gender construction/'relational element of gender' perspectives.

Gender Ideology Perspective, Gender Strategies and 'Family Myths':

The gender ideology perspective is based on socialization theories, specifically the theory that: "individuals are socialized into male or female gender roles" (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010: 772) with associated beliefs regarding how men and women should behave. This perspective is based on the conceptualization that an individual's gender ideology beliefs can be situated on a continuum, ranging from traditional to egalitarian gender ideologies (two concepts I

previously discussed, using research conducted by Hochschild). Research has shown that women with more egalitarian gender ideologies are less likely to complete all the housework than women with traditional gender ideologies. Also, men with more egalitarian gender ideologies are more likely to spend more time completing housework than men with traditional gender ideologies (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010: 772).

The gender ideology perspective assists in explaining the division of housework. For example, gender ideology provides a great insight in explaining the 'atypical' couples according to the relative-resource or power resource perspective. Upon first glance, the gender ideology perspective seems to be a straightforward perspective that should explain couples' divisions of housework; if a couple have the same or similar gender ideologies, it seems logical that they would have the corresponding division of housework (traditional, transitional, egalitarian). However, these cases may be the ideal exceptions to the rule, according to the concept of gender strategy. According to Hochschild (1989: 15) a gender strategy is "a plan of action through which a person tries to solve problems at hand, given the cultural notions of gender at play. To pursue a gender strategy [an individual] draws on beliefs about manhood and womanhood, beliefs that are forged in early childhood". It is a connection between what an individual thinks and feels about their manhood/womanhood and what they actually do about it.

I present this concept as an illustration of the complexity of dividing housework between men and women. Individuals have many different beliefs associated with their own definitions and standards about manhood/womanhood (the appropriate desires, roles and behaviours for men and women); thus, exists a complex process. As previously discussed, the conceptualization of gender ideology as a spectrum allows for a multitude of manifestations of gender ideology. Thus, this variety may contribute to conflict over the division of housework; if one's partner's values

are too traditional or too egalitarian, disagreements may arise, if the other partner does not share the same beliefs as the other partner. In other words, their beliefs and realities of their situations may be in contention with one another.

Hochschild describes these very scenarios in her (1989) book *The Second Shift*. She describes how life events or circumstances may prevent or make it a challenge for individuals to have the division of housework they want. For example, in a traditional couple the woman may need to work in order to supplement her husband's low income. Hochschild (1989: 16) states that she found that her participants were "traditional on top, but egalitarian on the bottom" (or vice-versa). By this she means that the individuals expressed beliefs consistent with one 'type' of gender ideology or believed they possessed one kind of division of housework, but on closer inspection their gender ideology and division of housework was significantly different.

Hochschild (1989: 19) states that some couples develop family myths, "versions of reality that obscure a core truth in order to manage a family tension". Family myths arise when couples do not resolve conflict but simply manage and contain them through the use of family myths (Hochschild 1989: 207). For example, Hochschild presents one couple with such myths – Nancy and Evan. Nancy and Evan have a family myth that they have a successful solution to the problems that arise over the division of housework, which is for Nancy to do the work required for the upstairs (the main house), and for Evan to do the work associated with the downstairs (basement and garage) (Hochschild 1989: 43).

Nancy believes that the housework should be divided equally. She is afraid that if the housework isn't shared equally, they will have a relationship like her parents. Nancy says that her mother was a housewife and that her father treated her like a doormat. She says that: "As

long as Evan doesn't do the housework, I feel it means he's going to be like my father – coming home, putting his feet up, and hollering at my mom to serve him” (Hochschild 1989: 39). According to Hochschild (1989: 40) “Evan is happy and proud to support Nancy in her career as a social worker. But at the same time he [does] not see why, just because she chose this demanding career [social worker], *he* [has] to change *his own* life”. Sharing the ‘second shift’ means to him a “loss in his standard of living and despite all the high-flown talk [his agreeing theoretically to her having a job], he [feels that he hasn't] *really* bargained for it”. Furthermore, Evan feels that if he shares the ‘second shift’, Nancy would “dominate” him. He feels that as Nancy has “won so many small victories in his mind”, which resulted in him doing many small housework tasks, that “he [has] to draw the line somewhere [sharing the ‘second shift’]”. Evan's behavior demonstrates the conflict between ideology and behavior, as well as the conflicts which emerge for individuals who hold transitional gender ideologies. Evan agrees theoretically in Nancy working, but in reality it seems that he is fine with her working as long as it doesn't interfere with her work at home. In fact, in order to cope with her ‘second shift’, as obscured in her ‘upstairs-downstairs’ solution, Nancy reduced her hours at work (Hochschild 1989: 47).

Nancy is afraid of getting divorced over this issue; of becoming a struggling divorced mother. This mythical division allows Nancy to feel that the housework is being divided equally, that Evan is not treating her like a doormat (Hochschild 1989: 43 & 47). However, Nancy's ‘half’ requires a lot more housework to maintain and her work must be done more frequently than the work of Evan's ‘half’. Hochschild (1989: 57) believes that “some women are forced to choose between equality and marriage. And they choose marriage”.

I argue that the gender ideology theoretical perspective is useful in illustrating the strong influence that gender it has on the division of housework between couples. The concepts of

gender strategy and family myths show that gender ideology may not predict the division of housework between couples. Pat Mainardi's article entitled *The Politics of Housework* (1980: 125-6) also casts doubt on this perspective. Mainardi suggests that men may agree theoretically with sharing the housework, but for various reasons, the division of housework continues to be gendered. At first glance it may appear that this idea is consistent with the "egalitarian on top, traditional underneath" concept. However, Mainardi suggests that practical reasons related to the actual completion of housework tasks, specifically when and how they should be completed, differing standards of cleanliness and tolerance for dirt and disorder, resulting in men's reluctance, avoidance or refusal to complete housework. As a result, I argue that the 'relational element of gender'/gender construction perspective may explain the gendered division of housework more successfully than the others previously discussed.

Gender construction perspective:

The gender construction perspective is described as a variant on the gender ideology perspective. This perspective is based on the assumption that the gender ideology perspective is inadequate in explaining the gendered division of housework because it does not include the gendered meanings that men and women obtain from performing unpaid work in the home.

According to Suzanne M. Bianchi, Melissa A. Sayer, Liana C. Milkie and John P. Robinson (2000: 194) completing unpaid work in the home is thought to "help define and express gender relations". According to this perspective, unpaid work in the home is associated with caring and appreciation, and caring is viewed as being associated with the female gender role. Thus, it is believed that women complete housework in order to "behave consistently with their feminine and gender identities" and that men avoid completing housework to protect and maintain their male identities (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010: 773). A concept discussed

in Kevin McQuillan and Marilyn Belle's article entitled *Who Does What? Gender and the Division of Labor in Canadian Households* (2004: 236) which is related to the ideas presented in the gender construction perspective is that of the 'relational element of gender'.

This concept is based on the belief that "men and women experience socialization differently, and that this shapes their values and behaviour". Furthermore, gender is viewed as more than a characteristic or a learned role, but as an ongoing process. Thus, according to this idea, individuals are constantly being socialized (or pressured) to follow the 'appropriate' (in this case traditional) messages about how men and women should feel, think and behave (McQuillan and Belle 2004: 236). Horsfield (1997: 31 & 224) argues that women may be more likely to have been assigned household chores growing up, or were assigned more of them. She also states that women have been taught by their mothers and grandmothers the knowledge and skills related to housework, such as what needs to be cleaned and how to do it.

I argue that these messages are traditional in nature because individuals today (particularly women) are being socialized/pressured, beginning at an early age, into following traditional gendered roles (being a good mother, being a good wife). In addition, women are exposed to the ideal of the 'supermom' – a woman who can successfully balance career, children, husband, housework and the dozens of other tasks related to these responsibilities. If the messages about gender and housework were more fluid and open, the division of housework would be more egalitarian. According to Hochschild (1989: 12) the gendered division of housework continues due to the stalled revolution; the idea that as more women enter the workforce, their ideas about the appropriate roles for men and women change; however, men's ideas about the appropriate roles for men and women do not appear to be changing to the same degree.

The above description of the gender construction perspective is similar to the compensatory gender display theory; both theories seem to explain that individuals complete or avoid doing housework to 'save face', to follow their ideas about the gender roles and identities of men and women. Both the gender construction perspective and concept of the relational element of gender emphasize the strong continuous influence of socialization upon the appropriate behaviours of men and women. However, this perspective does not address situations where couples have egalitarian or gender deviant divisions of housework (in which men help more with the housework). According to this perspective and concept, are these couples immune to the forces of socialization, or do they ignore or combat their influence? Couples may have a gendered division of housework for reasons which may not be motivated or only partly motivated by the desire to conform to traditional gender roles and behaviours such as the man engaging in 'masculine' household work (outdoor work, home and automobile repairs) and the woman engaging in 'feminine'; household work such as childcare, cooking and cleaning. After reading about the 'relational element of gender' of behaviour as discussed by McQuillan and Belle (2004: 236) as well as related research and insights, I argue that gender role socialization is only part of the puzzle.

Horsfield: 'Flappers' and 'Scrubbers':

Horsfield's two insights regarding the influence of female relatives and the gender differences involved with housework in a woman's childhood, led me to theorize that perhaps the gendered division of housework persists due to gender differences in childhood socialization. In my undergraduate research, I conducted interviews with couples to see if there was any inter-generational continuity regarding the knowledge and skills related to housework, as I argue that these factors might contribute to a gendered division of housework. The data collected through

my interviews showed that individuals who completed housework as children did housework as adults. Interestingly, I found that housework was divided on supposedly 'gender-neutral' grounds such as skill, standards or preference. However, why did one woman prefer to cook, why did one woman insist on doing the laundry, why did another woman choose to vacuum herself? Upon re-analysis of the data, I determined that two female participants described housework as needing to be done or implied that it needed to be done, but did not explain why. One woman stated that she needed to wipe the kitchen counters before work, even if it would make her late. Another couple suggested that the female spouse completed more of the housework because uncompleted housework bothered her more than it did her male partner; her higher standards for dirt and disorder compared to her husband compelled her to clean. These insights led me to ask whether there are some types of moral values that are associated with cleaning, which are related to gender differences in standards of cleanliness and feeling compelled to complete housework.⁶

I argue that the gender construction/social theories of behaviour theoretical perspective is a better approach to understanding and explaining the division of housework as it answers a concern raised by Shannon N. Davis. Davis (2010: 787) explains that many authors, like Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard, tackle the question of why the division of housework is gendered by attempting to explain why women tend to do more of the housework. Davis proposes that researchers should also ask why men are not doing the housework, or as much as their female partners. The gender construction/social theories of behaviour perspective, as well as my own insights and that of other authors is part of a larger answer to this question. Women

⁶ I will discuss the link between morality/values and housework in chapter three.

and men hold different values and standards related to housework, due to the differences in childhood socialization and continuous social pressures.

Various authors and research studies discuss information that supports my analysis. McQuillan and Belle (2004: 236) state that there may be a gender difference in the symbolic significance of housework. Horsfield (1997: 7) has stated that by doing housework women demonstrate their “moral, familial and domestic worth”. Myra Ferree (1991: 178) suggest that the fact that women may be more “psychologically invested” in maintaining high standards of cleanliness regarding housework is associated with men’s lower rates of participation in housework. Bianchi et al. (2000: 195) suggest that the cleanliness of the home is seen as a reflection of women’s competence as mothers and wives, but not of men’s competence as husbands and fathers. As a result, women may hold higher standards of cleanliness and are more invested in the “control and supervision” of housework. I interpret this to mean that when housework is done, be it promptly or left for later, and how, properly or according to their standards of cleanliness or improperly and the tasks need to be redone.

In fact, Horsfield has discussed two overlapping categories of cleaning styles/attitudes. She describes women (although these styles/attitudes could be applied to men) as being ‘flappers’, ‘scrubbers’, or some manifestation of the two. Horsfield re-appropriates the term flapping, which was originally utilized by Florence Nightingale to refer to an “inefficient method of dusting”, which spread dust around the room. She refers to any dusting which does not consist of wiping with a damp cloth. Essentially, the term refers to those who do not do housework tasks ‘properly’ (according to ‘scrubbers’). Horsfield also re-appropriates the term scrubbers, which refers to the excellent skills of workers who work for a cleaning company by the same name (1998: 249-250).

Horsfield describes flapping as a “lack of a philosophy” about cleaning. This type of cleaning is random and, done whenever the mood strikes. ‘Flappers’ “keep dirt barely under control”, they engage in cleaning “when time is short and priorities lie elsewhere” (Horsfield 1998: 247-248). ‘Scrubbers’, on the other hand, clean regularly and thoroughly. ‘Scrubbers’ believe that they can truly succeed, if just temporarily, in vanquishing dirt and disorder. ‘Flappers’ accept the fact that the “battle” against dirty can never really be won. As such, they do not feel they should put in much effort in trying to eliminate dirt and disorder. Another important difference between the two is scrubbers’ intolerance of dirt and disorder, “they find looking away from dirt is next to impossible”. Individuals can also have a mixture of cleaning styles and attitudes: ‘flappers’ may become ‘scrubbers’ temporarily, for instance, if their mother is visiting, and scrubbers may experience periods where they engage in flapping (Horsfield 1998: 250-252). I have discussed these concepts as I argue that the women who feel that housework must be done ‘properly’ and promptly, have low tolerances for dirt and disorder, and hold the associations of morality/values with cleanliness are ‘scrubbers’. Women who reject these associations and pressures imposed upon women, or feel that they can never meet them, are ‘flappers’. These may be the women who resolve the division of housework, and the demands of juggling, family and work by lowering their standards of cleanliness (Horsfield 1998: 227-228).

Mainardi: Reasons why men do not do housework:

Furthermore, several authors have discussed the fact that disagreements over the division of housework are ultimately related to standards of cleanliness, tolerance for dirt and disorder and when housework is completed. As previously discussed, Mainardi examines the various reasons why men would rather not do housework, and how they try to convince their female partners that they should be doing less housework than them. Firstly, men may state that they do

not mind sharing household work, but that they are not very skilled at completing housework. They believe each partner should complete the tasks in which they are skilled. Mainardi states that this implies that men are better at outdoor, maintenance, or other infrequent tasks and that women are better at doing housework. Secondly, men may state that they do not mind doing housework, but that their female partners will have to show them how to do it. Mainardi believes that such a scenario will result in the woman having to show her male partner how to do the task every time he does it, the woman will not be able to relax and feel that it will be easier to do the tasks herself (Mainardi 1980: 129).

Horsfield (1997: 224) states that many men were not taught to do housework as boys. She also argues that if men were taught household work in childhood, they were taught basic tasks such as washing the dishes or vacuuming. However, Horsfield questions whether boys were being taught other tasks, such as scrubbing the toilet or cleaning the refrigerator. In fact, she does not believe very many boys were taught to even notice when these items need to be cleaned. Being familiar with completing housework, and being comfortable with the idea of one completing housework come from what was explicitly taught to us regarding particular tasks and beliefs about men and women, but also what one witnessed or was modelled as a child.

Thirdly, men may say to their female partners that they have different standards of cleanliness, and that it is unfair that they have to meet theirs. Mainardi argues that men will notice mess, but realize that women will feel “guilt over a messy house” and will feel compelled to clean. Also, men know that if company comes over and the house is dirty or disorderly, the woman will be blamed not the man. Women do not want this to happen so they will complete the housework to avoid such an embarrassment. Men know they can “outwait women”, meaning that because of women’s lower tolerance for dirt and higher standards of cleanliness, men know that

if they go without completing housework, eventually their partners' will complete the housework.⁷

Mainardi also suggests that such a statement and the resulting scenarios can result in so much conflict that the women will find it easier to simply complete the housework herself to avoid/prevent conflict. Finally, Mainardi argues that men may say that they do not mind completing housework, but do not like doing it on their female partner's schedule. Mainardi believes that this results in passive resistance to completing housework. Men will do the tasks when they want to; which will be significantly less regularly than their partners. They will tell their female partners that if they do not like this that they should do the tasks themselves. This can result in men not doing the housework at all (Mainardi 1980: 130).

Finally, men may be reluctant to complete housework because they feel their efforts are not being appreciated. For example, if their female partners criticize their performance of housework or do not notice or thank them for completing the odd housework task. Women may find this desire to be thanked irksome, for they may not be thanked for doing the same tasks. Men may also become angry at women for 'nagging' them about their performance of housework or the timeliness of their tasks, which can also result in men insisting that if their female partners do not like how and when they complete housework, they can do the housework themselves.⁸

The Importance of Housework and Standards of Cleanliness:

Anne Rigt Poortman and Tanya Van Der Lippe (2009: 528) have conducted interviews

⁷ I will discuss judgement over housework in more detail in the chapter three.

⁸ I will discuss the concept of 'nagging' in chapter 5, in which I will analyze three books. I will discuss appreciation at a later point in this chapter, as well as in chapter 5.

that examined the attitudes of individuals in the Netherlands towards housework. Specifically, they asked couples about their enjoyment of doing housework tasks, the importance of housework tasks (standards- how well housework tasks need to be done) and the extent to which the participants felt responsible for doing housework tasks. Poortman and Van Der Lippe (2009: 538) found that the more positive women's attitudes and the more negative men's attitudes are, the greater share of the housework will be completed by women. The first piece of data supports the idea that the combination of women's positive attitudes (feeling responsible and higher standards) as well as men's negative attitudes (not feeling responsible, lower standards of cleanliness) results in women completing more of the housework. If couples have more similar attitudes (if both feel responsible, both hold high standards) then perhaps the division of housework would be more equitable. This also helps answer the question proposed by Davis (2010: 787) as to why men are not completing housework, or not completing as much housework as their female partners.

Additionally, Poortman and Van Der Lippe (2009: 538) found that women's higher standards or feelings of responsibility do not prevent men from doing housework and that men's attitudes do not seem to influence the housework the women perform. At first glance, the second findings may seem to contradict the theory I propose in this thesis. However, although women's higher standards do not prevent men from completing housework, I argue that they may prevent men from doing more of the housework. Secondly, although it appears that men's attitudes do not influence the housework the women perform, this may occur indirectly. Even if both partners have the same standards and both feel responsible, it does not necessarily mean that the man is actually completing the housework; in some cases men's high standards of cleanliness do not result in them completing housework, but instead is another pressure on the woman to keep a

clean and tidy home (Horsfield 1996: 225-226). Thirdly, if a man has a negative attitude towards housework, women may do the housework herself rather than engage in arguments – to prevent conflict. Therefore, it may seem that men's attitudes do not influence women's housework, for women complete more of the housework in cases whether their male partners have positive and negative attitudes towards housework.

Finally, Poortman and Van Der Lippe (2009: 538) did not find support for the theory that an individual's attitude influences the number of hours of housework their partner completes. They found that individuals tend to act upon their own attitudes rather than that of their partners. As a result, individuals' contributions to housework may match their attitudes. Thus, men with female partners who hold positive attitudes (high standards of cleanliness) do not complete housework because of those high standards. Presumably, men with high standards of cleanliness would complete more of the housework, but such men were not included in their study sample. I argue that women with high standards of cleanliness will act upon those standards and complete housework. If their male partners have lower standards than theirs they will complete the housework themselves to avoid confrontations and to ensure the housework is done properly and promptly. If their male partners have high standards of cleanliness then the housework may be shared equitably, or their male partners may impose high standards of cleanliness upon their female partners, as previously mentioned.

'Psychological Investment' in Housework and Prevention of Conflict:

I wish Poortman and Van Der Lippe had asked questions to participants about their individual division of housework (why it is gendered). Interestingly, men's standards of cleanliness were only slightly lower than women's. 93.8 percent of women agreed that the

standard of the cleanliness of the house had to be more than 6 out of 10 (10 being perfect), compared to 88.1 percent of men. Men and women have similar standards of housework, but the division of housework remains gendered. Also, I wish the sample had included couples with men who do more housework (in the sample women completed an average of 4.76 hours of cleaning per week compared to men's 1.51 average weekly time spent cleaning). I argue that the inclusion of such men in the sample would have changed the findings of this study.

Ferree (1991: 167 & 173) found in her research that 90 percent of men and women care somewhat or a lot that the house is clean, yet women do the greater amount of housework. She suggests that women may be more committed to enforcing and maintaining those standards; 66 percent of women said they maintain the same standards of cleanliness they would have if they were not employed. Thus, Poortman and Van Der Lippe (2009) findings that men and women had similar standards of cleanliness, yet the division of housework was still gendered may also be explained by the fact that it is the women who are doing the actual completion of housework tasks. Ferree (1991: 178) believes that women's "continued psychic investment" in maintaining high standards of cleanliness is associated with men completing less housework and women completing more. She suggests that "reducing the extent to which women care about such standards or see them as reflecting on them" may be in an important step to achieving a more equal/equitable division of housework.

I agree with the above statement, as I reject keeping very high standards of cleanliness (in which there is no flexibility in terms of the tidiness and cleanliness of the home, and in which all dirt and disorder is removed immediately, or prevented from even occurring) judging other people if their homes are not spotless, and cleaning for the sake of pleasing others/avoiding judgement from others. However, I also argue that perhaps men need to understand the pressures

(either external or self-imposed) women experience, and the socialization they have received. Women also need to understand that the values, standards and attitudes they have regarding housework are not common sense; they simply appear to be so for individuals who have been exposed to them throughout their lives. The goal of this thesis is to illuminate, analyze and discuss the influence of these standards, attitudes and values upon women and their divisions of housework.

Additionally, I argue that the findings of research by Brenda Beagan, Gwen E. Chapman, Andrea D'Sylvia and B. Raewyn Bassett in their 2008 article entitled '*It's Just Easier For Me To Do It': Rationalizing the Family Division of Foodwork*, which presents the data collected through interviews with families to examine the subject of food preparation tasks and the reasons/factors given as an explanation for how and who completes them. Teenagers believed that their mothers completed the majority of the food work and the cleanup afterwards because they had such high standards. If teenagers did complete food work or the cleanup afterwards, their mothers would complain that they were doing the tasks wrong, or that they were 'neat freaks'. The women also complained that their male partners did not clean up 'adequately'. Beagan et al. (2008: 662) state that teenagers (and in my opinion the men) seem to be either unable and/or unwilling to meet those standards.

The men and teenagers interviewed in this article described the women as 'control freaks' over the food work and its associated cleanup and describes the kitchen as their mother or partner's territory. Additionally, they discussed women's desire to control the timing of the after meal cleanup; they want it completed immediately while other family members wanted to complete the task 'in their own time'. Women did agree that their 'exacting standards' and 'desire for control' were some of the main reasons they completed the majority of the food work

and its associated cleaning tasks. However, according to a traditional gender ideology, women are judged on their food work abilities, specifically providing nutritious meals and maintaining a clean kitchen (Beagan et al. 2008: 663). The authors state that as most participants discussed women's high standards as an individual choice, and as the men and teenagers state that they cannot meet those standards, the latter inability is characterised as inherent.

I find this article very interesting; particularly, the fact that men and teenagers are viewed as being 'naturally' bad at food work and the clean-up afterwards. This implies that women are 'naturally' better at these tasks. This is a contradiction; the logic of 'choice' is applied to women but not to men and women, and the logic of 'nature' is applied to teenagers and men. Additionally, there is a contradiction between simultaneously seeing women as 'naturally' better at housework as is implied in teenagers and men's statements and these participants' statements that having high standards of cleanliness is a choice. I perceive this as a contradiction, for if the ability/inability or standards of cleanliness occur 'naturally' they would not be a choice, they would be a result of the ability/inability to clean. Having high standards of cleanliness is seen as a choice, but pressures women experience to complete food work and its associated clean up, 'properly'. It is true that these standards may be self-enforced and that women are pressuring themselves to meet them. These two scenarios obscure the fact that women have been socialized to know how to clean and when and have been continually exposed to the values/socialization to continue to do so. This thesis' aim is to demonstrate that the ability to clean and having standards of cleanliness are not 'natural', but yet do not feel that the term 'choice' is an accurate description of what is going on. More adequate terms would be socialization, compulsion, or pressure.

However, if it is a choice, then the choice is between doing the work oneself, and meeting those standards imposed by others or oneself, or engaging in conflict with family members to get the work completed, and completed properly and promptly, in case unexpected company drops by and negatively judges the woman on the state of the meal consumed and/or the state of the kitchen. Women have stated that they must argue or pester their children to complete the after-meal clean up. Additionally, if teenagers did complete food work, they would make a significantly more mess than their mothers, which essentially created more work for the latter. Thus, having teenagers complete food work and the after meal clean-up was frequently described by women as “more trouble than it was worth” (Beagan et al. 2008: 664-6).

Janeen Baxter (2000: 611) suggests that having an equal or equitable division of housework means coaxing, cajoling or even coercing men and children to complete more housework and can lead to unhappiness, greater stress and dissatisfaction. Hence, the desire for family harmony outweighs the desire for an equal division of housework (Beagan et al. 2008: 665). Trying to convince others to do more housework is work; emotion work consists of “activities to enhance others’ emotional well-being and provide emotional support, as well as people’s attempts to effectively manage the emotional climate within a relationship” (Erickson 2005: 338). Accordingly, according to Beagan et al. (2008: 665-666) for women it is not a choice of doing food work and the associated clean-up or not doing these tasks; it is about the choice about doing emotion work (to persuade family members to help) or to do the food work and associated tasks themselves. I argue that the same scenario and ‘choice’ applies to the struggles over the division of housework.

Furthermore, it is interesting that the women in this study see their decision to do the food work and the associated tasks themselves in order to ensure they are done properly and

promptly as an individual choice when there are “collective normative constraints” (Beagan et al. 2008: 662). The participants did not mention the “externally imposed standards” upon which women were being judged (serving healthy meals, having a clean kitchen), in some cases by other women. I argue that there are similar standards related to housework and individuals (particularly other women) do judge women on the cleanliness of their homes. As Mainardi has described, men and children are not judged on the cleanliness of the home; thus, they do not experience the pressures that women experience. They may not understand why it is important to complete housework tasks properly and promptly. I also argue that this is a major contributing factor to conflicts over the division of housework.

‘Manager-Helper’ Dynamic and Critique of Gender Construction Theory:

Scott Coltrane (1989: 480) describes couples’ divisions of housework as having a manager-helper dynamic. Women are like the managers as they notice when a housework task needs to be done, and ensure that it was completed by someone. Men are like helpers as they will wait to be told what tasks need to be done, when they need to be completed and how they should be completed. These men want to complete their ‘fair share’ of the housework but do not want the responsibility of planning and anticipating the tasks. The female participants in Coltrane’s study stated that what they admired most about their partners’ housework was their “self-responsibility”; completing housework tasks without being reminded. Similarly, he states that what women disliked most about their partner’s housework was the need to remind them or to teach them how to complete them. Coltrane (1989: 481) discusses how women had difficulty relinquishing control over management of the household. Participants stated that if they did, their partners would do the basic, daily cleaning tasks, and the women would do the thorough cleaning tasks or add the ‘finishing touches’.

Coltrane (1989: 482) also discovered that women were more likely to be embarrassed if unexpected company arrived and the house was a mess. Women were also reluctant to relinquish control of the home as doing so would mean accepting their partner's 'looser standards'. Yet, for the women who did relinquish this control, they found that their partners had similar standards of cleanliness. I argue that perhaps women are reluctant to relinquish control because women know they will be judged on the state of their homes, regardless of whether they have completed the tasks in question, as suggested by Mainardi (1980: 130).

Thus, I argue that the relationship proposed by the gender construction perspective is too simplistic. It should not be described as simply an 'a leads to b' scenario; it is too simplistic to say women's and men's gender socialization leads to women doing housework to fulfill their 'appropriate' roles as women, and men avoiding housework to fulfill their 'appropriate' roles as men. Rather, individuals' socialization regarding gender ideology (appropriate behaviour and roles), values/standards/responsibility about/for housework, and the way men and women deal with conflict (resolution/prevention or avoidance/passive resistance) interact with that of their partners' in a common-law or married relationship to produce a gendered division of housework.

Furthermore, this conceptualization demonstrates that gender ideology may not necessarily be manifested in an individual's behaviour. I argue that women's gender strategy (as discussed by Hochschild) may consist of wanting an equal/equitable division of housework but the differences between oneself and one's partner in terms of gender ideology, values/standards/responsibility about/for housework and response to conflict results in a gendered division of housework.

Perceptions of Fairness:

Whether a gendered division of housework is viewed negatively or positively depends upon whether or not the division is considered fair, or more specifically, equitable. This discussion will explore couples' perceptions of fairness over the division of housework despite the objective inequality on their divisions of housework. For example, Baxter (2000: 619) found that even though the division of housework was inequitable, only 39% of women reported that they were doing more than their fair share of housework, and only 28% of men reported that they were doing less than their fair share of housework. These results suggest that most women in the study believed that they were doing a fair share of housework, and that most men believe they are doing at fair share of the housework, despite the inequitable division of housework found in the research. For example, Baxter also (2000: 619) found that men who report that they are doing a faire share of housework are actually completing ten hours of housework a week, compared to the twenty-hours a week their wives do. Also, Frisco and Williams (2003:66) found that 96.6% of women who believe the division of housework is unfair report doing most or all of the housework. Conversely, 81.5% of men who believe the division of housework is unfair report doing half or less than half of the housework.

Frisco and Williams state that "the actual proportion of housework completed that underlies a respondent's definition of fairness is much smaller for men than for women". By this they mean that definition of equity regarding the division of housework "differs substantially by gender". They state that as housework is seen as a feminine activity, men complete much less housework than women, but still perceive any increase in the amount of housework they do as unfair. They believe that research needs to explore gender differences in "both the qualitative meaning and definition of housework equity". Specifically, they state that research needs to

explore whether gender differences in definitions of housework equity “are based primarily on the proportion of housework completed or if they largely reflect gender stereotypes about how much housework men and women are expected to take on” (Frisco and Williams 2003: 68). This idea is related to the concepts of ‘the economy of gratitude’ and ‘the politics of comparison’ which emphasize that perceptions of fairness are relative, they depend upon each partner’s perspective/gender ideology.

The ‘Economy of Gratitude’, the ‘Politics of Comparison’ and the ‘Going Rate’:

Hochschild (1989: 18) discusses the concept of ‘the economy of gratitude’. She explains that the dynamic between a man and woman’s gender ideologies creates “an interplay between his gratitude toward her, and hers toward him”. She explains that how a person wants to ‘identify themselves’ in the marriage, will influence what seems like a gift or not. Essentially, what one should expect, and what one should be thankful for due to its scarcity. For example, if a husband is not comfortable with his wife’s higher salary, his acceptance of ‘bearing it anyway’ becomes a gift. Alternatively, a woman’s higher salary would be considered a ‘gift’ to her husband and family.

Hochschild describes the phenomenon of the ‘politics of comparison’ by discussing the dynamic between Nancy and Evan. She says that this phenomenon is about comparing one’s partner to others, which is related to how ‘lucky’ a partner should feel about their partner’s contributions in paid or unpaid work. Hochschild states that this concept is based on a ‘going rate’ or the ‘market value’ of men’s behavior or attitudes. She explains “if a man was really ‘rare’, his wife intuitively felt grateful, or at least both of them felt she ought to” (Hochschild 1989: 51). Hochschild states that: “how far the whole culture...had gotten through the feminist

agenda [that men should share housework]...became the cultural foundation of the judgment about how rare and desirable a man was” (Hochschild 1989: 51).

She explains that Evan can use the tactic of the ‘going rate’ to his advantage. If he can convince Nancy that he does as much, or more housework as most men, than she should not expect him to do more housework, and that she should feel ‘lucky’ that he did as much housework as he did. Nancy disagreed, she felt that men did more housework but were embarrassed to admit it. Moreover, she felt that Evan’s share of housework “should be assessed, not by comparing it to the real inequalities in other people’s lives, but by comparing it to the ideal of sharing” (Hochschild 1989: 51).

Hochschild (1989: 52) also explain that the ‘going rate’ is also related to attitudes. She explains that the closer one meets the ideals of womanhood or manhood, the more credit individuals received. Also, the harder it was to live up to the ideals, the more pride-wallowing it took, and the more credit that was due. As previously discussed, Evan does not feel that completing housework is a masculine activity, although Nancy does. I would argue that due to their difference in ideals of manhood, it took more ‘pride-swallowing’ for Evan to partially conform to her ideal of manhood. According to Evan’s logic, Nancy should feel ‘lucky’ or, at least grateful, that Evan swallowed his pride, that he was willing to swallow his pride. However, as Nancy expected Evan to complete housework, she did not see him doing housework as a concession on his part. Hochschild (1989: 52) explains that essentially Nancy and Evan had different definitions of the ‘going rate’ of men’s participation in housework, in addition to different definitions of the ideal of ‘manhood’.

I would argue that according to the 'economy of gratitude', some men feel that their wives need to feel grateful that they are completing some housework- for both its rarity, based on the 'politics of comparison' and for their concessions for completing the 'feminine activity' of housework due to the resulting 'emasculatation'. I reject traditional gender ideology as well as narrow conceptions of gender and argue that women should expect an equal division of housework, they should feel entitled to it. Thus, I reject the conceptualization of men's contribution to housework as a 'gift'. Hochschild explains that struggles over division of housework are often "over the giving and receiving of gratitude" (1989: 18).

Research conducted by Lee and Waite is consistent with Hochschild's discussion. Lee and Waite (2010: 480) argue that women with traditional gender ideologies "expect fewer rewards" than women with egalitarian gender ideologies for the same amount of domestic tasks they are performing. They expect women with traditional gender ideologies to feel "higher levels of gratitude", regarding their husband's participation in domestic tasks, than women with egalitarian gender ideologies. Lee and Waite (2010: 487-488) explain "while some wives believe that family work should be shared, other wives take it for granted that they should do most of the domestic work, even if they are employed. These varying positions presumably produce different expectations and, as a result, lead to disparate assessments about any given level of reward".

'Distributive Justice' Framework:

Baxter explains that the "distributive justice framework" may explain the perplexing results of women finding it fair if they complete most of the domestic tasks. According to the framework created by Thompson (1991, as cited in Baxter 2000: 611) women's sense of fairness is based on three factors: outcome values, comparison referents and justifications. I will define each concept individually, then discuss the relevant research associated with each concept.

'Outcome Values': 'Relationship Outcomes', 'Task Outcomes' and 'Symbolic Value':

'Outcome values' refers to "what people want from a relationship", for example, if a wife wants her husband to complete more housework. However, Baxter explains that this is not the only outcome women value; they may want to keep the household peaceful and ensure that all family members are cared for. She explains that attaining a more equitable division of housework may be a less important outcome than maintaining household harmony, "especially if an equal distribution is dependent upon coaxing, cajoling or otherwise coercing men into doing tasks that they are unwilling to do" (Baxter 2000: 611). Thompson (1991, as cited in Baxter 2000: 611), states that if 'relationship outcomes' are more valued than 'task outcomes' (getting the housework completed), women are likely to overlook an unequal division of housework, if their husbands "respond to their needs in other ways". This author discusses the 'symbolic value' of men's contributions to housework, for example appreciation and responsiveness (knowing that men would help if their wives really needed them to) (Thompson 1991, as cited in Baxter 2000: 612).

This 'symbolic value' may be discussed by Lee and Waite (2010: 478). They state that women are more willing and happy to complete completing domestic tasks for their families as a "reciprocal expression of affection" if they receive affection and gratitude from their husbands, in the form of "compliments to her domestic experts" and offers of help with domestic tasks. The 'symbolic value' of men's contributions also refers to men completing traditional 'women's work', such as housework. Baxter (2000: 612) explains that research suggests that for some women it may not be the amount of domestic work that men complete that influences women's perceptions of fairness, but the type of domestic work they complete. She argues that women's perceptions of fairness are based more on their partner's domestic contributions, rather than on

their own contributions, or the amount of time men spend doing this work. Similarly, men's perceptions of fairness are based on their wives domestic contributions, rather than on their own.

I argue that for some women, women may feel that they are completing too much housework if they feel that their husbands are not completing enough housework; they seem to evaluate the equality of the division of housework based on the percentage of housework they are not doing; they need to feel that they are not doing all of the housework. These beliefs are based on an egalitarian gender ideology. In fact, research suggests that women may value their husbands' participation, not because it relieves them from doing housework, but because of the 'symbolic value' of their husband's perceived concern with the equality of the division of housework, by performing housework (Blair and Johnson 1992, as cited in Baxter 2000: 626).⁹ Conversely, I argue that some men's perception's of the fairness of the division of housework is based on the amount of housework their wives are performing; the amount of housework that they are not doing or do not have to do. These beliefs are based on a traditional gender ideology. Baxter's interprets that both men and women's sense of fairness increases when men complete "non-conventional housework", which is defined as the traditionally female cleaning tasks. These tasks are believed to be non-conventional for men to complete.

I understand her analysis, but I reject the logic behind these men and women's beliefs. I argue that by men and women thinking that a division of domestic tasks in which a husband is completing 'traditional female tasks' is fair, regardless of the amount of housework performed by men, this implies that men completing this type of domestic work is unusual, 'gender deviant', and thereby needs to be acknowledged not just as a simple contribution. By this I mean

⁹ I say 'perceived concern', as I will discuss the various reasons men are motivated to complete housework in chapter 5.

that perhaps men and women's sense of fairness are based on their contributions to 'traditional female tasks' as they believe that men should not be completing such tasks. In fact, Baxter (2000: 627) states that this suggests "that men and women tend to take women's contributions in the home for granted". I would argue that this is another example of the concept of 'compensatory gender display', but this example refers to attitudes. If women believe that men should not have to complete much housework, that it is 'emasculating', and they change their perceptions that the division of housework is fair, despite their husband's smaller contributions. It may be that men completing housework is valued as it is 'symbolically' seen as a man suffering an affront on his 'manhood' or masculinity. This parallels the 'gift' scenario discussed by Hochschild.

'Comparison Referents': 'Between-Gender' and 'Same-Gender' Comparisons:

'Comparison referents' refers to "the standards that people use to judge outcomes" (Baxter 2000: 612). Social comparison theory is based on the assumption that "individuals seek a sense of normalcy and accuracy about their world and that individuals affiliate more with others when they desire others' views about their own thoughts and behaviors...conditions of high anxiety and uncertainty motivate affiliative behavior and social comparisons (Sarnoff and Zimbardo 1961, as cited in Himself and Goldberg 2003: 844-845). Also, social psychologists have said that "social comparison processes are rather flexible and that individuals choose with whom to compare to self-regulate emotions and maintain positive well-being" (Taylor, Wayment and Carrillo 1996, as cited in Himself and Goldberg 2003: 845).

Social psychologists state that uncertainty in a relationship is associated with social comparisons. Research found that individuals with egalitarian gender ideologies feel more uncertain about "how their relationship is going" and that this uncertainty was soothed through

social comparisons with same-sex others (VanYperen and Buunk 1991, as cited in Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 845). Similarly, research found that individuals high in marital dissatisfaction and were uncertain about their marriages “experienced negative affect” from both upward and downward comparisons, which are “comparisons with those who are doing better and with those in worse shape” were associated with ‘negative affect’ (Buunk, Collins, Taylor, VanYperen and Dakof 1990, as cited in Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 845).

Thompson (as discussed in Baxter) explains that most research on the division of housework assumes that “one’s partner is the main point of comparison”; that women judge the fairness of their ‘domestic workload’ by comparing theirs to that of their husbands’. However, women tend to “compare themselves to another benchmark”, for example, they compare their ‘domestic workload’ to that of their mothers or friends. By doing so “women may decide that their own circumstances are not too unfair” (Thompson 1991, as cited in Baxter 2000: 612). This concept is based on research which suggests that women are less likely to feel that their wage rates are unfair if they compare themselves to other women, as opposed to comparing themselves to men (Crosby 1982, as cited in Baxter 2000: 612). Thus, it is argued that women compare their ‘domestic workload’ to that of their friends, rather than of their husbands’, as this comparison leads women to feel that “their own situation is comparatively fairer”.

Himsel and Goldberg state that social comparisons are a significant contributor to wives’ sense of fairness over their division of housework (2003: 846). They state that some men compare themselves to a “manufactured ‘don-noting average dad’ to establish their own level of high involvement” (Gager, 1998, as cited in in Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 846). Research also suggests that when women compare their husbands to other men they know, they feel better about their own division of housework, but when women compare their housework contributions

to that of their husbands; they are likely to feel that their division of housework is unfair (Thompson 1991, in Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 846).

It was found that between-gender comparisons were “directly negatively associated with perceptions of fairness” and that, indirectly, it was found that wives who made between-gender comparisons had a more equitable division of housework (Hawkins, Marshall and Meiners 1995, as cited in Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 847). The former relationship means that comparing oneself to members of the other gender was not associated with perceptions of fairness. I interpret this to mean, for example, that women who make between – gender comparisons with themselves and their husband perceive the division of housework to be unfair. The former statement may suggest that when wives realize the inequality in their divisions of housework, by doing between-gender comparisons, they may try and change that dynamic, to make it more equitable.

‘Generalized Other’:

Himsel and Goldberg (2003: 848) found in their interview research that most men compared themselves to the ‘generalized other’ or the ‘average dad’. For example, one participant stated: “ ‘I think I’m significantly more involved in housework and whatnot than most fathers are. It’s no scientific study, but I’ve always gotten the impression that most guys when given their choice, crank up the TV, pop the top on a beer and veg for the evening’ ”. However, Himsel and Goldberg (2003: 857) did find that almost one third of the men interviewed made between-gender comparisons (between themselves and their wives) in terms of participation in housework.

In terms of general findings, Himsel and Goldberg (2003: 860) found that women report “higher levels of satisfaction” if they perceived their husbands were doing more housework than the husbands’ of their friends, compared to women who perceived that their husbands were doing less housework than the husbands’ of their friends. Similarly, women who believed they did less housework than their friends had “higher levels of satisfaction” than women who believed they did more housework than their friends.

Himsel and Goldberg argue that although some men acknowledge that their wives complete more housework than themselves, they did not aspire to be as involved as their wives. They state that men are engaging in the process of ‘social downgrading’ by comparing themselves to men their own age, or comparing themselves to their fathers (Heckhausen and Brim 1997, as cited in Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 862-863). They state that the men whom they interviewed “described an image of the generalized other whose meager contributions to family work enhanced their own relative involvement”.

According to Heckhausen and Brim (1997, 610, as cited Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 863) making downward social comparisons “serves to maximize and protect motivational and emotional resources of the individual”. Most individuals want to view their situation as positive as possible, thus they “choose to attend to information from the social world that casts their own situation in the most favorable light” (Taylor and Brown 1999, as cited in Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 863). The researchers concluded that individuals do make social comparisons, but they “pick and choose the social referents that help affirm the normalcy and accuracy of their own situation” (Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 860). Essentially, individuals make comparisons which make themselves or their situation seem normal, or favorable. Also, they state that this research supports literature which suggests that the evaluations that women provide regarding their

divisions of housework “are more complex than a simple input/output tabulation between husband and wife” (Robinson and Spitze 1992; Sanchez and Kane 1996, Thompson 1991, as cited in Himsel and Goldberg 2003: 860).

‘Justifications’: Gender Ideology, Longer Work Hours and the Influence of Leisure:

‘Justifications’ refers to “the perceived appropriateness of current arrangements”. For example, gender ideology may justify an unequal division of housework. Baxter explains that women with traditional gender ideologies “will be less troubled by unequal divisions and more inclined to accept a lower level of domestic involvement from their husbands” and that men with traditional gender ideologies may be more likely to perceive unequal divisions of housework as fair (Baxter 2000: 613). Lennon and Rosenfield (1994: 509) state that research suggests that “individuals compare their actual rewards to those they think they deserve”. As such, women with traditional or even transitional gender ideologies may not feel entitled to help with housework from their husbands, or even to ask for such help.

Another justification for an unequal division of housework is the total workload of partners. By considering partner’s paid work and unpaid work responsibilities, men’s lower participation in housework may be justified (Lennon and Rosenfield 1994; DeMaris and Longmore 1996, as cited in Baxter 2000: 613). For example, if a husband works full-time and his wife works part-time. Baxter explains that if one partner works longer hours than the other, this may reduce the amount of housework responsibilities this partner in question is expected to complete.

As previously discussed, the ‘u-shaped’ pattern regarding men and women and income and the concept of ‘compensatory gender display’, I argue that some men may continue to do

less housework even if they work less than their wives, perhaps due to unemployment or loss of job hours, as they may feel emasculated by their wives' 'breadwinner' status, and their wives might complete more of the housework to relieve this 'gender deviance'. Also, I argue that even in a situation where both partners are employed, but the wife works more, this does not necessarily mean that the men will step up and complete more of the housework; I would argue that if they feel that housework is a woman's responsibility, they would find this situation 'unfair'.

Also, I argue that the belief that a partner who works longer hours should not have to do complete as much housework is related to income and leisure. Presumably, working longer hours than one's partner is associated with a higher salary. This higher salary may be used to justify this partner having more time for leisure and spending less time completing housework. As previously discussed, this attitude is based on the assumption that just because one spouse is not paid as much as the other, their work is less valuable. This attitude results in perceiving this partner's time as less valuable, which is why they should complete more housework and why they are not 'entitled' to as much leisure as their partner. This attitude does not value unpaid work, and ignores the fact that this will result in only women doing a 'second shift'.

Nordenmark and Nyman (2003: 190-191) found that couples who divide leisure time equally see as their division of housework as more fair and believes it feels "more gender equal", compared to couples in which the woman has less leisure time than the man. Nordenmark and Nyman (2003: 194) argue that there is a clear relationship between perceptions of fairness of housework and perceptions of the fairness of leisure time. Specifically, "an important aspect of evaluations of fairness regarding the division of housework is how this division affects access to leisure, relative to one's own partner" (Nordenmark and Nyman 2003: 195). I would argue that

just as it is important for women with egalitarian ideologies to feel that they are not doing more housework than their husbands/that their husbands are doing just as much housework as them, I believe these women feel that it is important for these women that their husbands do not have more leisure than them; that they have the same amount of leisure as their husbands. Having an egalitarian gender ideology can result in one being hyper-sensitive to differences in time spent in leisure and completing housework.

Finally, it has been suggested that having fewer economic resources and less power in the home leads to the lowering of expectations and standards for fairness. According to this perspective, individuals who have less power and are more dependent accept “objectively unfair situations” (Baxter 2000: 613). Similarly, research suggests that “individuals can be objectively deprived without feeling dissatisfied because, in comparing their rewards with those of persons perceived to be similar, they do not feel entitled to more” (Lennon and Rosenfield (1994: 509). This perspective is based on the idea that women with fewer economic resources (or none) will accept an unequal division of housework as they are aware that there will be ‘high costs’ (they will struggle financially) if they leave such relationships. This perspective also suggests that women with more resources will have higher expectations for their marriages and access to more alternatives. These women will be more likely to find an equitable division of housework as unfair, compared to women with fewer resources (Baxter 2000: 613).

Lennon and Rosenfield explain that women with few alternatives “need to maintain a sense of cognitive consistency between what they think and what they are doing” (Festinger 1957, as cited in Lennon and Rosenfield 1994: 527). Research suggests that “it is easier to change one’s ideas or ideology about an arrangement than to change the structure of the arrangement itself” (Gerson 1985, as cited in Lennon and Rosenfield 1994: 527). This idea is

consistent with Hochschild's concept of the 'family myth' that a couple has an equal division of housework.

As previously discussed, I reject the argument in the relative-resource theoretical perspective that money is the basis of power in a relationship. This argument implies that only when a woman is working, or makes as much money as her husband, does she have the power to legitimately ask her husband to complete more housework. This perspective implies that asking for an equal division of housework is illegitimate on its own, unless it is justified by power/money.

Nordenmark and Nyman (2003: 206) state that their interview content demonstrated that "the context and circumstances of a couple's life were also taken into account when evaluating fairness regarding the division of housework". I agree with this statement differences in work hours and salary need to be taken into account – a couple may not have a fair division of housework, but it can be equitable. Yet, I reject the attitude that money gives one power in a relationship in that it implies that this person's time is more valuable, and that it implies that they can dictate the dynamics of the relationship (in terms of the division of housework). From my perspective, it is how a partner uses their larger salary/longer work hours that determines whether the division of housework is fair or unfair.

Thus, perceptions of fairness related to the division of housework are related to gender ideology, income/work hours and leisure and are based on 'the politics of comparison' and 'the economy of gratitude'. This discussion is an important part of the gendered division of housework as it can shape whether it is justified or rejected as unequal.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this chapter explored the various theoretical perspectives and concepts related to perceptions of fairness regarding the division of housework to explore why the division of housework continues to be gendered, and also why this inequality is tolerated. Nonetheless, in order to understand the continuance of the gendered division of housework, the origins of the allocation of housework as a woman's responsibility, as well as how and why this assignment has continued need to be explored. Chapter three and four will engage in such an exploration.

CHAPTER 3: HISTORICAL EXPLORATION (PART ONE)

Chapter 2 contained a discussion of the gender differences in the values associated with the concept of housework. Specifically, that women tend to be more “psychologically invested” in housework, have higher standards of cleanliness, and have lower thresholds for dirt and disorder, compared to men. I argue that these women may have a ‘scrubber’ mentality regarding housework; they feel the compulsion to clean or tidy dirty or disorderly spaces. Yet, the origins of these compulsions must be examined in order to better understand the values and attitudes women have towards housework. This chapter and the following chapter are linked; chapter three is mostly a description of the history of these values. It will also discuss the circumstances and influences that shaped the values and attitudes related to housework many women have. Chapter four will also engage in this discussion; however, it will also include a discussion of how these factors have influenced women’s beliefs and attitudes, as well as a discussion of how these beliefs and attitudes influence women’s cleaning. Thus, within these two chapters I will explore the origins of the good/bad dichotomy between cleanliness/tidiness and dirtiness/disorderliness. This will include an examination of the moral links behind both states. I will also examine the origins of the forces that compel women to complete housework, as well as to be “psychologically invested” in housework. Furthermore, the aim of these two chapters is to contextualize the values and attitudes; to explore how and why these values were developed, as well as how and why women have developed and expressed these values.

In the first section of chapter three I will begin my examination of the origins of these factors by exploring the influence of the industrial revolution on North American society, the family and women. This will include a description of family life in the ‘Old Order’ before the onset of industrialization and also of a discussion of the changes to the family that influenced

women and the roles they held within society during the industrial revolution. I will also discuss the ideological and practical reasons for why women were encouraged to remain within the home and engage in domesticity. Secondly, I will examine how the choices and possibilities given to women, as a result of the industrial revolution, led to the development of 'the Woman Question'.¹⁰ Thirdly, I will discuss the influence of various experts (doctors, home economists and the expertise contained in advertisements for cleaning products) on the development of domesticity as part of the primary role for women in society. Their influence will illustrate the development of the good/bad dichotomy that emerged with respects to cleanliness/dirtiness, of the moral links associated with dirt and cleanliness, as well as the psychological investment in cleanliness that women developed.

The 'Old Order' and Industrialization:

In order to better understand the influence of the industrialization on women and their role in society, an illustration of the lives of pre-industrial women is required. This will permit a comparison of the two family patterns. According to Ehenreich and English¹¹ (1979: 9-10) this period, known as the 'Old Order', is characterized as being unitary, patriarchal and gynocentric. During the 'Old Order' there was no distinction between the 'private' and 'public' spheres of society, as the market or external economy did not determine family survival; family survival depended upon the hard work of its members as a whole. All labor was completed to provide the basic necessities required for survival. This labor included growing one's food, cooking, making necessary items such as clothing and candles, as well as a multitude of other important tasks. As such, the family functioned as the center of work and emotional intimacy; there was a sense of

¹⁰ I will define and discuss this concept on pages-74-75 in this chapter.

¹¹ Ehenreich and English's book, which provides much of the history in this chapter, describes concepts and phenomenon that are implied to have occurred in the Western world (North America and Europe), but her inclusion of the history of American medicine implies that the book is describing American History.

simplicity to life as all immediate needs were fulfilled by the family. This sense of simplicity of life was also created by the patriarchal authority of male family members. The father was given authority over other family members; fathers made all the decisions regarding family members' work as well as more individual matters such as marriages. This meant that for individuals, life was predictable. For women, doubly so, for their work as well as family dynamics would be determined by their fathers, and later, their husbands. Yet the 'Old Order' was gynocentric. In other words, "the skills and work of women were indispensable to family survival" (Ehenreich and English 1978: 10).

However, two of the characteristics of the 'Old Order'; the gynocentrism and unity of the family, were transformed by the industrial revolution. Beginning in the early nineteenth century, industrialization and a market economy began to replace the unitary 'Old Order'. Gradually wage labor replaced agriculture, and families were drawn from their rural homes into the towns to sell their agricultural goods as opposed to solely using them for themselves.¹² Furthermore, with the development of industrial machinery, goods could be produced on a massive scale and were sold at prices which rivalled the costs of producing them at home. As it became cheaper to purchase goods instead of making them, families were forced to earn wages as opposed to engaging in home production (Cook and Mitchinson 1976: 82; Dictionary of Sociology 2006: 187). As a result, working-class families and middle-class men worked in factories (or engaged in some type of wage labor) in order to survive (Ehenreich and English 1978: 9-10 & 157).

An interesting development that occurred during the industrial revolution was that middle-class women did not join their husbands in similar labor, as they had done so in the 'Old

¹² The process of families moving to towns and cities, urbanization, will be discussed in more detail on page 93 in this chapter.

Order'. Many middle-class married women instead stayed within the home and cared for their homes and children. This change occurred as a result of the conceptualization of separate spheres. The first was the public sphere which consisted of the workplace, industry and the market and the second was the private sphere which referred to the family home, the middle-class ideal of the 'idle wife'. This involved the rest and rejuvenation of woman's care, and duties within the home such as nurturing, caring for children and their husbands.

As previously discussed, during the 'Old Order', all work and family life occurred at home. During that time, commerce or any exchanges within the market were seen to be based on greed. As such, exchanging goods within the market was believed to be contrary to the religious principle of altruism. As industrialization and commerce developed, the greed associated with the market intensified. The market is described as indifferently devoid of moral values, beliefs or human costs for the sake of the 'bottom line': profits (Ehenreich and English 1978: 13-14).

Veneration and the 'Cult of True Womanhood':

The veneration of the home occurred for several reasons. Firstly, civilization was characterized in as "the product of decent home life". It was believed that home, and one's attachment to it, symbolized societal stability. During the early to mid-nineteenth century, in North America, the vast internal migration and separation of subsistence from the home left many with the feeling that "there was nothing solid on which to base the modern home" (Ehenreich and English 1978: 160-161). Secondly, the middle class, according to Ehenreich and English (1978: 164) expressed great commitment to the goal of "saving the home"; they believed the veneration of the home would benefit both the worker and the employer.

Thirdly, according to Adrian Forty (1986: 100) men who worked in factories and employers, managers and entrepreneurs venerated the home, albeit for different reasons. As the market, and thus the workplace, was characterised as being so harsh, all emotional or human qualities were assigned to individual's private lives, more specifically to home. The home was seen as the place that "inverted the values of the market", as it contained love, nurturance and affection which was absent from the market. Hence, for the men who returned home after engaging in wage labor and/or participated in the market, the home held sentimental value for its warmth,¹³ in contrast to the coldness of the workplace and the market (Ehenreich and English 1978: 13-14).

For men who worked in the oppressive conditions of factories, associating the home with positive qualities allowed them to regain some of the self-respect they lost at work. Henri Lefebvre (1991: 39) argues workers felt that the framework of capitalism (bourgeoisie vs. proletariat) was "alien and oppressive" and felt that: "Not only do the technical division and the social division of labor overlap and impose themselves on him without his knowing why, but also he knows that he is not working for himself, either directly or indirectly". I interpret this quote to mean that the technical division of labor (workers vs. managers, employers, owners) and the social division of labor (more power, status and control over labor is given to the owner or employer) overlap.¹⁴ Workers may have difficulty understanding (or I argue, accepting or justifying) this association and they realize that based on the framework of capitalism (whoever owns the means of production-factories, machinery, benefits from the labor of others) workers will never be able to work for themselves and benefit from their labor. While at home, although a

¹³ Women provided warmth in the home, as discussed in the concept the 'Cult of True Womanhood, and by physicians and other experts. The former will be discussed on page 69, and the latter on page 86.

¹⁴ The social division of labor, or the relations of production refers to "the relationship between the owners and non-owners of the means of production [factories]". The relations of production are also described as "antagonistic, as the worker or non-owner has his product [labor] taken from him (Dictionary of Sociology 2006: 325-326).

man may not own the means of production and he must engage in wage labor, he can be the head of his home. As a result of the family wage, he can have an 'idle wife' and he can benefit vicariously through her leisure.¹⁵ The home was seen as a 'good container' for male 'aspirations' (Ehrenreich and English 1978: 164). Men were able to express the moral virtues and emotions at home they felt were suppressed while they were at work and participated in the market. Essentially, an illusion of the home as the antithesis of the market and workplace was created (Forty 1986: 101).

Another notion that developed during this time was 'The Cult of True Womanhood'. This concept was presented to women in the nineteenth century in women's magazines and religious literature. The notion centred around four qualities that women were to strive to possess: sexual purity, piety, submissiveness and domesticity. It was impressed upon women that they would find happiness by demonstrating these qualities. The last three two qualities, piety, submissiveness and domesticity are of particular relevance to this project. Religion or piety was considered the source of woman's virtue. It was believed that religion was "a gift from God and nature". Dr. Charles Meigs argued that women were naturally more religious as "hers is a pious mind. Her confiding nature leads her more readily than men to accept the proffered grace of the Gospel" (Welter 1966: 153). I argue that in some cases, religion can be thought of as a synonymous with morality or moral virtues, for religion can and does instil morality in its followers.¹⁶ Based on this, women were thought to be more moral, or have higher moral values than men; they were considered to be the "bearers of moral norms and socializer of men" (Armstrong 1987: 129). This association resulted in women being assigned "the task of the moral

¹⁵ The concepts of an 'idle wife' and vicarious leisure will be discussed in more detail on pages 73 and 74 in chapter.

¹⁶ Personally I argue that morality and religion are separate; someone can have morality and ethics without being religious, without any reference to religion. However, I do acknowledge that some individuals make this association which is why I feel the use of piety in the 'Cult Of True Womanhood' may also be conceptualized as morality.

guardian of the male soul”, specifically in relation to material greed and sexuality (Hunt 1999: 83). For example, women encouraged their husbands to be virtuous, and warned them against sin (Cook and Mitchinson 1976: 30).

Domesticity was seen as the most important virtue for women to possess. This meant that they were to perform certain tasks such as ensuring that their homes were cheerful places, in order to discourage their husbands from spending their time elsewhere (Welter 1966: 163). The quality of submissiveness was centered on the idea that women were weak, needing of protection, and dependent upon men. It was suggested that women were separate from men, but equal. Women were not viewed as inferior to men, simply different. These differences were seen to be based in nature, assigned by God (Welter 1966: 158-159).¹⁷ According to Alan Hunt (1999: 82) the construction of gender differences in the ‘nature’ of men and women was related to class. As working class women engaged in wage labor, the concept of ‘The Cult of True Womanhood’ did not reflect their reality, but was looked upon as the ideal, or “the measure of respectability” (Cook and Mitchinson 1976: 6).¹⁸

Likewise, there is also a conceptualization of how men should behave, or are seen to ‘naturally’ be. The Victorian ideal characteristics of manhood were re-labelled the characteristics of ‘male sex role identity’ by Joseph Pleck in *Gender: Psychology Perspectives* (2008) written by Linda Brannen. He describes four tenets: ‘No Sissy Stuff’, ‘The Big Wheel’, ‘The Sturdy Oak’ and ‘Give’ Em Hell’. The first tenet, ‘No Sissy Stuff’ refers to “a stigma attached to feminine characteristics”. I interpret this tenet to mean that men are viewed by definition to

¹⁷ The belief that women needed protection, that this was due to women’s ‘nature’, will be linked to doctor’s beliefs about the nature of women’s bodies, to be discussed on page 87 of this chapter.

¹⁸ It will become clear, through a discussion of the veneration of the family wage, and the ‘idle wife’ that “The Cult of True Womanhood’ was applied to middle-class women who remained home.

behave and be different than women. The second tenet 'The Big Wheel' refers to men's needs for success and status.

Thirdly, 'The Sturdy Oak', states that men should be tough, confident and self-reliant. Finally, the 'Give 'Em Hell' tenet states that men should have "an aura of aggression, daring and violence". (Brannon 2008: 50-51). Pleck states that the 'Male Sex Role Identity', "as the dominant conceptualization of masculinity in our society and as a source of problems, both for society, and for individual men" (Pleck 1981, 1995, as cited in Brannon 2008: 51). I argue that the second tenet may be the basis of the idea that men's identity is based on their paid work, and that the fourth tenet 'naturalizes' and thus justifies men's violent and aggressive behavior. Additionally, the second and third tenets, as they refer to status and self-reliance may contribute to conflict over the division of housework, which will be discussed in chapter six.

The 'Family Wage' and the 'Idle Wife':

It is important to expand on the tenet of submissiveness of 'The Cult of True Womanhood' as it illustrated the attitudes and beliefs about men and women. It was believed by many that women were unsuitable to work, and should remain at home: "The best refuge for such a delicate creature [woman] was the warmth and safety of her home" (Welter 1966: 162). Based on these ideas regarding the ideal type of women, women who worked were criticized, even more so if their wage labor differed greatly from that associated with domesticity (Holloway 2005: 17). Dr. D. C. MacCallum, at the 1898 opening of the Training School for Nurses in Montreal, stated that: "certain pursuits were totally unsuitable for woman because of her sex, the power and influence of her emotional nature, and the delicacy of her physical organization Other pursuits...however, still remained that would not be repugnant to her sense of womanly dignity and propriety" (cited in Mitchinson 1991: 40). I argue that paid work which

consisted of work women would do in the home, such as seaming stockings or caring or serving others was seen as appropriate for women, while intellectual work or work of great physical labor or requiring great strength would be deemed inappropriate.¹⁹

Thus, these beliefs were utilized to “limit and exclude women from participating in certain occupations”. For example, factory work was not seen as appropriate work for women (Holloway 2005: 17). It was believed that working in factories would negatively effect, if not destroy “that fineness of feeling and gentleness of behavior” deemed part of the ‘natural’ characteristics of women (Cook and Mitchinson 1976: 17). Moreover, even work that was seen as appropriate for women, such as seaming stockings in factories, taking in sewing or lodgers at home, was viewed negatively; for any paid work was seen as taking time and effort away from their “domestic occupation”, even “neglecting their family” (Cook and Mitchinson 1976: 151; Lewis 1986: 104; Roberts 1986: 233 & Vicinus 1973: xiii).

Women were particularly discouraged from working in ‘masculine’ occupations based on the influence their presence had on men’s wages. For example, in textile towns in the United Kingdom, men were paid lower wages deliberately because it was understood that their wives worked alongside them. As a result, it was argued that men competed against women for higher wages; for even if a man’s own wife did not engage in paid labor he was paid as if she was (Roberts 1986: 237). Hence, both the husband and wife needed to work in order to earn what the husband would have earned if women remained at home (Lewis 1986: 104). Additionally, women were paid less than men as it was assumed that the women who worked were single; they were working to support themselves as a prelude to getting married and engaging in domesticity

¹⁹ The belief that women were less intelligent than men, and that women’s bodies were weaker than those of men, as described by physicians, will be discussed on pages 86-88 in this chapter.

(Vicinus 1973: xiv). Women were discouraged from working based on the following beliefs: “for every man that is thrust out of employment by female competition, there will be a marriage the less, or a reduction of the means of support for some married woman and her children” (Goldwin Smith, as cited in Cook and Mitchinson 1978: 40). I interpret this statement as a tactic used to make working women feel guilty about working, that their desire to work was selfish and negatively influencing others around them.

Many of the women who worked were unmarried and worked because they had no other means of supporting themselves, the assumption that all women who worked were only supporting themselves, and thus could be paid less than a man, who presumably was supporting a family was a logical conclusion, based on the demographics of the women who engaged in wage labor. This assumption however, overlooked the fact that many women also had to work because they had to, such as women from the working class (Roberts 1989: 229). It was during this time that the concept of the family wage was introduced: if a man could support his family solely on his income, it was believed that women would no longer need to engage in paid labor. Yet, in many cases, this was the ideal, not the reality (Lewis 1986: 103-104).

Related to this idea was the middle-class ideal of the ‘idle wife’²⁰ at home, or a wife who engaged in leisure. Thorstein Veblen (1967: 41) described the ability to abstain from labor is seen as evidence of one’s wealth. Middle-class men were not able to abstain from labor themselves do so; however, they could achieve this indirectly by ensuring that their wives abstained from work and were able to have the time for leisure activities. The ‘idleness’ of married women was seen as a reflection of the wealth and success of their husbands.

²⁰ I wish to clarify that I am not arguing that these women were ‘idle’, even if they managed their servants. I am using the term to demonstrate how these women were perceived and understood.

Additionally, having servants, particularly a number of servants with specialized tasks to complete, was a demonstration of one's wealth (Veblen 1967: 57). Leisure was defined as "non-productive consumption of time". Work was considered non-productive if it was not considered worthy (useful). The ability to engage in leisure was seen as evidence of the ability to afford a life of idleness (Veblen 1967: 43). Veblen clarified that middle-class women and the servants completed tasks related to "the physical efficiency and comfort" of the husband and the rest of the household, which can be classified as productive work. Examples of such work were needlework, embroidery of upholstery, hangings, covers and pictures, and decorating and furnishing their homes (Forty 1986: 105). However, if the 'comfort' created or aimed for was more ceremonial than tangible, the tasks are not considered strictly necessary, and thus not productive work, but leisure. Men who were able to support those who engage in leisure were said to experience vicarious leisure (Veblen 1967: 58-59). Thus, it became seen as a symbol of male respectability for working-class men to keep a wife at home (Lewis 1986: 103). Therefore, men lived vicariously through their wives and personally benefitted from their leisure and 'idleness' (Forty 1986: 104-105). Yet, the middle-class ideal of the 'idle wife' remained an ideal for many working-class families as many unskilled working-class men also never experienced the reality of a 'family wage', as this too, was an ideal (Roberts 1986: 225-226 & 229).

The 'Domestic Void' and the 'Woman Question':

As a result of the separation of home and work, the concept of the separate spheres, the tenets of domesticity and submissiveness of the 'Cult of True Womanhood', as well as the middle class ideal of the 'idle wife', many women were encouraged, even pressured into remaining at home and engage in domesticity in order to be 'true women'. However, as previously mentioned, many of the tasks women had completed during the 'Old Order' were no

longer done at home; it was more economical to purchase many items than to produce them at home. There were fewer tasks to do in the home, a concept labelled as the 'Domestic Void' (Ehenreich and English 1978: 158). The 'Domestic Void', was one of the key factors which resulted in 'the Woman Question'.

It was important to describe all of these concepts (separate spheres and the 'Cult of True Womanhood') in order to introduce the concept of 'the Woman Question'. According to Ehenreich and English (1978: 15-16) 'the Woman Question' arose due to the changes in society and the family as the 'Old Order' was eliminated and the period of industrialization emerged. As previously discussed, during the 'Old Order', women's lives were predictable; they would engage in labor in and around the home as daughters, and later as wives. Women had to contribute to their families and needed to marry because there was no way for a woman to survive financially without her household. However, the onset of industrialization brought with it the possibility for women to survive independently by engaging in paid labor. As previously mentioned, if a woman worked she would be chastised, but working also meant "independence from the grip of the family" (Ehenreich and English 1978: 16). The other aspect of 'the Woman Question' was the consequence of women having less tasks to complete at home, as many items previously made at home were now purchased. This was both positive and distressing for women for "Industrial capitalism freed women from the endless round of household productive labor, and in one and the same gesture tore away the skills which had been the source of women's unique destiny" (Ehenreich and English 1978: 17). Feminist writer and lecturer Charlotte Perkins-Gilman "questioned whether there could be any dignity in a domestic life which no longer centered on women's domestic skills, but on mere biological existence", as their life mainly consisted of provided sexual relations and children to their husbands. First-wave

feminists believed that this type of arrangement, between employed husbands and unemployed (and increasingly idle) wives was similar to prostitution (Ehenreich and English 1978: 16-17). Additionally, women who remained at home were characterized being the victims of domestic slavery (Mill, as cited in Millett 1973: 131).

I argue that the conceptualization of such marriages as similar to prostitution was linked to the ideas about women's sexuality. Cominos (1972: 156) argues that that men had sexual feelings that were "conscious and intense", while in women it was believed that women either experienced the conflict between sexual feelings and "the highest part of human nature, referred to either as the soul or duty of reason" unconsciously for 'innocent' women, or consciously for 'tainted' women. Essentially, this refers to the Madonna/Whore conceptualization of women's sexuality. Cominos (1972: 160) states that: "They [women] desired affection, not sensuality; the best mothers and wives knew little or nothing of sexual indulgence". Additionally, Dr. William Acton states that: "Love of home, children, and domestic duties are the only passions she felt. As a general rule, a modest woman seldom desires any sexual gratification for herself. She submits to her husband, but only to please him, and, but for the desire of maternity, would far rather be relieved from his attention" (Acton 1862: 102-103).

Furthermore, Goldwin Smith in *An Argument Against Women's Rights, 1872* (as cited in Cook and Mitchinson 1976: 37) argued that: "The main factors of the relation between the sexes have been sexual affection, the man's need of a helpmate and the woman's need of maintenance and protection". I interpret the last part of this statement to mean that men and women marry because men need someone to take care of the home and children, and women (and children) need to be supported economically and protected. The statement implies, however, that sexual

affection is mutually desired and enjoyed. According to previous discussion, it is believed that sex occurs for women to have children and men to have sexual release.

Thus, I argue that this information provides the basis for the assertion by feminists that the relationship between husbands and wives was similar to prostitution. As a prostitute is a woman who has sexual relations with men in exchange for money; these women are having sex in order to receive something they want (or need – as prostitution is their means of employment). In both cases, women are having sex with men to get something they want; wives want children. I argue that the harsh label of prostitution on marriages is used to illustrate that like the relationship between a man and a prostitute, the relationship between a husband and a wife is also based on exchange; it is characterized as a emotionless, business transaction.

B.G. Jefferis, in his book *Searchlights on Health: Light on the Dark Corners*, stated that: “as women are more or less dependent upon man’s good-will, either for gain or pleasure, it surely stands to their interest to be reasonably pleasant and courteous in his presence or society” (as cited in Mitchinson 1991: 33 & 37). I interpret this to mean that because women were dependent on men, it was crucial for women to be kind, even submissive to men. Also, viewing the relationship between men and women as one of dependence for the women, further demonstrates that there was an unequal exchange in such relationships. This conceptualization may have contributed to first-wave feminists viewing domesticity, and this type of relationship, negatively.

In fact, Ehenreich and English (1978: 95) suggest that first-wave feminists, like Charlotte Perkins-Gilman, “saw a link between female invalidism and the economic situation of women in the upper-classes”. Specifically, they believed that only upper-class women, who did not need to

work to support their families, but could embody domesticity, suffered from the physical and psychological problems previously discussed of the 'Woman Problem'. These feminists noted that poor women did not suffer from the 'Woman Problem'. Middle-class women, who increasingly were becoming more educated, were acutely aware of 'the Woman Question' – the question of what they could do and wanted to do, during the period of industrialisation – as they seem to have felt the 'Domestic Void' greater than their working-class and lower-class counterparts. They were not satisfied with filling their time with the tasks their mothers had done as hobbies, such as needlework and felt "that something was missing from the home" (Ehrenreich and English 1978: 4-6 & 158).

Charlotte Perkins-Gilman and other feminists felt that part of the 'Woman Problem' for women in the middle and upper classes was that marriage "had become sexuo-economic relation in which women performed sexual and reproductive duties for financial support" (Ehrenreich and English 1978: 95). In fact, according to Olive Schreiner, another first-wave feminist, this type of relationship consisted of "female parasitism"; Ehrenreich and English suggest Schreiner's statement is based on the idea that women having their husband's children "gave her a claim to any share of his income" (Ehrenreich and English 1978: 116). As such, it could also be said that first-wave feminists viewed domesticity as a situation in which women were treated as baby-making machines. They may have also realized that women needed to have children in order to survive.

Essentially, women had far fewer tasks in the home to complete and to occupy their time. Thus, 'the Woman Question' consisted of asking how women would survive, what would they do and what would they be like, in this new period of industrialisation (Ehrenreich and English 1978: 17 & 158). As a result, many middle-class women attempted to answer 'the Woman

Question' in one of two ways: the feminist solution or domesticity. Firstly, there was the 'feminist solution' which consisted of allowing women to enter society on equal footing with men. It was believed that as machines in factories reduced, if not eliminated the muscular differences between men and women, the market would allow for both genders to work within it (Ehenreich 1978: 23-26). According to Ehenreich and English (1978: 1-2) many women who were active outside the home experienced the 'Woman Problem' – the listlessness, the depression: Charlotte Perkins-Gilman (feminist writer and lecturer) Jane Addams (famous social reformer who wanted to study medicine), Margaret Sanger (birth control crusader) and Ellen Richards (founder of the domestic science movement or home economics who studied chemistry).

Ehenreich and English (1978: 26) describe the second solution, domesticity, emerged out of the fear that the events and attitudes discussed in the 'feminist solution' would come true. Those who preferred domesticity for women saw women as different, as not part of the sphere where men existed; they felt that 'the Woman Question' should be resolved by preserving the framework of the home (Ehenreich and English 1978: 160). I argue that those who supported the domesticity solution believed in biological reductionism, "the belief that social behavior can be reduced to, or largely explained by, biological states" (*Dictionary of Sociology* 1986: 31). This means that individuals believed that there were essential, natural differences between men and women which determined who they were (in terms of characteristic – strengths or weaknesses) as well as which roles they took (man – wage earner, woman – homemaker). I argue that they believed that such a conceptualisation of men and women, as well as the different roles assigned to them, were natural. According to John Stuart Mill (as cited in Milette 1973: 126) "justifying social and temperamental [characteristics that men and women are deemed 'naturally' to have]

differences by biological ones is a threadbare tactic". The differences described here between men and women are socially constructed, or 'artificially cultivated' and are used to characterize the differences in status between men and women as inevitable (Mill, as cited in Millett 1973: 126-127).²¹

First-wave feminists, as well as the women who wanted to work and become educated, disagreed and rebelled against such conceptualizations and assignments, while those who believed in the domesticity solution, and/or were frightened of the changes brought about by the 'feminist solution', were comforted by domesticity (Ehenreich and English 1978: 26). However, more and more women began going to college, joining clubs and organizations and entering the workforce because they were "following their work out of the home". It was explained that women needed to "follow their occupations or starve, emotionally if not literally" (Lasch 1977: 9). Women choose the 'feminist solution' because they wanted to avoid remaining at home and half-heartedly and reluctantly engaging in domesticity. Thus, many women remained at home and engaged in the domesticity solution, but may not have actively 'chosen' this option but surrendered to it as the lesser of two evils. Many of the women who worked did so because they had to, they were either from the working-class and had to work to supplement their husband's income, or they were unmarried or widowed and without any financial support from a man. Ehenreich and English (1978: 406) describe several women who were miserable, sick, depressed, and had little energy or interest. This sadness stemmed from their indecisiveness regarding which option they would choose; it is this state which inspired the labelling of the concept 'the Woman Question'.

²¹ The influence of the 'nature' of men and women, in relation to their biology, will be discussed on pages 84-85 in this chapter.

An important point to remember about ‘the Woman’s Question’, is that middle-class men were greatly concerned with this issue. Men were extremely worried about what women would do and who they would become; men viewed the ‘feminist solution’ to ‘the Woman Question’ unfavourably. They also felt threatened by the changes in women and society germinated by the events proposed.²² Likewise, men felt comforted by having women remain within the home and engaging in domesticity, as they wished to maintain the status quo. In fact, the home and domesticity was characterized as a “safe focus for women’s energies”, as opposed to the ‘feminist’ option of ‘the Woman Question’ (Ehenreich and English 1978: 164).

As stated by Ehenreich and English, domesticity became the dominant solution to ‘the Woman Question’ until the development of second-wave feminism in the 1960s due to the influence of various experts; doctors, home economists and the expertise characterized in various advertisements for cleaning products (1978: 23-24). Domesticity became the dominant solution to ‘the Woman Question’, as it now was supported by more than ‘economic realism’ (men wanting a family wage and an ‘idle wife’) or ‘political idealism’ (the belief in ‘the Cult of True Womanhood’ and in biological determinism). Science, as utilized by experts’, legitimized the belief that women should remain in the home and engage in domesticity (Ehenreich and English 1978: 31-32).

Science, scientific experts, and doctors:

Science, and by association, scientific experts were assigned legitimacy as a result of the relationship between science and religion, and the association of science and morality.

Originally, science was characterized in opposition to religion. It was believed that one became ill or diseased as a result of one’s ‘moral failings’, through the power of God. However, through

²² Specific examples of men stating that women needed to stay home, will be part of the discussion of the authority of scientific experts and doctors, which will take place at a later point in this chapter.

the use of microscopes, illness and disease were understood as natural events that occurred based on the growth rate of the particular species of microbes (Ehenreich and English 1978: 81). This new understanding was labelled as germ theory.²³

Yet, science underwent a moral transformation. The laws of nature and life which science was discovering could be understood as God's actions, specifically as part of the "Divine Plan". As a result, germ Theory also became linked with morality. According to Ehenreich and English (1978: 81-82) although germs and not sin was seen as the "immediate cause" of illness and disease, then sin became its "ultimate cause". Ultimately, germ theory became associated with the feeling of individual guilt; one deserved to become sick if one did not follow the "laws of hygiene". Furthermore, it was presumed that anyone who became sick had broken these laws.²⁴

As science became associated with morality, scientific experts also came to be seen in this light. They were seen as objective, selfless, as serving the interests of no particular group as they had no individual interests or agendas. In fact, General Francis A. Walker, the president of MIT, announced in 1893 that compared to other occupations, scientists had more "sincerity, simplicity, fidelity, and generosity of character, in nobility of aims and earnestness of effort" (Ehenreich and English 1978: 78-79 & 83-85). Furthermore, because science was associated with morality, scientists saw themselves as moral reformers; they felt it was their mission to bring objectivity to 'the Woman Question' (Ehenreich and English 1978: 127). Moreover, science was viewed as modern and progressive as it had challenged and helped to dismantle the "patriarchal authorities of the 'Old Order' " (Ehenreich and English 1978: 33). However, it is impossible for someone to be completely objective; one's values or interests will shape one's work, whether in

²³ This concept will be discussed in further detail on page 96 in this chapter.

²⁴ The environmental factors associated with illness (nutrition, living conditions) were not yet part of germ theory (Ehenreich and English 1978: 90).

the questions one asks, how one completes the work, or how one interprets the results. That being said, objectivity in science should be looked upon as the goal, the ideal for which experts should strive. Thus, the associations of objectivity, morality and modernity with science and experts can result in it being very difficult to question the statements, suggestions of experts, as doing so challenges the objectivity of experts.

Medical use of 'nature' to justify women's domestic roles:

In fact, Wendy Mitchinson in *The Nature of Our Bodies: Women and Their Doctors in Victorian Canada* (1991: 9) argues that women and science intersected on a social and cultural level, “for medical perceptions of the physiological nature of women reinforced and directed non-medical perceptions of women – that is, medicine gave them a scientific national”. I argue that the legitimacy of science, and by association medical experts, was utilized to make women engaging in domesticity, or rather not engaging in paid labor, and having children ‘natural’, inevitable, as the only possible choice for women. Mitchinson (1991: 30) also argues that as doctors’ legitimacy rested on the newly accepted legitimacy of science, they “tread[ed] warily so as not to lose what they had so recently gained”. Hence, doctors were not going to challenge the status quo beliefs about women; they “accepted the social division between the sexes and believed that physical differences accounted for it” (Mitchinson 1991: 30). Mitchinson (1991: 356) illustrates “how physicians working within a relatively closed ideological system were often unable to consider reasons other than those that fit the system to explain what they saw before them...Physicians did not...divorce themselves from the society in which they live and work”. In fact, Mitchinson (1991: 12) states that: “practitioners appealed to nature to bolster the conventional wisdom of the day regarding women, using it as a way to hold back change”. Physicians used nature as an “authoritative reference” because they knew it would be accepted

(Mitchinson 1991: 356). Thus, the attitudes and suggestions of doctors were not objective, but shaped by the patriarchal culture in which they lived.

Physicians used the notion of 'nature' to emphasize that women should not engage in wage labor, but remain at home to engage in domesticity and care for children, was based on several assumptions about women's bodies, particularly in comparison to the bodies of men. Mitchinson (1991: 31) explains that some physicians believed that women's sexual organs, "rather than part of the whole, were virtually the whole". M.L. Holbrook in his 1890 book *Parturition Without Pain* stated that: "Woman exists for the sake of the womb." Mitchinson believes that these physicians believed that women's reproductive organs "influenced her whole being" and these organs not only "dominated and controlled her, it [these organs] determined her function or purpose in life" (Mitchinson 1991: 31-32). Mitchinson also states that Eugene Backlard, in his text *Physiological Mysteries and Revelations in Love, Courting and Marriage* saw women as "baby-making machines whose reproductive organs dominated their lives" (1991: 33). This author stated that: "The uterus...may be said to govern the woman, for it has a place in all her thoughts, but especially in those which are occupied with love; hence it may be said that the reproduction of her species, is, in her, the most important object of life" (Mitchinson 1991: 33). This attitude led to the viewing women who did not want to have children or could not have children negatively. One woman writing for *Canadian Magazine* stated that: "Women who [had] no love for children [were] women to beware of, those who were not mothers have lived only a part of their women's lives" (Mitchinson 1991: 33). Mitchinson (1991: 33) states that Theodore Thomas, in *A Practical Treatise on the Diseases of Women* believed that "any inability to have [children] was a reproach to their womanhood". She explains that women who did not desire children were seen as "defective and maimed" (Mitchinson 1991: 34).

The belief that women's reproductive organs dominated and controlled her was based on the use of the male body as the norm, as an example of a healthy body. Mitchinson (1991: 12) argues that because most physicians were men, "they used the male body and how it functioned as the norm by which to judge whether women were healthy or not". I argue that she is implying that there was the understanding that because of the presence of women's reproductive organs deviated from the 'normal' human body, it was believed that they would have a negative, more powerful effect on the body, that they would have some kind of great effect on the body, as described above with the influence of the uterus.

Mitchinson declares that: "women, because of their bodies, were considered closer to nature than men and less able to escape its thrall" (1991: 31). Women were considered closer to nature than men because "women were closer to children in nature than men were". According to Alexander Skene, an American expert on diseases in women in the Victorian era, the humerus (the bone in the upper arm) in women "was not as well defined as in men and them observed...that the humerus was better defined in the 'higher races' " (as cited in Mitchinson 1991: 37).²⁵ Skene also stated that: "women are less intellectual than men, less original in thought, less capable of continuity, and hence they have been called more childlike in their mental characteristics, and in this respect resemble rather the primitive races" (cited in Mitchinson 1991: 37).²⁶ Viewing women as childlike may also have contributed to their being seen as submissive, or why they should be submissive to their husbands, as outlined in the 'Cult of True Womanhood'. Children are expected to submit to the will of their parents, and be submissive for parents have more knowledge and experience than them. Perhaps this logic was

²⁵ I want to emphasize that this rationale is ethnocentric and racist; this attitude is assuming that 'higher races' are Caucasians.

²⁶ Again, the concept of 'primitive races' is making the same assumptions as discussed in the previous footnote.

applied to the relationship between men and women: men were viewed as more intelligent than women, and certainly had more experiences (outside the home) than women, if women engaged in domesticity.

Mitchinson explains that Canadians believed in “the centrality of biological sex differences as a factor in personality development and in determining an individual’s social role” (1991: 12). I understand this statement to mean that during this time, biology (one’s sex) determined one’s roles (domesticity or paid labor). This attitude is a clear example of biological reductionism. She also states that male gender expectations were also considered the norm. This may not seem related, but I argue that Mitchinson is implying that gender expectations were related to biology. She explains that as “women could not conform to the physiological norm of being male and, because of this, gender expectations for women were different as well” (1991: 12). Hence, assignment of women to different social roles (domesticity as opposed to paid labor) than men was ‘justified’ or caused, in the eyes of these men, by their different biology.

Moreover, according to Mitchinson, it was believed that “the body not only reflected social roles, it somehow understood what these roles were and developed accordingly” (1991: 32). She cites R. Pierce in *People’s Common Sense Medical Advisor* (1882) who explained that “Solidity and strength are represented by the organization of the male, grace and beauty by that of the female. His broad shoulders represent physical power and the right of dominion, while her bosom is the symbol of love and nutrition” (1991: 32). Skene stated that: “woman’s gentle, timid, affectionate expression tells the story of her mental character, disposition, and functions in life” (as cited in Mitchinson 1991: 39). According to Mitchinson (1991: 39) “man’s stronger body determined his role as protector and breadwinner. Woman’s softer physique reflected her role as child-bearer and child-rearer”. To me, this implies, that the strength and power of men’s

bodies were seen as indicative of their ability to do physical work, paid labor, while women's bodies were designed for nurturing (child-rearing).

Women were also considered unsuitable for paid labor because they were seen as less intelligent than men. William Carpenter, in his 1869 text, *Human Physiology* said that: "For there can be no doubt that...the intellectual powers of Woman are inferior to those of man. Although her perceptive faculties are more acute, her capability of sustained mental exertion is much less; and though her views are often peculiarly distinguished by clearness and decision, they are generally deficient in that comprehensiveness which is necessary for their stability" (cited in Mitchinson 1991: 36). Also Dr. Richard Maurice Burke, superintendent of the London, Ontario Asylum for the Insane in London, Ontario, asked why there were no "great women artists or religious leader". He stated that: "although the essential factor in a religious founder is faith and in a supreme artist love, yet a high grade of intellect must go along with the high moral nature if anything great in either of these lines is to be achieved...Lacking, therefore, one essential factor of greatness cannot be great...in the same way that the greatest men are great" (cited in Mitchinson 1991: 36). However, according to Mitchinson (1991: 37) "if women could not be as great as men, Bucke comforted them by noting they could be as morally good, if not better". Mitchinson (1991: 39) explains that: "it would be wrong to assume that female attributes were imposed on women as part of a deliberate conspiracy to subjugate them. Women subscribed to the idealization of themselves as morally superior to men". She states that women applied this idealization to their participation in reform causes and organizations.

City cleansing as an 'appropriate' activity for women:

One of the causes was city cleansing. City cleansing involved the processes of lobbying for changes that would make cities cleaner, such as proper water drainage, removal of garbage

and sewer system (Hoy 1995: 65, 68). Frances Willard, a leader of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) within the U.S., an organization against the use of alcohol, linked the concept of 'home protection' with women's demand for the vote. She used the concept of 'home protection', "to encourage women to get involved in activities outside the home to protect the home...the notion of home protection went a long way toward convincing middle-class women that they were still good mothers and devoted wives despite their participation in public affairs" (Hoy 1995: 73). According to Hoy, women involved in the WCTU saw municipal housekeeping, or city cleansing, as another aspect of 'home protection'. Thus, I argue that Willard framed women's involvement in the WCTU and in city cleansing, as reflecting women's greater morality, as women attempting to expand their 'natural' characteristics and the characteristics of the home into society. In fact, George Waring Jr., a sanitary engineer who designed and supervised the construction of sewers in Memphis, Tennessee in the early 1880s, stated that city cleansing "required the sort of systematized attention to detail that developed more naturally out of the habit of good housekeeping than out of any occupation to which man is accustomed" (as cited in Hoy 1995: 63 & 73). What Waring Jr. was saying is that it was women who would be able to adequately engage in the work required for city cleansing; they knew how to keep their homes clean and the importance of cleanliness not just for their families' health but for the comfort and warmth it created in the home. Hoy states that Willard inspired women to "make the whole world home like" and that women believed that "as the nation's homemakers, [they] could improve the deplorable housekeeping practices of their cities and towns" (1995: 73).

City cleansing consisted of insisting that streets be cleaned more thoroughly (removal of manure, garbage). They argued that the filth in the streets resulted in "too much of women's time

and energy was spent in removing from floors and walls, furniture, utensils and clothing, the dirt and the soil that invaded the household at every hour and threatened their families' survival" (Hoy 1995: 74). Thus, there would be less work for women to do inside the home and presumably less disease-ridden filth outside the home as a result of city cleansing.

'Nature' and the 'functionalism' of women's domestic roles:

The biological reductionism, or the belief that men and women's bodies determined their roles, was linked to the belief that as biology was 'natural', God-given, men and women's social roles were also 'natural' and God-given. Mitchinson (1991: 39) explained that for Victorian women and men, "form was a reflection or preordained function and, from that perspective, determined their function...Nature was God's design and, consequently, so too were these respective social roles".

Mitchinson (1991: 30) cites a quote by self-help manual author William Buchan who stated that: "Women, in all civilized nations, have the management of domestic affairs, and it is very proper they should, as nature has made them less fit for the more active and laborious employments". She explains that "nature was reflection to Victorians of God's design" and led experts to investigate, as states by Carl Berger "adaption in nature, with the ways in which organisms had been exquisitely fitted by the skillful contriver [God] for the places they occupied" (Mitchinson 1991: 30-31).

This quote explicitly explains that nature is good because it was created by God; nature was functional and 'fitted'. This implies that any deviations from nature would go against God, may even be considered sinful or sacrilegious. They also would be negative and ultimately fail because they would no longer 'fit', or be functional. Applying this logic to women and

domesticity and the 'naturalness' of this arrangement, it becomes clear that this ideology provided the basis of the belief that if women deviated from domesticity by working, they would be going against nature and thus would not find a place where they 'fit'. In fact, Victorian men and women believed that "gender role change suggested the decline of civilization as they knew it" (Mitchinson 1991: 39). Another example, in a lecture by Reverend Robert Sedgewick in 1856 titled "Woman's Sphere" he states that:

It would never do...to draw the conclusion that woman behaves and is bound to exert her powers in the same direction and for the same ends as man. This were to usurp the place of man---this were to forget her position as the complement of man, and assume a place she is incompetent to fill, or rather was not designed to fill. This were to leap out of her sphere and attempt to move in another, in which, to move rightly, the whole moral relations of society would behave to be changed, and suited anew to each other, but which, because they are unchangeable, every attempt is fraught with damage, it may be with ruin, and woman becomes a wandering star, which, having left its due place, and violated its prescribed relations, dashes itself into shivers against some other planet, whose path it crossed in the eccentricity of its movements, and goes out in the blackness of darkness for ever (as cited in Cook and Mitchinson 1976: 9).

I interpret this statement to suggest that the only place for woman is the home, and if women leave the home, society will be negatively affected. In fact, Sedgewick states that: "it is only at home and in its co-relative situations that man finds woman to be his complement. In no other situation she can fill, in no other sphere in which she can move, will she so answer the end of her being...but at home" (as cited in Cook and Mitchinson 1976: 20).

Millett (1972: 125) states that: "It was precisely to avoid the danger of sexual equality within this or any other class, that he and his fellows invented the doctrine of the separate spheres and proclaimed it 'nature' ". Also, John Stuart Mill (as cited in Millett 1972: 127) stated that: "the unnatural generally means only uncustomary, and that everything which is usual appears natural. The subjection of women to men bring a universal custom, any departure from it quite naturally appears unnatural". Essentially, this statement suggests that the use of the term

'natural', or the use of 'nature', to refer to the difference between men and women, was utilized to mean that such arrangements were customary, normal. In fact, the terms 'natural' imply that something is biologically inevitable. Thus, the statements in this essay that women were 'naturally' morally superior, 'naturally' nurturing, imply that due to women's 'nature' or biology, they needed to have children.

Scientific experts attempted to describe the 'nature' of women, specifically how biology limited her role to the home and domesticity. They believed that social hierarchies were explained through natural law. In other words, they used nature or biology to justify women's inferior status to men. Specifically, they used Darwin's Theory of Evolution. They applied the belief that men were different (in different stages of evolution) in terms of race to women.²⁷ Darwin's theory suggested that there would be a shift "toward greater biological variation and differentiation among the species". Scientific experts applied this idea to society; they interpreted the differences between men and women in terms of specialization and differentiation.

They believed that biological variation and differentiation in humans occurred as a result of individual cleverness and daring, as they had not yet fully comprehended the influence of hereditary. Scientific experts believed that the ability to influence variation (cleverness and daring) was a male trait. They believed that it was men who tested themselves in new environments, who were the innovators of variation in the species, while women merely passed on the traits they themselves had. Based on these assumptions, it was believed that only men could fulfill a variety of functions (occupations) in the public sphere, while women remained the same; their function was to reproduce (to remain at home). Furthermore, it was believed that men

²⁷ I want to emphasize that this attitude is racist and ethnocentric; believing that individuals of other races or cultures are not just different, but inferior, undeveloped and uncivilized.

would increasingly become more differentiated (engage in occupations which become increasingly more specialized) but women would increasingly become less differentiated (women would increasingly focus on their biological role of reproduction and domesticity) (Ehenreich and English 1978: 130-131). Thus, with the use of Darwin, scientific experts not only legitimated women's role at home with domesticity, but characterized it as inevitable through the belief that biology was destiny.

During this period, women looked at science and its experts through rose-coloured glasses; they felt that experts were committed to progress, freedom and modernity, and that to ignore an expert's suggestions was to "live in the Dark Ages". Hence, if a woman rejected an expert's legitimacy of domesticity, such as suggesting a cleaning product or 'labor-saving' device, they appeared foolish, or even backward. In fact, according to Ehenreich and English (1978: 33 & 83-84) the following of science, in relation to domesticity, became almost a neo-religion, as this ideology characterized scientists or experts as prophets. For example, in addition to stating what was true, which would demonstrate objectivity, scientific experts began "to pronounce what was appropriate".

I argue that experts can and should make suggestions to others, based on the facts or their expertise. However, experts' suggestions which are not based on facts or expertise, but on ideology, personal biases or agendas are not based on objectivity. These suggestions seem similar to a religious leader giving a sermon; a sermon is based on the religious leader's beliefs and attitudes. I have discussed how scientific experts and physicians legitimized domesticity using their linkage of women with nature. After I have discussed the shift from miasma theory to germ theory, I will discuss the moral messages associated with domesticity contained in experts' declarations that women should engage in domesticity.

Miasma theory:

I argue that the legitimacy and morality associated with science, also influenced germ theory, more specifically, how germs and their removal, were characterized. However, an understanding of the extent and basis of the fear of germs requires an illustration of the living conditions of wage laborers at that time as well how the spread of disease and infection was conceptualized prior to the acceptance of germ theory.

Horsfield (1998: 78) states that industrialization and the migration of workers to cities led to increased dirt and overcrowding. These cities consisted of “poorly organised sanitation and water supplies, wretched drains, streets filled with garbage and manure and scavenging animals and waste of all sorts”. Furthermore, Suellen Hoy in *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness* (1995: 60) argues that: “the sheer crowding into compact spaces of people...multiplied the threat of contagions of all kinds”. Without the amenities that we have today (i.e.: running water, electricity and sewage systems) those who tried to keep their homes clean were fighting a losing battle. Edwin Chadwick, a British sanitary reformer (who advocated for the public works we have today) told the story of a woman who did her best to fight “against the tide of filth: a stream of abomination...was flowing close to a house, at the door of which stood a woman with ruddy cheeks, neatly clothes... ‘Five times this day, I have swept this place, but you see the state it is in again’. Her whole appearance indicated she was a newcomer, in a few days she would give up her hopeless attempt to keep the place clean, if she remain there she must necessarily sink into the state of squalor and filth so general among her neighbours” (as cited in Horsfield 1998: 79-80). Given the filth that was present due to the lack of amenities “pious preaching about keeping...one’s home clean was farcical” (Horsfield 1998: 78).

The Ladies' Health Protective Association described the need for city cleansing in New York City in "domestic and esthetic terms" and referred to the "culture of cleanliness that they assumed civilized people shared". When speaking to the mayor regarding the importance of proper street-cleaning, these women stated "even if dirt were not the unsanitary and dangerous thing we know that it is, its unsightliness and repulsiveness are so great, that no other reason than the superior beauty of cleanliness should compel New Yorkers to do what was necessary to achieve a level of comfort and self-respect" (Hoy 1995: 75).

This statement refers to the association of cleanliness with beauty, which I believe was part of the reason the home was characterized as warm and inviting. Furthermore, Hoy's statement that 'civilized people' share this belief and attitude, and that having a clean city was a matter of self-respect implies two things. Primarily, that 'civilized people' refers to the middle and upper classes who can keep their homes relatively clean and beautiful as they were more likely to have the amenities such as proper drainage, water closets (early bathrooms). Neuhaus states that before 1840, only the extremely wealthy had indoor bathing and waste facilities equipped with plumbed water". As the century progressed, the number of patents for water closets increased. However, it was not until after World War I that many poor and working-class Americans could afford their own bathroom (Neuhaus 2011: 70).

This implies that those that did not have hold such standards of cleanliness, which I argue was because they lacked these amenities, were 'uncivilized'. The notion that cleanliness was needed as a matter of 'self-respect' implies that those did not have clean homes (through no fault of their own; they lacked the amenities) lacked self-respect. This suggests that these individuals did not have the positive characteristics which were linked with cleanliness, that one is

conscientious, hard-working, and not lazy (physically and morally).²⁸ For example, Hoy (1995: 101) discusses how Josephine Shaw Lowell, director of the New York Charity Organization Society, believed that immigrants were “personally responsible for the impoverished conditions in which they lived. Their poverty and squalor had roots in their character people whom she described as ‘idlers’ ” (Hoy 1995 101). Lowell did describe the unpleasant circumstances of slum life, however, Hoy believes “she always seemed to be searching for the moral flaws that underlay such conditions” (Hoy 1995: 101). I argue that this attitude towards immigrants may also have been extended to all low-income individuals; it was believed the conditions of their homes the result of their character, or lack thereof, rather than the structural problems they faced (lack of amenities).

However, there were others who realized that the cleanliness of the poor’s homes was out of their control. Regarding homes that were not ‘well-kept’, the Senate’s Immigration Commission blamed “circumstances over which the inhabitants had little direct control, such as poor water supply or unsanitary drainage” (as cited in Hoy 1995: 98). Similarly, Jane Addams, a woman who was dedicated to serving poor immigrants, believed that immigrants were poor “not because of individual weakness but rather because of the harsh environments in which they lived and worked” (Hoy 1995: 102).

I want to emphasize that it was the lack of amenities, although low-income women may also have struggled with lack of time to ‘properly’ clean their homes, according to the standards needed to fight off disease by scientific experts, and those who needed to run a smooth home, as

²⁸ I will discuss the associations we make to cleanliness and to those who clean ‘properly’ and those who are seen as failing to do so in the following chapter.

described by home economists.²⁹ According to Hoy (1995: 68) cities constructed sewer systems to deal with the increasing amount of waste – the introduction of public water systems added the amount of wastewater from bathtubs and flush toilets. Without city-wide sewage systems and drainage, used water and human waste would not be efficiently removed-the streets would remain filthy.

Prior to germ theory the prevention of disease by medical authorities followed the principles of miasma theory. Miasma theory was based on the idea that disease and infection were spread through ‘bad air’. For example, it was believed that not only did the smell of animal and vegetable garbage carry disease, the items themselves were diseased (Horsfield 1998: 81). According to Hoy (1995: 61-62) during the late nineteenth century most Americans believed that filth or bad smells (‘miasmas’) were to blame for epidemics such as cholera, yellow fever and typhoid as well as typhus, scarlet fever and diphtheria. Individuals were terrified of these diseases. With cholera, for example, they were unsure of its causes but knew the symptoms appeared quickly and that they could die from this disease within hours or days. Thus, it was believed that proper ventilation and odour-free drains were required in order to reduce, if not eliminate disease and infection. However, as previous discussed, germ theory established that disease and infection were the result of the growth of germs (Ehenreich and English 1978: 81).

Moral associations with cleanliness and dirt:

One can see how the shift from miasma theory to germ theory would have significantly changed individual’s conceptualization of disease and illness and how they were spread. If disease and infection were the result of bad air, coming from any sort of waste or garbage, than

²⁹ The standards of cleanliness, as well as how homes should be run, will be part of the discussion of ‘scientific management’, which occurs on pages 101-102 in this chapter.

the removal of such waste and the removal of the 'bad air' would have, during the time of miasma theory, removed the threat of infection of disease. However, this theory was challenged by germ theory. According to Horsfield (1998: 91-92) germ theory was frightening. This conceptualization changed how individuals believed they could catch or develop diseases and illnesses such as cholera, typhoid, diphtheria, tuberculosis and scarlet fever; these horrible conditions were spread by germs, which were invisible and could quickly multiply (Horsfield 1998: 96). If germs carried disease, particularly in their growth and how they spread, then all germs were to be removed. Additionally, any surface or area would be presumed to be filled with germs unless it had been cleaned.

As such, health officials, home economists and advertisers spread the message that germs,³⁰ "the purveyors of everything evil, lived and thrived in dirt and they must be killed" (Ehrenreich and English 1978: 174). Germs were characterized as the enemy; they strongly suggested that scrupulous cleaning surfaces was the only solution (Horsfield 1998: 91-92). Germ theory (or the discovery of the bacterial transmission of disease) radically changed the conceptualization of dirt. Mary Douglas (1966: 35) states that: "So much has it transformed our lives that it is difficult to think of dirt except in the context of pathogenicity' ". As stated by Adrian Forty (1986: 168) hygienists (or home economists and health officials) transformed cleanliness from a physical problem (fear of disease and illness) into a moral one. For example, an English school textbook called *Fighting Dirt* written by Ernest Hood characterized dirt, flies and "impure air" as "allies of disease, as identified with the forces of evil".

³⁰ The influence of home economics and advertisements will be discussed on pages 103-104 and 109 in this chapter and also in the next chapter.

Through the metaphor of war, hygiene and health was characterized as a constant battle. The body was described as a fort that was always in danger of attack by the enemy, germs. As a result, this analogy implied that “only by constant vigilance against the forces of disease could the body survive and be victorious”. Furthermore, experts characterized every bit of dirt as a “potential source of disease”. This was a misleading association as “dirt is a personal value, not an absolute whereas disease and germs do have a verifiable physical existence” (1986: 168).³¹ As a result of the war metaphor and the association of dirt with disease, it became clear that only by regularly and thoroughly cleaning could germs, and therefore disease and illness, be prevented. Only “absolute cleanliness” would be accepted. The high anxiety and fear associated with germs, which was of course deepened and intensified by home economists and advertisements was due to the fact that there were no antibiotics against the illnesses and diseases family members could suffer or die from. Horsfield (1998: 77) argues that given the lack of amenities, and great threat and danger of illness and disease, “if we had to deal with such conditions on a daily basis we, like many of our forebears, might be driven to the conclusion that no effort is too great to attain a clean home and we too might be harshly and openly critical of those failing to attain decent standards”. Hence, as cleaning was the only method of preventing disease, one can understand that “it was impossible to be too vigilant or wary about germs” (Horsfield 1998: 99).³²

Of course, medical experts stated that it was housewives who were responsible for ‘public health’, and thus needed to ensure that their homes were ‘absolutely clean’. In home economics texts and advertisements for cleaning products, women were told that they could kill each and every germ, and that doing so was “a bounden duty”. Women were engaging in “moral

³¹ I will discuss in more detail the associations of dirt and cleanliness in the next chapter.

³² According to Hoy (1995: 152) it was only by 1950 that the majority of women would live in homes with central heating, indoor plumbing, running hot and cold water and electricity. As such, it is only then that these women could actually achieve the “cleanest clean possible”. These high standards will be discussed in the next chapter.

domestic combat”, they were “to be on guard, to defend and attack”; they were engaging in a ‘sanitary crusade’ against “the dangers within” (Ehenreich and English 1978: 175 & Horsfield 1998: 96 & 103-104).

Cleaning became a ‘moral responsibility’ as failing to clean or clean unsatisfactorily was associated with one’s family’s members becoming ill or even dying. For example, Harriet Plunkett, an early proponent of germ theory stated in 1885: “There is nothing in hygiene she [the housewife] cannot comprehend, and too often does she realize this and begin to study it when, too late, she stands beside the still form of some previous one, slain by one of the preventable diseases that, in the coming sanitary millennium, will be reckoned akin to murder” (Ehenreich and English 1978: 175). Additionally, neglecting one’s cleaning responsibilities was characterized as “tantamount to child abuse” (Ehenreich and English 1978: 175). Hence, “no alternative and no escape [from the responsibility of thorough cleaning] existed for a right-thinking housewife once she realised what she was up against [germs]” (Horsfield 1998: 96). Furthermore, the moral associations with cleaning were extrapolated onto the housewife. The president of the British Medical Association stated that when he made house calls he examined “the appointments and arrangements and management of the house”. He believed that the chances that disease or illness would spread depended “on the character of the presiding genius of the home” (Ehenreich and English 1978: 174). I interpret this statement to indicate that how well a woman cleaned her house was associated with not only with the prevention of disease and illness, but also a woman’s character.

I argue that this was the beginning of the moral associations with cleaning, specifically how having a clean house was seen as a sign of a woman's positive characteristics.³³ Horsfield (1998: 94) has stated that: "a strange combination of moral fervour...and downright threats is used to drive home advice about how to safeguard a home against germs and infection".

Ultimately, I hope this has demonstrated the origins of fear/anxiety about germs. Also, that there are moral associations with cleanliness, as well as those who clean. Thus, based on the fear created by home economic and advertisements, women were willing to take almost any advice that would assist them in thoroughly cleaning their homes, eliminating germs and illness and disease from their family (Ehenreich and English 1978: 175).

Home economics, scientific management, and the 'profession of homemaking':

Home economists and advertisements were two important sources of advice to women about germs, how to clean their homes, but they also influenced women in other ways. I will discuss the emergence of home economists, their influence on women, housework as well as their relationship with advertisements for cleaning products and other items which could be purchased for the home. The concept of home economics developed as a result of the circumstances that educated women, such as Ellen Richards experienced. Richards was a chemist; however, she discovered that although women could earn degrees, they were not be permitted to actively use their degrees in the workforce, such as in laboratories. It was believed being actively involved in the workforce was 'unfeminine', women should "passively observe from a distance". Thus, Richards developed a science in which she could be equal to men, the 'science of right living' or home economics. Ultimately, the creation of home economics, and the labelling of themselves as home economists or home economic experts, was an effort by

³³ I will discuss this association in more detail in the next chapter.

educated women such Richards to “make the most of a bad deal”; if they couldn’t enter the same professions as men, they could at least make housework into a science, a profession (Ehenreich and English 1978: 166-169 & 183). The legitimacy and morality associated with science was used by these women, as they became domestic experts, or home economists. Domestic economics (home economics) was endorsed by medical experts as it would reduce “infant mortality and contagious diseases”. Home economics envisioned their subject as a “pipeline between the laboratory and the home” (Ehenreich and English 1978: 172-173).

Additionally, as home economics was viewed as a science, home economics experts believed that women should educate themselves on a variety of subjects. These subjects included drainage, plumbing, ventilation, the efficiency of kitchen design, and the inner workings of domestic appliances. Home economics also believed that women should apply the theories or discoveries of science to their duties within the home. For example, it was believed that biochemistry could be applied to cooking, economics to budgeting, and lastly germ theory in relation to housework (Ehenreich and English 1978: 173 & Horsfield 1998: 107).

Furthermore, in order to make housework into a science, home economists encouraged women to apply the techniques of scientific management in their homes. Scientific management was an ordering system applied in factories which was utilized to maximize production. The idea centred around the analysis of the gestures or movements of the tasks workers completed, and to assign movements, as opposed to whole tasks to different workers. It was believed that workers could not understand the organization or goal of their work; all organization and decision-making about the work would be the responsibility of managers. Scientific management was applied to housework by home economists. They documented and analyzed the movements of housework tasks and suggested the ways women should complete housework to minimize

unnecessary movements and save time. It was believed that by following the principles of scientific management, women would gain more free time, without reducing standards of cleanliness (Ehenreich and English 1978: 177-178).

Yet, home economists expected women to engage in such record-keeping and analysis of all the housework tasks they performed, in order to attempt to minimize the time each housework task took to complete, but also to complete detailed daily and weekly cleaning schedules. Obviously, following the practice of scientific management in one's home required a great deal of time and effort. However, scientific management would not have saved a significant amount of time or movement for one individual woman's household; scientific management was better suited to the scale of factories where much more movements were completed. Furthermore, in the home the manager and the worker are the same person; the woman would be doing all the manager's work of record-keeping and analyzing and complete the housework tasks (Ehenreich and English 1978: 177-179).

I argue that this is where anxiety develops because the women were so concerned with mapping and charting everything and then doing the cleaning – there were so many steps to be done, and if one of those steps wasn't carried out or it was carried out in the wrong order, the women may have felt anxious or guilty for not doing the task or not doing it 'properly'. I also argue that anxiety over not cleaning 'properly' was introduced to women by the proponents of germ theory. As previously discussed, these experts utilized emotional tactics such as fear, anxiety and guilt to impress upon women the importance of keeping a scrupulously clean home to prevent the spread of illness and disease.

However, what extra little time was gained by engaging in scientific management, was appropriated by home economic experts. According to Alice Norton, a home economics expert: “if a woman undertakes homemaking as her occupation she should make that her business, and the possibilities of this today are almost endless...till more instruction is available to fit her for her business, she must use part of the time gained in preparing herself” (Ehenreich and English 1978: 179-180). Furthermore, Ellen Richards stated that women needed to continually strive to achieve better standards around the home; “ ‘Can I do better than I am doing? Is there any device which I might use? Is my house right as to its sanitary arrangements? Is my food the best possible? Am I making the best use of my time?’ ” (Ehenreich 1978: 177).

Horsfield 1998: 178). Thus, women were told that they needed to spend any free time educating themselves on subjects related to home economics, as there was always room for improvement in how they managed their homes. It seems to me that this created, in the women who heeded such advice, that home economics involved constantly and untiringly looking and striving for perfection; perhaps their homes could never be clean or tidy enough or managed well enough.³⁴

However, home economists knew that women needed more than an encouragement by doctors, as well as the ideology that women should remain at home, to keep women interested in domesticity. Thus, instead of utilizing the discourse of the veneration of the home, they characterized the home as a factory, specifically “a factory of citizens”. In conjunction with the fears and anxieties associated with germ theory, domesticity and home economics would

³⁴ I argue that this striving for perfection in one’s home can be present today. I will discuss this phenomenon in the next chapter.

produce 'men'; healthy, well-rested future citizens and workers (Ehenreich and English 1978: 172-184).

This way, homemaking and domesticity became a 'profession' and women became 'experts' at their profession. This discourse transformed housework into sophisticated, legitimate work. According to one advocate of domestic science in 1897: "When the grand meaning and hidden power of her ordained sphere dawn upon her in their full force thru [sic] scientific study, then she [woman] will not sigh because Nature has assigned her special duties which man has deemed safe to be trusted to her instincts, yet in reality need for their performance the highest scientific knowledge" (Ehenreich and English 1978: 172).

The purpose of the concept of home economics was thus to reconceptualise housework and domesticity not as something which women inevitably had to complete in order to "be women" (according to the 'Cult of True Womanhood') but because their expertise, skill and work was needed to eliminate germs and prevent disease and illness (Ehenreich and English 1978: 172 & 185). Furthermore, instead of thinking of themselves as being dependent on their husbands the most appealing choice (versus being single, working and chastised) women would decide to devote themselves to their housework, to domesticity.

The decline of servants, 'labour-saving' devices and the 'labour of love':

The conceptualization of housework as a profession or a craft also transformed the relationship between housework and servants. Housework was originally conceived of as servant-work (by those who would afford servants) work that was demeaning and degrading to do. Domestic work consisted of long hours, little pay, no regulations concerning their wages and working conditions (Benoit 2000: 64). Given these circumstances, more women who would have

worked as servants or domestics were instead selecting jobs in factories or in nursing when such jobs became available (Ehenreich and English 1978: 183-184). This shift led to the 'servant problem', the perceived need or demand for servants was larger than the number of women willing to work as servants. Middle-class or upper-class women who had servants complained about their reliability and cost of servants, as well as servants failing to meet their expectations. However, for these women having domestic help was more preferable to doing one's own housework, as doing one's own housework and the loss of servants would have meant a loss in status, as previously stated by Veblen, in reference to conspicuous leisure (Horsfield 1998: 178).

However, the re-conceptualization of housework as a profession, as a craft led to housewives believing that housework needed to be completed by themselves, and not servants. Firstly, it was believed that the principles of scientific management were too complicated to be entrusted to servants (Ehenreich and English 1978: 183-184). Moreover, women who hired domestic help feared the lower-classes were carriers of disease and illness. It wouldn't matter how clean their homes were if germs for illnesses and diseases were brought in by domestic help. For example, Harriet Plunkett, in her (1897) book *Women, Plumbers and Doctors, or Household Sanitation* stated: "A man may live on the splendid "avenue", in a mansion plumbed in the latest and costliest style, but if, half a mile away, in range with his open window, there is a 'slum', or even a neglected tenement house, the zephyrs will come along and pick up the disease germs and bear them onward, distributing them to whomsoever it seems, whether he be a millionaire or a shillingaire" (Ehenreich and English 1978: 173).

Secondly, it was believed that housework was too important to be completed by servants. Specifically, in Jessamyn Neuhaus' book *Housework and Housewives in American Advertising: Married to the Mop* (2011: 22-23 & 73-75) implied that ensuring the health of family members

and preventing disease was too important to be done by a servant who may not complete housework tasks properly, or as thoroughly as was needed. Home economists' books and articles insisted that women would find "great happiness and satisfaction in the pursuit of household perfection". It was their duty to complete these tasks in order to preserve her family's health and prevent illness and disease. Thus, home economists reconceptualised housework as a 'labor of love'; women completed housework not just because they had to (because they were women) but out of love for their family members; housework became seen as an activity women did as mothers and wives (Horsfield 1998: 57-58). I argue that this was the beginning of the association of housework as not really work, but a 'labor of love', and also the association of completing housework with being a good wife and mother. If housework was believed to be a 'labor of love', and that women should receive emotional satisfaction from doing it, it obscured the fact that housework was actual work that is not enjoyable to do (Forty 1982: 208). Advertisements also suggested that by completing the housework herself in order to prevent disease and illness, it was transformed into a 'labor of love', tasks done out of love for one's family members, specifically for a mother's love for her children (Neuhaus 2011: 19 & 69). According to Forty (1982: 208) the idea that housework was a 'labor of love' was endlessly repeated in multiple mediums (advertising, stories in women's magazines and the design of kitchens and domestic appliances) that it became "common sense".

Additionally, the characterization of housework as a 'labor of love' and as a profession, allowed the middle to upper class women who once had servants who completed the housework, or even still wished for servants to complete the housework, to maintain their belief that they were not doing the same tasks as working-class women. In reality they were, but these housewives utilized the "gross self-deception" that the housework that they completed was

another activity, a 'labor of love', or scientific management (Forty 1986: 208). As previously discussed, it was believed that domestics were potentially contagious, as they were working-class and lived in filthy areas where disease and illness proliferated, based on the assumption that working-class women were not good housekeepers. Thus, middle to upper-class women may have felt their completion of housework was different because it was done 'properly', and their family members were prevented from experiencing illness or death. Their completion of housework was completed out of love, as opposed to working-class women, whose housework was completed for sheer survival and necessity, to reduce illness and disease. Also, in order for women to feel that they were middle-class or higher, advertisements began suggesting that appliances such as vacuum cleaners and certain cleaning products would replace servants because they would remove or reduce the unpleasant or tiresome aspect of housework (Forty 1982: 209).

According to Hoy (1995: 152) due to the shortage of servants and the belief that it was better for women to do the housework themselves, both to ensure it was completed 'properly' and housework was seen as a 'labor of love', middle-class housewives in the 1920s and 1930s "depended more on machines than maids to maintain a decent standard of living for their families". One of these machines was the vacuum cleaner. For example, some vacuum manufacturers gave their products female names, such as Daisy or Betty Anne to suggest that they were substitutes for servants (Forty 1982: 214). In addition, having a product do the 'work' of housework contributed to the myth that housework was not work. For example, according to Neuhaus (2011: 73-78) many advertisements for cleaning products utilized characters, in their ads which are portrayed as doing the 'work' of housework. According to home economist Christine Frederick, by doing the housework themselves, they would not have to worry about

“putting good tools in the hands of bad servants” and that “exact standards could be followed and greater perfection achieved” (Hoy 1995: 154). Also, referring to scientific management, specifically the belief that the home was a factory, and the housewives the managers, she stated that “that household appliances were not “luxury” items but “productive machinery” as essential to the well-equipped home as to the well-equipped factory or office” (Hoy 1995: 154). Additionally, Frederick stated that by using electric appliances, housework became “efficient expressions of affection and concern or embarrassing signs of carelessness” (Hoy 1995: 154).³⁵

It may be seen that domestic experts’ plea for scientific management, and thus for the housewife doing housework herself, occurred conveniently at the time when no servants could be found, or servants could not be trusted (due to contagion or incompetence). Forty argues that in Britain, from 1918 to 1939, the number of servants gradually declined. However, “since there was a fairly rapid increase in the ownership of domestic appliances in the inter-war years, quite out of proportion to the decline in numbers, it would appear that appliances were manufactured and bought for other purposes than simply to provide substitutes for servants” (Forty 1982: 213). This statement suggests that women bought domestic appliances for other reasons. Home economists and advertisements outlined other reasons why women should purchase domestic appliances.

As previously discussed, home economists suggested that women should utilize the principles of scientific management, and educate themselves on areas related to the home. In addition, they also recommended cleaning products. As more cleaning products and domestic appliances became available, home economists advised women on how to purchase and care for

³⁵ The latter part of this quote, embarrassment carelessness regarding housework, will be discussed in the following chapter. Specifically, I will discuss the creation of new housework tasks and the concept ‘keeping up with the Joneses’ mentality.

these appliances (Horsfield 1998: 144-145). Understanding domestic appliances, cleaning products, as well as how to use and care for them became a “cardinal virtue”, as doing so allowed women “to work with grace...in an ‘educated’ and intelligent fashion” (Horsfield 1998: 146). By this, Horsfield means that such education allowed women to be modern, better housewives. She also states that this education was essentially educating women to become consumers; home economists “were playing right into the hands of the manufacturers” (Horsfield 1998: 146-147).

Based on the advice of home economists, generations of women would buy cleaning products and domestic appliances thinking that they were needed to properly complete housework, and continue to purchase these items over many years. Additionally, by emphasizing that the home can be cleaned more efficiently and more thoroughly, they “helped feed the desire for new gadgets”, and I would also new, cleaning products. Manufacturers and advertisers sought out home economists to work with them as consultants. At this juncture the soap manufacturers of America, worried about the downslide in the market, joined forces and ganged up on the unsuspecting public, deciding to pull together in a concerted effort “to stabilise the appeal of soap and water as the primary agencies of cleanliness, thus providing a basic and constant background for brand exploitation” (Horsfield 1998: 142).

Home economists advised marketers and advertisers about the needs of consumers, and also advised consumers about the need for these new products. Home economists became mediators between marketers/advertisers and women (Horsfield 1998: 146-147). For example, home economist Christine Frederick, in her (1929) book *Selling Mrs. Consumer*, offered almost four hundred pages of advice to advertisers regarding how they could “appeal to the fears, prejudices and vanities of the homemaker” (Ehenreich and English 1978: 198). Ehenreich and

English (1978: 197-198) argue that “control over housework passed from the housewives and even the domestic science experts, to the corporations which had “robbed” women of their work in the first place”. This statement suggests that control over housework was taken from women to the domestic experts (as women listened to their advice and applied their ideas out of fear of germs and because they wanted to be modern, efficient). The control then passed from domestic experts to marketers/advertisers through the use of advertisements, as well as the themes and discourses used in them, to sell women domestic appliances and cleaning products.³⁶ As such, the re-conceptualization of housework was also viewed critically.

Housework as a profession and as a solution to the ‘Woman Question’:

Horsfield states that the rhetoric of reconceptualising of housework as a profession, a craft, a ‘labor of love’ is as “an outright humble of exaggeration and lies”, it obscured the reality that completing housework is repetitive, boring work (Forty 1986: 208-209 & Horsfield 1998: 57-58 & 120-122). I argue that the extra tasks outlined by scientific management were ‘busy work’ – work that was created to give women something to do, to keep them busy. Barbara Ehrenreich in *The Snarling Citizen* (1995: 26) argues that housework, as we conceptualize it today, was created for the “exact purpose of giving women something to do...to keep them out of the workplace or the suffragist movement”. In reference to home economic experts she states that: “these were women who made careers out of telling other women they couldn’t have careers, because housework was a big enough job in itself. And they were right, since their standard for a well-kept home was one that revealed no evidence of human occupation” (Ehrenreich 1995: 26).

Conclusion:

³⁶ Advertisements, as well the discourses and themes within them, will be discussed at a later point in the chapter.

This chapter discussed the origins of the assignment of completing housework to women from the period of the 'Old Order' to the pre-World War II era. Women were assigned to the realm of domesticity as a result of the fear of 'The Woman Problem'. Home economists and 'scientific management' were developed precisely to give women tasks to complete in the home and to make women feel satisfied with their domestic roles. Yet, other forces and ideologies which occurred post World War II, also strongly encouraged women to remain at home and sophisticated women's roles as homemakers. These ideologies consisted of various arguments regarding why women needed to be wives and mothers, as opposed to engaging in paid labor.

Additionally, this chapter discussed several important concepts. The fear of illness and diseases, the linking of morality with cleanliness and housework as a 'labor of love' as discussed by scientific experts, proponents of germ theory, advertisements and home economists, resulted in middle and upper-class women engaging in vigorous cleaning practices out of fear, guilt and desire to be good mothers, wives and homemakers. I argue that this was the beginning of the psychological investment in housework which I will discuss in more detail in Chapter four. Thus, Chapter four will discuss the influence of the discourses of the post-World War II era regarding women's assignment of housework, as well as women's psychological investment in housework.

CHAPTER 4: HISTORICAL EXPLORATION (PART 2):

As discussed in Chapter 3, home economics filled the ‘Domestic Void’, ‘The Woman Problem’ and ‘The Woman Question’³⁷ by emphasizing scientific management, continually educating oneself in this area to continually improve how one’s home was managed and cleaned, and the standard of keeping one’s home spotlessly clean to eliminate germs (Ehenreich and English 1978: 179-180 & 184). These discourses and influences contributed to the belief that it is the responsibility of women to complete housework, and the associations and values women and society today associate with cleaning and housework. However, I argue that the influence of the ideologies expressed in the post WWII era also contributed to these beliefs and values.

Therefore, Chapter 4 will include an examination of how post WWII North American society contributed and maintained women’s development and internalization of values related to housework. I will discuss the influence of the men returning home from the war, advertisements, the contradiction of ‘labor-saving’ appliances and the prestige and status associated with appliances- for the women as well as for their families. Lastly, I will also describe the onset of the patterns of family-wage earning and divisions of housework that continue today. This will include an analysis of the influence of the following factors: the decline in male wages/loss of ‘male’ jobs, striving for higher standards of living, as well as the normalization of two-earner couples.

Firstly, I will discuss the influence of WWII on women’s place in the home, the discourses which were utilized to keep women home (which includes the influence of advertisements) which Friedan has labelled the feminine mystique, as well as the concept of ‘the problem with no name’, also created by Friedan. At the beginning of the twentieth century, living

³⁷ The concepts of the ‘Domestic Void’, the ‘Woman Problem’ and the ‘Woman Question’ were discussed in Chapter three.

conditions improved gradually the amenities women have today were invented or became available: sewage systems, running water, electricity and water closets – which later become bathrooms. Additionally, due to the work of first-wave feminists, women were awarded several rights, such as suffrage and the right to own property. Women attending university became more accepted, as well as women working. It would seem that gradually, changes were being made in society which were improving women's lives, which would eventually lead to equality.

However, as discussed by Betty Friedan in her book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) in the post WWII period (1945-1963) fewer women were attending university, or using their degrees upon graduation; more women were foregoing post-secondary education after high school in order to marry and become housewives, or did not engage in paid labor upon graduating university but married and became housewives. Friedan found this phenomena puzzling: "This is the real mystery: why did so many American women, with the ability and education to discover and create, go back home again?". She asks why, when education was becoming much more accessible, why were women choosing to not engage in post-secondary education, but are limiting themselves to the domestic roles of wife and mother (Friedan 1963: 67-68).

Friedan answers this question by explaining the circumstances and factors that encouraged and emphasized that women should be at home. Also, these influences contributed to why women were encouraged to remain at home; that the only proper role for women was that of housewife. *The Feminine Mystique* focuses on 'the problem with no name', the sense of dissatisfaction or depression women felt from being housewives, exacerbated by the elements which stated that women would achieve happiness through her roles as wife and mother, as well as the feminine mystique, the phenomena which strongly suggested to women that they would only find feminine fulfillment and happiness if they remained at home as wives and mothers.

This thesis is interested in the forces and factors which encouraged women to go into the home, and to remain within it (essentially the components of the feminine mystique); with an emphasis on how women coped, by becoming consumers of various cleaning products, domestic appliances as well as other products, and by “expanding housework to fill the time available” (Friedan 1963: 240-241).

Friedan: the various ideologies/concepts used to keep women home:

Friedan describes the forces or factors that made up the feminine mystique: the appropriation of Sigmund Freud’s concept of penis envy, the demonization of feminism and career women, the function of women’s role in society, the fear and indecisiveness of women, the influence of WWII and the influence of the content of women’s magazines. The feminine mystique was an amalgamation of many different ideologies; including the definition of the role of women in society and the characterization of career women. Functionalists, who are a sub-grouping of sociology, studied the function or purpose of every structure or institution in society. However, according to Friedan, their work implied “what is, is what should be”; everything that exists, exists for a reason; the status quo was functional. They argued that the family functioned in society because of men and women’s complementary roles. It was believed that if men and women engaged in the same roles (if they both worked), “the complementary relationship may break”; the function of the family as a unit, and also the function of the family within society may be negatively affected. Functionalists thus believed the focus should be on helping women adjust to their roles, instead of contemplating what would happen if women engaged in other roles (Friedan 1963: 128-130 & 135). Ultimately, I argue that their work reinforced the belief that the status quo (of women remaining at home) is functional; I argue that it became accepted as common-sense.

Additionally, Friedan states that the feminine mystique derived its power from Freudian thought, or rather the misapplication and misappropriation of Freudian thought. It misrepresented women's frustrations at being housewives as penis envy. She questions the use of Freudian thought in women's magazines. Freud developed the concept after treating Victorian women in Vienna (Friedan 1963: 105) Freud believed that the basis of a woman's personality was their envy of the penis. His argument is that in a normal, feminine woman would "wish for the penis of her husband, a wish that is never really fulfilled until she possesses a penis through giving birth to a son" (Friedan 1963: 114-115). Essentially, the normal, appropriate way for women to eliminate penis envy, is to marry and have children (specifically male children). Moreover, Freud states that: "the capacity to pursue an intellectual career, can often be recognized as a sublimated modification of this repressed wish" (Friedan 1963: 115-116). Thus, according to Freud, women who had careers were attempting to solve their penis-envy; to be like men.

However, Friedan explains that of course some women would envy the freedom and pleasures men experienced and secretly wish they had the opportunity for these things, some may even wished they were men, and had a penis. Moreover, Friedan states that: "You cannot explain away woman's envy of man, or her contempt for herself, as mere refusal to accept her sexual deformity, unless you think that a woman, by nature, is a being inferior to man. Then, of course, her wish to be equal is neurotic" (Friedan 1963: 117). This statement suggests that any plea for equality, such as the desire to have a career, was a manifestation of penis envy, of women desiring to be men. Thus, Freud's followers wanted to help women "get rid of their suppressed envy, their neurotic desire to be equal...they wanted to help women find sexual fulfillment as women" (Friedan 1963: 119).

Thus, it was believed that first-wave feminists, who fought for women's right to vote, and as a result pushed forward the idea of women choosing careers over marriage and children, suffered from penis-envy. In other words, it was believed that these women wanted to be men because they wanted the right to vote. It was believed that: "In battling for women's freedom to participate in the major work and decisions of society as the equals of men, they denied their very nature as women, which fulfills itself only through...acceptance of male domination, and nurturing motherhood" (Friedan 1963: 80). Thus, the femininity of women who had careers or fought for equality was challenged; by denying their 'nature' I argue that such women were characterized as odd; that there was something fundamentally wrong with them and their state of mind. Friedan states that these women were "man-hating, embittered...spinsters...who burned with envy for the male organ that they wanted to take it away from all men, or destroy them, demanding rights only because they lacked the power to love as women" (Friedan 1963: 82). These women were seen as wanting equality to be like men, because they were unable to 'be women', to love as women.

However, Friedan points out that in order to change society these women had to deny "the identity of women as it was then defined", and that the only model they had of free human beings were of men. She asks two questions: "Did women want these freedoms because they wanted to be men? Or did they want them because they also were human?" (Friedan 1963: 82) Friedan suggests that women wanted the same rights and freedoms as men, to be as equal as men, not because they wanted to be men, but because they wanted to be human. Friedan (1963: 90) argues that of course these women envied men; that they were 'disappointed women'. However, they lived in conditions (as previously discussed using concepts such the 'Cult of True Womanhood') that were rife with disappointment. Finally, Friedan makes an interesting

comment which I would like to discuss: “contempt and self-contempt were harder to get rid of than the conditions which caused them” (Friedan 1963: 87). I interpret this statement to mean that the contempt for women who wanted equality, and they believed self-contempt (that such women had penis envy) continued after some progress had been made for gender equality. The strong dislike for feminists continued even though feminist gains had been made – such as the right to vote, inherit property, go to university. I also interpret this to mean that the sexist, patriarchal beliefs that women were inferior was more difficult to remove than the practical realities of inequality (not having the right to vote, own property). Essentially, sexism and a belief in the inferiority of women persisted despite women winning some rights and freedoms. It is more difficult to eliminate and reduce an ideology than it is to remove institutionalized manifestations of an ideology. Friedan (1963: 100) states that: “the feminists had destroyed the old image of woman, but they could not erase the hostility, the prejudice, the discrimination that still remained. Nor could they paint the new image of what women might become when they grew up under conditions that no longer made them inferior to men, dependent, passive, incapable of thought or decision”.

The continuation of this ideology contributed to the indecisiveness of women regarding their future, that resulted in them becoming housewives. Friedan questions the belief that women decided to be housewives in order to avoid feminism and how feminists were characterized. The women who grew up around first-wave feminists did not want to be the women discussed in the ‘Cult of True Womanhood’, nor did not want to become “domineering, shrewd career women” (Friedan 1963: 100-101). This scenario echoes the dilemma previously discussed: whether or not to become a housewife willingly or reluctantly, or to work.

Friedan (1963: 70-71) interviewed university seniors at Smith College in 1959 about their plans once they graduated. One woman stated that: “We don’t like to be asked what we want to do. None of us know. None of us even like to think about it. The ones who are going to be married right away are the lucky ones. They don’t have to think about it”. Friedan argues that the feminine mystique “[permitted], even [encouraged], women to ignore the question of their identity”; women were encouraged to answer this question by getting married and having children (Friedan 1963: 71-72). Friedan states that women from her generation saw how their mothers suffered as housewives, felt their lives were empty and tied to the home. Their mothers encouraged them to be more than just housewives. However, according to Friedan, the only alternative to being a housewife, was to work, remain unmarried and childless; to be an ‘old maid’.

Women did not want to be like their mothers, but they had few alternatives; as a result Friedan argues that women convinced themselves that: “I will succeed where my mother failed, I will fulfill myself as a woman, and never learn the lesson of her mother’s life” (Friedan 1963: 72 & 74-75). Friedan (1963: 76-77) furthers her argument by stating that her generation of women was the first that had to reflect upon what they would do once they graduated, as they had so many opportunities. However, the women who decided to marry were envied; they did not have to engage in such self-reflection. Though these women were able to avoid this painful process, they were likely to experience the ‘problem with no name’ as the years passed.

These factors that surfaced in pre WWII contributed to the pressures to marry post WWII. According to Friedan (1963: 182-3) women were told that the loneliness they faced during the war “was the necessary price they had to pay for a career, for any interest outside the home”. If women chose careers instead of marriage and children, this was the life they would

have. Also women who had married in the 1930s before the war anxiously waited for their husbands to return, while those who grew up in 1940s were afraid that they might not experience, marriage, love and children. Thus, women rushed into marriage and having children once the men returned from the war (Friedan 1963: 182-3).

There was a large percentage of young, single men returning home from the war who wanted to re-create normalcy of their motherly home, and thus felt they could do so by marrying. In particular, there was a large percentage of men in their twenties, who had postponed marriage due to the war, and men in their thirties who had not married due to the Great Depression and the war. Friedan states that that there was a “pent-up hunger for marriage, home and children” in these generations of men. She argues that individuals “seized on and accepted” the feminine mystique as it “filled real needs”. She argues that after WWII and the threat of the atomic bomb, women and men sought the comfort of home and children (1963: 182).

Moreover, women’s abilities were praised and rewarded during the war; however, with the onset of the post WWII era, as men returned to work, women in the workforce were met with hostility. Prejudices against women (or rather the preference for male employees) resulted in women finding it difficult to keep a job, or advancing in the job. According to Friedan, competition with women, as opposed to competition with other men was seen as “the last straw”; I argue that their presence and losing to them in the competition for jobs was emasculating, and also infuriating for they took jobs away from men who presumably had families (similar to the ‘family wage’ phenomena previously discussed). Based on these circumstances, many women decide not to work but to remain at home (Friedan 1963: 185-6). Curiously, the hostility women faced at work, as well as the preference for male employees influenced the content of women’s magazines.

Friedan noticed a difference in the fictional stories printed in women's magazines. Prior to WWII, the stories contained 'New Women', women who pursued men, but "were usually marching toward some goal or vision of their own, struggling with some problem of work in the world". These 'New Women' reflected the desires of the women at the time; if they could not do this themselves, they hoped their daughters would do (Friedan 1963: 37-38 & 40). However, the stories changed their focus to housewives; housewives feeling unsatisfied by their role, but also informed of all the tasks they should complete and the importance of them (Friedan 1963: 41-42). Friedan explains that this change occurred, after the war, as many of the female writers (the "creators of the career girl" in these stories) stopped working and returned to the home. Men replaced these writers, and as previously discussed, because they had longed for wives and families, they wrote about housewives. The content of these magazines was "the product of men's minds" (Friedan 1963: 54).³⁸ The few female writers who continued to work felt embarrassed by their choice; they felt they would lose their femininity. According to Friedan, these women felt compelled by the feminine mystique to help other women fulfill themselves as wives and mothers because of their own choice to forego marriage and children for a career (Friedan 1963: 56). Friedan emphasizes her point that a variety of forces contributed to women remaining as housewives by utilizing an example of Chinese women's foot binding:

How did Chinese women, after having their feet bound for many generations, finally discover they could run? The first women whose feet were unbound must have felt such pain that some were afraid to stand, let alone to walk or run. The more they walked, the less their feet hurt. But what would have happened if, before a single generation of Chinese girls had grown up with unbound feet, doctors, hoping to save them pain and distress, told them to bind their feet again? And teachers told them that walking with bound feet was feminine, the only way a woman could walk if she wanted a man to love her? And scholars told them that they would be better mothers if they could not walk too far away from their children? And peddlers, discovering that women

³⁸ I will discuss the idea that men are the creators of the housewife image; specifically in the role of marketers and advertisers. This discussion will illustrate that men's creation of the housewife image may not have been as insidious or conscious as implied by Friedan's statement. In fact, she clarifies this insinuation herself during her discussion of advisers to advertisers.

could not walk bought more trinkets, spread fables of the dangers of running and the bliss of being bound? Would many Chinese girls, then, grow up wanting to have their feet securely bound, never tempted to walk or run? (Friedan 1963: 100-102).

This statement suggests that it was difficult for the first generations of women to go to university, have careers, and forego marriage and children. Also, a variety of forces and discourses being impressed upon women strongly emphasized that they should be housewives, otherwise known as the feminine mystique, led to many women remaining home as housewives. Friedan believes that the housewife that was created and encouraged by these magazines is not harmless; that: “there may be no psychological terms for the harm it is doing”. I also argue that the themes and discourses that have been part of advertisements for cleaning products are not neutral or innocuous. Thus, I will examine the themes as well as the logic present in these advertisements. Afterwards, I will discuss examples of the themes and logic used by advisers as illuminated by Friedan. The latter, as well as the concept of housework expanding to fill the time available, and ‘labor-saving devices’ will illustrate how women coped with the ‘problem that has name’.

Advertisers and marketers creation of the ‘need’ and the use of science and fear to sell products:

Soap manufacturers were part of the earliest industries to realize the importance of marketing. A significant amount of soap was bought at the end of the nineteenth century, due to the fear of germs, as well as the belief that keeping clean was ‘an unequivocal good’, as part of germ theory discussed by home economists (Horsfield 1998: 141). According to Victor Vinikas in *Soft Soap, Hard Sell* (1992), by the 1930s, as living conditions improved and different household surfaces were introduced, less soap was needed. Soap manufacturers were looking to maintain the demand for their product; thus, they united together to create the Cleanliness

Institute, whose purpose was to remind Americans that they needed soap badly “to improve and maintain their standards of living” through the use of advertisements in magazines.

Vinikas (as cited in Horsfield 1998: 142-143) “Manufacturer[s] had to let Americans know, not just that they were still soiled, but that they could never be sanitary enough. As the country became cleaner than ever before, manufacturers had to dig up dirt”. Manufacturers ‘digging up dirt’ can be interpreted two ways: they found other actual types of dirt (or germs), and thus other uses for their products, or they had to create dirt (or germs) where there was none (or might not be any) to create fear, anxiety and guilt which could cause women to buy their products. Essentially, manufacturers had to create new physical (actual) or psychological/emotional needs for their products.

Horsfield (1998: 152) cites Adrian Forty in *Objects of Desire*, who states that the importance of cleanliness was emphasized in one or two ways. Firstly, cleanliness is emphasized through the use of science, discussed by experts such as doctors and home economists. These experts utilize vocabulary “replete with words no one fully understands, these experts provide comments or quotations that help instill graphic ideas”. Secondly, emotions are utilized, specifically “to raise levels of anxiety and guilt about dirt—a technique of emotional blackmail”. I would suggest that these two techniques were present when germ theory was introduced (the legitimacy/goodness associated with science as well as the moral messages utilized to convince women why their homes needed to clean). In fact, Jessamyn Neuhaus (2011) demonstrates that these themes are present in advertisements for cleaning products from the early twentieth century to the present. According to Horsfield (1998:189) in advertisements for cleaning products, consumers are “reassured by the ‘scientific’ promises made by the advertiser,” and ‘purchasers’ anxieties, purposefully heightened by the advertiser, are simultaneously allayed by the soothing

promises inherent in using the product in question”. Thus, the legitimacy of science or experts is utilized in advertisements to legitimate the products, as well as the claims made in the advertisements regarding the product’s characteristics, such as its ease or potency, as described by Neuhaus (2011).

Additionally, American industrial designer, David Chapman argues that: “product development” must begin with an analysis the root of the problem the product will solve, and “must study people and their way of living” (Forty 1986: 220-1). Yet, market research is only utilized in advertisements to help with problems that can actually be alleviated or reduced with the product in question. As a result, it is easier for marketers and advertisers to describe products as removing or reducing imaginary problems rather than real ones (Forty 1986: 221). Horsfield states that for this reason, advertisers of cleaning products “are not far removed from the snake-oil salesman” (1998:158).

In fact Neuhaus (2011:5) argues that the basis of modern advertising is “implementing strategies for selling products based not on the measurable quality of a product but on some less tangible, more emotional or psychological reward”. For example, according to Horsfield (1998: 159) “...it does...not matter much if she is really wreaking havoc with germs, what is important is that she thinks she is because it makes her feel better”. She also states that the multitude of cleaning products would not be there “unless we bought them, and we would not buy them unless at some level we believed, or wanted to believe their claims” (Horsfield 1998: 153).

Moreover, according to Vance Packard in *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957) this market research resulted in manufacturers becoming “more adept at convincing their customers that the products being offered had been designed exactly to match their desires. It is therefore almost

impossible to say to what extent the needs that consumer-oriented design satisfied were felt independently, rather than being the products of persuasion” (Forty 1986: 220-221). Thus, it seems that an effective advertisement is able to create a ‘need’ for a product without the consumer being aware that the advertisement created this ‘need’. Marketers have added or subtracted the discourses of hygiene and labor-saving in order to sell more of their products. Advertisements “fuse together disparate ideas from different origins, so that the form of the completed product seems to embody only a single idea, which comes across as so familiar that we find ourselves supposing it to be exactly what we ourselves had always thought” (Forty 1986: 221). As stated by Forty (1986: 221) manufacturers want consumers that “they act only as neutral agents, transmitting through their products ideas that we are all said to hold”.

Friedan (1963: 206) believes that the feminine mystique was ‘powered’ or maintained (women were kept at home) by the influence of advertisements for cleaning as well as other domestic products. She believes that: “Somehow, somewhere, someone must have figured out that women will buy more things if they are kept in the underused, nameless-yearning, energy-to-get-rid-of-state of being housewives”. However, she does not believe that keeping women at home was done so consciously and intentionally by marketers and advertisers. Instead, Friedan explains that this is “something that just happened to women” as businesses marketed their products (Friedan 1963: 207). She suggests that there are those who provide a service to advertisers regarding how they can “manipulate the emotions of American women to serve the needs of business”. These men base their expertise on thousands of interviews with American housewives.³⁹ One stated that housewives’ “lack of identity, lack of purpose [can] be

³⁹ Friedan does not specify the company that conducted these interviews, but she did state that the man who gave her access to this data had begun this work in 1945.

manipulated into dollars at the point of purchase” and that housewives can be given “the sense of identity, purpose, creativity, the self-realization...by the buying of things” (Friedan 1963: 208).

As previously discussed, there are two main tactics advertisements utilize to sell products: science and emotions (guilt/anxiety). Two themes utilized by advertisements encouraged the housewife to be an ‘expert’, as described by Freidan and characterising completing housework and removing germs as a ‘labor of love’, as part of a woman’s mothering (Neuhaus:2011: 24, 45).⁴⁰ A survey conducted in the United States found that many housewives were: “lazy, neglectful, haunted by guilt feelings because she doesn’t have enough work to do” (Friedan 1963: 213). The men who advised marketers and advertisers suggested that they should “capitalize...on housewives guilt over the hidden dirt so she will rip her house to shreds in a “deep cleaning” operation, which will give her a “sense of completeness” for a few weeks”, as it was believed that during these periods they would be more willing to try new cleaning products. This echoes the statement by Forty that advertisements created a need, then offered their product to soothe that need.

Advertisements also utilize the theme of expertise to market their products. The men who advised marketers and advertisers also suggested that they “build up [housewives] role as the protector of her family – the killer of microbes and germs”. Then, advertisements released a product which would allow women to do so, but also “engage their emotional and intellectual interest in the world of scientific development outside the home” (Friedan 1963: 215-216). Thus these ads utilized the legitimacy of science, the fear and anxiety raised by the presence of germs, as well as the labelling of women as experts “protectors of the family” to sell housewives cleaning products.

⁴⁰ This theme will be discussed at a later point in the chapter.

Having a multitude of cleaning products and tools creates the illusion that she had become “a professional, an expert in determining which cleaning tools to use for specific jobs”. According to marketers and advertisers, in order to obscure the fact that housework was unpleasant they released “more and more products, make the directions more complicated, make it really necessary for the housewife to ‘be an expert’. By seeing themselves as experts, housewives saw themselves as more than someone who cleans; it gave them status and helped them feel like they were connected to the world of science in their “search for new and better ways of doing things”. This resulted in the release of different cleaning products for different materials in the home, or for “specialized cleaning products for specialized tasks”; instead of all-purpose cleaners, housewives were sold cleaning products ‘designed’ for one task or material. Women experienced a “sense of economic security, of luxury” when they bought a new cleaning product precisely because it elevated the status of their housework (Friedan 1963: 211-216).

Another way marketers and advertisers sold domestic products to women was to market these products to young, teenage housewives. It was discovered that these housewives were more insecure and “easier to sell” to than older housewives. These young housewives were told that if they bought the right products, they would instantly achieve middle-class status. In fact, it was believed that if “happiness through things” was internalized in the minds of women when they were young, they would even get part-time jobs to pay for the products they wanted. Advisers and marketers were told that these young women “want[ed] what the others want”. In fact, it was believed that “group pressure...was the most potent influence [on getting these women to buy products]”. Essentially, marketers utilized peer pressure, or the ‘keeping up with the Joneses’ mentality to sell domestic products. Neuhaus (2011: 90) described how this mentality also applied to housework; advertisements suggested that a housewife’s reputation would be at stake

if her home, for example, did not smell as fresh or if her floors were not as shiny as another's. Thus, advertisements also created 'imaginary needs' or problems which would influence a housewife's reputation, such as the shininess of her floors or the scent of her home. Housewives were made to believe that their floors 'needed' to be shiny, and that their home 'needed' to not only be clean, but also 'smell clean'. In fact, it was believed that the role of department stores was not just to sell housewives products but to "educate them" on how they can be part of larger society, of science, simply by buying products. According to reports done by men who interviewed housewives: "The store will sell her more...if it will understand that the real need she is trying to fill by shopping is not anything she can buy there" (Friedan 1963: 218-225).

Housework 'expands' to fill the time available:

I argue that this 'keeping up with the Joneses' mentality which influences why people shop, can get out of hand. As stated by Galbraith (2000: 20) consumer desire is like a demon that grows every time it is fed, until it becomes huge and unmanageable: "but it should be that his passion was the result of first having cultivated the demons, and it should also be that his effort to allay it stirred the demons to ever greater and greater effort". Individuals believe they will be satisfied with certain purchases, but the desire for more products grows as they continue to purchase. Furthermore, I argue that this metaphor could also be applied to cleaning; if we are made to feel (through the discourses discussed in advertisements) that our homes are dirty or full of germs, we clean them. However, this too can get out of hand, for the more we become invested in cleaning, the more 'dirt' we see, the more we feel more cleaning is necessary; our homes are never 'clean' enough. I argue that this process is part of the concept 'housewifery expands to fill the time available' as discussed by Friedan.

While interviewing American housewives Friedan noticed something peculiar. She expected women, who had no or few outside activities, to complete their housework with time to spare. Also, she thought that women who had responsibilities outside the home would potentially struggle to complete their housework. However, the interviewees proved her theories incorrect. She utilized a description of two women to demonstrate the difference between women who were 'pure' housewives and women who completed housework, but had responsibilities and interests outside of the home. She described two almost identical women, who had similar homes, a similar family income and the same number of children spent their time quite differently. One woman worked part-time, volunteered regularly and engaged in hobbies all the while completing her housework and caring for her children. However, the other woman did not have the time to work, to do community work, or even to read. The women who were not full-time housewives were able to complete their housework in shorter periods of time due to their other responsibilities. In her analysis, Friedan concludes that for the women who had no such responsibilities, the housework that could be completed in one hour was now completed in six. She believes that the feminine mystique explains this puzzle. The more women felt deprived of any real function or purpose in society, the more she resisted or prolonged finishing "housework, mother-work, and wife-work"; because to do would result in her having no other function. Additionally, the time devoted to doing housework is related to the "challenge of the other work to which she is committed". Without any other commitment, women prolonged housework to fill the time available to avoid the uncomfortable feeling of not fulfilling their function, as described in the previous statement (Friedan 1963: 237-239).

Friedan argues that the innovations on cleaning and domestic appliances and products, which promised to save time, were now being more frequently "to fill the time available", that is

the time that was 'saved' by the product or appliance in question. This is why 'labor-saving' devices do not actually save labor. Horsfield states that the washing machine, dryer and vacuum cleaner reduced the time spent on laundry and cleaning floors. These products raised standards of cleanliness. For example, because it is now much easier to have clean laundry, we wash our clothes after every use and can remove the daily dirt and dust from our floors (Horsfield 1998: 135-6). However, the housewives here expand their housework to fill the time available for a different reason, based in part of the feminine mystique and 'the problem that has no name.' Friedan suggests that the emptiness and dissatisfaction these women felt caused them to expand their housework "in order to keep the future out of sight". Also, by being constantly preoccupied with housework, she prevents these feelings from returning. Thus women who experienced the 'problem with no name' were expanding their housework, buying more specialized cleaning products, setting higher standards of cleanliness and having more children (which created more work) in order to avoid these feeling of dissatisfaction. Friedan (1963: 245-247) believes that these women convinced themselves that their work was indispensable, that the family and home would fall apart without their housework, "mother-work and wife-work". According to Horsfield (1998: 5) the 1960s was a period where everything in the home was whiter-than white. I argue that such high standards were developed from a variety of influences; the 'problem with no name', women cleaning to ensure their reputation as good housekeepers, wives and mothers, and due to the fact that they simply had fewer activities to occupy their time. Horsfield believes that these women became 'houseproud'; in fact one woman she interviewed stated that: "I think my mother became so houseproud because there was nothing else she could control or achieve" (Horsfield 1998: 36).

Friedan further states that if department stores were the 'schools' for women then advertisements were the 'textbooks'. This is a very important statement which accurately states what I am trying to argue; advertisements contained, and continue to contain, messages and discourses that are imposed upon women; their content influenced, and continue to influence, women, specifically their beliefs and feelings about housework and how they were/are to complete housework, and also others' beliefs and feelings about who should complete housework. Friedan believes marketers and advertisers "seared the feminine mystique deep into every mind"; I also argue these advertisements were seared into individuals' minds that housework was done, or should be done, by women. Friedan believes that marketers, advertisers and the men who advised them, could not be accused of creating the feminine mystique. However, she does believe "they [were] the most powerful of its perpetrators...it is their millions which blanket the land with persuasive images" and "if they [were] not solely responsible for sending women home, they [were] surely responsible for keeping them there" (Friedan 1963: 228).

The continued use of women to sell cleaning products:

Neuhaus offers some interesting insights into the power, but also the 'reality' of advertisements. She examines why the image of women doing housework in advertisements for cleaning products has endured, even in the twenty-first century. Echoing Friedan, she states that we "cannot definitively measure the real-life impact and influence of that stereotype [of women doing the housework]" (Neuhaus 2011: 8). Neuhaus (2011: 8) states that advertisements provide "evidence of what images of housework and domesticity dominated the marketplace. They also offer important clues about the nature and power of the culturally constructed housewife figure". She argues that advertising is one of the most widespread discourses regarding the roles women

because they are viewed by almost everyone in North America – anyone who has access to a television, or the internet or magazines – and because for many individuals, it is the only instance where they see someone other than a family member completing housework. Thus, Neuhaus (2011: 8-9) states that we “therefore cannot underestimate the power of advertising’s monopoly on public representations of housework”.

However, she believes that the continued existence of women in advertisements for cleaning products was not based solely on advertisers beliefs that they were the market for these products, but because they have evidence that the public has accepted the “symbolic function of the housewife in housework product advertising” (Neuhaus 2011: 9). She believes advertisements reflect “dominant discourses about gender and domesticity”. However, similar to Freidan, Neuhaus (2011: 9-10) states that advertisements for cleaning products are not simply “expressions of the dominant ideology”, as advertisers are aware of these ideologies and how they “shape the buying habits of the average consumer”. Additionally, like Friedan, she does not believe that these advertisements were created by misogynistic men; in fact in the 1970s, due to the influence of second-wave feminism, advertisers were warned not to utilize stereotypical, degrading images of women in their advertisements. These degrading images included women being enraptured by their cleaning products and their results (Neuhaus 2011: 221). Advertisers struggled to do so, for they had few alternatives other than the housewife. They could advertise products based on the ‘career woman’ or ‘working woman’; but they found that neither the stereotypical housewife nor the career women in advertisements had been accepted by consumers (Neuhaus 2011: 13).

Advertisers believed that the image of housework associated with homemaking “was so enmeshed with the image and signifier of feminine care for the home – the housewife – that ad

makes could not avoid her and replace her with more diverse images of people doing household labor” (Neuhaus 2011: 218). For example, advertisers did not think that ‘career woman’ would not be as interested in a product that would clean and shine floors as a housewife. However, they found that they could successfully market their products with an image that consumers could relate to: ‘the housewife mom’. The ‘busy woman’ or ‘housewife mom’ would desire such a product as it would give her more time to devote to her family (Neuhaus 2011: 219). Thus, advertisers utilized the image of ‘the housewife mom’ to characterize housework as ‘a labor of love’. She was a realistic depiction of women who cleaned to care for the health and comfort of their families; these women did not fawn over the cleaning products and their results, their appreciation was muted, more subtle than the ‘mom’ in today’s commercials and ads is not inately hugging detergent or manacled to the kitchen sink” (Neuhaus 2011: 220-221). Caitlyn Flanagan, a conservative commentator, stated that: “I am not a housewife. I am an ‘at-home mother’ and the difference between the two is vast. A ‘housewife’ defines herself primarily through her relationship to her house and her husband while an at-home mother feels little obligation to the house itself” (Neuhaus 2011: 220-221). However, the use in advertisements today of the ‘housewife mom’ is a kind of hybrid between the ‘housewife’ and the ‘busy woman’. Neuhaus (2011: 16 & 217) argues that the ‘housewife mom’ has been utilized by advertisers as “the sole signifier of home care” because “American consumers and views continued to widely accept a depiction of domesticity that strictly reinforced gender norms, even as they began to object to the most blatant stereotyping in advertising”. I argue that this is the case because of the stalled revolution – men’s ideas about women’s roles have changed at a slower pace than that of women (Hochschild 1989: 12).

For example, before reading Nehaus, I disagreed with the characterization of women in the Electrolux appliance commercials starring Kelly Ripa. In the ads, Ripa is juggling multiple domestic activities, such as preparing several food items, using the dishwasher, completing childcare and hosting a dinner party. The tagline of the advertisement is ‘You can be even more amazing’ and the theme song of the futuristic cartoon show *The Jetsons* is playing throughout the commercial. Electrolux is telling women that with their appliances, they can complete their domestic tasks easily. In fact, they can even do more as demonstrated by the words ‘even more amazing’. *The Jetsons*’ theme song implies that these appliances are modern, futuristic, as they allow a woman to complete domestic tasks faster and better. However, there is no mention of Ripa’s husband; what is he doing while Ripa completes a multitude of domestic activities? As the commercial only includes Ripa, the implication is that her husband is not doing these domestic tasks; they are Ripa’s responsibility. I argue that instead of utilizing these appliances to complete more domestic tasks, Ripa’s husband should help her with these tasks. That way, one partner is not overwhelmed. However, after reading Neuhaus, I realize that the premise of the commercial is relatable to women. They struggle to complete domestic tasks and they want to complete them faster and better. Women also want to be able to complete more tasks. Whether by choice or by necessity (their husband does not do tasks ‘properly’ or ‘promptly’), women relate to the scenario presented in the advertisement.

Neuhaus believes that the persistence of the ‘housewife mom’ is a sign that Americans’ entrenched beliefs about gender and housework. She states that the image has been “virtually uncontested; most television viewers do not see gender stereotypes as ‘problematic’ ” (2011: 219 & 220). I argue that this is the case because both the ‘housewife mom’ has origins in the housewife image; and also because of the discourse of the ‘new momism’; which states that

women should entirely devote themselves to their children, which includes ensuring that they are comfortable, clean and healthy in their homes by completing housework (Susan J. Douglas and Meredith W. Michaels, as cited in Neuhaus 2011: 14).

I argue that consumerism, as well as other factors including the influence of second-wave feminism and the shift in the economy. As previously discussed, the 'keeping up with the Joneses' mentality was cultivated by marketers, advertisers and home economists. The latter were, after all, training women to become consumers, and the two former utilized the tactics of the legitimacy of science and emotional appeals (fear of germs, guilt over a less than perfect house, of not meeting another's women standards of housekeeping). Purchasing products for the home allowed women to feel modern, that they were successful and proud of their homes. I would argue that the belief that one should 'keep up with the Joneses', or at least the desire for a comfortable standard of living, a habitation with such a standard of living contributed to the gradual development and acceptance of dual-earner families.

Development of the acceptance of 'dual-earner' couples:

Second-wave feminism challenged sexism in the workplace by demanding pay equity, and illuminated that personal problems women faced in the home mattered and should be voiced (the personal is political). Essentially, second-wave feminists advocated for the equality of men and women both in the home and in the workplace (David 2003: 28). As a result of their work, in the late 1970s, early 1980s, it became more common, and thus, more socially acceptable for women to work, even if they had a family. According to Waldman, Sherman Grossman, Hayghe and Johnson (1979:40), in 1970 39% of children under eighteen had mothers in the workforce, in 1978, the percentage was 50%. Waldman et al. (1979: 39) also state that during the 1970s, there were two recessions (1969-1970 and 1973-1975) and an "onset of one of the highest inflation in

several decades”. Beaupré, Turcotte and Milan (2006: 13) argue that after the Second World War, “demand for skilled labor and enrolment increased...due to rapidly improving education levels of the workforce, the 1950s and 1960s produced the biggest earnings gains of the century in real terms – almost 43% and 37% respectively”. They also state that after the oil crisis in 1973, there were high unemployment and inflation; interest rates were raised during the late 1970s to decrease inflation. This resulted in a recession in 1981-1982. Beaupré et al. (2006: 13) argue that in the late 1970s the “real earnings of workers began to fall”. By 1983, the economy was “pulling out of the recession and job growth accelerated”. In addition, there was a recession from 1990-1992, due to more downsizing, the “permanent reduction of jobs” and a slow recovery. Returning to the late 1970s- early 1980s, Hayghe (1981: 49-59) states that these circumstances had “an adverse impact not only on the growth of dual-earner families, but also, especially when combined with inflation, on their income”. He suggests that although husbands in dual-earner families in the 1970s earned more than their wives, these husbands earned less than husbands whose wives did not work. Also, Haghe (1981: 50) furthers his argument by stating that during these recessions, the number of men who worked declined, and the number of women who worked increased. Furthermore, Waldman et al. (1979: 44) suggest that during the 1970s, when both spouses worked “their real median income increased by only about four percent over the period from 1970-1977, just barely exceeding the rise of inflation”. These statistics demonstrate to me that perhaps the wives in dual-earner couples may have decided to work because of their husband’s lower income: either they worked for financial necessity (if their husband was not working or her income was needed to survive) or in order to purchase the products they needed to have and maintain the comfortable lifestyle they desired.

As time progressed, between the 1970s and the 1990s, dual-earner couples became the most common form of family structure. Second-wave feminism may have influenced this phenomenon in the following way: women were beginning to be viewed as capable as men and equal to men, and as such it was determined that they should share the wage-earning. However, though this was a big step in the right direction, a major issue developed because of this phenomenon: as women began to enter the workforce they realized that were having trouble with the domestic tasks such as housework and childcare – they could not do it all; could work full time and care for their children without some form of assistance. Some believed that if a couple was sharing wage-earnings, they should also share the domestic work. Also, they must have told their partners that they cannot do all the domestic work while they are working; they simply do not have the time (Mainardi 1980: 129).

Though these issues were acknowledged with the late 80s, early 90s, they persist today. Many men resist an equal division of housework; I would say that such men are transitional (as previously described by Horsfield) they accepted that their wives had to work, but thought that the domestic work was their responsibility as well – though they were working just like their husbands, the domestic work was still their responsibility as wives and mothers. They may have had the same attitude as Evan,⁴¹ as described in Horsfield's research. Evan believed that just because his wife was working, his lifestyle (time for leisure) should not change just because his wife worked; he should not have to assist with the household chores. This logic results in the "stalled revolution", as described by Horsfield. Furthermore, even if men believe in sharing the housework, 'obstacles' in the actual execution of their housework, as described by Pat Mainardi

⁴¹ According to Hochschild (1989: 40) "Evan is happy and proud to support Nancy in her career as a social worker. But at the same time he [does] not see why, just because she chose this demanding career [social worker], *he* [has] to change *his own* life". Sharing the 'second shift' means to him as a "loss in his standard of living and despite all the high-flown talk [his agreeing theoretically to her having a job], he [feels that he hasn't] *really* bargained for it".

(1982) prevent them from completing their share of housework. Recall that these ‘obstacles’; are different standards of cleanliness, different tolerances for dirt and disorder, different beliefs about when tasks should be completed (promptly or laissez-faire); generally values and attitudes related to the completion of housework and the importance of housework. Moreover, Beagan, Chapman, D’Sylvia and Bassett suggest in *It’s Just Easier For Me To Do It* *Rationalizing the Family Division of Housework* (2008) that arguments over the promptness of the completion of housework tasks, and how such tasks are completed (‘properly’) results in many women deciding it was just easier to complete these housework tasks herself. Thus, whether women complete more of the housework for ideological reasons – i.e. that men don’t think it is their responsibility – or differences in attitude, both of which lead to the same result: a gendered division of housework.

Conceptions of ‘dirt’ and ‘clean’:

As previously discussed by Douglas (1966: 44) “so much has it [germ theory] transformed our lives that it is difficult to think of dirt except in the context of pathogenicity. If we can abstract pathogenicity and hygiene from our notion of dirt, we are left with the old definition of dirt as matter out of place”. However, I argue that ‘matter out of place’ may still be associated with individuals’ attitudes, specifically their fear and anxiety related to dirt. In order to examine the morality associated with housework, specifically cleaning, and why women feel compelled to clean, we need to define the concepts clean and dirty.

Mary Douglas argues in her book *Purity and Danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo* (1966: 7) that: “Our idea of dirt is compounded of two things, care for hygiene and respect for conventions. The rules of hygiene change, of course, with changes in our state of knowledge. As for the conventional side of dirt-avoidance, these rules can be set aside

for the sake of friendship”. I believe Douglas is arguing that people clean in order to remove dirt and ensure their living spaces are hygienic and/or to follow the conventions (norms, beliefs, actions) which they have been socialized to believe, or to which they have been exposed. The inclusion of more scientific knowledge has changed the hygienic definitions of dirt⁴² and the ‘conventional’ definition of dirt has changed “with social circumstance”. I believe “social circumstances” refers to the various factors and forces which have shaped how and why women clean. Examples of these influences are childhood socialization,⁴³ advertisements for cleaning products, as well as the influence of other women. These influences, contain, teach and pressure women to have and demonstrate the knowledge and attitudes of how to clean, the values associated with cleanliness, the roles women are traditionally expected to take (mother, wife, housekeeper) as well as the association between these roles and the cleanliness state of the home.

Horsfield (1998: 8) argues that Douglas’ point in this statement is to demonstrate that the hygienic and the ‘conventional’ definitions of dirt are not absolute. In fact, Douglas (1966: 2) states that “there is no such thing as absolute dirt: it exists in the eye of the beholder”. Dirt can be defined as “matter out of place, within a pattern that is perceived as normal and ordered, suited to our own worldview” (Horsfield 1998: 8). Additionally, Douglas (1966: 3 & 35) believes that: “where there is dirt, there is system” and that “reflection on dirt involves reflection on the relation of order to disorder”. Thus, as order and dirt are conceptualized as opposites, one can also say that cleanliness is also in eye of the beholder, and non-absolute. Hence, each individual’s definition of dirt, or a dirty or disordered space, as well as their definition of clean or clean/orderly space, depends on their definition of the order of the space. For example, one

⁴² The first reason people clean, hygiene, seems self-evident, although I argue that the desire for hygienic living spaces/ fear of germs has greatly influenced why people clean.

⁴³ I will discuss childhood socialization in the next chapter.

person may believe that it is 'necessary' to wash the kitchen floor daily, while another person may believe it is silly and unrealistic to wash the kitchen floor so frequently. Therefore, one's standards of cleanliness (whether one's living space should be tolerably clean and orderly, or if one aims for a perfect home where there is no evidence of dirt or disorder) will influence what housework tasks, and the frequency and quality to which they are performed is deemed 'necessary'.

According to Horsfield (1998: 10-11) once the non-absolute nature of the concepts of 'clean' and 'dirty' are accepted, we realize that "cleaning then becomes a personal, not an impersonal activity, having nothing to do with the pursuit of a disembodied ideal and everything to do with how we define ourselves and our surroundings. We are forced to ask what is really going on when we are cleaning, and we are forced to look at our own behaviour". She also states that: "habits, soothing social rituals, psychological games, diehard beliefs" influence how and why individuals clean. Thus, I believe that the reasons why people clean are more complex than simply hygiene and "social convention".

Anxiety and other associations with 'dirt', 'cleanliness' and housework:

As defining the concepts of 'clean' and 'dirty' are futile, it is also pointless to try and define cleaning and tidying tasks, as well as the frequency of these tasks, are 'necessary', that 'need to be done' (Horsfield 1998: 11). Yet, I believe we must examine why women feel that housework tasks 'need to be done' and are 'necessary'. In order to do so, I will discuss some conceptualizations and associations women have with cleaning. As stated by Douglas (1966: 2) individuals do not "shun dirt" or clean because of fear, dread, or terror. Also, individuals' ideas about dirt do not reflect or influence individuals cleaning. She believes that cleaning is not "governed by anxiety to escape disease...there is nothing fearful or unreasoning in our dirt

avoidance”. Instead, Douglas argues that eliminating dirt (by cleaning) is “a positive effort to organise the environment”, to re-instate, or maintain order. Moreover, she believes that individuals react to dirt or disorder as simply an anomaly in their environment. In fact, she states that: “there is nothing in our rules of cleanness [how individuals clean] to suggest any connection between dirt and sacredness”. By this, I argue that Douglas is arguing that there is nothing inherent to suggest an association between dirt as negative, and clean as positive.

I disagree with several of Douglas’ statements. I argue that for some individuals, particularly scrubbers, cleaning is motivated by fear: fear of germs, fear of being seen as a ‘bad’ wife and mother, by other family members and by others if the home is dirty or disorderly, and fear of being judged negatively in a moral way by others (being seen as lazy, undisciplined, disorganized based on the state of cleanliness of one’s home. Yet, I also argue that for some individuals, particularly scrubbers, cleaning is also a positive task. It is positive as one is demonstrating that one is a good wife, good mother, a hard worker, and disciplined, organized person. Kathryn Rabuzzi ,in *The Sacred and The Feminine: Toward a Theology of Housework* (1982) discusses the meanings of housework to women. Her work will illustrate that individuals clean for both positive and negative or fearful reasons.

Rabuzzi (1982: 96) believes that there are ‘cultic rituals’ associated with housework, particularly cleaning and tidying tasks. She acknowledges that this association may seem ridiculous “until you consider what housework can mean to its performer and those who live with her. It is not what is done but how it is done that makes housekeeping chores rituals, although you can argue that the how transforms the what”. I argue that Rabuzzi is asserting in this statement that doing housework can be a positive experience, a ritual. How housework tasks are performed does matter, as this process transforms housework into either a positive or

negative ritual. I interpret this to mean that how housework is completed is important to the women who view housework as positive, as a ritual (scrubbers), the ‘how’ housework tasks are performed may refer to the ideas that they are completed ‘properly’, promptly, and completed with the right attitude, or conscientiousness.

Being ‘houseproud’ and one’s home as a reflection of oneself:

Rabuzzi (1982: 98) states that the meanings associated with housework may refer to how the individual views her home, “to a mode of relationship the housewife establishes between herself and her home”. She furthers her argument by stating that: “the homemaker relates to her home as an external image of herself”. I argue some women, particularly scrubbers, see their homes as a reflection of themselves. This “external image” or reflection of the home through the woman refers to their roles of wife and mother and their personality characteristics (lazy vs. hard worker; disciplined vs. flighty). This association is important; it provides the basis of the association of morality with housework, or cleaning/tidying. These links were created during the Victorian era due to the ‘Cult of True Womanhood’, in the earlier twentieth century by home economists and by post WWII by marketers and advertisers. These associations have continued today, as discussed by the concept of the ‘housewife mom’ utilized by advertisers and marketers today in Neuhaus’ book (2011). Furthermore, I argue that the relationship between a woman and her home can also result in women, particularly scrubbers, being “house proud”⁴⁴; they get a sense of pride in keeping a tidy and clean home. Likewise, I argue that they would feel a great deal of shame and guilt if their homes were in a less than perfect state when company arrived. Rabuzzi (1998: 98) also states that performing housework is “more akin to the performance of actor or singer than the product of writer or composer”.

⁴⁴ The influence of guilt and shame associated with housework will be discussed on pages 144-145 in this chapter.

I argue that on the surface this statement suggests that, for writers and composers, how they create their symphonies or novel may be irrelevant; what matters is the end product. Yet, underneath the surface, a successful performance involves more than the end project. For actors and singers, how they perform or bring the product to life is just as important as the roles they play or the songs they sing. In relation to housework, this statement illuminates that both the performance of housework (how housework is completed 'properly' and promptly) and the end product (a clean and tidy home) are both important to women, particularly those can be labelled as 'scrubbers' and 'houseproud'.

However, upon deeper reflection I argue that there are other meanings behind this statement. A composer or writer creates a new product that is their own. However, actors and singers may not have written the role or song, but perform them. As such, an actor or singer performs the song or role, but can put their own spin or interpretation on the song or role; they make it new. I would argue that this metaphor is used to illustrate that what is memorable about a performance of a role or song, is who is performing it; our immediate attention is on the performer, on their skills; not on the product (role/song) which they are performing. Furthermore, how well the song is sung or the role played depends upon the singer or actor's performance. Regarding housework, women are not creating new order that has never been experienced. Nonetheless, the conceptualization of completing housework as a performance, rather than simply creating an end product, as well as the way they complete or perform housework demonstrates their skills (knowing how and when to complete housework, as well as their skills as a wife and mother).

However, I question whether an actor or singer would be as invested in the product (song or role) as a writer or composer would be toward their novel or symphony, or as 'houseproud', as

a 'scrubber' woman to her home and housework. Actors and singers would be proud of their skills as performers – how they sang the song or played the role, their song and role selection – but would they be as psychologically invested in the end product as a writer or composer to a novel or symphony? I would think that 'houseproud' women have elements of both writers/composers and singers/actors. They are completing or performing an action, as such their performance can be judged. Yet, completing housework creates an end product, a clean home. Thus, in a sense, women are 'creating'; this may explain why women are so psychologically invested in housework. As such, I disagree with the oversimplification of the relationship between 'house proud', 'scrubber' women through the metaphor of a performance of an actor and the creation of a writer. In my view, the relationship between 'house proud', 'scrubber' women, their homes and housework contains elements of the relationship of the singer to the song and the writer to the novel. Ultimately, this metaphor was illuminated to me that the meaning associated with housework is related to both the action of completing housework as well as the end product (a clean and tidy home).

Soothing relief felt by completing housework:

In fact, Rabuzzi (1982: 98-99) states that the 'ends' of housework (a clean home) has been emphasized without a proper examination of the performance of housework. She states that the ends of housework, a clean and tidy home is the obvious, is the straightforward function of completing housework. Nevertheless, she states that there are "additional purposes [of housework] other than the tangible products of cleanliness and order" and that "the actual performance [of housework]...may also hold meaning in and of itself".

Horsfield (1998: 254) argues that initially she felt that Rabuzzi's statement that: "doing housework can take on near-religious dimensions", was "pretty far-fetched". Yet, she concludes

that she agrees with her, many of the women she interviewed spoke of “the calming effect that cleaning has on them”. Completing housework may be calming for one or both of the following reasons. Firstly, it relieves the anxiety and fear associated with germs and disorder; “when a housewife purifies [engages in housework] she ensures that the cosmos [space] she creates and maintains is safe” (Rabuzzi 1982: 114). Secondly, it simultaneously relieves the fear, anxiety, guilt and shame that they do not possess the positive characteristics (hard worker and organized) and/or not successfully fulfilling the domestic roles of wife and mother. Essentially, I believe ‘scrubber, ‘houseproud’ women experience fear and anxiety that their homes are not clean or tidy enough (based on judgements by others, particularly other women).

Rabuzzi (1982: 113) argues that for these women, completing housework “serves exactly the same function as the ritual action of a priest absolving a parishioner from guilt”. She states that to relieve someone from guilt is similar to the word solvent; “both words derive from the Latin solver, meaning to free, release, or loosen”. Rabuzzi suggests that there is an analogy between washing physical stains from a garment, and “washing away the sins of the world”. Nevertheless, she suggests that by removing physical stains from a garment, by engaging in cleaning and housework tasks, for these women, they are “washing away their spiritual deformities”. Rabuzzi (1982: 113) also argues that while women complete housework for the purpose of ensuring their homes are clean, the larger purpose of housework may be directed towards the meanings women associate with housework.

I argue that the “spiritual deformities” Rabuzzi refers to the doubt, fear and anxiety that they are not good housekeepers, wives and mothers, and that they are lazy, disorganized, undisciplined. Additionally, these women complete housework to assuage the guilt and shame that their homes were judged to be dirty or untidy, or more importantly they clean to prevent

such shame or guilt from ever occurring.⁴⁵ In fact, Rabuzzi (1982: 108) argues that in addition to using their bodies to clean and tidy rooms in their homes, women complete housework to “effect a clean self”. In a sense, by cleaning women are “cleaning themselves” of their guilt and shame; “part of what a housewife purifies when she cleans are her own inner feelings of shame or guilt” (Rabuzzi 1982: 114). Such emotional experiences could be understood as ‘dirt’ or ‘disorder’ on a woman’s peace of mind or general demeanour; they want a ‘clean’ state of mind, a peaceful state of mind. Rabuzzi (1982: 114) has stated to “feel at home with herself, [to have a clean self, no spiritual deformities] is to feel an absence of shame”.

Alternatively, it could be interpreted that by doing housework, women are “cleaning themselves” of worry, anxiety or any negative feelings or thoughts. Anecdotally, I know of some women who clean when they are stressed. By focusing on the repetitive motions of a housework task, on the goal of tidying or cleaning, *this allows women to momentarily forget or ease the urgency and difficulty of the issues and problems they faced/face or will face outside the home.* Or, perhaps the sense of accomplishment or success felt by completing a housework task, gives women the confidence or serenity to tackle an issue or task that is bothering them or that they find difficult.

The ‘negative state’ of housework and housework taken to extremes:

Another important point I argue should be discussed is the idea that cleanliness can be conceptualized as a negative state, in the sense that it can be conceptualized as containing no dirt or mess, rather than the conceptualization of cleanliness as order, as something positive, that dirt and mess negates. Dirt and mess are considered as ‘addition’, as they are literally added to a

⁴⁵ The basis of this guilt/shame is linked to the associations with cleanliness/dirt, and those who keep their homes clean and those who do not. This link will be discussed at a later point in this chapter.

clean space, as their 'addition'/presence destroys the 'negativity'/pure state of cleanliness. This conceptualization illuminates the fragile and temporary nature of cleanliness, as anything added to a space can make a space dirty or disorderly. Thus, I argue that the conceptualization explains why some women, who hold an idealized 'negative' standard for cleanliness, otherwise known as high standards of cleanliness, and believe that any dirt or disorder is dirtying their home (Rabuzzi 1982: 128). Essentially, women who keep such homes could be described as "scrubbers", "house proud" or fussy, neat-freaks, or even anal or obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). I further argue that holding such standards is unrealistic and exhausting. Yet, I do not think that there is anything wrong theoretically with holding high standards of cleanliness, having a low tolerance for dirt and disorder and completing housework regularly and thoroughly, as is with the case with 'scrubbers'. I do not think such women are odd or that there is something mentally wrong with them; I reject the name-calling of neat-freak and anal. I particularly reject labelling such women as OCD, for it trivializes the experience of those who suffer from this mental disorder. In fact, Rabuzzi describes the cleaning habits of women who I argue more realistically characterize those who experience OCD in relation to cleaning.

Rabuzzi (1982: 114) argues that keeping one's home free from dirt and disorder is taken to extremes. Housework tasks are expanded to great lengths and the cleaning itself is no longer a positive experience – "instead of being holy and self-affirming, are demonic". In these homes, there are no signs of dirt or disorder. For example, no newspapers or magazines accumulate, dishes are cleaned the moment after they are used. Every item is always returned to its proper place before another item is used. These descriptions may seem harmless, as they are presented in many homes as the ideal of how one's home should be cleaned and organized.

However, this level of perfection takes a great deal of time and effort; in fact, if every room and item must be cleaned and orderly, then there is never enough time to keep one's home in such a state. These individuals work very hard at housework tasks that others would find unnecessary, such as vacuuming already immaculate floors, washing dishes before they go in the dishwasher, etc. For those who "succumb to housework's demonic pull, time is so filled that there is no room for surprises". Ultimately, Rabuzzi (1982: 116) argues that housework is not completed because it physically needs to be done, as in the floor is physically dirty and needs vacuuming; housework is done "because they feel compelled to do it". She suggests that in such cases the women seem "not to exist apart from their work...the task swallows up the performer instead".

Furthermore, Rabuzzi (1982: 116-117) states that: "that relationship to housework is just as far removed from divinity as is the ordinary profane performance of the woman who hastens to get through her tasks heedlessly only longing to get them over and done with". Thus, she suggests that such a relationship to housework is 'demonic', or negative; such women complete housework because they feel compelled to do it, not because of any positive meanings they could get through such tasks. I argue that the negative associations with housework could also be applied to 'scrubbers' and 'house proud' women; they clean because they feel compelled to do it, to avoid the negative characterizations of their homes, and by extension themselves in terms of their own personality and fulfillment of domestic roles. These women may not have taken housework to the extreme case described by Rabuzzi; their housework may not significantly impact their lives and relations to others, which I argue is part of the definition of OCD in the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV).

Additionally, Rabuzzi's statement suggests that the women who "just want to get their housework over and done with", housework is not 'divine'. Perhaps these women do not hold, or do not hold to the same degree the positive associations and meanings associated with housework described by Rabuzzi for 'scrubber', 'houseproud' women. Instead, these women may have a 'flapper'⁴⁶ attitude towards housework, as discussed by Horsfield. Therefore, I argue Rabuzzi's work reveals two important insights. Firstly, that completing housework is viewed positively because it assuages women's guilt, fear and anxiety, but that the meanings associated with housework (related to one's successful fulfillment as a wife and mother, the cleanliness of one's home is a reflection of one's personality characteristics) provide the basis of women completing housework for negative reasons, as initially dismissed by Douglas. Thus, secondly, I argue Rabuzzi's insight to the extremes of housework, as well as the meaning "in and of itself" associated with housework challenge Douglas' statement that dirt is removed for only positive reasons; fear, anxiety as well as guilt and shame can influence women's completion of housework as the meanings they associate with housework tasks.

Contributors to the 'moral' association of housework:

Finally, the idea that morality may be associated with housework may seem odd; however, individuals do judge the cleanliness and order of others' homes. Specifically, I argue that women judge other women's homes. Moreover, I argue that women who have high standards and cleanliness, low thresholds for dirt and disorder, keep their homes spotless and believe that keeping a home clean is a women's responsibility, are particularly judgmental and

⁴⁶ Horsfield describes (1998: 247-248, 250-252) flapping as a "lack of a philosophy" about cleaning. This type of cleaning is random and, done whenever the mood strikes. She described 'scrubbers' as women who clean thoroughly and regularly. Also, scrubbers' are intolerant of dirt and disorder, "they find looking away from dirt is next to impossible.

harsh in judging other women's homes. I further argue that this is the case as these women have internalized the moral associations with cleaning and the person who does the cleaning.

Furthermore, in extreme cases, such as the filthy homes or completely disastrous homes in various organization and cleaning shows like *How Clean Is Your House?*, individuals perceive the dirt and disorder as "morally questionable"; individuals make comments with "moral overtones" in relation to seeing such houses. They question what is wrong with the occupants, how they could live in such dirt and disorder, why haven't they kept their homes reasonably clean and liveable (Horsfield 1998: 23-24).

I argue that several factors have shaped women's relationship to their housework. These factors include the warnings of germ theorists, advertisers and marketers and the guidelines outlined by home economists and marketers and advertisers. The culmination of these factors has resulted in a moral association with cleaning the housework, more specifically with the morality of the person completing housework, or rather unsuccessfully completing it; especially if that person is a woman. As a result, I argue that women's housekeeping is evaluated by others, particularly other women, and that women self-evaluate their performance of housework. Ultimately, I believe these factors result in women engaging in self-monitoring regarding their successful completion of housework. In other words, women regulate their activities, such as cleaning, in order to ensure that they will not be negatively judged by others, specially other women.

These beliefs persist today, as demonstrated by a 2012 commercial for Cascade's Kitchen Counselor. In the commercial, a woman is visited by her sister. The visiting sister notices the glasses are cloudy, the original woman says: "You didn't have to come over". The sister replies:

“Actually, honey, I think I did”, in a snarky tone. The Cascade Kitchen Counselor introduces Cascade to solve the problem, stating that: “we can help avoid this”. However, once the glasses are clear, the visiting sister says that: “Too bad it doesn’t work on windows” while the original woman frowns in anger. The visiting sister is utilizing a moralizing, judging tone in her statements and voice. Instead of suggesting the dishwasher is broken, or that her sister is using the wrong product; I argue that she is criticizing her sister’s domestic skills. The original woman’s response suggests that she interprets this remark as being a moral evaluation, as a criticism of her domestic skills, and thus, of her. The visiting sister’s retort “I think I did [need to come over]” implies that cloudy glasses is a problem that needs to be fixed, that the original woman needs to be aware of. The visiting sister’s final statement provides another criticism of the original woman’s domestic skills. Finally, in this light, the Cascade Kitchen Counselor’s suggestion to ‘avoid this’, may be a suggestion to not just avoid cloudy glasses, but also to avoid arguments/ criticisms.

Unfortunately, the Cascade Kitchen Counselor does not have a product to ‘solve’ the problem of the cloudy windows, and the resulting argument, and thus leaves. I argue that this commercial may be relatable to women as they may experience criticism from other women (particularly female family members) regarding their domestic skills. Ultimately, the commercial is telling women that the right cleaning product can avoid, ‘solve’ arguments over domestic tasks. However, the product is not really ‘solving’ the problem, as women continue to judge other women on the quality of their housework, and women continue to feel that their successful completion of housework is a reflection on them as a woman, mother and wife.

Cleaning for Goffman’s ‘imagined other’:

I argue that the phenomenon of monitoring oneself because of the presence of the ‘other’,

or the belief in the presence of the 'other', or even the imagined 'other' is also going through women's minds when they clean – for both 'scrubbers' and 'flappers'. Erving Goffman's concepts assist in the better understanding of the differences between 'scrubbers' and 'flappers'. Goffman discussed in his book (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* the concepts of impression management and the 'backstage/ front stage'. Goffman states that social interaction involves two kinds of activities, "the expression we give, and the expressions we give off". The first activity "involves verbal symbols or their substitutes which he uses admittedly and solely to convey the information that he [they] uses admittedly and solely to convey the information that he [they] and the others are known to attach to these symbols". The second activity "involves a wide range of action that others can treat as symptomatic of the actor, the expectation being that the action was performed for other reasons other than the information conveyed in this way" (Goffman 1959: 2).

Goffman further suggests, that like a play, people 'perform' on the 'front stage', and do not perform on the 'back stage' (1959: 111-112).⁴⁷ He states that performers usually expect the audience to not intrude on them in the 'back stage' area; that the 'back stage' provides a reprieve for performers from the demands of the 'front stage' (1959: 112-113). In the same way, it is believed that when individuals are in their 'back stage', they are separated from their 'audience' – the people who experience their 'performance' or interaction, and thus do not need to 'perform' – to engage in impression management.

⁴⁷ The discussion of whether there actually is a 'back stage' where people are not engaging in impression management versus the idea that there is no 'back stage' we are always performing, or engaging in 'impression management' is beyond the scope of this chapter. The concepts of 'back stage' and 'front stage' are utilized for the purpose of analyzing the differences in 'scrubbers' and 'flappers' relation to how housework, specifically how they interpret and are influenced others' perceptions of their housework.

Differences between 'flappers' and 'scrubbers':

I argue that the concepts of impression management, expressions given and given off, the 'front stage' and 'back stage' can be applied to housework. With housework, I also argue that individuals engage in impression management regarding their successful completion of housework. The impressions given, in this case, are the standards of cleanliness (or lack thereof) in one's home. The impressions given off, are the associations individuals link to the individual who has successfully completed or unsuccessfully completed their housework. As such, I argue that 'scrubbers' engage in this type of impression management, while 'flappers' do not; as such I argue that they either do not care or reject the impression management scrubbers engage in, as well as the 'impressions' given and given off. Thus, I argue that 'scrubbers' believe their home is their 'front stage', they must put on the performance of successfully completing their housework, while 'flappers' do not engage in this performance, as they view their home as their 'back stage'.⁴⁸

Based on these insights, one question that came to mind regarding the compulsion to clean and the 'psychological investment' in housework in 'scrubbers' is whether these women clean for themselves, for others, or both. By this I mean do they clean because they despise dirt/disorder and/or adore cleanliness in itself, separate from how they will be judged? I question whether these women clean so thoroughly and regularly because they have internalized these associations/qualities of cleanliness and the links/judgments associated with these states that have been previously discussed. I am interested in the link between three things: (1) one's feelings regarding dirt/disorder and cleanliness, (2) how one is judged by these characteristics

⁴⁸ I realize that I am describing individuals' cleaning habits and attitudes towards cleaning as an either/or scenario. As discussed in a previous chapter, the scrubber/flapper division is not absolute, as 'scrubbers' can have periods of 'flapping' and vice versa.

(as a 'good' or 'bad' wife, mother, as someone who is morally lazy or undisciplined or a hard worker and disciplined) and (3) their housework, specifically, how, why and how often they clean.

This question may become clearer by discussing 'flappers'. As previously discussed, in the definition of the two types is a difference in attitude and behaviour regarding housework. Thus, I theorize 'flappers' clean for others, such as when company, particularly a mother or mother-in law is coming to visit. I also think 'flappers' clean because of the looming presence, or imagined presence of others in their homes; they do not feel compelled to regularly and thoroughly clean, as 'scrubbers' do. I believe 'scrubbers' may have stronger feelings of dislike towards dirt and disorder and more appreciation for cleanliness than 'flappers'. I am asking whether they may also have internalized the judgments of others can make regarding the state of their homes; they clean because they feel their homes need to be clean and orderly at all times to avoid potential judgment; in a sense they clean because of the 'imagined other', more specifically, the 'imagined judgments' of the 'imagined other'. 'Flappers' also clean for 'imagined others' (if they think their mother is coming), but they do not internalize these judgments; I argue that this internalization compels 'scrubbers' to clean thoroughly and regularly.

By internalization, I mean whether or not one is thinking about the potential response of others to the state of one's house, and if one accepts these judgments and associations. As such, the difference between the two types of cleaners may also be an acceptance of the associations previously discussed: 'flappers' may reject the belief that one is a 'bad' wife and mother if one's house is untidy/disorderly as they reject that part of a wife's and mother's responsibilities is being the family member who is solely or mostly responsible for the cleanliness of one's home.

'Flappers' may also reject the belief that the cleanliness of one's home is a reflection of one's character (or lack thereof) one may neglect housework due to a lack of energy or time; in fact, part of the definition of 'flapper' is one who realizes that the "war on dirt" cannot ever be won (Horsfield 1998: 250).

Positive and Negative Reinforcement and Punishment:

However, it may be the case that 'scrubbers' clean simply because of their feelings regarding dirt and cleanliness, rather than the associations with cleanliness. The three elements are separate, but I argue that these three elements are linked for 'scrubbers'; the psychological investment in housework and the compulsion to clean is more easily explained by the link of these associations with cleanliness, specifically their continued presence and acceptance (internalization). I argue that operant conditioning is occurring externally and internally for women when they clean for both 'scrubbers' and 'flappers'. Positive reinforcement consists of "a reward or rewarding circumstance following an action which leads to the action's being more likely to be repeated" (Matsumo 2009: 392).

I argue that the pleasure/pride in having a clean/orderly space is a personal positive reinforcement. Furthermore, I argue that 'scrubbers' experience internal and external positive reinforcements, while 'flappers' may clean for external positive reinforcement. Externally, positive reinforcement would consist of others, specifically family members or other women, making positive comments about the cleanliness of one's house. However, I do not think this would often occur.

As previously discussed, with housework such as the maintenance of cleanliness, one is not completing anything new – this may be why family members may only notice uncompleted

housework rather than when housework has been completed. Other women may not comment on housework- they may think it is rude, or they may not comment at all – if cleanliness/order is something that is expected, it is not seen as remarkable. Thus, unless a woman feels personal satisfaction/pride from having a clean/orderly home, women clean to avoid the psychological definition of punishment. Punishment consists of “any stimulus that decreases the likelihood that the behavior that immediately precedes the stimulus will be repeated” (Matsumo 2009: 414). In this scenario, I argue that the negative judgments of other women (seeing them as ‘bad’ wife and mother, seeing them as physically and morally lazy), or the fear of such judgments motivates women to clean. As previously discussed, as ‘scrubbers’ have internalized the judgments others can make about the state of their home, they are more motivated to avoid positive punishment, indeed, their cleaning may be motivated by the very idea or fear of this positive punishment. Finally, I think that ‘scrubbers’ cleaning is more motivated by negative reinforcement than that of ‘flappers’. Negative reinforcement consists of the “reinforcement of a behavior by the removal or prevention of an aversive stimulus” (Matsumo 2009: 331). I believe that as ‘scrubbers’ have a greater dislike for disorder and dirt than ‘flappers’, taking away the dirt, imposing order is a removal of an ‘adverse stimulus’. For flappers, cleaning and imposing order also consisting of removing an “adverse stimulus”, but there is a significant difference in the perception in the severity of the stimulus (dirt and disorder are viewed much more negatively by ‘scrubbers’).

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the ideologies and beliefs discussed by Friedan influence how women perceive themselves and housework. The work of Neuhaus has demonstrated why and how these beliefs continue to present in advertising. Additionally with the use of the insights described by Douglas and Rabuzzi I have discussed the psychological investment in housework; specifically

the psychological meanings housework can have for 'scrubbers'. However, an understanding of the assignment of housework to women and women's psychological investment in housework is not sufficient to adequately understand the complexity of the continuance of the gendered division of labor. I argue that an understanding of the socialization/ communication styles in men and women, as such I argue that they influence how men and women communicate (or do not communicate) about housework. I also argue that these gender differences can help explain what occurs during conflict over housework. By exploring men and women's communication styles and socialization, I will be able to discuss the fairness/equality debate, as well as how and why conflict occurs during discussions/ arguments over housework.

CHAPTER 5: EXAMINATION OF TEXTS1:

In this chapter, three 'self-help'⁴⁹ books will be analyzed. The first book is *The Superior Wife Syndrome: Why Women Do Everything So Well and Why-For The Sake of Our Marriages-We've Got to Stop*, the second is *The Lazy Husband How To Get Men to More Parenting and Housework*, and the third is *You Just Don't Understand! Women and Men In Conversation*. These texts were chosen for the insights they provide in both their contributions and in their weaknesses. I argue that analyzing self-help books is insightful as they are illustrations of the information, arguments and solutions everyday individuals are exposed to and are consuming regarding gender and housework. They provide examples of how gender and housework are discussed in a non-academic setting.⁵⁰ I contend that non-academic examples of information and discussions of gender housework are worthy of academic examination in order to understand how issues related to the gendered division of housework are framed and understood. By examining their logic, solutions and arguments, these texts can be analyzed and critiqued in the light of academic theories and concepts surrounding the gendered division of housework. The preceding chapters consisted of an overview of past research, theories and concept in order to formulate the framework that gender differences in knowledge, skills, values and perceptions related to housework significantly contribute to and explain the continuing gendered division of housework. I will use the insights presented in previous chapters to examine the concepts presented in these texts.

⁴⁹ Not all the books are intended to be self-help books. Tannen does not describe her book as such. However, she states in the afterword in a later edition that she has been told by many individuals how her book has helped them.

⁵⁰ The three books I will be analyzing do refer to and discuss academic research. However, I would argue that the books are written for a non-academic reader. This fact will be part of my criticisms for each text.

Carin Rubenstein's (2009) *The Superior Wife Syndrome: Why Women Do Everything So Well and Why-For The Sake of Our Marriages-We've Got to Stop:*

Carin Rubenstein's book is concerned with the concept of 'superior wives'. She believes that the majority of heterosexual married couples include a 'superior wife', whom she describes as "the one who develops expertise in nearly all aspects of modern life; she becomes the de facto master of the marital domain while also earning a significant part of the family income" (Rubenstein 2009: 2). She argues that these wives are 'superior' because they are ones who are "capable and responsible, organized and efficient, caring and involved" (Rubenstein 2009: 2). I argue that Rubenstein's use of the concept 'superior wives' expands upon the concept of the 'supermom'; such women are those who feel they need to perfectly and effortlessly juggle paid work and family. The concept of 'superior wife' also illuminates the other work that 'supermoms' do such as making family decisions/doing family planning. In addition, the concept demonstrates why women are 'supermoms' or rather 'superior wives' as their husbands do not seem to be as efficient or competent at domestic tasks as them.

Moreover, Rubenstein expands upon the concept of 'supermom' by explaining the process of how a 'superior wife' emerges. She explains that the dynamics of a 'superior wife' marriage by referring to the interplay between husbands and wives: "First, take a husband who tries to do as little as possible, one who may even fake incompetence to avoid responsibility. Second, add a wife who steps into the breach and uses her natural ability to master most aspects of adult and family life. And third, stir in the complicity of both: a husband who avoids domestic effort, worry, and stress, and a wife who allows her husband to be an unequal partner." (Rubenstein 2009: 4).

Rubenstein's goal is to examine the concept of the 'superior wives' and see how it affects the relationships of husbands and wives. Rubenstein designed surveys, posted them on the Internet and analyzed the results statistically – her participants were from all over the world; however, most were from the United States. Rubenstein conducted interviews with many married couples. She also: “poured over the latest social science research about marriage and relationships, divorce and femininity, household chores and dual-earner couples” (Rubenstein 2009: 4-5).

In chapter 1, Rubenstein explains that the 'superior wife' exists because of the interplay of two attitudes: men believe it's their job to be taken care of, and wives believe that it's their job to do the caring. In addition, she states that these attitudes exist despite the expectation that both partners engage in paid work. Rubenstein states that 'superior wife' marriages exist because of the following formula: if she takes control, he doesn't have to. One woman interviewed by Rubenstein stated that: “ 'If I do not do things, they do not get done' ” (Rubenstein 2009: 17-19).

Rubenstein points out that as a consequence of the 'superior wife' phenomenon, a woman's life is similar in terms of domestic work regardless of whether she is single or a wife – in both scenarios women cook and complete housework. However, a man's life tends to be differently if he is single: “If a man lives alone, he's much more likely to get by as a marginally functional bachelor, one who eats pizza and frozen dinners and lives like a college boy” (Rubenstein 2009: 21-22).⁵¹

Rubenstein describes five signs that she believes define and explain 'superior wives' –

⁵¹ A 2010-2011 Statistics Canada article by Milan, Keown and Robles-Urquijo stated that single women and men spent similar hours a week during housework (7.7 and 6.1). However, in dual earner couples, women completed 13.9 hours to men's 8.6—a little more than half of the amount of hours women complete weekly.

“management theory, organizational psychological research and common sense” (Rubenstein 2009: 42-43). The five signs are being the family managers, multi-taskers, caring caretakers, sacrificers, deciders and efficiency experts.

The first sign is the family manager; these women are in charge of everything that involves the family and the home. These women figure “out what’s most important and needs to be done right away, what can wait, and how to get all of it done eventually” (2009: 43). The second sign of ‘superior wives’ is multi-taskers. Multitasking allows these women to avoid feeling overwhelmed by the tasks they have to do. The third sign, Rubenstein argues, is these women become family managers and multi-taskers because they care so much about their marriage, children, relatives and friends. Rubenstein believes that this care consists of ‘emotion work’, that is another task of unpaid work, like housework and childcare (Rubenstein 2009: 46, 48-49). The fourth sign is that women sacrifice a great deal; “they sacrifice their own needs and desires for the sake of their family...being self-sacrificing means being feminine” (Rubenstein 2009: 51). Finally, Rubenstein describes ‘superior wives’ as efficiency experts – as completing tasks “with minimal waste, expense and unnecessary effort”. She argues that women also view efficiency as feminine (Rubenstein 2009: 56).

Rubenstein discusses in chapter 2 the biological, social and psychological reasons behind the ‘superior wife’ phenomenon. She states that 28% of the wives in her web survey believed that women’s expertise in family matters was “natural, in our genes”. Also, two in ten wives say that “society has trained them to take the family reins, to steer the family ship, to be in charge”. In addition, one in ten wives feel that “it is a woman’s need to please that guides her onto a superior path” (Rubenstein 2009: 62-63).

This rationale is characteristic of the relative resource theoretical perspective discussed in chapter 2. As a societal explanation of the gendered division of housework, this theory was critiqued for its inadequate addressing of gender. I argue for a rejection of such a theory, as it is based on the assumption that only when a woman earns an income can she ask her partner to complete housework. Additionally, the theory does not seem to apply to men if their wives out-earn them in these situations, women do more of the housework as a way to compensate for the gender difference. Also, the logic of the participant suggests that income trumps fairness; if two spouses work the same or similar amount of hours, I argue that housework should be divided as equally as possible as it is objectively unfair and very insensitive for one partner to engage in leisure during the same time period that the other partner is struggling to complete hours of unpaid work. Yet, I do realize that in terms of time availability, equity or equality in the division of unpaid work is difficult to practically achieve if spouses have different amounts of work.

Conversely, Rubenstein discusses several arguments for this concept. Firstly she argues that: "A woman's brain is vastly different from a man's brain, and her female hormones offer a lifelong advantage in being social, in understanding emotion, and in being able to manage a complex life that includes breadwinning, child rearing and household managing" (Rubenstein 2009: 63). Secondly, it can be argued that "social pressures reinforce these genetic tendencies and guide the ways in which women and men behave in the particular time and place and time in which they live" (Rubenstein 2009: 63). Thirdly, Rubenstein argues that: "If the brain rules the body, then family and culture propel people to behave within their neurochemical guidelines. It's true that social rules define our beliefs and attitudes and expectations about gender roles, but they do so in a way that is consistent with biology" (Rubenstein 2009: 73). Finally, she states that "our feelings and thoughts and opinions are subject not only to social approval and current social

trends but also to biological imperatives. The brain leads us along a culturally acceptable path” (Rubenstein 2009: 73).

I argue that in these statements Rubenstein is demonstrating her lack of reflexivity on the topic of biology. Her description suggests that the social is a manifestation of biology. She does not question the legitimacy of the social following ‘biology’; that gender differences in behavior and attitude (the social) are explained by biology. Essentially, this attitude ignores the influence of the social on people’s behavior and attitudes. I would argue that this statement characterizes the social as another manifestation of biology. The last two arguments suggest that Rubenstein believes that biology influences people’s thoughts and feelings. This assumption could be used by some to justify gender differences in thoughts and actions, thereby absolving individual responsibility from one’s thoughts or behaviors.

Rubenstein argues that: “...gender experts focus almost exclusively on a wide variety of innate, biological differences between men and women. They proclaim that neurobiology is destiny, that women have female brains, and that men have male brains, and that never the twain shall meet. Differences begin early during development due to a combination of genetic and hormonal events and continue throughout the lifespan of an individual”. Similarly, other neuroscientists believe the reality is that: “women and men will always and forever be more distinct than alike. That fact, they insist, is owing to gender differences in the hardwiring of the brain, and there’s nothing to be done about it. It’s not biology is destiny, exactly, rather that biology is unavoidable, so get used to it”. (Rubenstein 2009: 64).

These neuroscientists’ statements are characteristic of biological determinism, as the concept implies that biology is inevitable, and cannot be changed. Furthermore, I argue that

using biology to explain gender differences is a flawed method; in many cases gender differences are 'explained' or justified by biology. I am not saying that biology does not influence any of the gender differences between men and women, but that I feel that biology is often used to explain the 'naturalness' of gender differences. Therefore, I would argue that either Rubenstein's mistake is one of the following: she has not adequately analyzed the deeper meaning of the concept 'biology is destiny' and the ways biology is often used, she does not adequately understand the concept, or she herself does not believe that 'biology is destiny' but that: 'biology is unavoidable, so get used to it' (Rubenstein 2009: 64). I acknowledge that she may not be discussing her own perspective, but I strongly wish she had been reflexive enough to deconstruct her own meanings of biology to adequately analyze the perspective that came across in her account of neuroscientists".

Rubenstein furthers her discussion by examining the perspectives men have of their wives being 'superior'. She argues that there is a gap between men and women's perceptions. In fact, her web survey showed that 85% of wives said they were the family expert on caring for the house; whereas, 61% of husbands said they were. Rubenstein believes that the wives' perspectives are more appropriate because they wrote lengthy written explanations regarding all the family/domestic work (Rubenstein 2009: 76). She uses the new social rule that men should be doing domestic work to explain this inconsistency. Men are aware they should be sharing the domestic work and in fact believe "in their imagination [that] they are sharing...They are [also] domestic legends in their own mind: every time they move a single load of laundry to the dryer, they are doing all of the laundry" (Rubenstein 2009: 76). Rubenstein thus argues that: "This credibility gap exemplifies men's refusal to perceive how superior their wives really are (Rubenstein 2009: 76).

Rubenstein also discusses several beliefs which are related to the 'superior wife' phenomenon. Firstly, she states that men have difficulty letting go of traditional ideas about gender roles, regarding what is masculine or feminine. She found in her research that women tended to be more open minded about gender identity. Secondly, Rubenstein discusses the influence of women being over-dependent on their marriages. Overdependence can be defined as being submissive, in constant fear of separation and of being criticized or disapproved off by significant others. Such wives either silence their thoughts and feelings to save the marriage or they confront their husbands to demand changes. Finally, Rubenstein discusses the influence of income. Rubenstein believes men adhere to the following formula: "If his total income is bigger than her total income, then her domestic responsibilities are bigger than his domestic responsibility" (Rubenstein 2009: 111).

In chapter 3, Rubenstein discusses in more detail the influence of income on men's lack of participation in domestic work as well as wives 'superiority'. She found in her research that the higher a husband's income, the more likely his wife is 'superior'. In addition, she found that high-earning wives are just as likely to be 'superior wives'; they do not use their salary to bargain their way out of domestic tasks the way men do (Rubenstein 2009: 91-92). Rubenstein believes that these wives feel that their larger salary emasculates their husband. She states that men who believe their manliness is linked to their income feel the most distress if their wives earn more than them as "their beliefs are contradicted by their marital reality. It hurts their masculine pride to have a wife that earns more" (Rubenstein 2009: 122). As a result, these wives try very hard to be 'domestic goddesses' in order to prevent further emasculation (Rubenstein 2009: 99).

In chapter 4, Rubenstein argues that some men deliberately play dumb to avoid the responsibility of domestic work. Her web survey result concluded that three in ten men sometimes pretend to not know how to complete a task to avoid doing it, while four in ten wives believe their husbands play dumb to avoid doing domestic work (Rubenstein 2009: 132). Rubenstein also states that some don't complete domestic tasks as they have realized that if they wait long enough, their wives will give in and do the tasks themselves or they have learned that if they complete a task badly, they will not be asked to take on that responsibility again (Rubenstein 2009: 132-133). She argues that the concept of learned helplessness may explain men's behavior. Rubenstein argues this most likely self-taught learned helplessness is a "deliberate attempt by men to train themselves to be dependent on their wives" (Rubenstein 2009: 133).

Rubenstein also discusses the idea that as a result of the 'superior wife' phenomenon, husbands tend to have more free time than their wives. Moreover, this time is defined as 'pure free time', which does not include watching television with one's children, but is spent relaxing or doing something one finds fun. Wives and mothers tend to have less free time than childless, unmarried women (Rubenstein 2009: 135). She argues that women feel guilty for taking time for themselves. However, men "feel utterly entitled to snag time for themselves, with no guilt strings attached, which is why they can relax so easily...It's as if male free time is a birthright, one that cannot and will not be denied. Meanwhile, female free time is taboo, a rare and extraordinary thing" (Rubenstein 2009: 136).⁵²

⁵² Believing or rejecting that male free time is a 'birth right', or an entitlement, is related to perceptions of fairness as this will shape whether women accept less leisure time as their husbands, or fee; that they are entitled to comparable leisure time, as discussed in chapter 2.

In the final part of the chapter, Rubenstein discusses the concept of nagging. She states that many men complain about their wife's nagging due to the "male refusal syndrome: the stubborn rejection of anything that's in their best interests if it's even remotely related to their wife's being right about something" (Rubenstein 2009: 144). She explains that there is a gender stereotype that if wives are saying something negative, it is automatically seen as nagging, but if a husband makes a negative comment, it "gets a more positive spin".⁵³ She believes this is why only 10% of all couples in her research said that the husbands do the nagging, compared to the half of the couples who stated that the wives do most of the nagging.

Rubenstein found that couples that do not include a 'superior wife' are most likely to see that neither partner nags. She argues that nagging may be a symptom of the dissatisfaction and frustration on the part of women in being a 'superior wife' marriage. She explains that the lack of nagging in 'non-superior wife' marriages may indicate that it may be beneficial for a husband to have a 'non-superior' wife. Rubenstein explains that some husbands believe their wives nag because they want all domestic tasks completed their way, others believe that wives nag no matter what tasks he does or how he does them (Rubenstein 2009: 145). I agree with this statement, and I argue that wives 'nag' because they want their husbands to know that doing housework 'properly' is important to them, although they may not have explicitly expressed this attitude and value to their partners; as previously suggested, wives may feel that their knowledge, skills and values related to housework is common sense, that it is straightforward and obvious why housework needs to be completed 'promptly' and 'properly'.

⁵³ This unusual perception will be discussed in the analysis of *You Just Don't Understand! Women And Men In Conversation! Women and Men In Conversation*.

In chapter 5 Rubenstein discusses wives' desire for fairness in their marriages. She states that wives do not want to be the boss, they want a man who "will be a true partner and co-conspirator, or at least to have cooperative and caring husband" (Rubenstein 2009: 171). They want husbands who complete a fair share of domestic tasks. Thus, the more domestic tasks a husband completes, the happier wives are.⁵⁴ However, research by Amato, Johnson, Booth and Rogers demonstrates that the more domestic tasks men do, the less satisfied they are with their marriages (Amato, Johnson, Booth and Rogers 2003, as cited in Rubenstein 2009: 172).

Rubenstein states that it seems for men "giving is not, apparently, its own reward, at least as far as husbands are concerned" (Rubenstein 2009: 172). She also states that by the logic described the Amato et. al. research, husbands of 'superior wives' should be very happy. However, Rubenstein states that in her research she found that men who admitted that their wives were 'superior' received anger and resentment from their wives. Research by Coltrane suggests states that the more housework women complete, the more depressed wives are (Coltrane 1994, as cited in Rubenstein 2009: 173).

This phenomenon of unfairness being linked to bad marriages baffles me, in the sense that I have difficulty understanding the husband's mentality. If husbands know that an unfair division of housework can result in their wives feeling, angry, resentful and upset, why would they continue to resist completing housework? I would argue that a sensitive, reasonable person would not continually do (or in this case, not do) something that would make their partner upset, they would do what they could do to make their partner happy, satisfied and secure. I realize that gender ideology, and the reasons regarding why men 'justify' not doing housework, come into

⁵⁴ Some women's acceptance of unequal division of housework- believing that this division is fair is based on their feelings of entitlement, their gender ideology as well as the type of comparisons (same gender or between gender) that they make, as discussed in chapter 2.

play, as well as the link associated with status, which will be discussed in the third book.

However, I would argue that men need to put an end to their pride, self-righteousness and narrow view of masculinity (as will be discussed in the analysis of the third book) in order to make the most important person in their lives, their wives, happy.

Rubenstein (2009: 175) also discusses how many of the women she interviewed confessed to resorting to certain tactics to persuade or sweet-talk their husbands into doing more domestic work. She states that three in ten wives in her research 'play dumb' to avoid doing tasks they don't want to do. However, only 22% of husbands believe wives do so; therefore, Rubenstein argues that perhaps husbands are not fooled by this tactic. Some wives who 'play dumb' say they do so as they are tired of being 'superior', others do so to "inflate their husbands' ego". One woman stated that : "It's not that I play dumb, but I play weak...why kill bugs or lift boxes when he's right there?...It's easier to act like I can't do something, plus it bolsters his ego" (Rubenstein 2009: 175-176).

I argue that Rubenstein has failed to see that this attitude is similar to some men's attitude. She has stated several times that the husbands of 'superior wives' seem to think 'why should I do it, if she's here?', which implies that housework is 'naturally' a woman's job. In fact she describes an infinite loop of flawed logic which justifies the allocation of housework as a woman's responsibility. The continuance of 'traditional beliefs' about men is the other side of the coin of 'traditional beliefs about women' – specifically the stalled revolution. Rubenstein does later suggest to women to try to take on traditionally masculine activities around the house as part of the solution to become 'non-superior', and does suggest that she thinks that women having 'traditional beliefs' about men is a problem. However, I argue that a deeper discussion of

the parallels of this belief to the 'superior wife' phenomenon would have strengthened her argument.

In chapter 7, Rubenstein discusses 'non-superior wives', specifically the characteristics of such wives and the effect of having such a wife in a marriage. She describes these wives as "defying biology and social and psychological imperatives by refusing to be the most efficient, most organized, most decisive, and most sacrificing person in their marriage". Echoing previous statements, she also states that it takes two partners to have a 'non-superior wife' marriage. 'Non-superior wife' marriages do not contain a 'superior' husband; according to Rubenstein's research, neither partner is superior (Rubenstein 2009: 256). Thus, 'non-superior wives' are more likely to be in either part of 'truly egalitarian' or 'truly traditional couples' (Rubenstein 2009: 236). Rubenstein clarifies that many couples who adhere to traditional gender roles contain a 'superior wife', but wives are 'non-superior' in 'truly traditional couples' in which both partners "buy into the man-as-breadwinner, wife-as-homemaker plan, wholeheartedly and without reservation, doubt or resentment" (Rubenstein 2009: 236).⁵⁵

I am confused by Rubenstein's characterization of 'non-superior' vs. traditional wives. She states that these wives are not 'superior' as they are not the deciders in the family and because they do not view themselves as better than their husbands. However, these wives are presumably doing all the other tasks of 'superior' wives in relation to family management, childcare, housework and cooking. I would argue that not being the family decider, is just one task removed from a 'superior wife' list of responsibilities. To specify, I believe these wives are

⁵⁵ In order to prevent confusion, I will discuss 'non-superior wives' as a group, even though they differ by ideology (egalitarian or traditional). As such the discussion of 'non-superior wives' may not include the beliefs, characteristics or behaviors of 'truly traditional' 'non-superior wives'.

still 'superior' as they are doing a second shift. The only difference, other than the removal of being the family decider is these wives' attitudes to their superiority.

As previously discussed by Rubenstein, 'superior wives' feel angry, bitter and resentful about their division of domestic tasks as they wish it were more equitable. Egalitarian 'superior' wives seem to feel this way. However, as I try to imagine the attitude of traditional 'superior wives', they may be unhappy about their division of domestic duties if they want some help with these tasks, but wish to be the spouse who is primarily responsible for them. I am confused because it seems to me that a 'traditional' superior wife- who has the attitude characteristic of 'superior' wife as well as a 'traditional' gender ideology is a contradiction. I argue that Rubenstein should have clarified and analyzed this concept in more detail. I realize that a woman can be 'transitional' or less traditional than the 'highly traditional' 'non-superior wives' Rubenstein describes who are happy to complete domestic duties as their responsibility and for their husbands to be the family decider.

Perhaps Rubenstein refers to 'traditional' 'superior wives' as wives who have a traditional gender ideology but are not happy with the unequal division of domestic duties. Ultimately, I argue that this confusion about ideology of 'superior'/'non-superior' wives, and the definition and attitudes characteristic of 'superior wives' is due to the existence of a transitional gender ideology, that was discussed in chapter 2. As such, I would re-label 'non-superior' traditional wives as 'superior' traditional wives. I would make the distinction between traditional 'superior' wives and most of the of the superior wives, as based on Rubenstein's definition, it is traditional 'superior' wives who deviate from her conception of 'superiority'.

Rubenstein also discusses the different types of husbands in 'non-superior wife' marriages. Firstly, there are men who are mutually agreed upon traditional marriage, which Rubenstein describes as 'caveman husbands'. They view themselves as "the king of [their] castle, the master of [their] domain". Such men make most of the family decisions, as both spouses believe that men should be the manager of the household. 'Non-superior wives' in such marriages see themselves as 'mistresses' of the children, cooking and cleaning (Rubenstein 2009: 258). The second type of husband in 'non-superior wife' marriages is the 'team-player husband'. Rubenstein states that two in five of 'non-superior wife' marriages contain such a husband. These men "reject traditional rules and roles...insist on equality at home...think that both partners should give the same amount and that both should be in charge" (Rubenstein 2009: 258-259). The final type of husband in a 'non-superior wife' marriage is the 'inter-sex husband'. Rubenstein states that these husbands share domestic tasks with their wives, similar to 'team-player husbands', but their sharing is motivated by a different reason. These husbands "truly give and sacrifice as much as their wives do, if not more. They are not part of a team so much as they are clones of their wives, as if they've been mind-melded together" (Rubenstein 2009: 262).⁵⁶

I argue that the distinction between the 'team-player husband' and the 'inter-sex husband' is a very important distinction. It seems to me that a 'team-player' husband completes housework out of love, out of care, while an 'inter-sex husband' completes housework because he feels it is inherently important, or for the inherent value in the principle of equality. I would argue that there is a hierarchy in terms of reasons for men to complete housework. The latter reason discussed is seen as the ideal, as it demonstrates that men understand and respect the importance

⁵⁶ Rubenstein states that she names these husbands after fish that have appeared in Potomac River in Virginia that are male but also female, as they produce eggs in their testes. As such, the author argues that 'inter-sex husbands' contain "the best of both gender worlds. He internalizes domestic chores and doesn't need to be reminded or nagged to help out" (Rubenstein 2009: 262).

of housework and equality. However, I argue that there are some problems with completing housework for care or love. Completing housework solely for care/love implies that one does not agree with completing housework based on equality, or the importance of completing housework/having a clean and tidy home.

In the final chapter, Rubenstein discusses solutions to the 'superior wife' problem. She insists that 'superior wives' revel in their 'superiority' as it's "their only source of power and control in a marriage gone wrong". Rubenstein also explains that many 'superior wives' only realize that they are 'superior', when they are bedridden with an illness or injury and realize that there is no one else who can run the household, or when they see the division of domestic tasks written down while completing a survey. Indeed, family therapists have stated that: "most couples fall into unequal relationship patterns without their conscious intention or awareness" (Knudson-Martin and Rankin Mahoney 1998, as cited in Rubenstein 2009: 280).

Rubenstein argues that ridding a 'superior wife' of her superiority is difficult as she needs the 'express cooperation' of her husband to do so. The rehabilitation plan to remove 'superiority' from a marriage can be very chaotic as "many husbands tend to be resistant to change or to confrontation of any kind. This male tendency is so predictable that many marriage experts call it demand and withdraw, a shorthand reference for what happens when wives try to change their husband's behavior" (Rubenstein 2009: 278). These couples "disguise their adherence to traditional gender roles by saying that the only reason she does so much is that she's better at cooking and doing housework than he is, but they really share everything...Or that he has a longer commute or works a few more hours a week, so he should do less at home, although they share everything" (Rubenstein 2009: 279-280).

I also found such a pattern while examining the transcripts of interviews I conducted as part of my undergraduate thesis research. My participants insisted that they did not divide housework by gender; instead, housework tasks were assigned by skill, preference or even competence. However, I argued that there were gender differences in socialization and exposure to knowledge, skills and values related to completing housework, which could explain why the wives knew how to complete housework tasks and/or were more skilled at completing these tasks than their husbands, and also enjoyed tasks more/felt completing housework was more important than their husbands.

Some men's help may be seen as a demonstration of care/love, but they may only be completing housework because housework is important to them, and or fairness is important to them. By this I mean that they do not necessarily agree with completing a fair share of housework, nor that completing housework is important, but they are completing housework to please their wives. However, this can cause problems because if wives criticize their husband's performance of housework, the men can see them as rejecting their care.⁵⁷ A tier below that would be men who have the mentality that: 'I'm doing this so she'll get off my case' – these men reject the reasons that 'inter-sex' and 'team-player' husbands complete housework – they do not care how the unfairness makes their wives feel. They may then feel that they are doing their wives a favor by completing housework.⁵⁸

Rubenstein concludes her book by describing how things would be if 'non-superior' wives were the norm in society. She states that: "if life were fair, the method of curing superior wives would be a public process, and women would not have to wage such an important battle

⁵⁷ Hochschild discussed that her female participants thought their fathers helped their mothers out of love and consideration. However, the men interviewed did not make this link between housework and love (Hochschild 1989: 49).

⁵⁸ This perception will be discussed in the analysis of the second book.

on their own. There would be a broad and legal assumption that it is unjust and unreasonable to expect wives to be superior” (Rubenstein 2009: 300). She also acknowledges that she is revealing a personal bias when she calls “for a future filled with egalitarian unions and devoid of traditional, father-knows-best marriages. Although I don’t believe that the so-called traditional marriage will ever vanish, I do believe that this arrangement is not to a woman’s benefit, since it guarantees her a lifetime of subservience and inferiority. A marriage in which the husband is the supreme head of the household is a pact made at the expense of a wife’s independence and self-reliance and self-confidence”(Rubenstein 2009: 301).

I find it interesting that Rubenstein discusses her ‘personal bias’ of rejecting traditional marriages for two reasons. Judging from the biology research discussion, Rubenstein is either implying that she believes ‘biology is destiny’, or at least that there are ‘natural’ differences between men and women. Thus, I argue that the above statement contradicts the extrapolations I have made. Overall, I feel that Rubenstein has not sufficiently analyzed, deconstructed and critiqued her assumptions regarding gender in this book.

Overall, I find that Rubenstein’s book lacks reflexivity in the sense of reflecting upon her assumptions about gender. Primarily, I argue that she confuses the use of the concept of biological determinism, as she describes the neuroscientists’ work as not characterizing ‘biology as destiny’, but that they state that biology shapes, if not determines, gender differences. I conceded that she may simply be describing their perspective, but she does not criticize or challenge this contradiction.

Secondly, this attitude is present in her discussion of ‘inter-sex’ husbands. An author who accepts wider gender expressions would have called such husbands another name, perhaps

'androgynous'. Her use of 'inter-sex' implies that differences between men and women are due to differences in sex, or biology. I assert that the term 'androgynous' suggests that these men possess the attitudes and engage in the behaviors that are stereotypically assigned to both genders. They are seen as feminine as they have these 'traditional' attitudes and engage in these 'traditional' behaviors. I argue that this concept clearly states that the difference between these men and the other type of husbands are due to differences in gender expression, and is based on the idea that gender differences are not based on biology but are socially constructed.

Thirdly, she defines 'non-superior' traditional wives as women who complete all of the domestic tasks because they choose to based on their gender ideology, and are married to men who are viewed as the managers of the home. As previously discussed, I argued that these wives are one degree below the 'superior wife' definition Rubenstein describes: they are completing all of the responsibilities of superior wives except for the managing, and they do not experience resentment and anger of their condition. I stated that Rubenstein either should have discussed this contradiction, and modified her definition of 'superior wives' in the sense of omitting the negative feelings women associate with being 'superior and the fact that that they are the family 'managers', or re-labelled these 'non-superior' traditional wives.

If Rubenstein had modified her definition, then, yes these women are 'non-superior wives'. However, as many 'superior wives' discussed by Rubenstein are the family managers and possess negative feelings, I argue that these wives are in fact 'superior', but that the dynamics of gender ideology prevents them from feeling resentment and anger. They do not perceive themselves to be 'superior', as their husbands are the 'masters' at home, but as they are doing all of the domestic tasks and they possess most of the characteristics of 'superior wives', I

argue that they are in fact 'superior'. Thus, I argue that Rubenstein has not adequately reflected upon her definition of a 'superior wife' and these supposed 'non-superior' traditional wives.

Finally, initially I felt there was a contradiction between Rubenstein's assertion that wives should be 'non-superior', in the sense that they should complete more housework and her lack of reflexivity on biology. For example, my argument for gender equality is based on the idea that gender differences are socially constructed, as well as a rejection of any gender difference (in how men and women are treated, rewarded or thought of) which is 'legitimized' by biology. However, it seems that Rubenstein's argument for equality may be based on feelings of justice, not a rejection of biology. Ultimately, I am disappointed by Rubenstein's lack of reflexivity regarding gender.

Joshua Coleman's (2005) *The Lazy Husband How To Get Men to Do More Parenting and Housework*:

Joshua Coleman's book discusses how women can ensure that their husbands stop being lazy – i.e.: not doing any or very many domestic tasks. Coleman begins the book by confessing that he is a former lazy husband. He states that he “developed allergies to all household cleaning agents, especially anything that could ever be used on a toilet, run through a washing machine, or poured on a kitchen floor” (Coleman 2005: 1).

However, he states that eventually, his wife changed – she told him that he was not doing his fair share of housework, but she did so without screaming, crying or trying to elicit him into feeling guilty. Coleman argues that he tried to test her limits, but she remained firm in her decision. He admits to trying several other tactics, such as memory failure (I never agreed to take out the garbage every week!), 'hearing failure' (You never said I should change their diapers more than once a day!) and 'loss of vision' (Actually, I don't see any dust balls). However, his

wife became “someone that I couldn’t shrug off, scare off, or bug off. She was someone that I had to reckon with” (Coleman 2005: 1-2).

Coleman is a psychologist and a self-help author. He states that he often receives desperate pleas for help from women who want their husbands to do more housework. Thus, he explains that this book is for the women who ask him for advice regarding this issue. Coleman states that he believes that it is up to men to change in order to have a more equitable division of housework. However, he argues that men are in no hurry to change the status quo. As such, Coleman explains that in order to change one’s lazy husband, wives will have to make the first move. He realizes that if he wrote a book about this topic for men, it would not be read (Coleman 2005: 2-3 & 5).⁵⁹

In chapter 1 Coleman discusses gendered expectations and assumptions attached to them. For example, the assumption that completing housework and childcare are women’s responsibilities. As a result of these assumptions, he explains that “women who aren’t as involved in maintaining their homes are far more likely to be censored by a society that tells her that it damned well is her job to care. In other words, women’s identities are more influenced by house and children, in part, because others are more likely to judge them by those yardsticks” (Coleman 2005: 17). Conversely, Coleman argues that individuals are not surprised if single men are slobs. However, a messy home is not blamed on the man once he gets married, but on his wife. It is assumed that if a man lives with a woman, she is doing the cleaning; it is seen as her responsibility. Coleman also argues that: “A woman who lives alone and keeps her apartment like a pigsty is more likely to be viewed in a critical way by both men and women” (Coleman

⁵⁹ As Coleman writes this book for women, the book is written in the style that he is speaking to a woman. I will discuss Coleman’s work in the third person, more formally, except when I am quoting directly from the text. He also frequently uses practical discussion examples-in order to simulate how his suggestions may result.

2005: 17). Coleman's discussion on this issue eloquently expresses how men and women are judged differently regarding the cleanliness of their homes, as I discussed in chapter 4. His argument here also addresses my point that as a result of this, some women have internalized the values associated with housework; the importance of completing housework 'properly' and 'promptly'. My discussion of the history of housework being allocated to women in chapters 3 and 4 explains why many women possess the knowledge skills and values related to completing housework, and why they feel it is important.

Coleman concludes this chapter with a discussion of fairness and 'gatekeeping'. He says that when women believe that it is their responsibility to do housework and childcare, they feel "unentitled to make demands of a fair exchange for all of the work that they do with their house and kids", meaning that they do not think they have a right to ask their husbands for help with these domestic tasks (Thompson and Walker 1995, as cited in Coleman 2005: 18). However, Coleman argues that the assumption that a husband's time is more valuable than that of his wife, based on his higher income, is only valid in the jobmarket. At home, he argues "that calculus only makes sense if raising children [and doing housework] is considered unimportant".

Coleman explains that women who use the 'job market' logic regarding their unpaid domestic work "begin their negotiations from a far weaker position than those who see their contributions to their children, their marriage, and their husbands as priceless" (Coleman 2005: 18). I agree with this argument; not only is it consistent with my critique in chapter 2 of the time-availability and relative resource theoretical perspectives, but this description also illuminates another important point. Couples are not living in a contract relationship, where one partner earns more money, so the other does all/most of the housework and childcare. As men and women are couples, they cannot have such an objective, abstract mentality to the division of

housework; the division of housework should be influenced by both partner's thoughts, feelings and ideologies.

Research suggests that women determine whether their division of housework is fair by comparing themselves to other women, not to their husbands. As a result of this, "both men and women to accept a standard of participation from the husband that is problematic for the wife" (Hochschild 1989, as cited in Coleman 2005: 21). In addition, Coleman explains that men and women often compare themselves to their parents to measure their division of housework. Yet, this usually results in women comparing themselves to women who completed more housework than they do, and men comparing themselves to men who completed less housework than they do.⁶⁰ As previously discussed in chapter 2, such comparisons create the belief in women that they are better off than their mothers and also causes men to believe that they are much better in comparison to their own fathers. Coleman explains that: "recalling what their fathers contributed doesn't provide much guidance because, in all likelihood, he had his feet propped up before and after dinner, and was out with his friends on the weekends" (Coleman 2009: 21). Coleman suggests that men fail to take into account that women today face more responsibilities and social pressures than their own mothers (Coleman 2005: 22).

Coleman concludes the chapter by discussing the concept of 'gatekeeping'. "Gatekeeping is a term that sociologists use to explain how much a spouse allows the other spouse to participate in some activity such as parenting, housework, or managing the finances" (Allen and Hawkins 1999, as cited in Coleman 2005: 22-23). He explains that people 'gatekeep' by "complaining about the other's standards, by redoing tasks, or by refusing the other's offer to

⁶⁰ Coleman discusses both men and women engaging in 'same-gender' comparisons to feel better about their divisions of housework, as discussed in chapter 2.

help". Coleman argues that women's 'gatekeeping' of the quality and quantity of men's housework creates or maintains the existence of a lazy husband. Women engage in 'gatekeeping' to prevent men from taking over the responsibilities which they feel they have more authority, such as being the caregiver, or in order to ensure that domestic tasks are completed to their standards.⁶¹ Women may also 'gatekeep' as they feel guilty or inadequate sharing domestic tasks if they feel that women should complete these tasks without help from their husbands (Coleman 2005: 22-23).

Coleman also explains that 'gatekeeping' is an important concept because as a result of it, many women are manipulated or 'warned off' by their husbands' excuses or rationales. He explains that one reason women 'gatekeep' about housework is that they do not like how their husband clean (if he does); 'gate-keeping' is motivated by differences in standards of cleanliness. One man interviewed by Coleman said: " 'whenever I do clean she just goes over what I did anyway, so why bother?' ". Another reason women 'gate-keep' according to Coleman is that they are afraid their husbands will complete care-giving tasks in a way they think is wrong. One man interviewed said that: " 'I pretty much feel like whatever way I parent it's the wrong way for Michelle'; 'That's not the kind of baby food he likes. 'I'm starting to feel like, 'Fine. You want it done your way, be my guest!' " (Coleman 2005: 23-24).

However, Coleman argues that many men ensure that their wives will complete domestic tasks by "maintaining low standards, forcing their wives to act as managers, acting incompetent, waiting to be nagged, or doing the tasks far less frequently than their wives would like".⁶² He

⁶¹ I argue that 'gatekeeping' can be considered the opposite of the concept of 'relaxed egalitarianism' discussed by Rubenstein.

⁶² Men's responses to 'gate-keeping' precisely describes the problem discussed by Mainardi and Beagan et al. in chapter 2. Both discuss men not completing tasks 'properly' or 'promptly' and knowing that they their wives will complete the housework.

also explains that some men do not engage in these behaviors; they are simply unwilling to get involved either because their wives are over-involved or due to their own obstinacy (Coleman 2005: 24).

Coleman begins chapter 2 by telling women that in order to ensure change in their marriages, they have to be “acutely aware of what each of you has with which to bargain”. He states that women need to know “what cards you have in your hand but also which ones your partner holds and is willing to play” (Coleman 2005: 25). Coleman explains that the reality for many individuals is that they constantly evaluate whether they are benefiting as much as the others. He also explains that when individuals feel they are getting as much benefits as the others, their “need to strategize and negotiate recede into the background and a kind of harmony is achieved”. Similarly, when individuals feel they are receiving less, individuals began to examine what they are receiving, not receiving and how they acquire the latter. This explanation echoes the opposite of the discussion of Rubenstein of the type of ‘relaxed egalitarianism’ of ‘non-superior wife’ couples: in such couples partners do not carefully monitor each other’s contributions. Based on what Coleman has presented, it seems that women are not tallying up what domestic work their husbands are doing because they feel that their husbands are doing enough housework (women are receiving enough benefits).

Coleman explains that women need to stop believing that the average husband does not have to do housework, which is related to a similar belief that a man who does an equal amount of housework is remarkable, even rare. These beliefs create a sense of ‘gratitude’ for the portion of housework men do, even if it a lot less than what their wives do.⁶³ Thus, Coleman argues that

⁶³ This attitude of women idealizing men’s power is related to women feeling more gratitude to their husbands-as they feel less entitle to ask for more help with housework, as discussed in chapter 2.

women need to stop thinking that a husband is doing his fair share of the housework as a favor to her, it is an 'even exchange of services'.⁶⁴ Coleman contends that in order for wives to change the division of domestic tasks in their marriages, they need to "come face-to-face with the ways in which you may subtly or overtly idealize men or their power. You need to gain the comfort to face a man down and to strongly assert your wishes and needs for change" (Coleman 2005: 28). He suggests several ways women can get their husbands to change their behavior. Firstly, he suggests that wives should 'appeal to their husband's sense of fair play'. He cautions that this suggestion assumes that one's husband cares enough about his wife to hold this principle. Coleman explains that many men do feel guilty about the unequal divisions of housework, but they hide these feelings as they do not want to be involved in housework and do not want their wives to use that guilt against them.

Secondly, Coleman explains that women could suggest to their husbands that he would benefit from changes in his behavior. Wives should tell their husbands that they will be happier, and it will free up their wives' time for activities he does enjoy (I assume that Coleman is referring to sex here). Thirdly, Coleman suggests cashing in on a favor. This involves reminding their husbands of what their wives do for them and that they owe their wives. This suggestion also involves men's sense of fairness. Again, Coleman emphasizes that in discussing changes with one's husband, wives should refrain from using "moralistic or shaming language", but to introduce topics in a non-argumentative, non-confrontational way (Coleman 2005: 29 & 32-33).⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Again, this discussion is related to the hierarchy of reasons men complete housework.

⁶⁵ This is another reference to the way one speaks to one's husband, which is related to information discussed in the third book.

Fourthly, Coleman suggests showing husbands how much their wives are contributing through writing lists. He explains that writing a list of what one does for the family and home will allow one to be more confident to demand more. I would argue that this makes women more confident as listing all the domestic tasks one completes is a straight-forward, objective way to demonstrate the inequality in the division of unpaid work. Coleman explains that such a list may stimulate a husband's feelings of fairness, thus motivating him to change (Coleman 2005: 29 & 33).

Fifthly, Coleman argues that women should tell their husbands how unhappy they are with their current arrangement. He also suggests being honest with one's husband about how exhausted, resentful and discouraged they feel. Coleman realizes that some women have a hard time letting their partners know their feelings about their division of housework because they feel they do not have the right to complain. He states that this belief may be based on one or more of the following reasons: their mother took on more responsibilities than they do, they have low self-esteem which causes them to feel un-entitled, or they have traditional views about what responsibilities are assigned to women. Coleman suggests that wives' tone should be "authoritative and unmoveable" (Coleman 2005: 29 & 35-36).

Coleman states that women need to explicitly and directly tell their husbands what domestic tasks they want their husbands to do as men may genuinely not be aware of which tasks are more important. However, he warns that: "Men are overly sensitive to being told what to do. If they are persuaded to understand that they're making you happy, they'll be a lot more interested than if they're doing it because they're being told" (Coleman 2005: 37).⁶⁶ Coleman

⁶⁶ Men's defensiveness in relation to being told what to do will be discussed in the analysis of the third book.

suggests that a husband cares how unhappy his wife is the more he cares, the more he will be willing to change his behavior

As a result, the next suggestion of Coleman is to work with her husband's priorities. This involves out-waiting a husband on tasks that are a high priority to him. The benefit of this is that this allows women to devote their time and energy to tasks that are important to them. He argues that "knowing your partner's priorities and pet peeves improves your bargaining position in marriage" (Coleman 2005: 29). Coleman explains that this technique of out-waiting one's husband is only effective as the wife knows that her husband will not let the high-priority domestic tasks go uncompleted. If a wife refuses to complete certain domestic tasks, the husband is forced to do them as they matter more to him.

Additionally, Coleman suggests eliminating some domestic tasks by accepting a lower standard of dirt/disorder or clutter. He acknowledges that each woman will have to "determine what's a healthy trade-off between standards of cleanliness and the amount of sacrifice required to achieve it" (Coleman 2005: 40). Coleman explains that lowering standards not only will reduce women's stress,⁶⁷ but may increase husbands' willingness to complete more domestic tasks. He explains that if women's standards are significantly higher than that of their partners', husbands will "throw up his hands and walk away from the bargaining table" (Coleman 2005: 40). As such, Coleman explains that such wives may not actually have lazy husbands if their standards will never be successfully fulfilled to their satisfaction by their husbands.

⁶⁷ The stress of having such high standards is not only the stress of completing tasks 'properly' and 'properly', but also of working so hard to eliminate the negative personal judgments and internalization of a less-than perfectly clean and tidy home, as well as the judgments of others, or rather the 'imagined judgments of others, as discussed in chapter 4.

Coleman also discusses the issue of mother-in-laws and their judgements of their daughter-in-laws' cleaning practices. He argues that wives who do not like what their mothers-in-law are saying about them and how they clean should ask their husbands for support. He suggests that such women should ask their husband to ask their mother to back off. Research has found that "couples who prioritize their marriage over their in-laws have better marriages than those who allow the in-laws too much influence". If the husband agrees to talk with his mother, the woman could ask him to start making supportive comments whenever his mother makes "not-so-subtle criticisms". For example: 'Yes, it's amazing how much Penny gets done in a day. I've never met anyone like her'; 'Yeah, its harder for mothers these days than it used to be. They have much more responsibility' ". If these statements do not have an effect, the author suggests that men should address these comments more pointedly. For example, " 'Mom, that sounds like a dig. Penny works extremely hard' " (Coleman 2005: 62). Coleman explains that what is important is that the husband needs to prioritize his relationship with his wife over his relationship with his mother.

Women should also clarify to their husbands that "they are not the ones putting their husband into a loyalty battle, his mother is" and assert that they have a right to prioritize their happiness over that of their mother-in-law's. Finally, they have to explain that if their husbands will not confront their mothers, they will, but that this will not strengthen the marriage, but could hurt it – they will feel closer to them if they don't blame them if confronting their mothers does not go well. I argue that the example of a mother-in-law making negative judgments about her daughter-in law's cleanliness of her home is also a negative judgment about her daughter-in-law. This is an example of how women judge other women on the cleanliness of their homes and demonstrates that housework does contain other meanings, judgments and associations.

Coleman's mother-in-law example echoes the moral judgments and layers discussed in the analysis of the Cascade commercial. Additionally, this is an example of the 'imagined other's judgments' which motivates many women to furiously clean. These topics were discussed in chapters 3 and 4.

As previously discussed, Coleman suggests that if a husband does something the wife should "reward the hell out of him for it". A wife should: "try not to see this as a moral battle. The reality is probably that you're doing a lot more than he is and nobody's thanking you for it. However, one way to get him to change is to use positive reinforcement. I understand you may be too annoyed with him to lavish praise on him, and in all likelihood, what he does pales in comparison to what you contribute...However, if the goal is to increase his involvement, we have to start somewhere" (Coleman 2005: 70).

In chapter 4, Coleman discusses three different belief systems (traditional, transitional, egalitarian). He argues that traditional men are less sensitive to their wives' pleas for more help with domestic tasks than men of other gender ideologies. Wives who are traditional would be much less resentful about this than women who have transitional or egalitarian 'belief systems'. He explains that women with the two latter gender ideologies see "their husband's lack of participation as a betrayal of shared values and beliefs" (Coleman 2005: 77). Traditional wives believe that if their husbands resist their pleas their help, the domestic tasks are ultimately still their responsibility.

Coleman explains that women resent having to ask their husbands to help with domestic tasks "because it feels like begging for something they feel entitled to have" (Coleman 2005: 78). He explains that women manage their resentment by "deceiving themselves into thinking that

they're more accepting of the household arrangements than they really are. They tell themselves that it's okay because their husbands are incompetent, they won't do it right, or they shouldn't have to do as much because it doesn't matter to them as much" (Coleman 2005: 78).⁶⁸

Coleman lists several beliefs and behaviors that tend to inhibit men from doing more housework (Allen and Hawkins 1999, as cited in Coleman 2005: 80):

- a) I frequently redo some household tasks my partner hasn't done well;
- b) It's too hard to teach family members the skills necessary to do the jobs right, so I'd rather do them myself;
- c) My partner doesn't really know how to do a lot of the household chores-so it's just easier if I do them;
- d) If visitors dropped by unexpectedly and my house was a mess, I would be embarrassed;
- e) I believe that people make judgments about how good a wife/mother I am based on how well cared for my house and kids are;
- f) I care what my neighbors, extended family, and friends think about the way I perform my household tasks.

Coleman states that the strategy egalitarian couples use to motivate husbands to complete more housework is for wives to lower their expectations (standards of cleanliness) and for men to raise theirs. He states that finding an agreed on standard may require experimentation and arguing (Coleman 2005: 83). He also suggests that while traditional man/egalitarian woman couples may not be common, the couple may not have any problems until they have children. When the couple begins to have children it can "[bring forward] the differences in views about men's and women's roles into sharp focus. This is because an egalitarian woman believes her husband should do half of the parenting and housework, while a traditional man believes that his

⁶⁸ These rationalizations are 'family myths', as discussed by Hochschild in chapter 2.

wife should do almost all the parenting and all of the housework” (Coleman 2005: 90). For example, conflict can occur when the husband in such a scenario increases his participation in domestic tasks from ten percent to twenty five percent, which is a huge increase in his mind. However, his wife is not satisfied by this change; she still does most of the domestic tasks.

The most common problem in couples with different ‘belief’ systems occurs between a transitional man and an egalitarian woman. The man may believe he should do between twenty-five and thirty-five percent of domestic tasks, while his wife may feel he should do half of the tasks. Coleman explains that this fifteen to twenty percent difference is “large enough to drive a truck through in most homes” (Coleman 2005: 94). For example, the wife says: ‘Frank’s a good guy and a good dad but he acts like he’s doing me a favor whenever he washes a dish or spends time with the boys’, while the husband says ‘I know June complains if it’s not exactly fifty-fifty but I feel like, give me a break, I do so much more than my father did or any other guy in my family ever did. Most guys I know don’t do half of what I do. I would like a little more credit’ ”. Coleman also explains that: “while June grants that Frank does more than a lot of men, she doesn’t believe that this entitles him to gratitude for something that is still less than half.”⁶⁹

Coleman offers two suggestions to transitional man/egalitarian woman couples. Primarily, he states that women should err on the side of appreciation. He explains that: “while it’s absolutely reasonable to expect a full 50 percent contribution, you have to work with who you married. The reality is that you married someone whom you either knew was transitional or his belief system got revealed with the arrival of kids, as happens in so many families. In either

⁶⁹ It is clear that both statements concern the ‘economy of gratitude’ and the husband invokes the ‘politics of comparison’ concept, both of which have been discussed by Hochschild.

event, you should begin with what he's doing right, and make that your platform, not what he's doing wrong" (Coleman 2005: 96).

Coleman's discussion of couples with different gender ideologies is similar to Hochschild's discussion of Nancy and Evan. More specifically, his examination of transitional men thinking that increasing their participation ten to twenty five percent is huge, and men comparing themselves to other men, and expecting gratitude echoes the discussion between Nancy and Evan. As discussed by Hochschild, this type of couple's problem stems not only in differences in gender ideology, but in 'the politics of comparison' and in the 'economy of gratitude', as gender ideology shapes these two concepts.

In chapter 5, Coleman discusses the influence of one's childhood. He argues that "our ability to communicate is strongly influenced by what we observe and how we were treated when we were young". He is referring to the amount of strength and affection people bring to their marriages ideally there should be a balance of the two. Thus, he explains that knowledge of how one was influenced by one's childhood can allow couples to improve their relationships (Coleman 2005: 101). Coleman argues that as women tend to be socialized to be more empathetic and understanding, they are most likely to give in, and as a result may get used or ignored. Meanwhile, men tend to be socialized to be self-interested.

Coleman states that in some cases, one's strength can negatively affect one's relationship there is a fear that one will not be taken seriously or that they do not have enough power to influence their spouse. He explains that one woman witnessed her mother letting her father treat her badly. As a result, she vowed to never let that happen to her. This conviction led her to "approach her husband in a combative fashion". She spoke in a belittling way to her husband,

which Coleman imagines is the way the woman's father spoke to the woman's mother. He explains that the way she spoke made her husband shut down and withdraw.

Coleman also argues that critical parents can also influence one's relationship. The woman discussed in a previous chapter who's mother-in-law criticizes her grew up with parents who shamed and belittled her. As a result, this woman lacks strength; particularly in fending off other peoples' judgments. Coleman explains that she spends a great deal of energy trying to please others instead of focusing on her own happiness. This woman's lack of strength also affects her relationship she tends to be too passive in discussions with her husband – he may know that if he raises his voice or acts upset about her requests for him to do more she will back off.

Finally, Coleman argues that many women have been socialized with the belief that they should give more than they receive. Some women have been raised in homes where this was reinforced where the parents were depressed, needy or self-centered. This may have left some women believing that others' needs are more important than their own (Coleman 2005: 104). One such woman struggles with knowing what her needs are and knowing when to state them. Thus this weakens her power in her family; family members take advantage of her selflessness and take her for granted. (Coleman 2005: 105).

In chapter 6, Coleman examines the different personality types; particularly he states with this chapter that “a key part of creating change in a marriage comes from gaining an understanding of how you and your partner's personalities affect your marriage” (Coleman 2005: 112). Specifically, this involves examining how one's past makes one react to different types of behavior or communication from one's spouse, is related to misperceiving one's spouse and

makes one behave in confusing or troubling ways to one's spouse. Coleman explains that by understanding their husbands' personality it, will allow one women to correct their husbands' perceptions about them and communicate in ways that "don't trigger his anxiety, negativity, or defensiveness". He lists the personality types: The 'Boy-Husband', 'The Worried Wife', 'The Worried Husband', 'The Perfectionist Wife', 'The Perfectionist Husband', 'The Angry Husband' and 'The Angry Wife' (Coleman 2005: 112-113).

Coleman describes 'Boy-Husbands' as men who seem "incapable of conducting an adult life" without help from their wives. In such a marriage, the wife helped her husband function, but she assumed that "the increase in responsibility of parenthood would serve as a shock treatment to her husband's indolence and force him to grow up and change" (Coleman 2005: 115). In these situations, women complain that living with their husband is like having another child. Coleman offers several solutions to the situation.

Primarily, he suggests that women work on feeling responsible for their husbands. He acknowledges that this may be difficult, as women are socialized "to feel responsible for others", and as a result are unhappy if their family members are distressed" (Coleman 2005: 115-116). Secondly, Coleman explains that "a dependent husband can only continue his dependence if he's being supported by his wife" (Coleman 205: 116). Thirdly, Coleman suggests "using non-judgmental language to let your partner know of your change". This means that a woman should give her husband notice of the changes she will be implementing without humiliating him – instead of shaming her husband by saying she will not "play mommy with him anymore". He recommends gradual phasing out the care work one does for one's husband to allow him to take these tasks on himself (Coleman 2005: 117-118).

Coleman discusses the 'Perfectionists'. He states that they "often have a hard time enjoying their lives or their marriages. They constantly hold themselves and others to a standard where the bar is always being raised...Being a perfectionist is stressful because it makes you more likely to believe, often irrationally, that your partner is also holding you to this impossible standard" (Coleman 2005: 126). Also, 'Perfectionist Wives', who hold high standards for themselves, also perceive their husbands' communication negatively.

Coleman described living with a 'Perfectionist Husband'; he argues that women can feel controlled, dominated or blamed by their husbands. He further argues that 'Perfectionist Husbands' may not be lazy; as they may be hard-working and obsessive over everything, including completing domestic tasks. However, a 'Perfectionist Husband' can also be defined as someone who only has perfectionistic expectations of his wife. For example, in such a relationship, the wife felt her husband held critical and unrealistic expectations of her. This woman was already hard on herself, so she reacted to her husband's expectations with hostility. As a result the dynamic of this relationship consisted of a criticism and counter-criticism cycle. Coleman explains that women who have such husbands tend to feel anxious, guilty or depressed.

Coleman examines wives who live with 'Angry Husbands'. Such husbands as those who treat their wives in "controlling, belittling, or domineering ways and who may use their size, loudness, or tone of voice to intimidate their wives". He states that these women often feel depressed, inadequate, anxious, or afraid. Coleman emphasizes that: "if your partner is frequently hostile, his laziness may be the least of your worries. You may first need to learn how to decrease his hold over you before you can effectively strategize how to get him to do more with the house and kids". He suggests examining how having such a husband influences one's behavior, he asks if these wives if they "do much more for him, the house, or the children that is

fair and reasonable and constantly worry that their behavior is going to get them yelled at” (Coleman 2005: 132-133). For wives who feel terrible when their husbands are angry with them, Coleman suggests that they need to “gain control over how much the other’s behavior affects how we feel about themselves”. He explains that her irrational beliefs in response to her husband’s anger keep her “cowed and compliant” in the marriage (Coleman 2005: 135-137).

In order to change the sharing of the domestic tasks in these marriages, such women need to approach requests for more help “with an assumption of cooperation”. This includes speaking in an affectionate tone of voice, and assuming that her husband wants to cooperate and make her happy. Coleman acknowledges that these conversations may not be productive the first few times as people tend to change slowly; these husbands may not change until they realize their old tactics will no longer work (Coleman 2005: 140).

Finally, Coleman discusses ‘Angry Wives’. He explains that some women respond to childhood abuse by becoming combative and argumentative in order to avoid feeling vulnerable. However, the author explains that such women “approach every interaction with guns blazing, and as a result are more likely to make their husbands feel belittled, resentful, and resistant to change”. They believe that if they let their guard down, others will take advantage of them (Coleman 2005: 144).

Coleman explains that women may feel this way as a result of living with parents who were critical, depressed, or neglectful. These women may feel “excessively entitled to be treated well, that they never want to be deprived again, which causes them to be hostile, defensive, or vigilant to any hint that their needs won’t be met”. He explains that these women need to begin approaching negotiations assuming mutual cooperation as opposed to assuming the worst. The

author explains that these husbands' laziness may be an attempt to guard against feeling excessively controlled, belittled, or hurt by their wives.

Coleman discusses in chapter 7 "how men view the world, and why women may be having such a hard time understanding them" (Coleman 2005: 149). Specifically, he explains that often women complain about "the supposedly clueless and selfish nature of the male; 'How come they don't get it? How come guys are so useless with their feelings? Why don't men communicate better?' " (Coleman 2005: 150). He says that this chapter involves "peering through a variety of these lenses as a way to increase women's ability to gain more involvement from their husbands and more peace in their households" (Coleman 2005: 150).

Coleman states that women often notice that their husbands "resent any suggestions that they're obeying a wife's orders". One husband said to the author " 'I don't want to feel like I have to hop to it as soon as she asks me to do something. I'll get to it, I just want to get it in my own time.'" Coleman explains that men's sensitivity to requests is related to "men's vulnerability to any hint of subordination. Doing something because they're told to suggests that they have low status. Refusing to do the task, however trivial, asserts their independence" (Coleman 2005: 158). Coleman also states that husbands "may stonewall, make excuses, avoid, and evade family work in order to prove to their wives that they have status as men, odd as that may seem, more than because they really believe their wives have no right to ask" (Coleman 2005: 163). Coleman emphasizes that he is not saying "just understand him and forget about his doing his share. I'm saying that understanding him is a first step to getting him to change" (Coleman 2005: 163).

Coleman explains that as men are “sensitive to any suggestion that they are of lower status, you will probably get more cooperation if you state your requests as not demands. I know, I know. He has no problem telling you to do things and you don’t get all huffy on him...asking is almost always a better strategy” (Coleman 2005: 163). For example, one man states ‘I have an allergic reaction to any request Suzie makes that begins with, “ ‘You need to’...‘You need to empty the dishwasher’...‘I always feel like’...‘I don’t need to do jack’. If she wants me to do something, she should just ask me rather than tell me it’s something I need to do’ ”. Coleman explains that for men “doing activities in their own time frame promotes a feeling that they’re doing it ‘because they want to not because they have to’ ” (Coleman 2005: 164).

Coleman also states that the fact that men do not want to be told what to do, and that women tend to be family managers causes a double-bind for women. Men tend to wait for instructions of what to do, yet they are “sensitive to feeling subordinate, they resist or get defensive if their wives make demands of them, especially if the expectation is to get to the task immediately”. This can result in men responding negatively to requests. Yet, if women do not “act as household manager they’re forced to live with their husband’s far lower standards of cleanliness and parental involvement” (Allen and Hawkins 1999, as cited in Coleman 2005: 166-167). As a result, if women want domestic tasks “to be done to their standards, they need to be in the managerial role in a way that doesn’t leave their husband feeling shamed or inadequate” (Coleman 2005: 167). One woman complained “ ‘it’s bad enough I have to tell him what to do, I also have to be nice about it when I’m doing it!’ ”.

He discusses several excuses husbands may use to justify their not doing a fair share of the domestic tasks, and how women should respond to them. Firstly, some men say that that as they earn more money or are the sole wage-earner in the family, they should not have to do any

domestic tasks. Coleman suggests that in this situation, women should “appeal to their husbands’ sense of fairness” by saying that just because they earn less money/or no money compared to their husbands does not mean that their time is any less valuable. He also states women should argue that ‘I don’t think that just because society doesn’t value parenting and housework that means that I never get a chance to rest’. Secondly, some men say that they are too tired to complete domestic tasks after their paid work. Coleman suggests that women “challenge that men are more exhausted than them, and challenge the principle that men’s work is more stressful” (Coleman 2005: 168-169).

Thirdly, some men say that they do not know how to complete domestic tasks. They may say that they are not skilled at completing housework, that it does not come ‘naturally’ to them and that they hate doing housework. In this situation, Coleman suggests countering the notion that one has to be skilled at housework in order to do these tasks and that one should not have to do housework if they hate doing it. For example, the woman could say ‘I understand that it doesn’t come naturally to you, but you’ll get the hang of it. I can show you how for the first few times. I wasn’t that good at doing some of the things I had to learn how to do, too (Coleman 2005: 169-170).

Finally, Coleman argues that some men say that as they contribute to the family in other ways (I presume he is referring to income), they should not have to complete both housework and paid work. He suggests that if women in this situation want their husbands to be involved long-term in domestic tasks, they should not expect perfection from them, but demonstrate appreciation in every step in the right direction. Coleman describes this process as “shaping behavior”, defined as “making rewards for every small change in a positive direction”. Coleman

states that he “find this technique useful when working with women to get their husbands to stop being Lazy Husbands” (Coleman 2005: 169-170).

Coleman introduces chapter 8 by stating “Okay, right now I’m sure I’m the last person you want to take advice from...I know that laziness is a matter of perspective. But there is a cost, and overall, if seventeen years of marriage has taught me anything, it’s not that it’s not worth the bill. But maybe that’s just me. On the other hand, maybe a few suggestions from a Lazy Husband in recovery could improve your situation at home, or at least, get off your back” (Coleman 2005: 182-183).

Additionally, he explains to men that he has not ruled out the possibility that one’s wife may be really difficult, and that he does not necessarily believe it is about the men changing in this book. He states that he has spent most of the book telling women “to take responsibility for how they contribute to the problem by taking over, being critical, expecting too much, not understanding her past, not appreciating the ways you do contribute to her and the family, and misunderstand how gender differences create problems. I told her that the best way to change your partner is to change yourself” (Coleman 2005: 183). However, he emphasizes that men also need to acknowledge how they contribute to the problem as well.

Coleman also discusses several complaints men have. Primarily, men complain that they cannot meet their wives’ standards. Coleman states that: “I understand. She sees dirt where you see nothing, she sees chaos where you see order, she feels tormented by dishes in the sink while you just see dishes in the sink. And then, when you do go to do it, you get told that you don’t do it right” (Coleman 2005: 185). Coleman contends that men may be using their wives’ high standards as a way to get out of doing housework. He uses sarcasm to describe this situation,

'winking' at men that they do this, but that it is wrong: "Not that I myself personally would ever dream of doing such a manipulative, devious act to my beloved wife...And I have never, nor would I ever consider the fact that if I do a half-assed job that maybe, just maybe, she might, in exasperation, take it over herself, thereby freeing up time for me to do all of the other things I do enjoy doing, none of which have the vaguest relationship to housework (or sometimes parenting)" (Coleman 2005: 185-186). He acknowledges that if he can get his wife to complete tasks he doesn't want to do, they'll be done much faster.

He suggests that men tell their wives that they are willing to begin doing things differently around the house. He says that doesn't mean that men have to do everything their wives want them to do, nor does it mean that wives are going to "accept any small change from men as the second coming". Coleman explains that by agreeing to do more domestic tasks, men are saying to their wives "I understand that this is really important to you, and your happiness is important to me. Because of those two facts, I'm glad to think about ways that I can do more around the house" (Coleman 2005: 186).

Coleman argues that one of the easiest ways men can improve their marriages is by showing appreciation. Appreciation is important as it shows that a man is not taking his wife for granted. Coleman explains that even if one's wife always does certain domestic tasks, men show appreciation to their wives each time they do these tasks. He realizes that many men think 'I shouldn't have to appreciate it when she makes me dinner or puts the kids to bed. That's our arrangement'. Appreciation is also a way a husband can tell his wife he loves her. He explains that research has shown that "even if a husband isn't doing his fair share, simply beginning to appreciate his wife for all of the things that she does greatly increases her satisfaction with her marriage" (Hochschild 1989, as cited in Coleman 2005: 193).

Coleman states that men need to develop a way to discuss complaints productively. Research has shown that conversations tend to end as they begin; if one opens a conversation with hostility, they will receive hostility (Gottman 1994, as cited in Coleman 2005: 197). Thus, he suggests structuring conversations the following way: “Begin with an appreciation, say how serious it is on a scale of one to ten, use non-blaming language, take responsibility for your end of the problem, ask for solutions and thank her for listening” (Coleman 2005: 197). He explains that showing appreciation lets a woman know that the man understands her motivations and respects them. Coleman states that stating the level of seriousness tells the wife to take the husband seriously. He explains that using non-blaming language lets a husband voice his concerns without making his wife feel badly about herself. Thus, when a man takes responsibility for his part, it shows his wife that his goal in the interaction is not to humiliate. It also “equalizes the interaction”. By asking for solutions, it demonstrates to the wife that “they’re in this together, it’s solvable, and that he expects a different path” (Coleman 2005: 197-199).

Coleman also emphasizes that men should not engage in stonewalling, which is defined as “shutting down and withdrawing when one feels criticized”. He states that this occurs as individuals try to control their feelings of shame, anger or rejection. This tactic can drive wives crazy.⁷⁰ This response can negatively affect one’s marriage as the ‘distance-pursuer’ dynamic is more likely to lead to divorce. Research has found that “women prefer men who complain about them to men who withdraw; this is probably because men who complain look engaged in the marriage, while men who withdraw look as though they don’t even care” (Gottman 1994, as cited in Coleman 2005: 201).

⁷⁰ See Appendix C for a visual representation of this process (Coleman 2005:52).

Coleman concludes the book by summarizing several of the key issues. He argues that men need to do more of the changing to have a more equitable division of domestic tasks (Coleman 2005: 202). Yet, he acknowledges that women have to instigate the process of getting men to change. Most husbands genuinely want to make their wives happy, but they may also be genuinely confused about what's fair in relation to domestic tasks based on and influences from what he observed in his childhood, what he observed from his peers and general social pressures regarding what it means to be a man. He hopes that this book allows women to develop "a healthy sense of entitlement, an expectation of change and cooperation (even when it's not immediately forthcoming), a commitment to appreciate whatever it is that he's doing right in the marriage and a feeling of acceptance and compassion for who he is, regardless of whether he changes quickly or not" (Coleman 2005: 206).

I disagree with Coleman's suggestion that women should not only ask their husbands to do tasks, but also shower them with appreciation for every housework task they do. Coleman suggested wives thank men at least daily for the tasks they do, rewarding 'the hell of out men' when they do domestic tasks. Initially, I got the impression from his earlier statement that wives should not be satisfied with their husbands' little or no participation domestic tasks, and he tells husbands that wives are not going to see them doing more housework as 'the second coming'. Yet, Coleman suggests thanking husbands frequently for the tasks they do. In principle, I agree with showing appreciation to someone who completes domestic tasks, as this demonstrates valuing the tasks as well as the efforts involved in completing them.

However, I find thanking a husband for doing far less than his wife does, especially if the wife does not receive any appreciation contradictory and hypocritical. It's as if men should be thanked and that women should be thankful for the housework men do because not many men do

housework or do a fair share, one that does some housework is seen as a rare gem to be cherished. As such, I believe this suggestion contradicts Coleman's earlier suggestion to women to stop thinking that men should not do housework; that it is not their responsibility.

Coleman does acknowledge that women may be too annoyed with their husbands to praise them, and I argue that this contradiction occurs as the author has not sufficiently explored and reflected upon the concepts of 'the politics of comparison' and the 'economy of gratitude' as discussed by Hochschild, and that he justifies this contradiction by saying that if neither partner decides to not change until the other partner does, nothing will change.

Also, I would argue that emphasizing rewarding and showing appreciation for men implies that women need to tread carefully when dealing with men's emotions, as is consistent with the stereotype of 'the fragility of the male ego'. Consistent with this stereotype is that men are deeply affected by criticism and simultaneously feel a disproportional surge of positive feelings when they receive a compliment. In the analysis of the first book, Rubenstein discussed how men overestimate their abilities, and Tannen (the author of the third book) will discuss why men want to see themselves favorably and really resist seeing themselves unfavorably. I would thus argue that the stereotype of the 'fragility of the male ego' may hold some basis in reality, in terms of patterns of male behavior, not in terms of the acceptance of such behaviors. I would argue that Coleman's advice implies that women have to tip-toe around not causing their husbands to withdraw or become defensive. I found this concept to be quite puzzling, however the discussion of the text of the third book clarifies this phenomenon.

I also have a problem with Coleman saying, in his realization that some husbands do not care about their wives (their feelings, what is important to them). I find this a concept to be a

oxymoron, if one's husband does not care about his wife or her feelings, why is the couple together, or more specifically, why is the wife tolerating such treatment? I argue that one would not tolerate a friendship in which a friend did not care about the other (their feelings) so why would they tolerate this in an intimate relationship. Perhaps Coleman is assuming that women are staying in these awful marriages due to their lack of financial stability, they are engaging in 'delusions' or 'family myths' that their marriages are fine, or they believe they are not 'entitled' to this type of relationship.

Similarly, I do not understand why women stay with 'angry' husbands who belittle, control or dominate their wives. Again, I see staying with a belittling husband to be an oxymoron, and similar to the uncaring discussion above. I argue that women who stay with these husbands may not realize this behavior is emotionally and psychologically abusive, or they may not feel entitled to a caring, supportive husband. Finally, I notice that Coleman uses 'masculine' terms and strategies: he says that women need to 'play hardball, not to back down, play their hand'. He suggests they be firm and assertive, and use logic and reason. He states that men respond to the latter. To me, this implies that men do not respond well to emotion or reasons of care. Men's perceptions towards emotions will be discussed in the analysis of the third book. Finally, I find that the chapter written for husbands is written in a very simple, 'dumbed-down' way. Sometimes men complain that their wives are treating them like children by 'nagging them', to which women respond that their husbands should stop behaving like children. A child has to be reminded that they lack the intelligence and maturity of an adult. Women assume that a mature intelligent adult will remember someone's request and comply with it, even if they do not feel like doing the task. I would argue that men's insistence on doing the task when they want to

do it, to feel independent is immature as it is based on a narrow perception of masculinity (which will be discussed in the analysis of the third book).

Deborah Tannen's (1990) *You Just Don't Understand! Women and Men In Conversation*:

Sociolinguist Deborah Tannen states that when she speaks about different conversation styles between women and men, individuals recognize those patterns within their own experience. She explains that individuals realize that: “their partners’ way of talking, which they had ascribed to personal failings, could be reframed as reflecting a different system. And their own ways of talking, which their partners had been hounding them about for years, could be defended as logical and reasonable” (Tannen 2007: 14). However, some individuals are nervous about discussions of gender differences. Men may feel that if a woman is discussing gender differences, men will be “objectified if not slandered, by being talked about at all”. Likewise, women may fear this discussion will suggest that women’s behaviors/ideas/characteristics will be characterized as deviant, as men’s are seen as the norm. They feel that a difference may be seen as being ‘less than’ (Tannen 2007: 14-15).

She explains that taking a sociolinguist approach to relationships “makes it possible to explain dissatisfactions [about relationships] without accusing anyone of being crazy or wrong, and without blaming – or discarding the relationship. If we recognize and understand the differences between use we can take them into account adjust to, and learn from each other’s styles” (Tannen 2007: 17). Tannen suggests that it is important to recognize each gender’s conversation styles, as then individuals will “begin to realize our opportunities and escape the prison of a monolithic conversational style” (Tannen 2007: 18).

In chapter 1, Tannen discusses the main gender difference in conversation style: men’s conversations tend to be focused on hierarchy, while women’s conversations tend to be focused

on connections with others. She explains that many men live in a “hierarchical social order in which he was either one-up or one-down. In this world, conversations are negotiations in which people try to achieve and maintain the upper hand if they can, and protect themselves from others’ attempts to put them down and push them around. Life, then, is a contest, a struggle to preserve independence and avoid failure” (Tannen 2007: 24-25). Conversely, many women approach the world as a “network of connections. In this world, conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give confirmation and support, and to reach consensus (Tannen 2007: 25).

Tannen argues that intimacy is key in the world of connections, “where individuals negotiate complex networks of friendship, minimize differences and try to reach consensus”. However, independence is key in the world of status, as it is a primary way of achieving status by telling others what to do. According to this perspective, taking orders is seen as demonstrating low-status. She explains that different perspective can result in men and women perceiving the same situation quite differently. Tannen further explains that the way individuals interpret someone else’s words depends “more on the hearer’s own focus, concerns, and habits than on the spirit in which the words were intended” (Tannen 2007: 37).

She also describes the following scenario: “When Josh’s old high-school chum called him at work and announced he’d be in town on business the following month, Josh invited him to stay for the weekend. That evening he informed Linda that they were going to have a houseguest, and that he and his chum would go out together the first night to shoot the breeze like old times. Linda was upset. She was going to be away on business the week before, and the Friday night when Josh would be out with his chum would be her first night home. But what

upset her most was that Josh had made these plans on his own and informed her of them, rather than discussing with them with her before extending the invitation” (Tannen 2007: 26).

Linda was upset as she would never make plans without first checking with her husband. As a result, she does not understand why “he can’t show her the same consideration and courtesy”. However, the husband responds to this explanation by exclaiming “ ‘I can’t say to my friend, ‘I have to ask my wife for permission!’ ”. From the husband’s perspective, “checking with his wife means seeking permission, which implies that he is not independent, not free to act on his own. It would make him feel like a child or underling”. Yet, from the wife’s perspective, permission has nothing to do with this situation, she “assumes that spouses discuss their plans with each other because their lives are intertwined, so the actions of one have consequences for the other” (Tannen 2007: 26-27). The wife was upset because “she sensed a failure of closeness in their relationship”; she felt that he did not care as much about her as she did about him. Whereas, the husband felt his wife was attempting to control and limit his freedom. Also, he felt that the wife’s use of feelings to control his behavior was ‘manipulative’.⁷¹

Tannen also discusses the dynamic of women being labelled ‘nags’. She explains that women tend to do what is asked of them, but many men “are inclined to resist even the slightest hint that anyone, especially a woman, is telling them what to do” (Tannen 2007: 31). Women may repeat a request if they do not get a response as she “is convinced that her husband would do what she asks, if he only understood that she really wants him to do it”. However, Tannen argues that men who want to avoid feeling that they are “following orders may instinctively wait before doing what she asked, in order to imagine that he is doing it of his own free will”. Thus,

⁷¹ I will discuss men’s perceptions of women’s feelings, and feelings in general, on pages 213 and 214 in the discussion of this chapter.

'nagging is the result', as each time the woman repeats the request as she does not get a response, the man continues to delay doing it (Tannen 2007: 31).⁷²

Tannen uses the concept of 'meta-messages', which she defines as "information about the relations among the people involved, and their attitudes toward what they are saying or doing and the people they are saying or doing it to" (Tannen 2007: 32). Another conception of meta-messages is that they frame a conversation, "they let you know how to interpret what someone is saying by identifying the activity that is going on: Is this an argument or a chat? Is it helping, advising or scolding? At the same time, they let you know what position the speaker is assuming in the activity, and what position you are being assigned" (Tannen 2007: 33).

Tannen also discusses the different gendered worlds of men and women's childhoods. She explains that "boys tend to play...in large groups that are hierarchically structured. Their groups have a leader who tells others what to do and how to do it, and resists doing what other boys propose. It is by giving orders and making them stick that high status is negotiated". Meanwhile, girls play in pairs or small groups in which "intimacy is key: Differentiation is measured by relative closeness. Girls don't give orders; they express their preferences as suggestions, and suggestions are likely to be accepted...Girls are...more concerned that they be liked" (Tannen 2007: 43-44).

Thus, Tannen explains that as "women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, while men speak and hear a language of status and independence, then communication between men and women can be like cross-cultural communication, prey to a clash of conversational styles. Instead of different dialects, it has been said they speak different 'genderlects' " (Tannen 2007: 42). She contends however that "taking a cross-cultural approach

⁷² This discussion parallels the plea and flee cycle discussed by Coleman.

to male-female conversations makes it possible to explain why dissatisfactions are justified without accusing anyone of being wrong or crazy”. She elaborates that “learning about style differences won’t make them go away, but it can banish mutual mystification and blame. Being able to understand why our partners...behave the way they do is a comfort, even if we still don’t see things the same way” (Tannen 2007: 47-48).

In chapter 3, Tannen discusses men and women’s different purposes in conversation. She says that women see conversation as a way to “develop rapport, establish connections and negotiate relationships”, they also believe that “talk is about interaction. Telling things is a way to show involvement, and listening is a way to show interest and caring” (Tannen 2007: 77 & 81). Conversely, men see talk as “a means to preserve independence and negotiate and maintain status. This is done by exhibiting knowledge and skill”. They believe talk is about information (Tannen 2007: 77 & 81). Tannen explains that many men do not express their feelings, she explains that their unhappiness expresses itself as a “distancing coldness”. She argues that “this response is just what women fear most, and just the reason they prefer to express dissatisfaction and doubts – as an antidote to the isolation and distance that would result from men keeping them to themselves”(Tannen 2007: 84). I argue that this discussion explains women’s distress when men stonewall or withdraw, as discussed by both Rubenstein and Coleman.

In chapter 4, Tannen suggests a solution for the problem of ‘cross-cultural’ communication. She argues that both men and women need to “try to take each other on their own terms rather than applying the standards of one group to the behavior of another”.⁷³ She suggests that each group learn the strategies typically used by members of the other gender.

⁷³ I will discuss my reservations with this suggestion, specifically about what it implies on pages 212-213 in the discussion of this book.

Tannen explains that “men should accept that many women regard exchanging details about personal lives as a basic ingredient to intimacy, and women should accept that many men do not share this view” (Tannen 2007: 120-122).

In chapter 6, Tannen discusses the different styles men and women have in conflict. She explains that conflict is valued by men “as a way of creating involvement with others...conflict is the necessary means by which status is negotiated, so it is to be accepted and may even be sought, embraced, and enjoyed”. However, women see conflict as a “threat to connection, to be avoided at all costs. Disputes are preferably settled without direct confrontation” (Tannen 2007: 150). Tannen explains that men seem to have an “early warning system geared to detect signs that they are being told what to do”. She explains that for men, “being on the lookout for threats to independence makes sense in the framework of an agonistic world, where life is a series of contests that test a man’s skill and force him to struggle against others who are trying to bend his will to theirs”. As such, the author states that “if a man experiences life as a fight for freedom, he is naturally inclined to resist attempts to control him and determine his behavior” (Tannen 2007: 151-152). She says that this perception has developed into the concept of the ‘hen-pecked husband’. This characterizes women as continuously bothering/ bossing their husbands around. However, as previously discussed, many men “resent any inkling that their wives want to get them to do things”. Tannen states that: “women’s lives have historically been hemmed in at every turn by the demands of others – their families, their husbands – and yet, though individual women may complain of overbearing husbands, there is no parallel stereotype of a ‘rooster-pecked wife’. Why not? Seeing people as interdependent, women expect their actions to be influenced by others, and they expect people to act in concert” (Tannen 2007: 152). I argue that the concept of the ‘rooster-pecked wife’ does not exist as some individuals believe that it is

'natural' for the husband to be in charge and for women to 'naturally' submit to their husband's wishes and requests. This may be why it is only women's requests that are viewed negatively, or as it is sometimes called 'nagging', and as women making requests are viewed negatively by men, due to their emphasis on status, believe that their wives are trying to dominate them, but women do not have these negative metamessages associated with their husband's requests/complaints.

Tannen also asserts that the system of female communication views confrontations negatively; that: "directly expressing criticism and sparking a fight would send a metamessage that one wants to weaken the bonds of friendship" (Tannen 2007: 158). As a result, women avoid conflict and try to resolve conflict. Men, on the other hand, view "being able to express disagreement as a sign of intimacy" (Tannen 2007: 160). Tannen emphasizes that these different perceptions of conflict can cause arguments that: "lead to frustration not only about the subject of dissension but also about the other's way of arguing. One again the difference between messages and metamessages is key" (Tannen 2007: 174).

Tannen also argues that in many cases when individuals are not getting the results they want, they do not question their method or way of acquiring results or try a new method. Instead, she states that: "we try harder by doing more of what seems self-evidently the right way to proceed. But when styles differ, more of the same is usually met with more of the same from the other party as well. As a result, far from solving the problem, our efforts only make things worse" (Tannen 2007: 186). She suggests that women should learn that conflict is not horrible, while men should learn that they should not always engage in conflict.

In chapter 8, Tannen discusses women's indirectness and judgments of men's conversation style as the norm. She explains that women prefer to not make explicit demands as they prefer to seek connection: "if you get your way as a result of having demanded it, the payoff is in rapport. You're neither one-up or one-down but happily connected to others whose wants are the same as yours. Furthermore, if indirectness is understood by both parties, then there is nothing covert about it: That a request is being made is clear. Calling an indirect communication covert reflects the view of someone for whom the direct style seems 'natural' and 'logical' – a view more common among men" (Tannen 2007: 125-126). As such, I argue that women may not explicitly ask their husbands to complete domestic tasks, as they want their husbands to complete housework not because they demand it, but because their husbands will do it to enhance the rapport between them, women want to do it out of love or caring.

In chapter 10, Tannen provides suggestions for improving communication. Particularly she describes the concept of 'complementary schismogenesis' – "a mutually aggravating spiral by which each person's response to the other's behavior provokes more exaggerated forms of the divergent behavior" (Bateson 1972, as cited in Tannen 2007: 282). This concept "commonly sets in when women and men have divergent sensitivities and hypersensitivities". Tannen provides the following example: "a man who fears losing his freedom pulls away at the first sign he interprets as an attempt to "control" him, but pulling away is just the signal that sets off alarms for the woman who fears losing intimacy. Her attempts to get closer will aggravate his fear, and his reaction – pulling further away – will aggravate hers, and so on, in an ever-widening spiral" (Tannen 2007: 282).⁷⁴

⁷⁴ The concept of 'complementary schismogenesis' seems to me to be the process of 'demand and withdraw' discussed by Rubenstein and the cycle discussed by Coleman. See Appendix D for a visual representation of the process by Coleman (2005: 92).

Tannen argues that: “we create masculinity and femininity in our ways of behaving, all the while believing we are simply acting ‘naturally’. But our sense of what is natural is different for women and men” (Tannen 2007: 287). Tannen explains that the gendered worlds men and women live in put pressures on them: men as boys experience “the pressure to maintain connections with others while appearing skillful and knowledgeable, and while negotiating relative rank”, while girls and women experience “the pressure to achieve status while avoiding conflict and appearing no better than anyone else” (Tannen 2007: 292-293). She states that women and men can learn from each other’s styles of communication. Women can learn to “accept some conflict and difference without seeing it as a threat to intimacy”, and men can learn to “accept interdependence without seeing it as a threat to their freedom” (Tannen 2007: 294).

Tannen explains that there is no one best conversation style or strategy; the ‘best’ style is a flexible one. She explains that “the freest person is the one who can choose which strategies to use, not the one who must slavishly replay the same script over and over” (Tannen 2007: 294-295). Tannen says that ‘genderlects’ may be taught, people can change their conversational styles if they want. However, she argues that: “those who ask this question rarely want to change their own styles. Usually, what they have in mind is sending their partners for repair: They’d like to get him or her to change. Changing one’s own style is far less appealing, because it is not just how you act but who you feel yourself to be” (Tannen 2007: 297). She argues that it is more realistic to “learn how to interpret each other’s messages and explain your own way in a way your partner can understand and accept” (Tannen 2007: 297). She explains that it is a big mistake to believe that there is only right way to listen, talk, have a conversation or have a relationship. “Nothing hurts more than being told your intentions are bad when you know they are good, or

being told you are doing something wrong when you know you're just doing it your way" (Tannen 2007: 297).

Finally, Tannen discusses in her afterword the effect this book has had on others, as well as her experiences and thoughts since the release of the book. She explains that she did not set out to write a self-help book, that she originally "wanted to use her expertise as a linguist to explain how ways of talking affect relationships...and show that behaviors people might ascribe to the individual failings of family members...can sometimes result from ways of talking people learned growing up as girls and boys" (Tannen 2007: 300). She takes a "no-fault approach" in her advice; she argues that: "the styles of women and men both make sense, our challenge is to understand the logic of both" (Tannen 2007: 301).

Tannen states that she is often asked whether she believed gender differences in conversational style that she describes are biological or cultural. She states that: "what intrigues me the most is why we are so obsessed with picking the influences apart. Perhaps one explanation lies in a gender pattern I have noticed. Those who ask the question usually feel they know the answer: Either they are convinced that differences between women and men are all or almost all biologically based or they are convinced that the differences are all or almost all culturally shaped. And it tends to be men who assume it is all biology and women who assume it is all culture. The division in itself is interesting. Many people seem to assume that if gender differences are biologically based, then it can't be helped...If it can't be helped, this reasoning goes, then men are relieved of guilt, and women's hopes to remedy such inequities are doomed. On the other hand, others assume that if gender differences are culturally based, then anything we don't like can be changed tomorrow. Yet neither of these assumptions strikes me as accurate.

Biological influence does not mean patterns of behavior can't be changed. And cultural influences are extremely deep and difficult to change" (Tannen 2007: 307-308).

I have some major criticisms of Tannen's book. To begin with, she states that both styles are valid, but I disagree with both conversation styles, as they are based on 'traditional' ideas of womanhood and manhood, as discussed in the "Cult of True Womanhood' and the 'Male Sex Role Identity' discussed in chapter 3. I agree with Tannen that when women try to avoid conflict and keep harmony based on the intention of considering other's feelings and maintaining relationships, it is likely that they will be exploited by others. I argue that women need to feel more entitled, in the sense that their views and feelings are just as important as those of others. If someone does not respect a woman's thoughts or feelings, it is better to confront them, to engage in conflict, rather than being a doormat. However, I have a bigger problem with men's conversation style in the sense that they are very concerned with status. I further argue they have narrow, dichotomous perception of the world; they are seen as either being g high status or low status, as being dominant or submissive.

I argue that the reason why men seem to be so sensitive about appearing dependent/submissive or having low status is linked to perceptions of masculinity. These qualities are associated with being masculine; thus, I argue that such men feel that their masculinity may be threatened or questioned if they appear to be dependent/submissive or having low status. I argue that the men seem to have a dichotomous view of society, as discussed above, as they may have a narrow view of masculinity; they may see everything is either characterized as masculine or feminine. As such, I argue that these gender differences (that women should be submissive, accommodating and that men should demonstrate their status, dependence) are related to the traditional characteristics associated with men and women

discussed in chapter three, which emerged during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (The Cult of True Womanhood). Consequently, I reject Tannen's argument that both styles are legitimate, as I reject what I believe is the basis of men's conversational style. Also, Tannen states that she opposes wide generalizations; these gender differences do not apply to every man or woman, and does not manifest itself in the same way.

Additionally, Tannen does not discuss why the husband sees his wife's use of emotion as 'manipulative'. According to Hochschild book *The Managed Heart*, it is believed not only that women are more emotional than men, but they are much more skilled at managing their emotions. Women manage their emotions to please others, as previously discussed, however this also could imply that women are 'creating' emotional expression as opposed to 'spontaneously feeling' their emotions (Hochschild 1983: 164-165). They may even feel that talking using emotions is the talk of 'artful prey' in that women are using emotions, as well as the psychology behind them (anger, guilt, shame) to modify their husbands' behaviors (Hochschild 1983: 166-167).

He may feel that he does not agree with her emotions or even emotions in general, but feels like the bad guy if he ignores or rejects her feelings. It may be that some men view emotions as an illegitimate, in the sense that they view logic and reason as legitimate reasons and motivations, but not emotions. Hochschild describes the reason why emotions, or more specifically, women's emotions are rejected. She states that as women have been considered 'of lower status' compared to men, their feelings are "accorded less weight than the feelings of men" (Hochschild 1983:171). Hochschild explains "high-status people tend to enjoy the privilege of having their feelings noticed and considered important. The lower one's status, the more one's feelings are not noticed or treated as inconsequential" (1983: 172).

Furthermore, Hochschild argues that: “we’re still in the stage that if you don’t hold in your emotions, you’re pegged as emotional, unstable, and all those terms that have always been to describe women...When a man expresses anger, it is deemed “rational” or understandable anger, anger that indicates not weakness of character but deeply held conviction. When women express an equivalent degree of anger, it is more likely to be interpreted as a sign of personal instability. It is believed that women are more emotional, and this very belief is used to invalidate their feelings. That is, the women’s feelings are seen not as a response to real events but as reflections of themselves as ‘emotional’ women” (1983: 173). I disagree with the stereotype that women are more emotional than men, it is deemed more acceptable for women to express ‘feminine’ emotions; such as crying, but not the ‘masculine’ emotion of anger; likewise it is socially acceptable for men to express anger, but not sadness. I reject the labels of ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’ emotions, the discrediting of women’s anger and the negative evaluation of man who cries, for example. I argue that adhering to the labels for emotions is a narrow gender expression, based on ‘traditional’ beliefs about the supposed ‘inherent nature’ of men and women.

Tannen and Coleman have discussed the stereotype that women are more emotional than men. I disagree, as I argue it is seen as more socially acceptable for women to express certain types of emotions. Hochschild describes the above process as the ‘doctrine of feelings’: “the lower our status, the more our manner of seeing and feeling is subject to being discredited, and the less believable it becomes” (1983: 173). Unfortunately, Hochschild states that “to make up either way of weighing the feelings of the two sexes unequally, many women urge their feelings forward, trying to express them with more force, so as to get them treated with seriousness. But from there the spiral moves down. For the harder women try to oppose the ‘doctrine of feeling’

by expressing their feelings more, the more they come to fit the image awaiting them as 'emotional'. Their efforts are discounted as one more example of emotionalism" (Hochschild 1983: 174). Thus, I argue that by belittling a wife's feelings, a man is also belittling his wife; his seeing her feelings as less legitimate than his thoughts or logic implies that that his 'thought process' is more important or valid than hers, which ultimately dismiss a wife's complaint or request.

I argue that Tannen should have applied this open-mindedness in more detail to what is implied in her gender differences in men and women's conversational styles. I also argue that she should have discussed these issues in her book. Her lack of analysis seems to be to imply that these differences are somewhat 'natural'. I further argue that she answers whether she believes gender differences in conversation style are related to biology or culture by asking a question of the one who asked-why they want to know as not really an answer, as a tactic used to distract the reader and evade the question. I also argue that Tannen should have deconstructed these gendered issues and been more reflexive.

In conclusion, I argue that each book does present interesting insights and suggestions to help couples either have a more equal division of domestic tasks and/or understand each other better. I think that these three texts provide a good example of the type of books someone who is not familiar with academic research will read regarding the gendered division of housework and its related topics. Each text discusses research and provides concrete examples that may be relatable to the reader. The first book, *The Superior Wife Syndrome: Why Women Do Everything So Well and Why-For The Sake of Our Marriages-We've Got to Stop* discusses in great detail the dynamic of why and how couples are living in marriages that contain an unequal division of housework, as well as tactics to develop 'non-superior' wife marriages, or more egalitarian

marriages. Likewise, the second book, *The Lazy Husband How To Get Men to More Parenting and Housework* illustrates why women have accepted their lazy husbands, how to feel entitled to more help and offers a variety of tactics women can use to try to persuade their husbands to complete more housework, regardless of the dynamics (gender ideology, personality type, income division) of the couple. Additionally, the book insightfully discusses the gender differences in conversational style (men's focus on status and women's focus on avoiding conflict) as well as the plea-and withdraw scenario. The third book, *You Just Don't Understand! Women and Men In Conversation* discusses these gender differences in conversation style in more detail in an attempt to help couples understand each other.

However, I argue that each author should have deconstructed the issue of gender or that at least, the influence of it in their texts. They should have analyzed or clarified their assumptions, or analyzed or engaged with the research or concepts to which they refer and discuss.

Rubenstein should have been more reflexive about gender, as demonstrated in her discussion of 'biology is destiny' and 'intersex' husbands, and she should have discussed her concept of 'non-superior' traditional wives in more detail as such a classification contradicts her definition of 'superior wives'. Coleman should have analyzed in more detail research on the 'politics of comparison' and 'the economics of gratitude' I argued that his suggestion that women should feel entitled to help with housework, that they should stop seeing it as a favor but as an expectation contradicts his later advice that women thank their husbands profusely and ask their husbands nicely to complete housework. Finally, Tannen has not adequately examined the gender differences in conversational style. I argued that her stating that each style is legitimate fails to address that each conversational style is based on stereotypical 'traditional' beliefs about

the 'appropriate behavior' of men and women. Her omission of the critique of the gender differences implies that she believes that they are 'inherent' or 'natural'. I also argue that she failed to discuss the influence of status with men's conceptions of masculinity. Ultimately, I argue that each author's text requires more reflexivity, specifically about their assumptions related to gender.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION:

This thesis has discussed several important areas in order to understand the dynamics and the continuance of the gendered division of housework. Specifically, this thesis has explored the various theoretical perspectives which attempt to explain the gendered division of housework, the history of housework being seen as a women's responsibility, the link between morality and housework, as well as the nature of conflict over the division of housework.

In chapter two, the various theoretical perspectives that have been used to explain the gendered division of housework were discussed. The relative-resource and time-availability theoretical perspective were criticized for their omission, lack of analysis of the influence of gender. Specifically, both concepts fail to examine why women tend to have less resources and more time than men. I present research, particularly the concept of 'compensatory gender display' and the 'U shaped' pattern of housework by income, that demonstrates that ideology appears to determine contributions to housework more so than income. I also establish that the gender ideology perspective was lacking in respect to predicting individual's behavior; that ideology may not be reflected in behavior. As such, I argued that although gender does impact the division of housework, there must be another factor that influences individual's behavior regarding the continuing gendered division of housework.

The gender construction illuminated that the gendered meanings associated with housework may explain why women tend to complete more housework than men. However, I also argued that this perspective would be strengthened by my clarification: gender differences in the morality/values associated with housework, specifically about its importance, may explain the gendered division of housework. I also included a discussion of research on perceptions of fairness/equity in the division of housework – as this shapes whether a gendered division of

housework is perceived negatively or positively. This research demonstrated that the group or the person to whom an individual compares one's partner to can shape their perceptions of the division of housework. The process of the 'politics of comparison' may result in a partner being seen more or less favorably, or one believing that one is contributing far more or far less than others. Related to this is concept of an 'economy of gratitude'; the type of comparison utilized to judge one's partner's contributions shape the perceptions of whether or not one or one's partner should feel grateful or feeling that they are entitled to a larger contribution.

In chapter three and four the history of the allocation of housework as a woman's responsibility was discussed. This included a discussion of the 'woman problem' as well as a discussion of the creation of housework as a profession through the concepts of home economics and scientific management. In addition, chapter three examined the history of the link between morality and housework, and how this was utilized by various 'experts' such as advertisers, marketers and home economists. Chapter four examined the emphasis placed upon homemaking as a result of World War II, including why some women at the time become psychologically invested in housework and I would say 'over-involved' in their housework. This also included a discussion of the influence of advertisements in shaping and continuing to shape and normalize certain perceptions, attitudes and behaviors in relation to housework. Following this, I discussed the meaning of dirt and cleanliness, that these states possess moral associations and perceptions. I discussed the psychology of women who are 'psychologically involved' in housework, known as 'scrubbers', and those who are not, labeled as 'flappers'. I also discussed what I argue is the different psychological associations and perceptions involved in both styles of cleaning style or approaches.

Finally, in chapter five I analyzed 'self-help' books. The first two books were aimed at getting couples to have a fairer division of housework, while the third contained a discussion of the differences in men and women's conversation styles. In each book, I argued that the author was not reflexive enough; they did not self-analyze their own perceptions or analyze in more detail the concepts that they discussed. In the first book, *The Superior Wife Syndrome: Why Women Do Everything So Well and Why-For The Sake of Our Marriages-We've Got to Stop*, Rubenstein discusses 'superior wives', women who complete most or all of the domestic tasks, as well as being the family managers, deciders and planners. Essentially, the concept of 'superior wife' is an elaboration of the concept of 'supermoms'. The second book *The Lazy Husband* by Joshua Coleman, involved a discussion of appreciation and asking one's husband to complete tasks nicely. I argued that this suggestion may be based on the stereotype of the 'fragility of the male ego'; that men tend to overreact to positive and negative statements regarding them. In addition, the analysis of these books provided a discussion of the arguments couples may have in their discussions of housework. The deconstruction of the concepts such as 'nagging' and the 'plea and flee' phenomenon or complementary 'schismogenesis' was based on the insights gained by the analysis of the third book *You Just Don't Understand* by Deborah Tannen. It was revealed that the issue of status/dependence may be related to some men's labelling their wife's requests as 'nagging', as well as why these men particularly dislike being told what tasks to complete and how to do them. The analysis of these books led to the conclusion that these authors may be over-simplifying their discussion of certain concepts and research in their texts. However, these texts provide good examples of what the average individual may be exposed to in their quest to improve their own division of housework.

The exploration of this topic has led me to reach several conclusions. Primarily, both women and men should compare their contributions to housework to that of their partner. Women feel bad about themselves if they compare themselves to other women who do more than them; men feel better about themselves if they do more than other men. Some wives point out that men who do more housework than their partners, men may compare their wives to women who do more or have more responsibilities than their wives. This 'politics of comparison' scenario is ultimately used to silence and devalue women's claims that their partners should do more, in fact it creates the belief that women should be 'thankful' and 'appreciate' whatever portion of the housework their husbands are completing; however, minimal it is. This relates to my second conclusion: Women are entitled to expect that the division of housework be divided equally, both theoretically and practically. I use both terms as often men agree theoretically with equality, but do not meet that expectation in reality – they may think it is a great idea, but do not in fact behave in a way that is consistent with equality. This concept was discussed by Mainardi. She described men who agree theoretically with completing half of the housework but use various complaints and tactics to avoid completing housework.

I also argue that resentment over the inequality over the division of housework may be related to anger and resentment that women feel regarding men's real or 'supposed' free or leisure time. Like the concept of relaxed egalitarianism and 'gate-keeping' in relation to housework, I argue that some women may be acutely aware of the amount of leisure time their husbands have if they themselves feel that they are deprived of leisure time because of their domestic responsibilities. A stereotypical example would be a husband plopping himself on the couch and watching TV while his wife prepares dinner, cleans up after the meal and does some

laundry. As discussed by Rubenstein (2009: 135-136) some men feel that their leisure is a given. I also argue that everyone is entitled to leisure, but that one person's leisure is not more important than that of the other partner; it is selfish and arrogant for some men to think that they are entitled to relax while their wife engages in domestic responsibilities. I acknowledge that sometimes leisure time cannot be quantified, and that one partner may spend less of their free time engaging in domestic responsibilities if they have very little free time due to the demands of their job. I emphasize that what is important is a sense of whether one partner feels taken advantage of, in the sense that they feel they are spending too much of their free time doing housework and not enough time engaged in leisure.

In conclusion, this thesis was written with the intention to explore why the division of housework continues to be gendered. I addressed this topic at both the macro and micro level. I explained why Western Society associates and continues to associate housework as a woman's responsibility. I demonstrated why women as a group and individually may feel socially and/or psychologically that they should complete housework, that it is important. I discussed the dynamics between the couple which contribute to a gendered division of housework (the politics of comparison, the economy or gratitude, differences on gender ideology, differences in conversation style). The goal of the thesis was to attempt to explain how and why the attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of men and women in relation to housework and the roles of men and women may differ by gender. I argue that this exploration illuminated that the division of housework is gendered is partly due to conflict over the division of housework. This conflict is based on the multiple gender differences I have discussed in this thesis. Specifically, I wanted to provide some insight to couples so they will understand the various factors, as well as the dynamics between them, which contribute to the division of housework. Being aware, and may

even coming to understand the processes, concepts and factors I have discussed will hopefully result in a higher probability for a mutually agreed upon divisions of housework.

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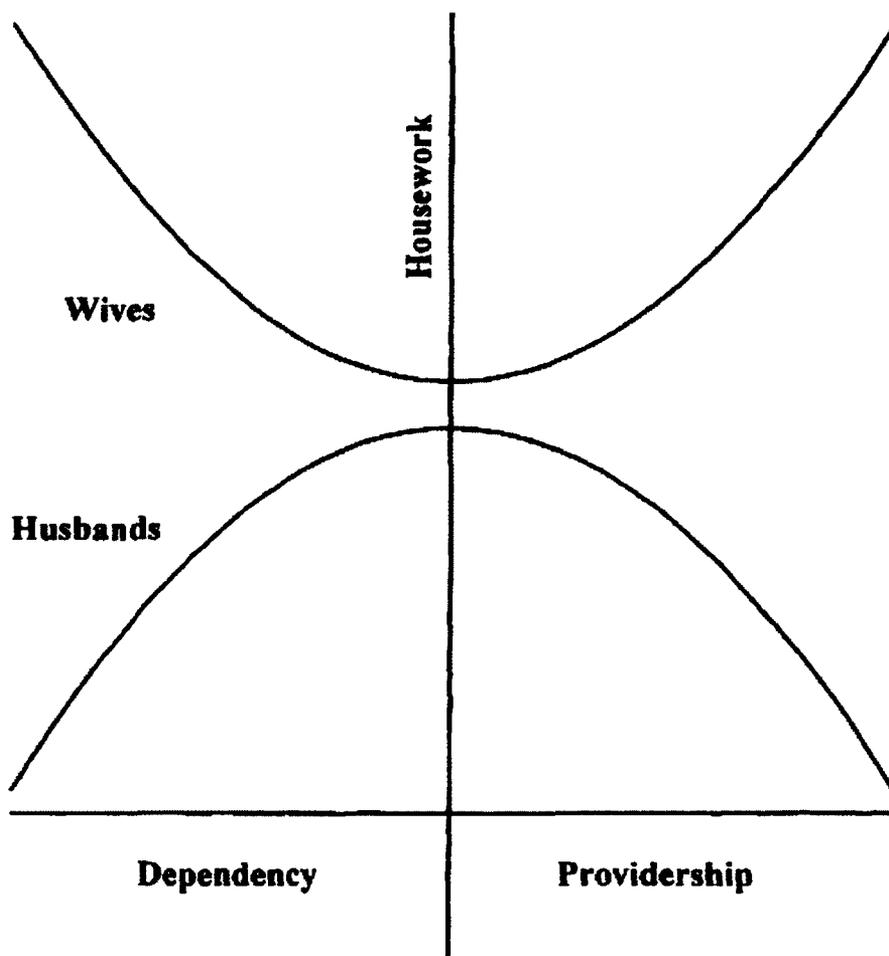
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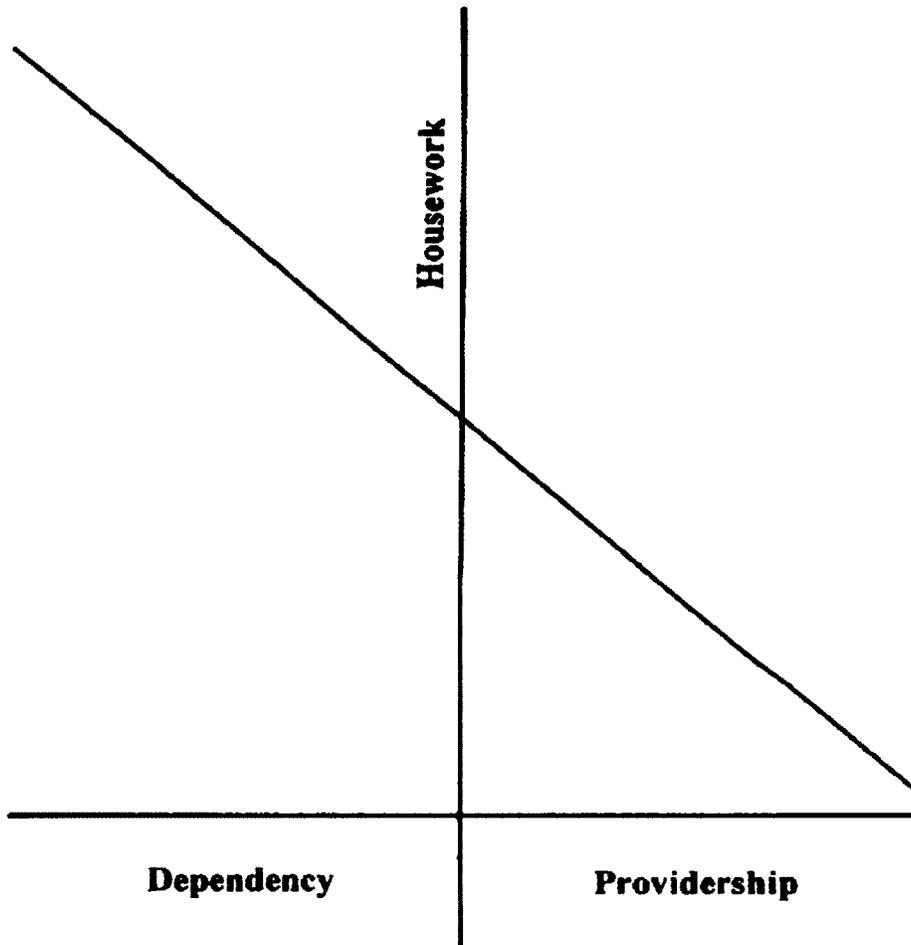
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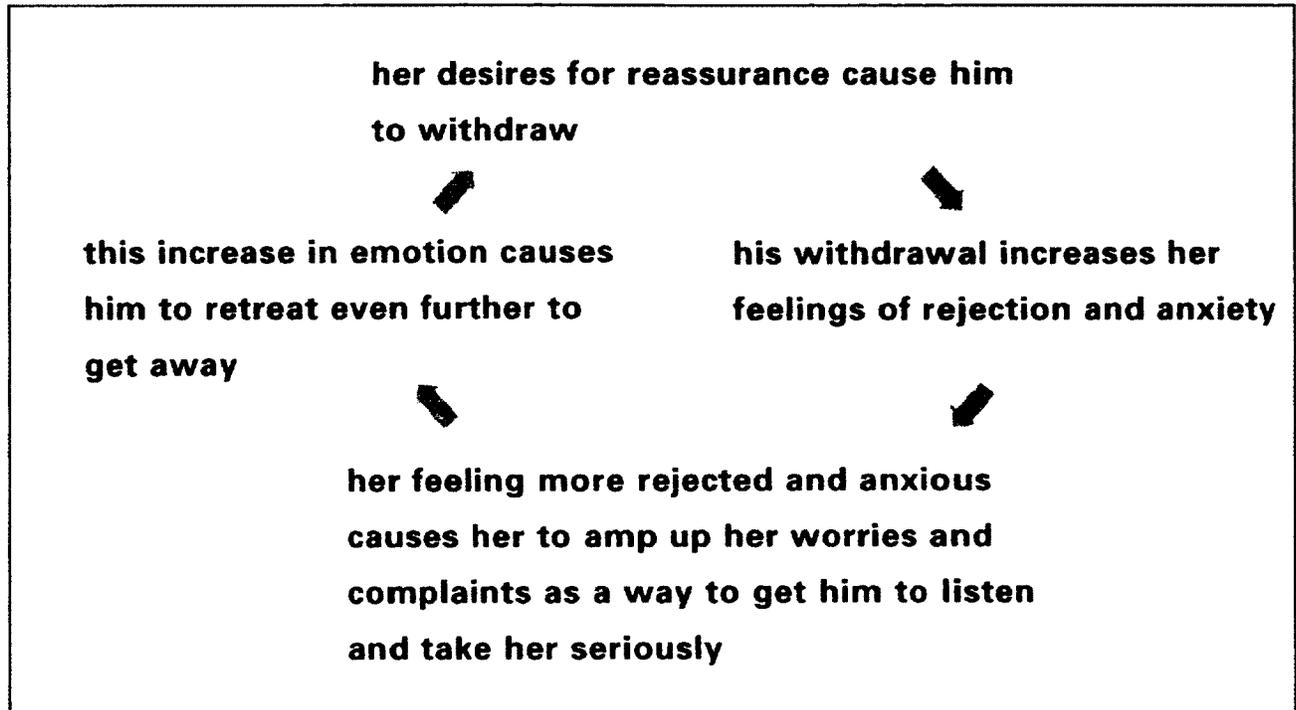
APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B



APPENDIX C



APPENDIX D

