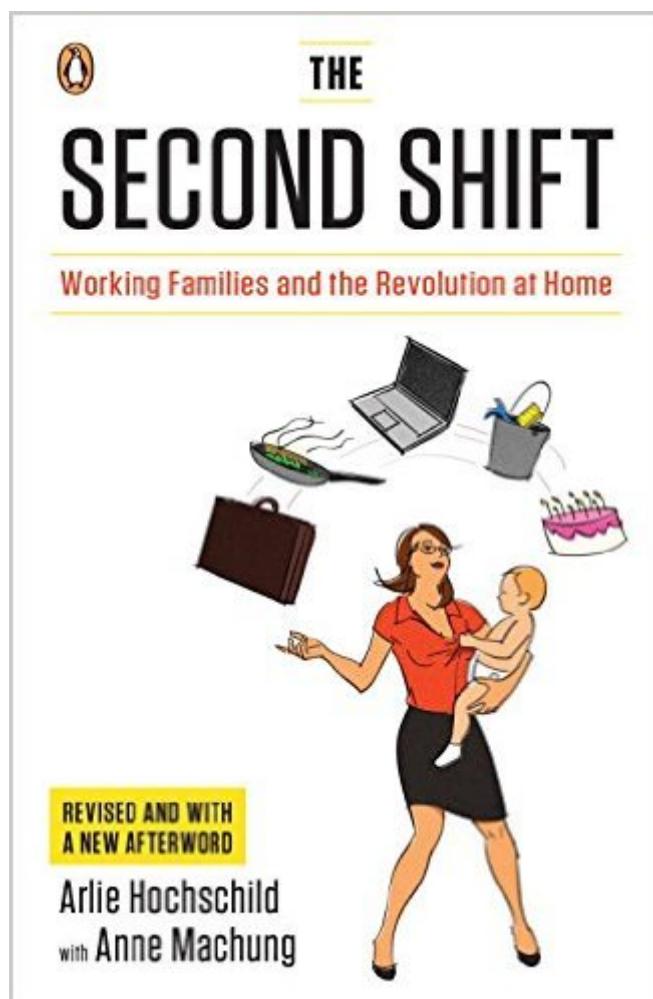


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# The Second Shift: Working Families And The Revolution At Home



## **Synopsis**

An updated edition of a standard in its field that remains relevant more than twenty years after its original publication. More than twenty years ago, sociologist and University of California, Berkeley, professor Arlie Hochschild set off a tidal wave of conversation and controversy with his bestselling book, *The Second Shift*. In it, she examined what really happens in dual-career households. Adding together time in paid work, child care, and housework, she found that working mothers put in a month of work a year more than their spouses. Updated for a workforce now half female, this edition cites a range of new studies and statistics and includes a new afterword in which Hochschild assesses how much-and how little-has changed for women today.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I've bought ten copies of this book and sent them to friends from CT to CA. I was impressed with how the authors didn't bash men but presented the facts without judgement. The facts being: women have traditionally handled the equivalent of an 8-12 hr/day job at home that consisted of meal preparation, childcare, laundry, bill paying, gift purchasing, holiday and event planning, dental/medical maintenance for the family etc. Now that they work, the question must be addressed - who will handle that full time job at home ?Until we shine a light on this question we can't expect men to intuitively KNOW it needs to be addressed since they've never done the work to begin with (plus, let's be real, how many of us RUN after more work?). Many women just do the work until they get sick from exhaustion- so the conversations aren't even happening, or they have happened and failed. I sent this book to friends with daughters and more importantly with sons, because we have a

chance as mothers to raise men willing to share the work and to raise women who will not settle for anything less than an equal partner. They also highlighted issues with 2 job families that our society needs a solution for, e.g. until there is adequate and affordable childcare women are taking lower paying flexible jobs to deal with half-day school schedules. If every parent works, how could a school arbitrarily close for a half day? And why would we hobble 50% of our workers so they could not achieve their full potential when the resulting taxes they would have paid could help to support our economy? Yet my friends from NM to NY to CA complain about school schedules not matching work hours and having to compromise their careers. An excellent read that prompted many productive conversations.

It most certainly is an interesting read. My sociology professor was ecstatic when it came out and told the class to pre-order the book. Although I felt it was a little outdated, most of the concepts remain the same twenty years later. Hochschild interviewed and observed several different family environments, all had working mothers and children under the age of ten. She explains the different techniques that the mother uses to juggle home and work. The title *Second Shift* represents the house work that women generally deal with after their "first shift" at work. Overall, any woman with a family can relate to at least one of the women in the book.

I love this book. It's fantastic for all women and men to read, to better understand how our culture values the time and careers of men and women. The book is organized primarily in case studies of individual families, which really gives a nice look at how many different families of different cultures, races, locations, and socioeconomic statuses grapple with this key issue. Highly recommend this read for any one who is a grown person, man or woman, married or single! Highly relevant for same sex couples as well even though it is targeted at hetero couples.

This book is an eye-opener to all the women out there thinking they are the only ones who are married to men who don't want to help out around the house or with the kids! Apparently, it's a normal thing in the U.S. and other countries! It's not a feminist book in my opinion; it doesn't attack men. It does show some of the consequences of women working outside of the home. I enjoyed it very much; I had to read it for one of my graduate courses and I would recommend it to women and men alike!

Since 1989, this title has made an impact on the American household reader. It deals with the

working woman, and they're a majority of women, and shows you insights into dual-income households, changes in love and relationships, myths long outdated and many other things. This is a nice read for the American worker, in particular a woman! Well worth the \$16.00!

I wish I could say this book is dated and no longer relevant, but unfortunately the burden of work-life balance is still a problem that disproportionately affects women. Hochschild describes several case studies of husband-wife pairs in which both spouses have worked at some point in the marriage and then describes the conclusions she has reached by examining patterns in these relationships that lead to the stresses the couples endure. Though I find the book interesting, informative, and engaging, it is often repetitive - the author probably could have made the same points in a book 60% of this length. It was somewhat disappointing that she focused so much on the specific relationships between wives and husbands, as though those attitudes are the root cause of the problem, rather than paying more attention to the structural issues within our society and culture that perpetuate inequality. In the last few paragraphs, she does describe how changes to the workplace, childcare, and urban planning could contribute to the cause of equality, but she mentions these as though they are an afterthought. Plus, an article published in the NY Times last month (entitled "When Family-Friendly Policies Backfire," and clearly written decades after The Second Shift) revealed statistics demonstrating that well-intentioned policies like paid maternity leave often contribute to further inequality. Hochschild neglects to mention how a culture that values productivity and profit above all else is also potentially to blame. These reservations and imperfections aside, this book is an important one for the feminist bookshelf. How might the world change if more men (and people in general) read books like this?

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