

**MALE SAME-SEX COUPLES AND
THE DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOUR**

By

Deirdre Ann Pinto

Department of Sociology
Lakehead University
Thunder Bay, Ontario

A thesis submitted to the Department of Sociology and the Collaborative Master's
Program in Women's Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts

November, 2005

© Deirdre Ann Pinto, 2005



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-15639-1
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-15639-1

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

Abstract

Studies on heterosexual couples show that women continue to perform the overwhelming majority of household tasks, and that factors, such as gender, parental influence, relationship status, income, education, age, and occupational status, affect their division of labour. Studies also show that men continue to remain more satisfied with the division of labour than women. The purpose of this study was to examine the division of labour in male same-sex couples, the factors which contribute to the division of labour, satisfaction and perceptions of fairness, and participants' perceptions regarding conventional gender roles. Using data from 92 questionnaires and 20 interviews, this study found that male couples shared household labour more equitably than heterosexual couples. Factors contributing to their division of labour were unlike those found in studies on heterosexuals. Factors included interest, skill and ability, time in paid labour, and practicality. Other emphasized themes included negotiation, conscious sharing, and the option of hiring help. Overall, participants felt that their sexual orientation gave them the freedom to reject conventional gender roles and invent new ways of sharing domestic labour. Findings from this study add to the growing body of literature on the division of labour in same-sex couples.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Table of Contents.....	1
Acknowledgements.....	3
Thesis Introduction	5
Aim of this research study.....	5
Topic Selection	5
Significance of this Research Study.....	6
Outline of the Thesis.....	6
Chapter 1 - A Review of the Literature on the Division of Unpaid Labour.....	8
The Normative Status of Dual-Earner Heterosexual Couples	8
Factors Contributing to the Division of Domestic Labour in Heterosexual Couples	10
The Significance of Gender in Relation to the Division of Labour	10
Gender and “Doing Gender”	10
Gendered Meanings of Housework	11
Gender Role Attitudes	12
Parental Influences	13
Relationship Status and Its Implications for Men Doing Housework	14
Time in Paid Labour	14
Relative Income	15
Presence of Children.....	17
Level of Education.....	18
Generation.....	18
Occupational Status	19
Satisfaction with the Division of Labour and Perceptions of Fairness	20
Same-Sex Couples and the Division of Labour	21
Hegemonic Masculinity and Reconstructing Masculinities.....	26
Conclusion	28
Chapter 2 – Methodology and Method.....	30
Feminist Methodological Concerns: Quantitative and Qualitative Research	30
Using Multiple Methods in Feminist Research	33
Ethical Issues	34
The Relationship between Researcher and Interviewee	34
Power.....	35
The Need for Reflexivity	35
Interpretation and Positionality	36
Positionality of the Researcher.....	37
Positionality of the Participants	39
Method	40
The Questionnaires, Survey Sample, and Coding Procedures.....	41
The Interviews	43
Study Limitations.....	46
Conclusion	48

Chapter 3 – The Division of Labour and Factors.....	50
The Division of Paid Labour.....	50
The Division of Domestic Labour.....	51
Patterns of Task Specialization.....	52
Factors Typically Correlated with the Division of Domestic Labour.....	54
Relative Gender Role Identity.....	54
Relative Income.....	55
Relative Time in Paid Work.....	55
Length of Cohabitation.....	57
Relative Age, Educational Attainment, and Occupational Status.....	57
Primary Factors which Affect the Division of Unpaid Labour.....	58
Relative Time Availability.....	58
Time as a Significant Factor.....	58
Time as a Predictor of Change in the Division of Unpaid Labour.....	60
Parental Influence and Childhood Routines.....	61
Parental Influence: Childhood Learning.....	61
Childhood Routines.....	62
Acquiring Skill as an Adult.....	63
Does Income Matter?.....	65
Does Income Affect the Division of Household Labour.....	65
Fair Division of Financial Responsibilities.....	66
Conclusion.....	68
Chapter 4 – Factors Affecting the Division of Labour in Gay Couples.....	71
Interest and Preference.....	71
Unpaid Labour: Therapeutic Effects.....	72
Dual-Interest: Dual-Participation in Completing Tasks.....	73
Skill, Capability, and Physical Limitations.....	74
Skill: Task Specialization.....	75
Capability and Higher Standards.....	76
Physical Limitations.....	78
Practicality and Conscious Sharing.....	79
Practicality and the Division of Unpaid Labour.....	79
Conscious Sharing: Fairness as an Objective.....	80
Unassigned Tasks: Practicality and Sharing.....	80
Negotiation: A Problem-Solving Tool.....	81
Negotiation: Problem-Solving Strategies.....	82
<i>Completing the Task Together</i>	82
<i>Compromise</i>	83
<i>Hiring Outside Help</i>	84
Income and Hiring Help.....	85
Conclusion.....	86
Chapter 5 – Satisfaction with the Division of Household Labour.....	87
Satisfaction with the Division of Household Labour.....	87
Factors Found to Affect Satisfaction Levels with Division of Domestic Work.....	88
Reasons for Levels of Satisfaction with Division of Domestic Labour.....	90
A Closer Look at Participants' Responses Regarding Satisfaction.....	94
Similarity of Couple's Responses Regarding Satisfaction.....	94
Patterns of Responses Regarding Satisfaction.....	96
Conclusion.....	100

Chapter 6 – Perspectives on Sexual Orientation and Gender Roles.....	102
Self-definition of Roles.....	102
Being Equals.....	102
Partnership.....	103
Sharing.....	103
Other Responses.....	104
Primary Breadwinners and Primary Housewives?.....	105
Same-Sex Couples: The Necessity of Crossing Masculine Boundaries.....	107
Sexual Orientation: The ‘Coming Out’ Process and the Acceptance of Gender Role Non-Conformity.....	108
Gender Role Non-Conformity: Choice and Empowerment.....	110
The Need for Negotiation.....	112
Chapter Conclusion.....	113
Chapter 7 - Conclusion	116
General Findings from this Study.....	116
Implications of these Findings.....	119
Recommendations for Future Research on the Division of Labour.....	121
Works Cited	123
Appendices.....	132
Appendix A - Recruitment Flyer.....	132
Appendix B - Characteristics of Survey Sample.....	133
Appendix C - Couple Profiles.....	134
Appendix D - Chi-square and Gamma Results.....	139
Table 1 - Relative Contribution to “Feminine” Tasks.....	139
Table 2 - Relative Contribution to Tasks.....	139
Table 3 - Factors Influencing Relative Contribution to Typically “Feminine” Tasks....	140
Table 4 - Factors Influencing Relative Contribution to Typically “Masculine” Tasks...	140
Table 5 - Factors Influencing Relative Contribution to all “Feminine”, “Masculine” and Total Domestic Tasks.....	141
Table 6 - Relationship between Equality of Contribution.....	141
Table 7 – Couples’ Length of Cohabitation and the Division of Household Labour.....	142
Table 8 – Factors Affecting Relative Satisfaction Levels.....	142
Appendix E - Questionnaire and Coding Scheme.....	143
Appendix F – Interview Guide.....	161

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all the participants, who have made this thesis possible by their contributions and willingness to share their experiences. I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Dr. Sharon Dale Stone, for her immense support, guidance, and encouragement throughout the writing and editing of this thesis. I also thank Dr. Stone for her efficiency, as well as making an enormous effort in teaching me how to improve my writing and analytical skills. I also wish to thank my committee members, Dr. Pam Wakewich and Dr. Jianye Liu, for their insightful comments and suggestions on the final drafts of the thesis, and also for their guidance and suggestions along the way. I would also like to thank all the other Professors at Lakehead University who showed their enthusiasm and offered their advice and support over the past two years.

I would like to thank my mother, Ms. Victoria Pereira, for her emotional and financial support during the past 24 years. I would like to thank her and my brother, Mr. Brendan Pinto, for always believing in my potential to succeed not only in the academic sphere, but in life generally. I wish to thank all of my friends for always believing in me, encouraging me, and supporting me during all the stages of conducting this study and writing the thesis. I wish to thank my partner and fellow graduate student, Brenda Simpson, who during the writing of her own thesis, was always there to love and support me throughout the writing of my thesis.

Thesis Introduction

Aim of this research study

Academic research on the division of unpaid labour focuses almost exclusively on heterosexual couples. Of the few studies that look at same-sex couples, the majority focus on female same-sex couples. Therefore, the aim of this research study is to gain an understanding of the division of labour in male same-sex couples. This research was conducted in a large American city and used both qualitative and quantitative methods—92 questionnaires and 20 semi-structured interviews. There were three primary areas of interest. The first objective was to find out how male same-sex couples divide domestic labour and explore the factors that contribute to their division of household labour. Second, satisfaction levels as well as perceptions about satisfaction were studied. Finally, participants' perceptions about the relationship between sexual orientation and socially defined gender roles were examined in order to increase an understanding of the division of labour in same-sex couples.

Topic Selection

As a graduate student in Sociology/Women's Studies, I view gender relations as being one of the most interesting areas of research. This topic was selected for two main reasons. First, as an active member of the gay community since 2000, it has become second nature to always question research that focuses exclusively on heterosexual people and wonder whether or not a study on gay people (or in this case, same-sex couples) would produce similar findings. Second, taking quite a few undergraduate Women's Studies courses at McGill University made me aware of various issues relating

to gender. It was particularly the course on women and labour issues that brought the division of labour issue to the forefront. After noticing that virtually all the research was based on the lives and experiences of heterosexual couples, the idea for this study came into being.

Significance of this Research Study

Since the literature that exists on the division of unpaid labour focuses virtually exclusively on heterosexual couples, this study adds to the growing body of literature on the division of unpaid labour in same-sex couples. As a marginalized group, the gay community continues to be under-represented in academic research, as well as in other domains. This study provided an opportunity for gay men to share their perceptions, ideas, and lived experiences, and therefore, readers will gain a better understanding of the realities surrounding the issue of same-sex couples and the division of labour. Not only is this study an opportunity to broaden our understanding of the division of household labour from a different perspective, but it also has the potential to create new ways of thinking about the division of labour issue.

Outline of the Thesis

This thesis is comprised of seven chapters. Placing emphasis on gender as the primary factor, the first chapter reviews the literature on the division of domestic labour in heterosexual couples. Also, the limited literature on the division of labour in same-sex couples is reviewed. The second chapter outlines several feminist methodological concerns with regard to quantitative and qualitative research, and this is followed by details about methods used to conduct this study as well as the limitations of this study. In the third chapter, the way in which this sample of male same-sex couples divides

unpaid labour is presented. Additionally, using both the quantitative and qualitative data, the third and fourth chapters will explore the factors which contribute to the division of unpaid labour in this sample. Using both the quantitative and qualitative data, Chapter Five examines the sample's satisfaction levels, and more importantly participants' perceptions about satisfaction and fairness. Relying on the qualitative interviews, Chapter Six focuses on the participants' ideas and perceptions regarding the relationship between sexual orientation, socially defined gender roles, and the division of household labour. Lastly, Chapter Seven summarizes the findings, discusses their overall significance, and makes recommendations for future research on the division of labour issue.

Chapter 1 - A Review of the Literature on the Division of Unpaid Labour

This chapter reviews previous findings on the division of unpaid labour. First, general patterns of the division of labour amongst dual-earner heterosexual couples are considered. The significance of gender and how gender has been theorized as influencing contributions to unpaid domestic labour is examined. Factors contributing to the division of domestic labour in heterosexual-headed households, both dual- and single-earner, are then be examined, followed by an exploration regarding satisfaction and perceptions of fairness. Lastly, findings from studies done on same-sex couples with regard to the division of labour are reviewed, followed by a discussion of sexual orientation in relation to “hegemonic masculinity.”

The Normative Status of Dual-Earner Heterosexual Couples

In Canada and many Western countries, over the past three decades women have entered the paid labour force at an extraordinary rate (Arrighi and Maume, 2000: 464; Statistics Canada, 2004: 6). Dual-earner families have become normative, displacing the mid-20th century ideal, in which the male is the sole breadwinner and the female is the homemaker (Health Canada, 1999: 6). Many norms surrounding living arrangements and paid labour are changing. Employment patterns have changed, family structures and cohabitation patterns are changing, and challenges to gender roles are emerging (Maher and Singleton, 2003: 59). Although women are now almost as likely as men to be in the paid labour force on a full-time basis, unpaid household labour has maintained its gendered components (Arrighi and Maume, 2000: 464).

Based on information gathered from Statistic Canada's 1992 and 1998 General Social Survey, it was found that domestic work in Canada is unequally distributed, whereby women are spending 30 hours per week on household tasks and men are spending 18 hours per week on household tasks. Women perform the overwhelming majority of household tasks, such as clothing-care tasks (88.6%), meal preparation (71.6%), and cleaning (71%) (Hamdad, 2003). There continues to be a clear gendered division of labour in Canada, in which women are primarily responsible for the bulk of indoor tasks (such as cooking, cleaning, laundry), and men are mainly responsible for outdoor tasks, such as mowing the lawn and home repairs (Baxter and Western 1998: 108; Zukewich, 2003: 12). The difference between the indoor and outdoor tasks is that the former include many tasks, such as cooking, doing laundry, and doing dishes, which must be *routinely* completed and are difficult to schedule as flexibly as the latter (Zukewich, 2003: 12).

Research on dual-earner couples in western, English-speaking countries consistently indicates that women do a significantly greater share of housework than men (Batalova and Cohen, 2002: 753; Baxter, 2005: 300; Baxter and Western, 1998: 108; Bittman, England, Folbre, Sayer, and Matheson, 2003: 203; Chandler, 2003: 6; Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 348; Himsel and Goldberg, 2003: 853; Kroska, 2004: 920; Presser, 1994: 353; South and Spitze, 1994: 336; Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 519). For instance, excluding childcare, Bittman, England, Folbre, Sayer, and Matheson (2003: 203) found that American men averaged 11 hours of housework, while women averaged 23 hours per week. Similarly, Presser (1994: 353) found that American wives in dual-earner couples spend about 33.4 hours per week on household tasks, while husbands

spend 17.6 hours per week. Baxter and Western (1998: 108) found that Australian husbands spend approximately 16 hours per week on household tasks, while wives spend 43 hours.

Factors Contributing to the Division of Domestic Labour in Heterosexual Couples

Several factors have been found to have an effect on how heterosexual couples divide domestic labour. These include the following: gender, time in paid labour, relative income, presence of children, age/generation, level of education, occupational status, and parental influences.

The Significance of Gender in Relation to the Division of Labour

Gender and “Doing Gender”

In order to understand how the division of labour is gendered, one must first understand the difference between sex and gender. Sex commonly refers to the biological aspect of being either female or male (although this definition has come under much scrutiny in recent decades). Gender, on the other hand, refers to the socially constructed identities and behaviours which are associated with biological sex—that is, the behaviours and identities which are constructed to be appropriately masculine for men and appropriately feminine for women. Since gender is socially constructed, constructions of what constitutes appropriate and normative “masculinity” and “femininity” differ by location, culture, class, age, and so on. (Abercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 2000: 149).

“Doing gender means creating differences between ... women and men, differences that are not natural, essential, or biological” (West and Zimmerman, 1987: 137). “Doing gender” refers to the routine and recurring actions done by women and men

that serve to legitimate one of the most fundamental societal divisions (West and Zimmerman, 1987: 126). In order for gendered actions to be successful, “doing gender” must be accomplished in such a way that the outcome is seen to be appropriate for one’s gender (West and Zimmerman, 1987: 136). Many people view this gendered division as rooted in biology, and therefore natural. However, this acceptance and promotion of gendered divisions has profound social implications (West and Zimmerman, 1987: 128). With specific regard to the division of unpaid labour, men (and more specifically, men in dual-earner couples) remain in the position of advantage by “doing gender,” thus leaving women responsible for completing the bulk of domestic tasks. This, in turn, has a multitude of negative ramifications for individual women and women in general.

Gendered Meanings of Housework

Women who do housework are likely to be doing it out of feelings of obligation, whereas men who do household tasks are more likely to be doing it out of choice (Kroska, 2003: 472). These gender-differentiated feelings result primarily from conventional gendered expectations, which maintain that women should be responsible for taking care of the overwhelming majority of household tasks. Men’s choice, as opposed to the obligation women feel, leads men to have more positive impressions of doing domestic tasks. When looking at dual-earner couples and controlling for time in paid work, men were found to have more positive impressions of doing domestic tasks than women (Kroska, 2003: 472). Therefore, men who do domestic work are more likely than women to find completing tasks as being more pleasant and empowering (Kroska, 2003: 472).

It is clear that the division of labour in Western countries is indeed structured by gender ideologies (Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 357). In Canada and the United States, although dual-earner heterosexual couples have become the norm, women are still expected and encouraged to be responsible for taking care of the bulk of household tasks (Kroska, 2003: 472). Conversely, even though dual-earner couples are now the norm, it appears that men still feel the need to identify with the masculine gender role of being the breadwinner (Brennan, Barnett, and Gareis, 2001: 179). Although the division of labour may be slowly progressing to a more equal state between men and women, significant changes need to emerge before the division of labour becomes equal among Canadian dual-earner couples (Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 357).

Gender Role Attitudes

Gender role attitudes refer to the system of beliefs that individuals have towards the concepts included under the term *gender roles*, with specific relation to ideas held about masculine and feminine roles (Abercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 2000: 19). Several studies have found a relationship between gender role attitudes and the division of household labour. Men who express more egalitarian views about gender perform a larger share of household tasks compared to men who hold less egalitarian attitudes about gender roles (Arrighi and Maume, 2000: 477; Artis and Pavalko, 2003: 758; Batalova and Cohen, 2002: 749; Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 356; Kroska, 2004: 915-916; Nakhaie, 2002: 147; Presser, 1994: 360; Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 522). Furthermore, men who have more egalitarian/liberal gender ideologies tend to be younger (DeMaris & Longmore, 1996: 1060). Men who hold the most liberal gender role attitudes are more likely to believe that women should not be held responsible for performing the

bulk of domestic tasks, and they therefore perform more housework than men who do not have liberal/egalitarian attitudes. Additionally, if both partners in a couple hold liberal gender role attitudes, their division of labour tends to be shared more equally than couples comprised of partners who do not have liberal gender role attitudes (Shelton & John, 1996: 306).

Parental Influences

During the early years of socialization, children learn to behave in ways that are considered appropriately masculine for boys and appropriately feminine for girls. Children as young as two years-old can demonstrate knowledge about gender roles with regard to everyday activities (Poulin-Dubois, Serbin, Eichstedt, Sen, & Beissel, 2002: 166). Additionally, household activities, such as performing household tasks, are among the first gender-typed activities that children become aware of (Poulin-Dubois, Serbin, Eichstedt, Sen, & Beissel, 2002: 179).

Parental influence may affect how children divide household labour as adults. For sons, the relative amount of their father's contribution to traditionally feminine household tasks is a good predictor of relatively how much the sons will contribute to household labour as adults (Cunningham, 2001: 194; Myers & Booth, 2002: 33). This suggests that parental modeling may have effects on children's gender role attitudes when they reach adulthood (Crespi, 2003: 21; Cunningham, 2001: 194; Myers & Booth, 2002: 33). Additionally, the mother's gender role attitudes have been found to have an effect on the son's contribution to household tasks as an adult. When mothers show greater support for egalitarian gender attitudes, their son's contribution to domestic labour increases during adulthood (Cunningham, 2001: 194-195).

Relationship Status and Its Implications for Men Doing Housework

Although men in all marital statuses spend fewer hours than women on housework, marital status has been found to affect the division of household labour (South and Spitze, 1994: 340). Compared to men who are living by themselves, gender differences in housework are most evident for men in married or cohabitating unions (Beaujot & Liu, 2005: 18; South and Spitze, 1994: 340), although married men spend less time on housework than cohabitating men (Baxter, 1997: 300; South and Spitze, 1994: 337). Time in paid work generally increases for men after they get married, while time in unpaid work generally decreases (Beaujot & Liu, 2005: 18). Likewise, married men do significantly less housework than divorced or widowed men (South and Spitze, 1994: 337). Time spent doing housework is least for men when they are married and greatest for men when they are widowed (South and Spitze, 1994: 337). It is apparent that for men, housework is increased when there is an absence of a female partner in the household. Men's time spent doing household tasks significantly increases, especially on cleaning and meal-related tasks, when there is an absence of a woman in the household (South and Spitze, 1994: 341). It is evident that when women are absent in the household, performing housework tasks becomes a necessity for men.

Time in Paid Labour

Time in paid labour has been found to affect the division of household labour. Men with longer paid work hours do fewer household tasks (Arrighi and Maume, 2000: 477; Batalova and Cohen, 2002: 749; Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 355). As women's hours in the paid labour force increase, their hours spent doing housework decrease (Artis and Pavalko, 2003: 756; Ciabattari, 2004: 121; Gazso-Windle and

McMullin, 2003: 356; Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 522), thereby increasing the men's *share* of household tasks (Artis and Pavalko, 2003: 756; Batalova and Cohen, 2002: 749), but only because the women are doing less, rather than men doing more (Presser, 1994: 361). Although time in paid work may affect the division of household labour, it has also been found that, compared to men with women who do not work outside the home, men with employed female partners fail to significantly increase their share of unpaid labour (Arrighi and Maume, 2000: 477). However, when controlling for individuals' spouses' housework time, it has been found that as wives' time in paid work increases, husbands time spent on household tasks and "feminine" tasks increases, suggesting that husbands may increase their contributions to household tasks (Kroska, 2004: 922).

Relative Income

Income has been found by some researchers to have an impact on the division of household labour. The exchange-bargaining theory suggests that one's financial contribution to household expenses allows the higher earner bargaining powers to get the other partner, typically a woman, to do housework (Bittman, England, Folbre, Sayer, and Matheson, 2003: 187). As men's earnings increase relative to their female partners, their contribution to domestic labour decreases (Arrighi and Maume, 2000: 477; Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 357; Presser, 1994: 360). Likewise, women who are completely financially dependent on the men's earnings do more housework than women who contribute financially to the household (Bittman, England, Folbre, Sayer, and Matheson, 2003: 202; Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 522). Having said this, however,

if time in paid labour is correlated with higher relative earnings, then the time availability factor may explain these findings as well.

The exchange-bargaining theory has been criticized as inadequate for explaining division of labour. For the most part, according to Bittman, England, Folbre, Sayer, and Matheson (2003: 209) men's unpaid work hours are unaffected by who provides how much of the income. Women whose earnings become a larger proportion of the total household income do not have a greater reduction in household labour (Artis and Pavalko, 2003: 758; Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 355). When women's contribution to household finances is equal to or greater than their male partners, housework is not reduced. In fact, women who provide more of the income may do even more housework (Bittman, England, Folbre, Sayer, and Matheson, 2003: 203; Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 357; Greenstein, 2000: 332-333) -- an additional five to six hours per week more than other women, thus going against the exchange-bargaining theory (Bittman, England, Folbre, Sayer, and Matheson, 2003: 203). It is possible that when men are not achieving masculinity through providing the income, women pick up more of the housework in order to neutralize the men's perceived deviance (Bittman, England, Folbre, Sayer, and Matheson, 2003: 203; Kroska, 2004: 923).

It has also been found that men who are financially dependent on their female partners may decrease their contributions to household tasks (Greenstein, 2000: 332). Women who are the primary breadwinners and men who are economically dependent occupy deviant identities, as these identities go against normative economic roles (Greenstein, 2000: 322). Deviance neutralization theory states that women and men who find themselves occupying these deviant identities may feel the need to compensate by

exaggerating behaviours that contradict those deviant identities (Greenstein, 2000: 332-333). Deviance neutralization theory may be useful in explaining why women who are primary breadwinners contribute more to household work than would be predicted by exchange-bargaining theory (and time availability models). It may also explain why men who are financially dependent contribute less to household tasks than would be predicted by exchange-bargaining theory (and time availability models) (Greenstein, 2000: 332-333).

Presence of Children

The presence of children has been consistently shown to increase responsibility for housework for both women and men. More specifically, compared to older children, the number of pre-teenaged children significantly increases women's unpaid work (Artis and Pavalko, 2003: 756; Beaujot & Liu, 2005: 18; South and Spitze, 1994: 339). This is not surprising, as the presence of young children creates more housework (South and Spitze, 1994: 339; Veltman, 2004: 135; Zukewich, 2003: 10). For example, being responsible for most of the cooking and cleaning tasks would be less time-consuming if the person is cooking for one person or cleaning up after one person, as opposed to cooking for four people or cleaning up after four people. However, it is important to note that the presence of children significantly increase women's responsibility for housework compared to men (Beaujot & Liu, 2005: 18; Ciabattari, 2004: 121; Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 355; Kroska, 2004: 915; Presser, 1994: 361; South and Spitze, 1994: 339; Veltman, 2004: 135; Zukewich, 2003: 10).

Level of Education

One's educational attainment has been found to have an impact on the division of household labour. Women with more education tend to do less housework than women with less education (Artis and Pavalko, 2003: 756; South and Spitze, 1994: 339). Conversely, higher educational attainment increases men's housework contributions to tasks typically designated as feminine (Batalova and Cohen, 2002: 749; Ciabattari, 2004: 121; Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 356; Presser, 1994: 358; South and Spitze, 1994: 339). This has been found to be a result of both a reduction in time that women spend on household labour, as well as an increase in men's time (Presser, 1994: 358). As women who are highly educated are more likely to marry men who are also highly educated, it is possible that higher education for both men and women may be bringing about or reinforcing more egalitarian gender ideologies for both partners, hence leading towards a more balanced division of labour, whereby the women are contributing less and the men are contributing more (Presser, 1994: 360). Men with more education have been found to consider an unbalanced division of labour to be less fair to women than men with lower education levels, therefore their contributions to housework tend to be larger (DeMaris & Longmore, 1996: 1063).

Generation

Several studies have found generation to be a factor influencing the division of household labour. Older men complete less housework than younger men (Arrighi and Maume, 2000: 477; Batalova and Cohen, 2002: 749; Baxter, 1997), perhaps indicating that socialization experiences differ by generation (Arrighi and Maume, 2000: 477; Baxter, 1997). Older men tend to have been socialized to have less egalitarian/liberal

gender ideologies than younger men (DeMaris & Longmore, 1996: 1060). With specific regard to the division of labour, this means that older men are more likely than younger men to have been socialized to accept a division of labour that fits the mid-twentieth century ideal of breadwinner and housewife.

Also, younger men are more likely to have sole responsibility over more tasks than older men, indicating once again that there are generational changes in men's responsibility for housework (Artis and Pavalko, 2003: 756; Presser, 1994: 360). Younger cohorts of men have higher sole responsibility for household tasks, suggesting that socialization regarding gender, family life, and housework may have been different for newer cohorts. These findings suggest that socialization has a strong influence on the way couples divide household labour (Artis and Pavalko, 2003: 758; Baxter, 1997). Additionally, the age difference between husband and wife is important, whereby men who are older relative to their female partners do less domestic work. This falls in line with the age-stratification perspective, in which the relative difference in age allows older men to exercise their preferences (Presser, 1994: 360).

Occupational Status

Partner's occupational statuses have been found to affect the division of labour in some studies. The husband's *share* of household work is greater if the wife holds a professional or managerial occupation. The husband's share of domestic labour is increased because the wife's hours are reduced, rather than because he has increased his actual hours (Presser, 1994: 358). Compared to men who have low occupational status, men who possess high occupational status spend less time doing housework. This suggests that the economic resources and power that men acquire from high status

occupations serves to reinforce gendered behaviours with regard to the division of housework (Gazso-Windle and McMullin, 2003: 357). However, men's occupational status relative to their female partners seems to affect their housework contributions. Men whose job status is higher than their female partners tend to do more housework than men whose job status is lower than their female partners (Kroska, 2004: 916). Again, this finding may likely be explained using the deviance neutralization theory (see "relative income" section). Men who have a lower job status than their female partners do not fit society's economic norms, and thus may contribute less to household tasks in order to counter this deviant identity (Greenstein, 2000: 332-333).

Satisfaction with the Division of Labour and Perceptions of Fairness

Satisfaction with the division of household labour is an important predictor of marital satisfaction for both women and men (Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 514). Research has consistently shown that men report having higher levels of satisfaction with the division of labour than women (Baxter and Western, 1998: 109; Himsel and Goldberg, 2003: 853; Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 519). When men's share of housework increased, their satisfaction levels and marital happiness levels decreased (Amato, Johnson, Booth, and Rogers, 2003: 17; Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 520). By contrast, men's satisfaction levels increased when women did more housework (Himsel and Goldberg, 2003: 843). Additionally, an increase in men's share of housework is associated with a significant increase in divorce proneness among men, while having the opposite effect on women (Amato, Johnson, Booth, and Rogers, 2003: 17). However, women who feel that they do more than their fair share of domestic work are more than twice as likely to divorce their partners compared to women who perceive

their division of household labour to be fair (Frisco and Williams, 2003: 64). This is likely due to men and women having different perceptions of what constitutes fair. Both men and women in dual-earner couples who perceive that they perform more than their fair share of household tasks have lower levels of satisfaction (Frisco and Williams, 2003: 59). However, the proportion of domestic work done that underlies their definition of what constitutes fairness is much smaller for men than for women. For the most part, men in dual-earner couples believe their division of household labour to be fair when they complete less than half or none of the household chores (Frisco and Williams, 2003: 66). Additionally, the more housework women do in comparison to the men's mothers, the more satisfied men tend to be with the division of labour (Himsel and Goldberg, 2003: 855).

As a result of being more satisfied with the division of labour, men do not have to juggle the demands of paid work and unpaid work to the same degree as women. This results in men generally having more leisure time (Fast & Frederick, 2004: 21). Men in dual-earner couples also tend to be more satisfied with leisure time and general time use. Time is therefore a source of inequality amongst most dual-earner couples, whereby men hold the position of advantage (Phipps, Burton, & Osberg, 2001: 7). Having higher satisfaction with the division of labour is associated with lower levels of role strain. Therefore, another result of being more satisfied with the division of labour is that men have lower levels of role strain (Himself and Goldberg, 2003: 855).

Same-Sex Couples and the Division of Labour

On the whole, the limited amount of research done on same-sex couples with regard to the division of labour in the household suggests that there are both differences

and similarities in the way same-sex couples and heterosexual couples carry out their relationship. Male same-sex couples may function differently in some aspects compared to female same-sex couples and heterosexual couples (Ambert, 2003: 6).

Dunne's study (2000: 31) of lesbian couples found that routine domestic responsibilities were quite evenly shared, and the women mutually recognized the right of women to have an identity outside the home. Dunne argues that one must not ignore the possibility that average gay men and women, through their prioritization of egalitarian ideals, pose challenges to the status quo (Dunne, 2000: 33).

Chan, Brooks, Raboy, and Patterson (1998) compared the division of family labour between lesbian-headed families and heterosexual-headed families. All mothers in their study used anonymous donor insemination to become pregnant. Therefore, both heterosexual and lesbian families included one parent who was biologically related to the child, and one parent who was not biologically related. This study allowed the researchers to focus on the sexual orientation factor directly. Their study found that lesbian parents both wanted and practiced a more egalitarian division of child care labour than heterosexual parents. Consistent with the majority of studies, heterosexual mothers took on responsibility for most of the child care duties (Chan, Brooks, Raboy, and Patterson, 1998: 410).

Bialeschki and Pearce (1997: 120) conducted a study of lesbian couples and found that performing household tasks was often based on personal interests (i.e. liking or not liking to do particular tasks). Rotation of tasks occurred sometimes, as well as sharing mutually disliked tasks (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997: 120). Also, time availability based on partner's schedules influenced who completed tasks at certain times. One main finding

was that responsibilities did not seem to follow any pattern of gendered roles (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997: 120-121). An additional finding was that many couples felt that hiring help for completing domestic work brought along benefits, such as having more time for themselves. Their decision to alleviate some of the burden of domestic work may suggest that some lesbian couples are resisting conventional roles of femininity (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997: 121). Due to not having preconceived gendered notions of how domestic labour ought to be divided, these couples consciously negotiated their roles (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997: 122). Additionally, these lesbian couples placed high emphasis on joint decision-making, good communication, and negotiating the allocation of tasks as being important to their overall sense of living in an egalitarian partnership (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997: 120). Negotiation was especially important when neither partner was interested in completing the task (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997: 121). These lesbian couples felt that in contrast with heterosexual couples, household responsibilities were divided differently given the fact that there were no gender-based assumptions, since the couples were composed of two women (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997: 122).

Kurdek's study (1993: 135) found that gay and lesbian couples allocate household labour differently from married heterosexual couples. The division of labour in married heterosexual couples was primarily based on gender, with wives performing the bulk of domestic responsibilities. Gay and lesbian couples, on the other hand, tended to specialize in doing certain tasks in such a way that the responsibility for completing household tasks did not fall on only one partner (Kurdek, 1993: 135-136). Simply stated, compared to heterosexual couples, partners in gay and lesbian couples divided tasks in such a way that each partner completed an equal number of different tasks (Kurdek,

1993: 127). Kurdek also found that while performing household tasks was positively correlated with higher distress levels for married wives, the opposite was found for same-sex couples. It is then reasonable to suggest that same-sex partners feel as though they are choosing to do household tasks, whereas married women may feel obligated to perform household responsibilities (Kurdek, 1993: 137-138).

Kurdek's study (2004: 889) found that, compared to heterosexual couples, male and female same-sex couples perceived higher levels of equality and autonomy in their relationships. Compared to heterosexual couples, gay and lesbian couples reported a more frequent use of mutual positive communication. Additionally, it was found that gay and lesbian couples are better at conflict resolution than heterosexual couples (Kurdek, 2004: 890). However, with regard to relationship satisfaction, perceptions of equality were linked to greater commitment levels for both heterosexual and same-sex couples, while ineffective arguing was negatively related to satisfaction for both heterosexual and same-sex couples (Kurdek, 2004: 892).

Kurdek's previous study looked at 80 gay male couples and 53 gay female couples (2003: 417). He found that, in comparison to heterosexual couples whereby the females identify as more feminine and males identify as more masculine, partners in gay and lesbian couples identified similarly in terms of gender identity (Kurdek, 2003: 429). One difference Kurdek partially found was that, compared to gay male couples, lesbian couples reported more equality. With regard to conflict resolution and rates of dissolution, gay and lesbian couples showed no differences (Kurdek, 2003: 429). Relationship satisfaction levels were related to individual differences, relationship attitudes, conflict resolution, and social support domains (Kurdek, 2003: 431). His overall

finding was that gay and lesbian partners were more similar than different from each other (Kurdek, 2003: 431).

Christopher Carrington (1999) conducted a major ten-year study in the Bay area of San Francisco. He looked at both male and female same-sex couples with regard to the gendered division of labour in the household. He not only supplemented questionnaires with in-depth interviews, but he also observed couples in their own homes for an extended period of time. His sample consisted of 52 couples who were diverse in terms of many demographic factors, including income, ethnicity, occupation, educational level, and length of relationship. Although the couples mostly professed egalitarianism, Carrington did not observe this. Additionally, by using separate questionnaires for each partner in a couple, Carrington found that couples tend to protect their partner's gender identity. This means that the man who goes out to work will downplay how much housework his more domestic partner does. Likewise, the more domestic woman will overstate how much domestic labour her partner does (Carrington, 1999). This finding is similar to those mentioned earlier (see "relative income" section)—that is, when heterosexual men and women exaggerate their own behaviours to neutralize their deviant identity. Perhaps, deviance neutralization theory may also explain why partners in same-sex couples in Carrington's study downplayed or exaggerated how much housework the other partner did. It may also be argued that gender roles are so socially constructed and engrained in Western culture, that it makes it incredibly difficult to avoid conforming to this pattern.

Hegemonic Masculinity and Reconstructing Masculinities

In Western society, heterosexuality has not only become an institutionalized norm which is used as a mean to regulate individuals, but it has also become linked with the institution of masculinity. Under these institutions a man must be heterosexual to be a “real” man (i.e. masculine). For example, the 20th century witnessed a “hegemonic construction of masculinity”, whereby being the “breadwinner” and “provider” of the household became a distinguishing and fundamental feature of being masculine (Kinsman, 1993: 11). “The formation of a particular male-dominated heterosexual household/family form ...and corresponding forms of masculinity and femininity as the only officially sanctioned ways of life [is one] side of the social organization of gay and lesbian oppression” (Kinsman, 1993: 10).

Although gay men and heterosexual men might share the dominant position of being male, gay men exist in a marginalized group. Therefore, the lives and experiences of gay men differ from heterosexual men (Kinsman, 1987: 104). In their daily lives, not only have gay men had to question the institutions of heterosexuality and masculinity, but they have also had to question the assumed link that exists between heterosexuality and masculinity (Kinsman, 1987: 105).

The coming out experiences of gay men are at the root of what makes their lives different from those of heterosexual men. When gay men come out and assert their different sexual orientation, resistance to the institutions of “heterosexual hegemony” and masculinity begins (Kinsman, 1987: 106-107). Coming out for many gay men becomes the means of liberation and empowerment, where they become more free to live outside the constraints defined by mainstream heterosexuality (Kinsman, 1987: 114)..

Contemporary sociology has begun to view gender as being socially constructed during interaction, rather than being static and fixed. Rather than passively internalizing already existing norms, conventional gender roles continue to be reconstructed (Connell, 1995: 35). To advance gay liberation, many gay men are challenging the norms of both heterosexuality and masculinity as institutions that guide mainstream behaviour (Kinsman, 1987: 114). As heterosexuality and masculinity have been socially constructed and defined, it is also possible for gay men to redefine sexuality and masculinity. Gay men have learned, and continue to learn, how to challenge sexual and gender norms in a way that often aligns them with feminist goals (Kinsman, 1987: 116-117). Many feminists and gay men are deconstructing “heterosexual hegemonic practices” and are reconstructing social relations, especially sexual and gender relations, so that these relations become more egalitarian (Kinsman, 1993: 24). Not only does the challenging of gender norms and roles have the potential to liberate gay men, but it also has the possibility of redefining masculinity in a way that relieves the insecurities of many heterosexual men who struggle so hard to embody the ideals of mainstream masculinity (Kinsman, 1987: 116-117). Discovering and creating new forms and images of masculinity will serve as a resource for all men to draw upon in reconstructing their own masculinities (Bach, 1993: 39).

Therefore, even in the same cultural or institutional setting, different types of masculinities are being created (Connell, 1995: 36). Since gender roles are sets of specific behaviours that are produced in certain social situations, gender roles may change as situations change (Kimmel, 2000: 90). Gay men thus have the potential to “transform masculinities—including heterosexual hegemonic masculinity—to open up

new ways of doing masculinities that are no longer coded with the organization of oppression and social power. ...Challenging and transforming heterosexual hegemonic masculinity [will bring about] new, more egalitarian ways of living, loving, and doing masculinities” (Kinsman, 1993: 24-26).

Conclusion

This chapter has presented research findings from studies conducted on the division of household labour. Generally, gender continues to remain the primary factor in contributing to the way heterosexual couples divide unpaid labour. Although women have entered the paid labour force in extraordinary numbers, they continue to complete the overwhelming majority of household tasks. This chapter identified several other factors which have been found to affect the division of household labour in heterosexual couples. These included time in paid labour, income, marital status, cohabitation, presence of children, age/generation, educational attainment, occupational status, parental influences, and gender role attitudes. For the most part, men continue to remain more satisfied with the division of labour compared to women. However, factors such as age, education, gender role attitudes, time in paid labour, and participation in housework also influence satisfaction levels.

Also, findings from studies done on the division of labour in same-sex couples were presented. Although there are too few studies done on same-sex couples for findings to be conclusive or generalizable, many researchers have found same-sex couples to place higher emphasis on egalitarian values. This means that same-sex couples may be more likely to have a more egalitarian division of labour compared to heterosexual couples, as well as placing more emphasis on choice and joint decision making,

specialization of tasks, and communication and negotiation regarding tasks. Also, some studies found factors such as personal interest and time availability as factors contributing to the division of labour in same-sex couples.

This chapter also looked at how gendered meanings are socially constructed and the existence of hegemonic masculinity. In the 20th century, hegemonic masculinity has defined heterosexuality and being the financial provider as fundamental features of being masculine. As gay men do not fit these constructs, their lives and experiences differ from heterosexual men. Therefore, different masculinities continue to emerge, and more specifically, gay men are becoming freer to live outside the confines of mainstream masculinity and heterosexuality. With regard to the division of labour, it is possible that gay men are beginning to reconstruct gender roles and challenge hegemonic constructions of masculinity, and this may have implications for how male same-sex couples divide unpaid labour.

This study focuses on male same-sex couples and the division of domestic labour. The study will attempt to provide a better understanding of what factors contribute to the way male same-sex couples divide unpaid labour. It will also place emphasis on participants' perceptions of satisfaction and attitudes towards gender roles and masculinity. As this study is being conducted from a feminist perspective, the following chapter will address feminist methodological issues, which will be followed by the methods used for conducting the study.

Chapter 2 – Methodology and Method

Methodologically, this study is guided by a feminist perspective. This chapter first presents feminist methodological concerns about both quantitative and qualitative research, with specific reference to using the survey and interview methods. Details of the data collection and analysis are offered, and lastly, study limitations are presented.

Feminist Methodological Concerns: Quantitative and Qualitative Research

In deciding which methods to use in order to conduct this study, various feminist methodological concerns had to be taken into account. Quantitative methods have come under much criticism (Baber, 2004; Maynard, 1994), while the benefits of qualitative methods have been emphasized (Deem, 2002: 840) for their potential to add to an understanding of the lives of women and other minority group members. Quantitative research, and more particularly surveys and questionnaires, have been criticized as representing a “masculinist way of knowing, where the emphasis was on the detachment of the researcher and the collection and measurement of ‘objective’ social facts through a (supposedly) value-free form of data collection” (Maynard, 1994: 11). Because relevant issues are predetermined by the researcher, the instrument is necessarily limited. This has the potential of distorting the picture that is interpreted in the data. In addition, responses are limited to those that are chosen by the researcher, which leads to the likelihood that the voices of the participants will be silenced (O’Neill, 1995).

On the other hand, qualitative methods have been praised because they are seen to focus on the subjective experiences and meanings of the participants being researched (Chafetz, 2004: 972; Deem, 2002: 846; Deutsch, 2004: 895; Olesen, 2005: 237; Speer,

2002: 785; Taylor, 1998: 364). Amongst feminist researchers, there continue to be debates on various issues, including the issue of comparing qualitative with quantitative methods (Chafetz, 2004: 972; Deem, 2002: 836; Eichler, 1997: 9).

The political potential of quantitative research should not be underestimated. For example, the significance of violence against women and other minority group members is backed up by studies which show the extent and severity of its incidence (Maynard, 1994). One particularly useful type of quantitative methods of data collecting is survey research, which enables the researcher to study large samples of participants. These large samples allow the researcher to carry out statistical analyses of relationships within the data set to find out if there exist any general patterns of responses (Babbie, 2002: 7; O'Neill, 1995).

People can be usefully surveyed regarding highly personal issues, such as motherhood, rape, sexuality, abuse, and relationship issues (Babbie, 2002: 271; Greaves & Wylie, 1995). Such surveys can provide important information about attitudes and/or incidence of behaviours (Babbie, 2002: 271; Greaves & Wylie, 1995: 306). In addition, survey participants may come to recognize that their own personal experiences regarding the survey topic are important in and of themselves, and surveys are also useful in promoting awareness about the importance of the issue being researched (Greaves & Wylie, 1995). Also, using a survey questionnaire may produce more reliable information than interviewing, because it often allows the participants to respond anonymously (Maynard, 1994).

Unlike the case for quantitative research, responses in qualitative research are not necessarily subjected to numerical analysis and need not conform to the requirements of

quantification (Deem, 2002: 837; O'Neill, 1995: 334). Rather, qualitative techniques allow researchers to collect data that reveal the meanings that participants associate with various issues, as well as allowing participants to communicate their views in their own words without any imposed limits (O'Neill, 1995: 334).

Having said this, however, there is no compelling reason for qualitative researchers to avoid all numeric analysis of their data. In fact, this may often be useful (Deem, 2002: 837). In the data chapters that follow, I have made use of quantifying the qualitative interview data. I do so not only because of my interest in knowing how many participants said something particular, but also because the numbers allow us to see which themes are common and which are unusual.

Qualitative methods do not, however, offer perfect research techniques; they also have limitations (Deem, 2002: 837; O'Neill, 1995). Qualitative methods are most notably lacking when information must be gathered from a large sample. Qualitative methods, such as the highly regarded interviewing technique, can place substantial limits on the number of individuals who can be studied (O'Neill, 1995). Therefore, while qualitative research methods can provide the researcher with a clearer and deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and responses, the method is limited in terms of its ability to generalize on a broader level (O'Neill, 1995).

It is important that neither qualitative nor quantitative methods be placed on a knowledge production pedestal, because the representations of the participants' lives and experiences, by both the participants and researcher, will always be partial (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 1994: 126; Lyons & Chipperfield, 2000: 35). It is important to remember that the data gathered in the surveys and interviews need to be understood as how

participants responded at a particular point in time, in a particular place, taking a particular survey, and talking to a particular person.

As discussed in this section, there are advantages and disadvantages of using either qualitative or quantitative methods. Many feminist researchers have begun to reconsider their anti-quantitative methods stance and are arguing for the utility of both methods (Maynard, 1994; Taylor, 1998: 358). This issue is addressed in the following section.

Using Multiple Methods in Feminist Research

The use of mixed methods suggests that quantitative and qualitative methods can be used in a complementary rather than a competitive manner (Deem, 2002: 842; Reinharz, 1992). Mixed methods, in fact, are becoming popular in social science research generally (Creswell, 2002; Brewer and Hunter, 2005). Rather than abandoning one method in preference for another, it may be best to combine the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research methods (Baber, 2004: 980; Chafetz, 2004: 972; Deem, 2002: 842; Eichler, 1997: 11; Reinharz, 1992; Walker, 2004: 994).

The term *triangulation* generally refers to the use of multiple methods in a single study. Feminist researchers who triangulate their research generally do so because of their commitment to thoroughness and the desire to be open-ended (Reinharz, 1992). “Feminist researchers combine many methods so as to cast their net as widely as possible in the search for understanding critical issues,” such as those which deal with gender roles (Reinharz, 1992: 201).

Relating these ideas to my own study, I believe that making use of both quantitative and qualitative methods makes this study unique. Often researchers who study

the division of labour use either qualitative data or quantitative methods, but most do not use both to research the division of labour. As both methods have their strengths, I thought using mixed methods would be more effective in contributing to an understanding of the division of labour in gay couples.

Ethical Issues

The Relationship between Researcher and Interviewee

One major feminist concern pertains to the relationship between the researcher and participants (Baber, 2004; Bungay & Keddy, 1996: 444; Deutsch, 2004; Eichler, 1997: 18; Olesen, 2005: 255; Speer, 2002: 784). Although many feminists prefer using qualitative methods, such as interviews, there are many elements of the process that are often overlooked, but are deserving of attention.

The interview participants give up a great deal in terms of time, cooperation, hospitality, and so on, and giving back to the participants is a matter of mutual respect. Additionally, the formulation of bonds between the researcher and interviewee, as well as creating a more comfortable atmosphere, are likely to generate a better quality of information that is given to the researcher (Deutsch, 2004: 896; Oakley, 1981). Therefore, when carrying out in-depth interviews, it is important to keep in mind that there is “no intimacy without reciprocity” (Oakley, 1981: 146). Having said this, however, Lenore Lyons and Janine Chipperfield (2000: 36) state that,

Not every [participant] needs a ‘sympathetic listener’ and that, for some, friendship is not a necessary prerequisite for talking about intimate or difficult subjects. ...It is precisely because the interviewer is a ‘friendly stranger’ who the

interviewee does not know and will not see again that they are able to open up about difficult or even taboo subjects.

Although establishing rapport may seem like a clear-cut issue, it is clear that it is in fact an issue that sparks debate amongst feminist researchers.

Power

Although feminist researchers strive to diminish power differences between the researcher and participants, this is something that remains an ideal that is nearly impossible to achieve (Baber, 2004: 981; Bungay & Keddy, 1996: 444; Deutsch, 2004: 894; Eichler, 1997: 19; Oakley, 1981; Speer, 2002: 784). As Lyons and Chipperfield (2000) note, it is still the researcher who is accorded the power to interpret the data and write up the conclusions. Another issue that concerns feminist researchers revolves around how participants' voices are heard and how researchers display participants' representations of their accounts and experiences (Olesen, 2005: 252). There is no denying the researcher's power—that is, researchers are accorded the power to interpret and represent their participants, even though it can not be guaranteed that they have accurately interpreted and represented participants' accounts and experiences. This raises concerns about the researcher's power to produce knowledge and how that knowledge has been produced (Brown, 1994: 153; Harding, 1987: 9-10; Jansen, 1990: 236). To better understand how knowledge is produced, it is important to acknowledge the need for reflexivity, an issue discussed in the following section.

The Need for Reflexivity

Resulting from feminist critiques of knowledge, the production of knowledge, and claims of objectivity and truth (Brown, 1994: 153; Harding, 1987: 9-10; Jansen, 1990:

236), reflexivity has become a widely engaged practice amongst many feminist researchers (Bungay & Keddy, 1996: 444; Burns, 2003: 229; Eichler, 1997: 18; Holliday, 2000: 505; Pini, 2004: 170; Speer, 2002: 786; Speer & Hutchby, 2003: 353). During the research process, reflexivity entails a constant examination and reflection of the researcher's own practices (Abercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 2000: 291). Being reflexive about the research process may serve to enhance research, since it reveals the conditions in which knowledge is produced and therefore opens it up to questioning and close examination (Pini, 2004: 169).

Many feminists believe that complete objectivity and bias-free research is unachievable and should not be a desired goal of feminist research (Deutsch, 2004: 888; Eichler, 1997: 14; O'Neill, 1995; Walker, 2004: 991). Much of mainstream positivist literature tends to portray itself as being objective. Researchers often times fail to recognize the bias in their perspectives. Additionally, researchers often fail to take into account the effect that their values and perceptions have on all aspects of the research process (Eichler, 1997: 18). Researchers who are aware of their own subjective experiences in relation to that of the participants are acknowledging the limits of objectivity (Deutsch, 2004: 888-889). It is important to be reflexive about several aspects of the research process—these include the researcher's selection of the research topic, their perspective guiding the research process, their methods design, and most notably, their interpretations of the data.

Interpretation and Positionality

Interpretation may be seen as one of the most challenging points of the research process. It is an area in which the presence of the researcher in the research process has a

profound effect (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 1994). Not only does interpretation present a problem in qualitative research, it also presents a problem in drawing conclusions from questionnaires and other methods of observation (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 1994). Feminist researchers can only attempt to explain how interpretations have been made by making clear which decision-making processes have produced their interpretations (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 1994). In order to realize how these decision-making processes occur, researchers ought to reflect on their own social location (Baber, 2004: 980; Burns, 2003: 234; Chafetz, 2004: 969; Deutsch, 2004: 886; Pini, 2004: 169; Speer, 2002: 785; Walker, 2004: 992) and how their own position affects the research process—that is, researchers have histories and characteristics that influence the research process (Bungay & Keddy, 1996: 447; Deutsch, 2004: 886; Eichler, 1997: 18; Holliday, 2000: 505; Olesen, 2005: 248; Speer, 2002: 785)

Positionality of the Researcher

Individual researchers occupy different social positions, and therefore they have different experiences which result in different perceptions (Chafetz, 2004: 969). The acknowledgement of these varying perceptions has brought feminist researchers to accept that there is no analytical technique or logic that can eliminate the social nature of interpretation. Researchers “cannot read meaning in data, allowing [the data] to propose their own meanings, without also reading meaning into them, as [researchers] make sense of their meanings” (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 1994: 133). In other words, researchers ought to be aware of their own social position and how their social position tends to affect how data is interpreted.

As a researcher, I recognize my own positionality—most notably, that I am a young woman, a lesbian feminist, a first-generation immigrant, and a person of colour. It is possible that my own social location made me more sympathetic or favorable to the participants being studied. As well, my own social location affected the research process in a positive way – that is, it gave me a great empathy and awareness of questions to ask and how to ask them in a meaningful way.

My own experiences as a lesbian led me to conceptualize the issue of the division of labour in a way that perhaps heterosexual researchers have not. For instance, as my lesbian identity grew, I began to question many of the roles placed upon me by mainstream society. I began to question many issues, one of them being the division of labour issue. When thinking about this issue, I also began to question the design of previous studies which focused on either demographic variables or those which suggested that a person's gendered upbringing is an adequate explanation for their division of labour as an adult. For instance, I would think to myself—"what would happen if I lived with another female partner, who would do the cooking, cleaning, etc?" As I pondered these questions as well as my own answers, I began to realize more and more that there is a lack of legitimate correspondence between sex and gender, and I believe that this led me to ask different questions. Although the basic design of the questionnaire in this study was guided by previous studies, some additions were made by me. For instance, unlike previous studies which do not look into how heterosexual men and women identify with their ascribed gender role, I asked participants to rate themselves on a gender identity scale that I created (one being "very masculine" and ten being "very feminine"). The overall results of this question led me to further inquire into participants' ideas about

gender, masculinity, and sexual orientation, thus making Chapter 6 of this thesis possible. Also, unlike most studies, participants were asked about whether they had any physical limitations which affected the division of labour. Once again, the questionnaire findings were interesting, and this led to a more in-depth discussion with the interview participants about the role of physical limitations in affecting the division of labour.

Positionality of the Participants

One must remember that both the participant and researcher are positioned in the research, meaning that both the researcher and participants have a history of experiences that places the research into context (Burns, 2003: 234; Deutsch, 2004: 886; Olesen, 2005: 248). Furthermore, due to their varying histories and experiences, one must acknowledge the complex social relations between the researcher and participants (Lyons & Chipperfield, 2000: 35). Participants are active creators and interpreters in the research process (Baber, 2004: 981), meaning that “in a certain sense, participants [do] research, for they, along with the [researcher] construct the meanings that are interpreted and turned into findings” (Olesen, 2005: 255). This may be of particular concern in this study. That is, issues revolving around same-sex couples continue to remain controversial and the “gay issue” more generally sparks much debate. Therefore, it is reasonable to suspect that just as I may have been biased towards focusing on responses that fit in with my preconceptions about the benefits of gay male domestic partnerships, it is also reasonable to suspect that the gay men in this sample may have put a positive spin on their responses, as they might not want to portray any negative images of same-sex couples.

Method

This study, which received ethical approval from the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board, was conducted between May and August, 2004 in a large, American metropolitan area. In order to account for various other important factors that may play a role in determining the division of labour in the household, I was looking for a sample of male same-sex couples that was diverse in terms of length of cohabitation, age, class, ethnicity, education, and occupational status. In order to accomplish this goal, ads and flyers (see Appendix A) were posted at various organizations/subgroups. I also used the snowballing technique to acquire additional participants.

The most successful way of acquiring participants for this study was by going to an area of the city known for being frequented by gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, queer, and queer positive (GLBTQ+) persons and personally approaching potential participants. Additionally, I solicited participation when attending several GLBTQ+ pride events during the study period, such as a Marriage Equality Rally (and the reception that followed), an Annual Pride Parade, and a GLBTQ festival

Potential participants initiated contact with me via an email address or cellular number that was created solely for the purposes of this study. Once a potential participant and his domestic partner indicated interest in the study, I mailed them two copies of the questionnaire (one for each partner to complete separately) with an information letter attached. Eighty couples contacted me because they were interested in participating in the study. Sixty-three couples confirmed all the necessary contact information and were mailed two questionnaires; 46 couples returned the completed questionnaires. Couples who were interested in participating but did not confirm their mailing address and contact

information with me on or before July 31 were eliminated from participating. Couples who contacted me after July 31 to indicate their interest in participating in the study were thanked and informed that I was no longer in need of additional participants. Participants returned the questionnaires to me via the provided self-addressed stamped envelopes. A post office box was created for the reception of completed questionnaires.

The Questionnaires, Survey Sample, and Coding Procedures

The questionnaires (see Appendix E) were designed to learn several things: according to self-estimates, how couples' contributions to unpaid labour are divided; if there are patterns between typical demographic factors and partners' relative contributions to housework; and whether housework is being divided along conventional gender lines. Although I did not design this study intending to generalize findings to the larger gay male population, I was nevertheless interested in obtaining a diverse sample. When looking at the frequency statistics, it is apparent that this was accomplished. The sample of those who completed the questionnaire consisted of 92 participants (46 couples), and demographic factors were wide-ranging (please see Appendix B for details of sample characteristics and Appendix C for the profiles of couples who were interviewed).

When carrying out the analysis of my study, I was looking for similarities and differences between male same-sex couples and heterosexual couples. For example, income has been repeatedly shown to be a factor in predicting the division of labour patterns amongst heterosexuals. My study examines the effect that, for example, income has on male same-sex couples, in order to see if the factor of income is as crucial in male same-sex couples as it is in heterosexual couples in influencing the patterns of division of

labour. Performing Pearson's chi-square tests allowed me to measure the effect of any independent variable on the division of labour pattern in male same-sex couples, in order to determine whether the particular independent variable is statistically significant in affecting the division of labour in this sample (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000; Johnson & Kubly, 2000). Based on prior research findings, I expected the key variables to be relative income, relative occupational status, relative educational attainment, and relative age.

The design of the questionnaire allowed for the use of SPSS in carrying out the analysis. Using SPSS functions, I performed frequency distributions and chi-square tests. Frequency distributions allowed me to compute the number and type of responses to a particular question. This is particularly useful for the general analysis of demographic factors comprising my entire sample.

Studies done on heterosexual couples use sex/gender as the main variable of analysis when performing tests of statistical significance and association. However, since this sample is composed of same-sex couples, this was not possible. Therefore, partners' responses were recoded into relative responses within each couple for all appropriate columns, whereby "1" equaled more and "2" equaled less. So for example, partners who earned relatively more were "1"s; partners who contributed more to tasks were "1"s, and so on. An "8" was used to recode instances in which partners' responses were identical. For all columns which dealt with contribution to household tasks, participants' responses were first recoded into percent of contribution. These percentages were then used to recode the values into couple's equality of contribution to tasks (see Appendix E for

entire coding scheme). Once the variables were recoded, an analysis of this sample was performed.

Chi-square tests (p) were performed in order to learn whether relationships between variables were statistically significant within the sample. Relationships were determined to be statistically significant if p was less than 0.10. As p approached 0.000, the relationship was determined to be more significant. When relationships were found to be of statistical significance, Gamma association tests (γ) were performed in order to learn the strength and direction of the relationship. Association values were defined as follows: values between 0.01 and 0.10 were extremely weak; values between 0.11 and 0.19 were weak; values between 0.20 and 0.29 were modest; values between 0.30 and 0.39 were moderate; values between 0.40 and 0.49 were moderately strong; values between 0.50 and 0.70 were strong; and values between 0.71 and 1.0 were very strong.

The Interviews

After receiving permission from couples to interview them at a later date (as indicated on the questionnaire), I was able to interview 10 couples (see Appendix C for profile of couples). Time constraints limited the number of interviews that could be completed. All couples whose partners mutually agreed to be interviewed, who lived in or around the metropolitan area, and who confirmed dates and locations with me in time, were interviewed. No couples were chosen over other couples to be interviewed.

Partners in each couple were interviewed separately at a location deemed appropriate for both the researcher and participant. The interviews were semi-structured (see Appendix F) and consisted of a series of open-ended questions, in order to more thoroughly explore the issues surrounding their particular division of household labour,

as indicated in their completed questionnaires. With written consent of the participants, all interviews were tape-recorded.

I then transcribed and coded the interviews for the purposes of analysis and discussion. I carried out a thematic analysis of the transcripts, searching for general similarities and differences in themes. The information gathered from the interviews not only provided internal validity for the statistical patterns uncovered by the survey, but also conveyed additional information about particular couples' experiences that was unobtainable in the questionnaires. Using this multiple method approach to research produced an integrated analysis of quantitative and qualitative data concerning male same-sex couples and the division of labour in the household.

I believe that my own social location helped establish a good rapport with the participants. My social location, which is marked by my young age, female sex, first-generation immigrant status, lesbian sexual orientation, and visible minority status, gave me additional insight into what life is like as an outsider in mainstream society. Almost all of the previous features listed were visibly noticeable or made known to many participants, especially interview participants. Furthermore, not only do I believe that the participants were comfortable with me because of my pre-established lesbian and other marginalized identities, I believe that I, as an amateur and nervous researcher, was able to become comfortable with participants almost immediately upon initial greetings. The comfort on both ends was obvious for several reasons. Even prior to meeting me in person, interview participants were comfortable enough with me so that all 20 invited me to their homes to conduct the interviews. During the interviews, almost every interview participant offered me a drink and more than several offered me lunch or dinner.

Secondly, the off topic conversations were of the kind that I have with acquaintances who are intrigued by my various backgrounds. Questions were asked regarding where I am originally from, what it was like to grow up in Kenya, what made me decide to do this study, questions about what I plan to do in life, etc. A wide range of topics were discussed before and after the formal interviews—common themes were about sociology, feminism, politics, history, religion, law, etc. Lastly, more than several interview participants told me how easy it was to talk to me, and encouraged me to continue along this path. Finally, all 20 interview participants told me they would like to be notified when the overall results of my thesis are obtained, as they were excited about the study and were curious to find out what the results were.

Relating to the various off topic discussions which emerged during all the interviews, one must remember that due to the more conversational style and using a semi-structured interview, the social interactions between myself and the participants were unpredictable and varied (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 1994: 131). Due in part to the off topic discussions, there were several times when thoughts would not be fully finished or issues were never raised, thus demonstrating that there are occurrences during the interviews when thoughts go unspoken (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 1994: 131). As a result of this semi-structured format, each interview was unique in terms of topics addressed and the order of topics. Therefore, it is important to note that although some participants never spoke about an issue, this does not imply that the issues were not relevant to their division of labour.

Each interview took place between different individuals—that is, although I was present in each interview, I dealt with a unique personality. Each participant responded to

me in his unique way. The uniqueness of each interview is of primary importance in explaining why all interviews did not address exactly the same issues. The flow of conversation sometimes led one way, sometimes another. This also explains why the data created in the interviews cannot be understood as an objective representation of reality. Instead, it is data created at a particular time, in a particular place, between particular people. Another researcher at a different time may have created different data.

However, having said this, I believe that using semi-structured interviews was beneficial, as it is seen as being compatible

with my commitment, as a feminist scholar, to allowing [participants] to describe their experiences in their own terms, to developing more egalitarian relationships with interviewees, and encouraging interviewees to introduce new research questions based on their own lived experiences. (Taylor, 1998: 366)

Using semi-structured interviews and a more conversational approach led to many conversations that produced unforeseen important findings, such as those relating to reconstructing masculinity and their perceptions regarding conventional gender roles. As a lesbian who has very little firsthand experience about dividing household labour with a partner, using semi-structured interviews created a condition whereby the participants to be the experts on the issue.

Study Limitations

It is important to note I make no claim that all findings that are statistically significant within my sample are generalizable to the larger gay male population. Due to the small sample size, patterns found in this sample may not reflect the patterns existing for male same-sex couples in other locations. As well, in the city where participants were

solicited, there is a large community of residents who are not fluent in English but participants had to write and speak English in order to participate. Thus important segments of the gay male population have not been sampled. This sample mainly consisted of male same-sex couples without children, therefore there can be no speculation as to how male same-sex couples with children divide unpaid labour.

Having said this however, there was a diversity of ways in which participants became involved in the study. Ads of the flyer were posted in several newspapers, and flyers were distributed to various organizations, offices, restaurants, bars, cafes, online groups. I also solicited participation by personally going to several areas and events frequented by gay clientele. Lastly, the snowballing technique was used—that is, current participants, potential participants, and those unable to participate were encouraged to spread the word about my study to gay couples. Therefore, although there are segments of the gay male population that were not sampled, this sample was not limited to those who were in contact with particular organizations or those willing to attend public events, etc.

There was great variation in terms of length of cohabitation, so that some but not all couples have been together long enough to establish persistent patterns for dividing domestic labour. Additionally, because participants were self-selected, it is reasonable to suspect that they were more likely than non-participants to have a relatively egalitarian division of labour, less conflict about the division of labour, and higher satisfaction levels regarding the division of domestic labour. It is possible that other potential participants may have different patterns regarding the division of domestic labour. These limitations

prevent any generalizability of this sample to a larger gay population. Nevertheless, the findings from this study are suggestive of patterns that *may* exist more generally.

Another limitation is that each interview lasted only one hour. This time constraint affected the data produced, in that the interviews touched on a large array of issues, but not all issues could be thoroughly explored. As well, given the uniqueness of each interview, some questions were never asked at times, and I was left still looking for more answers and explanations. Thus, even though I identify common issues and themes in the following analysis, and I indicate how many participants discussed each issue, there is always the possibility that I have misrepresented the significance of issues from the participants' perspectives.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed several feminist methodological concerns regarding quantitative and qualitative research, with specific focus on the use of the survey and interview methods. After discussing the positive and negative implications of using these methods, it was thought most effective to combine both in this study, to gain a more thorough understanding of how male same-sex couples divide unpaid labour.

The reader is now aware of the feminist principles guiding this research, the methods and types of analysis used for conducting this study, sample characteristics, and study limitations. In the following four chapters, the analysis of the data found in this study is presented. Using both quantitative and qualitative data, Chapter Three will look at how this sample of male same-sex couples divides unpaid labour, with particular focus on the factors typically found to contribute to the division of unpaid labour. Using data from the 20 interviews, Chapter Four will explore other factors which were deemed more

relevant to understanding the division of labour in gay couples. Using both quantitative and qualitative data, Chapter Five focuses on satisfaction levels and perceptions of participants' satisfaction with regard to the division of domestic labour. Finally, Chapter Six presents participants' attitudes regarding gender roles and masculinity in relation to the division of labour.

Chapter 3 – The Division of Labour and Factors

This chapter examines findings from the 92 questionnaires and begins to present findings from the 20 follow-up interviews. Using the questionnaires, the way in which couples divide domestic labour and paid labour is described and examined. An analysis of whether or not couples divide tasks along typical gender lines is offered. The correlation between variables and the division of domestic labour is then presented. These variables are the following: relative gender role identity, relative income, relative time in paid work, length of cohabitation, relative age, relative educational attainment, and relative occupational status. These are the demographic variables in relation to the division of household labour that are typically found to be important for heterosexual couples. Finally, this chapter discusses what interview participants had to say about the relevance of some of the factors for determining the division of household labour. These factors are: time in paid labour, parental influence, and income. Interview participants did not discuss other factors that have been found relevant for heterosexual couples.

The Division of Paid Labour

Although this study focuses on the division of unpaid labour, it is useful to know how this sample of male same-sex couples divides paid labour (time in paid labour and income contributions to the household). Studies of the division of labour in heterosexual couples state partners' contributions to various matters (income, time in paid labour, contribution to tasks) using simple percentages which are based on gender. As discussed in the previous chapter, since partners in this study are all male, I calculated comparable percentages by recoding partners' responses into relative responses within each couple. Results showed that, on average, the primary earner in each couple contributed 64% of

the total income. On average, the partner who contributed the most to time in paid labour per week (including traveling time) contributed 61%, while their average contribution to time in paid labour per week (excluding traveling time) was 60%. Later in this chapter, the effects of relative time in paid labour and relative income contributions on the division of household labour will be examined.

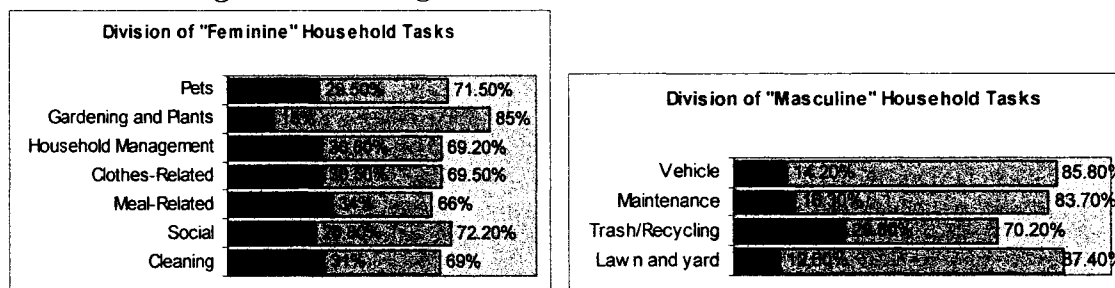
The Division of Domestic Labour

Tasks were classified as “feminine” or “masculine” depending on conventional expectations about who should complete the task. “Feminine” tasks refer to cleaning tasks, social tasks, meal-related tasks, clothes-related tasks, household management and correspondence tasks, gardening and plants tasks, and pet tasks; and “masculine” tasks refers to lawn and yard tasks, trash and recycling tasks, household maintenance tasks, and vehicle-related tasks. It is also important to note that “feminine” tasks constitute the overwhelming majority of household tasks and those which need to be carried out daily rather than periodically.

Across the entire sample, the contribution of the partner in each couple who had the most responsibility for completing all domestic tasks was, on average, 62%. On average, one partners contributed 63% to all “feminine” tasks, while on average, one partner contributed 71% to all “masculine” tasks. These figures are simple averages of how domestic labour was divided across the *entire sample of couples*. Overall, they show a relatively balanced division of labour.

The following tables show how couples in this sample divided “feminine” tasks and “masculine” tasks. They show a high degree of task specialization:

Figure 1 – Average Ratios of Division of Household Tasks



The following section examines this task specialization more closely.

Patterns of Task Specialization

As shown in Table 1 in Appendix D, tests for statistical significance and for association show no evidence to suggest that overall, partners who complete one set of “feminine” tasks are more likely to complete other “feminine” tasks. In this regard, the most significant correlation found was between being the person who completes more of the social tasks and being the person who completes more of the management and correspondence tasks ($p < 0.01$). The association in this case was positive and strong ($\gamma = .595$)—that is, partners who had more responsibility for social tasks were likely to have more responsibility for management and correspondence tasks. This finding may be due to the fact that social planning tasks may require the individual to perform organization and correspondence tasks. Other less significant findings were a marginally significant correlation between having more responsibility for social tasks and having more responsibility for meal-related tasks ($p < 0.10$), but these tasks were not strongly associated ($\gamma = 0.385$). As well, there was a marginally significant correlation between having more responsibility for cleaning tasks and having more responsibility for social tasks ($p < 0.10$), but these tasks were not strongly associated ($\gamma = 0.338$). There was no

statistically significant correlation between having more responsibility for cleaning tasks and having more responsibility for completing any of the other “feminine” tasks.

Similarly, when looking at the four “masculine” sets of tasks (Table 2 in Appendix D), there were no significant correlations between having more responsibility for performing more of one set of “masculine” tasks and having more responsibility for performing any of the other “masculine” tasks. Once again, the findings suggest that partners who complete one set of “masculine” tasks are not any more likely to complete other sets of “masculine” tasks. Apparently, the division of labour in this sample is not based on partners taking on typically “masculine” and “feminine” roles.

Chi-square correlations showed significant associations between performing selected “feminine” tasks and performing selected “masculine tasks.” As seen in Table 2 in Appendix D, there were four significant correlations. One was between having more responsibility for cleaning tasks and having more responsibility for trash and recycling tasks ($p < 0.05$). In this case, the association was moderately strong ($\gamma = 0.411$). This may be because survey participants view trash responsibilities as going hand in hand with cleaning responsibilities.

The other three correlations were related to having more responsibility for lawn and yard tasks ($p < 0.05$ in all cases). The association between this and having more responsibility for meal-related tasks was strong ($\gamma = 0.674$), while the association between this and more of the household management and correspondence tasks was equally strong ($\gamma = 0.674$). It is difficult to speculate on what the reasons are behind these two latter findings. There also existed a strong association between having more responsibility for lawn and yard tasks and having more responsibility for gardening and

plant tasks ($\gamma = 0.674$). This is likely due to the similarities in the nature of these two groups of tasks.

Clearly, this sample of male same-sex couples does not divide tasks along conventional gendered lines, and individuals typically perform both “masculine” tasks and “feminine” tasks.

Factors Typically Correlated with the Division of Domestic Labour

Relative Gender Role Identity

Studies of heterosexual couples always find gender (or sex) the most significant factor in explaining why women tend to do the bulk of domestic labour. For obvious reasons, conventional sex and gender markers could not be used since this sample consists of same-sex couples. Therefore, survey participants were asked to rate themselves on a gender identity scale (1 being very “masculine” and 10 being very “feminine”) in order to find out if relative gender-role identity would produce results that were similar to or different from that of typical heterosexual couples.

Tests for statistical significance and for association (as shown in Tables 3, 4, and 5 in Appendix D) showed substantial evidence to suggest that, overall, relative gender-role identity does not affect the division of household tasks in this sample. There were no significant correlations between relative gender-role identity and relative contribution to any of the sets of “feminine” or “masculine” tasks. Additionally, there were no significant correlations between relative gender-role identity and relative contribution to “all feminine” tasks, “all masculine” tasks, and all domestic tasks. These findings suggest that gender role identity is not a factor in determining the division of domestic labour

amongst this sample of male same-sex couples. This finding suggests that gender role identity does not influence the division of labour in this sample.

Relative Income

As shown in Tables 3, 4, and 5 in Appendix D, tests for statistical significance and for association showed evidence to suggest that, overall, income only somewhat influences the division of labour in this sample, and there must exist other factors that are more important in determining the division of labour. The most significant correlation was between relative income contribution and relative contribution to “all feminine tasks” ($p < 0.01$). The association in this case was positive and moderately strong ($\gamma = 0.447$), meaning that partners who earned more were more likely to contribute more to “all feminine tasks.” Additionally, relative income contribution was significantly correlated with relative contribution to “all domestic tasks” ($p < 0.05$). Similarly to the previous finding, the association was positive and moderate ($\gamma = 0.391$)—that is, partners who had relatively larger income contributions were more likely to spend more time on “all domestic tasks.” These cases are interesting, in that the associations were opposite from findings in previous studies on heterosexuals—that is, partners who earned *more* contributed *more* to tasks. There was no significant correlation between relative income contribution and relative contribution to any specific feminine or masculine tasks and “all masculine tasks.”

Relative Time in Paid Work

Tests for statistical significance and for association showed evidence to suggest that, overall, time in paid labour does influence on the division of labour in this sample. With regard to “feminine” tasks (as shown in Tables 3 in Appendix D, the most

significant correlation found was between relative hours in paid work per week (including travel time) and relative contribution to meal-related tasks ($p < 0.01$). Results showed that there was a strong likelihood that partners who worked longer hours per week tended to contribute more to meal-related tasks ($\gamma = 0.533$). As this finding was surprising, meal-related tasks were broken down further into main sub-tasks (not shown in Tables). It was found that relative contribution to paid hours per week (including travel time) was significantly correlated with relative contribution to cooking ($p < 0.05$). The association was positive and strong ($\gamma = 0.468$), meaning that partners who spent more time in paid hours per week were more likely to contribute more to cooking. However, there was no correlation between relative contribution to paid hours per week (including travel time) and relative contribution to grocery shopping or doing dishes.

As shown in Table 3, Appendix D, a less significant correlation was between relative contribution to hours in paid work per week (excluding travel time) and relative contribution to social tasks ($p < 0.05$). Partners who spent more time in paid labour per week (excluding travel time) were moderately likely to contribute more to social tasks ($\gamma = 0.355$). Perhaps those who work longer hours per week find some kind of enjoyment or therapeutic effects by doing more cooking and social tasks, or perhaps with specific regard to cooking (as discussed in the next chapter, several interviewees mentioned this), some division of tasks are based more on skill and interest, rather than on time available.

When looking at correlations in terms of equality of contributions (as shown in Table 6 in Appendix D), the only significant association was between equality of contribution to paid work hours per week and equality of contribution to clothes-related tasks ($p < 0.001$). In this case, the association was negative and moderately strong ($\gamma = -$

0.476), meaning that partners who contributed to paid work hours more equally were more likely to have *less* equal contributions to clothes-related tasks.

As shown in Table 4, with regard to “masculine” tasks, there existed a significant correlation between relative contribution to paid work hours per week (including travel time) and relative contribution to lawn and yard tasks ($p < 0.05$). There was a strong likelihood that partners who spent more time in paid work (including travel time) were likely to contribute less to lawn and yard tasks ($\gamma = -0.674$). This was the strongest association found between relative contribution to paid labour and a domestic task.

Length of Cohabitation

Tests for statistical significance and for association (as shown in Table 7 in Appendix D) show evidence to suggest that, overall, couples’ length of cohabitation does not affect the division of household tasks. However, there was a marginally significant correlation between length of cohabitation and hiring outside help to complete domestic tasks ($p < 0.10$). Couples who have lived longer together were moderately likely to hire outside help ($\gamma = 0.368$). This is an issue that was discussed in interviews, and the next chapter discusses reasons for choosing to use hired help.

Relative Age, Educational Attainment, and Occupational Status

Tests for statistical significance and for association show evidence to suggest that, overall (as shown in Tables 3, 4, and 5 in Appendix D), relative age, relative educational attainment, and relative occupational status are not important for explaining the division of labour in this sample. As shown in Table 4, relative age was significantly correlated with relative contribution to lawn and yard tasks ($p < 0.01$), and this was the only case in which there was a strong association ($\gamma = 0.632$) — that is, older partners were more

likely to spend more time on lawn and yard tasks. Similarly, there was a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) and strong association ($\gamma = 0.503$) between relative educational attainment and relative contribution to lawn and yard tasks, whereby partners who had higher educational attainment levels spent more time on lawn and yard tasks. These associations with lawn and garden tasks, however, are likely to be a result of factors such as skill or interest. Tests for statistical significance and for association (as shown in Tables 3, 4, and 5 in Appendix D) for relative occupational status show no evidence to suggest that, relative occupational status affects the division of housework in this sample.

Primary Factors which Affect the Division of Unpaid Labour

This section allows for a qualitative appreciation of interview participants' views on some of the factors that other studies have found to be important for explaining the division of labour. It is important to remember that interviews were conducted using a conversational style, so that not all participants were asked the same questions. This type of interview format allowed each participant to freely share his own perceptions of what factors influence the division of labour in his household. It was often the case that factors or issues were not identified by both partners in a couple, but it cannot be inferred from this that those factors and issues were not relevant to both individuals

Relative Time Availability

Time as a Significant Factor

Of the 20 interview participants, 19 individuals (including both partners in nine couples) stated that time in paid labour (including traveling time) has a significant effect on the way domestic tasks are divided between the partners. For example, when Nicholas

was asked, “When you first started living together, how did you two decide who was going to do what?,” he responded that,

It’s ...who has the time. ...If Michael is spending late hours at work, then I’m available to do those chores, whatever the case may be, to iron, to clean. ...If I’m during my monthly period ...where I work late hours, he does the cooking and cleaning, if I’m in ...my exam period, he does everything.

Reinforcing Nicholas’ comment, Michael stated that,

It’s sort of evolved ... because I’ve changed jobs, so at the moment..., Nicholas does more of the household chores, like ... the cooking has been split now into half/half, ...whereas previously it was more me doing the cooking, and he’d do the cleaning, but ...I’ve changed jobs, and I work longer hours, and I’m studying. My work ...and study schedule has changed. ...Once I changed jobs, and my studies were in full swing, ...he just ...assumed those roles.

Michael’s use of the word “evolved” is interesting, as it brings awareness to the fact that the division of labour in his household is not static; instead, it changes over time as external circumstances change. In this case, when Michael’s job changes and his time in paid labour (or study time) increases, Nicholas partially assumes roles that were previously done by Michael, so that the balance in domestic and paid labour remains equitable for both partners.

Similarly, Evan stated that, “[Frasier’s] home like three hours before I am in the evening, so he has more time at home, so I think he takes on responsibility for more of the household chores than I do.” For another couple, work schedules sometimes present a conflict during specific times. For example, when asked who mows the lawn, Grant stated that,

Hank mows the lawn like 80% of the time, but ...part of it ...is that every Saturday and Sunday I’m out doing real estate during the day. ...He does earn more and do more in the household, but ...I work one and a half jobs, which I think is hard to do too. I mean on Saturday...even if he’s at home mowing the lawn, he swims with the dogs, maybe he ...does a few errands, I’d rather be home

doing that with him than working. ... He gets to be home on Saturday and enjoy the pool and I don't, but he also gets chores done too while he's at home.

Comments from these couples make it clear that time in paid labour has the potential to directly affect the division of household labour.

Time as a Predictor of Change in the Division of Unpaid Labour

Reinforcing the importance of time as a factor, 17 of the 20 interview participants (including both partners in seven couples) additionally asserted that a change in one's time in paid employment would be an important predictor of changes in the domestic division of labour. For example, when Kyle was presented with this hypothetical situation, "Say you're both earning the same amount, ...except [Luke] works 20 hours a week and you work 45 hours, what would happen?," he responded that, "I would probably think that, given that he's got more free time, he should probably be doing more of the domestic work." Likewise, when asked a similar question, Luke supported Kyle's answer by stating that, "I think [Kyle] would do more-- I think ...whoever has less work time would do more chores, because part of it is enabling us to do things."

Similarly, when Ian was asked, "Let's say you were working 70 hours a week and [Jeremy] was working 40 hours, but you were earning the same amount, would things change?," he replied that,

Yes, ...if I had monstrous commutes ...[and] he had more leisure time at home, ... I would want him to pick up more of the household slack and ...if he were to work monstrous hours, I would feel that it's my obligation ...to take care of more of the household duties because I would have more time than him.

It is noteworthy that Ian also mentioned commute time to and from work as affecting the division of labour in the household, as this (especially in a large metropolitan area) can drastically increase time away from home. This was also mentioned by Daniel when

asked, “If things could change, what could cause those changes?” Daniel responded that, “It would be a job change or a location change ... If [Christopher’s] job changes and he’s around the corner instead of an hour metro ride away, then his tasks would change here.”

Parental Influence and Childhood Routines

Parental Influence: Childhood Learning

Of the 18 participants that were required to do household tasks when growing up, six (including both partners in only one couple) stated that seeing their parents doing certain household tasks influenced them to do those same tasks as an adult. For example, when Grant was asked, “What would [your dad] do around the house?” he responded that,

He liked gardening...that’s probably where I got my gardening interest from--he’d like to do the flower beds, making the lawn look nice, and then I’d keep the grass mowed, like I’m talking like 12 years old.

In the same way, when Owen was asked, “So why does [Patrick] do the renovating?” he responded that, “When he was growing up, I think his family was into doing home renovations and ... he enjoys the challenge and enjoys designing things.” Patrick supports this by stating that,

I’m in charge of the renovations. ...I have the skills--my dad was always working on renovating the house. ...The renovations, I do ...because I like doing them. ...If someone was called in to do things that I like to do and that I’m skilled at doing--it would be so boring.

It is clear that Patrick, much like Grant, is claiming that there is a link between parental influence and having the interest in doing a particular task. When Jeremy was asked, “Can you think of some other things where ability or skill comes into play?” he replied that,

JEREMY: I do most of the repairs around the house--I can do some basic wiring, basic plumbing, basic brickwork and woodwork.

DAP: Where did you learn that from?

JEREMY: My grandfather was a carpenter and my father did all that kind of stuff around the house. ... I helped him with ...all that stuff growing up. [Ian] can [do it if it's] very basic--if it's something he's got to look up ...I'll just do it.

Again, it is evident that, for some participants, parental influence may affect the division of household labour.

Childhood Routines

Of the 20 interview participants, 18 acknowledged that as children, they were required to do certain household tasks. Eight participants recall being taught how to do “masculine” tasks, in particular yard work and home renovations (either by seeing or by doing), and seven participants recall being taught how to do certain “feminine” tasks, particularly cooking and cleaning. However, having learned how to do certain household tasks did not necessarily translate into behaviour as an adult. Of the 18 participants that were required to do household tasks growing up, only four (including both partners in one couple) stated that they do certain tasks as an adult because they did them as a child. For example, when discussing care of plants, Daniel said,

If we're gonna keep plants, then I have to keep an eye on them. ...That may be upbringing because we always had plants and outdoor stuff ..., and it was always our job ... to weed or do this and do that. ... I know growing up [Christopher] never did ... that stuff, so it could be that ...I was just raised having to do those things.

Similarly, childhood routines are brought up when Andrew justified the division of labour between himself and his partner Brendan:

My mother...was a single mom, she worked a couple jobs. From a very early age,...if I wanted to eat something before 7 or 8 o'clock, I had to make something. ...I always used to help [clean]. ... Generally my mom took care of

the bathroom (laugh)--maybe that's what's going on (laugh), but ...the straightening up ... I always had to give a hand. I know how to cook, I can take care of myself if I really need to and I like having a clean apartment.

Andrew, according to his and Brendan's self-estimates, does 71.4% of the cooking and 29% of the cleaning. Unlike Andrew, Owen never learned how to cook during his childhood years and as a result cooks very little—according to Owen and Patrick's self-estimates, his partner Patrick does 97.5% of the cooking. Owen stated that, "Cooking is skilledmy parents never trained me how to cook, and as a result I find it kind of scary. ... I find cooking difficult, challenging actually."

Looking at these examples, it seems that childhood routines only sometimes play a role in the division of labour. Perhaps a way of explaining this finding could be the following argument: If a man's childhood routines included doing certain tasks as a child, this will *enable* him, rather than oblige him, to do those same tasks when *necessary* as an adult. Defining when the task is *necessary* to do depends on other circumstances, such as living by himself or living with a partner who can not complete the task as it ought to be done. However, if a man's childhood routines did not include doing certain tasks, such as cooking in Owen's case, given the opportunity to avoid doing it (i.e. living with a partner who is accustomed to doing that task), he might.

Acquiring Skill as an Adult

Perhaps the clearest evidence that there is no necessary relationship between what boys learn to do as children and which household tasks they perform as adults, can be found in the comments of six participants (including both partners in one couple) who said that they were not required to do any "feminine" household tasks when they were growing up. Instead, they learned how to do them once they left home and began living

either with roommates or by themselves. Being placed in these situations forced them to learn how to do household tasks, such as cooking and cleaning, because the situation made learning a necessity. For instance, Owen said about learning to clean:

[My mother] worked all the time, and she was still doing all the cooking and cleaning in the home. ...But I lived in a group home when I was in college and because of the filth in my room (laugh), I had to help maintain the place. ...*It was ...out of necessity*, ...when I was renting an apartment. I always used to have a roommate, ...you have to keep it clean--that's part of the agreement [emphasis added].

Similarly, Evan said that when he was growing up,

The girls did the laundry and the dishes ..., and the boys did the cleaning gutters, mowing the lawn. ...I lived alone ...after I moved out of my parents' house, so *you learn* to do things, *because you have to do it..* ...I *had to* do all [of the cooking and cleaning] since I was *living alone* [emphasis added].

Evan's partner Frasier was required to do some "masculine" tasks as a child, such as mowing the lawn, while the girls completed some of the typically "feminine" tasks. Although Frasier, like Evan, never learned how to do "feminine" tasks, such as cooking and cleaning, as a child he learned them as an adult when it became a necessity because he was living alone for the first time. Frasier stated that, "Cleaning, ... I don't think I did much of that [growing up]." I then asked, "When did you start doing that?" and he responded, "When I went away to college and I had roommate *situations where I had to* [emphasis added]."

As adults, these participants learned how to perform essential tasks, such as cooking or cleaning, because their situations forced them to. Possibly, if their situations had been different and they had someone to continue to cook and clean for them, they would have never learned these skills. This is often the case for heterosexual men, and it is even the case for someone like Owen, who was earlier discussed as talking about his

inability to cook. Owen is fortunate to have a partner who does the cooking for him, thus relieving him of the need to learn to cook for himself.

Does Income Matter?

Before proceeding with this section, it is important to remind the readers that income has been found by some researchers to be a factor in contributing to the division of labour in heterosexual couples. Therefore, it is useful to examine whether or not income plays any role in the division of labour for this sample of male same-sex couples.

Does Income Affect the Division of Household Labour

It is significant that 19 individuals (including both partners in nine couples) stated that income plays no role (and would play no role in the event that incomes should change) in determining the division of labour, that is, in terms of directly affecting who does what in the household. For instance, Christopher states that,

I ...don't think income plays a factor...[Daniel's] never said, 'I make more so I'm going to do less.' He's always recognized that I just work more and ...it's just the nature of my business versus the nature of his business.

One can see that Christopher and Daniel clearly differentiate between the importance of income versus time as a factor in their division of labour. What affects household labour is not the fact that Daniel earns a higher income than Christopher; rather, it is the fact that Christopher's job requires a higher time commitment. Along the same lines, when Kyle was presented with the following hypothetical situation: "If you were making \$50,000 and [Luke] was making \$10,000, but you're both working the same 40 hours, what would happen?," he responds that,

I would imagine ... that it would be a little more equal ...because ... pay is not relevant, but it's the fact that we're both putting in the same amount of hours in our jobs, we should be putting in more equal time on domestic things.

Once again, a clear distinction between income versus time is made, designating that time in paid labour, rather than income, has a direct effect on the household division of labour. Likewise, when Hank was asked: “Say [Grant] was earning \$200,000 a year and you were earning \$60,000, both of you are working 40 hours a week ...would things change ... in terms of the domestic tasks?,” he responds that, “It would probably be just like it is now, ...are you saying because he’s making more money he gets to work less? That doesn’t seem fair to me.”

Fair Division of Financial Responsibilities

Six of the 20 interview participants (including both partners in one couple) stated that, although income does not directly affect the division of labour, income currently plays a role in figuring out how the household finances should be divided between the partners. Although this may not differ from the typical financial arrangements of most heterosexual couples, it is important to acknowledge that, for those couples who have a large discrepancy between the partner’s incomes, the partner who earns more contributes more towards the larger household expenses, such the mortgage, bills, and car payments. This is directly stated by Daniel when he said that,

Our roles at home have nothing to do with ...money... There’s no relationship. ... The money part only has to do with how much each contributes to running the household, but not our actual roles in running the household.

Similarly, Grant stated that,

[Hank] ...pay[s] the bills and then [I] write him a cheque ...[for] half. Before I started the real estate thing, it was 2/3, 1/3, because he was making twice as much ...as I did. Now that I’m making much more..., we do it 50/50.

Likewise, Jeremy and Ian follow the same pattern:

IAN: I contribute more money into the mortgage and our joint savings account, out of which all of our household expenses come out of. ...I figured I made more so I should pay more ..., and it's worked out well for us over the years. ...I'm content to throw in more money because I earn more, so I should contribute more.

JEREMY: Ian has always made more money ...but he has always picked up more than his share of the bills, because he views it as our bills and our incomes ... I'd do exactly the same thing if I was making more money than him.

When asked if there could be any way that a change in income might affect the division of labour, nine interview participants (including both partners in four couples) stated that, although income would not directly affect who does what in the home, income would become a factor in determining how household expenses would be paid. In the event that one partner began to earn a significantly higher income than the other, the higher earner would contribute more financially by taking on a large proportion of household expenses. Interview participants were given a hypothetical situation in which one partner earned a significantly higher income than the other, while time spent at paid work remained equal. They were asked whether or not the change in income would alter the division of labour in any way. The following quotes depict the same pattern of logic:

ANDREW: I don't think it will. What it might change is that I would provide more in terms of paying for the groceries, picking up an extra bill ..., but ...in terms of the division of household labour, I don't think it would change anything.

BRENDAN: I don't think it would ...the amount of money we make doesn't play into what needs to be done around the house. It's ...a non-factor ... it doesn't even make sense ...why it would be a factor. ...The only way a change in income would come into play is ...figuring out who's going to pay for something.

CHRISTOPHER: The person who made more would probably contribute more financially, but if we worked the same amount of hours, ...it wouldn't be like, 'I make more money therefore you need to do more,'-- that's ...never been an issue.

HANK: Yeah, I think if that was the case, then I would pay a smaller percentage of our bills, like I would pay 1/3 and [Grant] would pay 2/3.

In this sample, it is evident that a change in income would not alter the division of labour. What it would do is alter the financial contribution of each partner towards household expenses.

Conclusion

This chapter has produced some important findings regarding the way in which couples divide unpaid labour, as well as the factors which contribute to the division of labour in this sample. Generally, this sample divides household tasks more equally than heterosexual couples. Although a strong division of labour exists with regard to partners specializing in tasks, a more balanced division of labour overall is the end result.

It was found that the specialization of household tasks was not divided according to conventional gender roles. In other words, there was a lack of evidence to suggest that partners who completed one set of “feminine” tasks were more likely to complete other sets of “feminine” tasks—the same was true for performing “masculine” tasks.

Additionally, there was sufficient evidence to suggest that couples complete tasks in a way that transcends gender boundaries. Compared to gender being the primary factor in contributing to the division of labour amongst heterosexual couples, the division of labour in this sample was not based on partners taking on typically “masculine” and “feminine” roles. Similarly, gender role identity was not found to be a factor in determining the division of domestic labour.

With regard to income, the survey data as well as the interview data were in agreement. The general finding was that, unlike the case for heterosexual couples, relative income between partners is inadequate for explaining the division of unpaid labour in this sample. Quite contrary to patterns found in heterosexual couples, primary

income earners in this sample contributed *more* to “feminine” tasks and domestic tasks overall. A reason for this could be that primary earners feel some sort of obligation to perform household responsibilities, perhaps because they do not want the partner who earns less to feel less “masculine”.

Studies done on heterosexual couples have found time in paid labour to be a factor in affecting the division of labour. The evidence from the survey data shows that time in paid labour is more important than income in affecting the division of labour in this sample. Reinforcing this, the evidence from the interviews suggests that time in paid labour is one of the primary factors that affects the division of labour in this sample. However, time in paid labour only partially explains the variation in the sample.

Parental influence and childhood learning have been found to affect the division of labour in heterosexual couples. The literature on the division of unpaid labour in the household focuses virtually exclusively on heterosexual couples. Thus, when studies find that women tend to perform “feminine” tasks and men tend to perform “masculine” tasks, it is easy to explain this in terms of childhood training. Certainly, most children continue to be raised learning how to perform gender-appropriate tasks, and adults garner social approval for continuing to perform gender-appropriate tasks. Nevertheless, and regardless of whether this adequately explains the division of unpaid labour in heterosexual households, the evidence presented in this chapter shows that for interview participants, childhood training is not related to what tasks they perform as adults. Even for those participants who learned how to do stereotypically “masculine” tasks as children and who continue to perform these tasks as adults, it is not a foregone conclusion that there is a

necessary correspondence, since there is less social pressure on these men to maintain the “masculine” role in a couple, unlike the case for men in a heterosexual relationship.

Previous studies have found that married men spend less time on housework than cohabitating men. As same-sex marriage is not an option for men in this sample, no comparable analysis can be offered. However, length of cohabitation was not found to affect the overall division of household tasks.

Previous studies have found educational attainment, age, and occupational status to be factors that contribute to the way heterosexual couples divide unpaid labour. Relative age, however, only very minimally explains some of the variation in the sample and is inadequate in explaining the division of labour. Similarly, relative occupational status and relative educational attainment did not affect the division of unpaid labour in this sample.

The evidence presented in this chapter strongly shows that factors found to be important in determining the division of labour in heterosexual households are not relevant for explaining the division of unpaid labour in this sample of male same-sex couples. The next chapter examines the factors that were relevant according to interview participants.

Chapter 4 – Factors Affecting the Division of Labour in Male Same-Sex Couples

This chapter focuses on findings from the 20 follow-up interviews. Since the quantitative results generally looked at demographic variables that are widely held to influence the division of household labour for heterosexual couples, this chapter sheds light on the *primary* factors that were deemed important by interview participants in determining the division of household labour. Considerations repeatedly discussed by the participants were interest, ability and skill, practicality, conscious sharing, negotiation, and hiring help.

Interest and Preference

All 20 of the interview participants affirmed that interest is one of the most significant factors in determining their division of household labour. Interest, in this context, is defined as having a preference for doing certain tasks over others, enjoying doing certain tasks for various reasons, or disliking to do particular tasks. For instance, Kyle was asked if there are “any things that either of you do ...because you like to do them?” He responded that,

Yeah, ...yard work. [Luke] ...wouldn't care if we had a yard or not...he jokes about paving it over (laugh), so ...yeah, I do all the yard work because I really enjoy it and I've always been an outdoors kind of person.

Although many people dislike cleaning and view it as nothing more than a chore, Andrew stated that,

I get up ... earlier than Brendan does, and... sometimes I'll come out here...[and] pick up a dust rag and just start doing it, and it's fine--I enjoy doing it... I kind of spend time with myself, and the things in the house, dust them off and kinda set them back, and rearrange slightly, and it's fine.

In a similar fashion, when Wyatt was asked if he could think of any “things where interest plays a role,” he replied that,

Yeah, ...I love cooking, ...that is something that I don't want to give up... making a good recipe is fun, and there is this wonderful feeling of enjoyment ...that I get when I see people enjoying my food... We actually had to change the way I do things in the kitchen, like getting a barstool so I can ...sit at the stove instead of having to stand at it, to help me ...because it's ...harder now.

Wyatt's case is rather unique and interesting—even though his leg problems are so troublesome that often he must use a wheelchair, he never wants to relinquish doing the cooking because he enjoys it so much. When the task became more difficult due to his leg problems, he found a way to adapt his technique so that he can continue with his interest.

The case of Owen and Patrick also illustrates the importance of interest and preference for the division of meal-related tasks:

PATRICK: I hate shopping for groceries--it's boring. Owen buys the groceries and ...we ...make a list. ...He doesn't know what ingredients have been used up. ...I will cook what he buys... he ...wants to eat healthy and I could care less...so it works out really well--he influences what we eat and I influence what we eat.

OWEN: I do most of the grocery shopping because I ...enjoy shopping..., whereas I don't think [Patrick] enjoys [it]...--he likes to go in, ...get just what he needs, and get out ...and I like to browse and wander around the store...looking at stuff. ... Because of his ... cooking, high carbohydrates and fat, which I don't like, I also like to shop because I get to control what goes into our food.

It is clear from the above examples that interest is a significant factor in determining the division of household labour in this sample.

Unpaid Labour: Therapeutic Effects

Looking more closely at what the participants had to say about their liking for particular tasks, it can be seen that eight of them (including both partners in three couples) in one way or another made reference to the “therapeutic” effects brought about

by doing a particular task. These therapeutic effects include feelings of relaxation, quiet time for oneself, and stress relief. The following examples are representative of this pattern:

ANDREW: In terms of the cooking, I enjoy it ...it's a stress reliever..., so the chopping and all that ...helps to get rid of the stress from the rest of the day.

CHRISTOPHER: I do the groceries ...I know it's sick (laugh), but I love grocery shopping-- it's ... therapeutic, I do it by myself, it's my quiet time, and I love to shop.

NICHOLAS: I do the gardening--I love [it], I find it therapeutic--after a hard day's work, I water the garden and that gives me ...satisfaction. It ...de-stresses me.

OWEN: I like cleaning--I find it very therapeutic. After using my brain ...at work, I want something that doesn't require ...in-depth analysis--superficial thinking is what I want ..., cleaning. ...relieves the pressure from my mind. ...I want to clean not because of the need to clean--I just find it relaxing.

These examples clearly point to interest, once again, as a major factor in determining the division of household labour.

Dual-Interest: Dual-Participation in Completing Tasks

Sometimes, there are tasks which both partners enjoy doing. Eight participants (including both partners in two couples) talked about cases in which partners either rotated doing the task or completed the task together. For example, Evan stated that he and his partner would soon be moving to a new house. I then asked, "Are there going to be any differences with the other house once you move there?" and he responded that,

Yeah, there will be a yard, ...I'm nostalgic about cutting grass. It was my chore as a kid and I love the smell of fresh grass, and I enjoy it, it's sort of meditative, but [Frasier] ... likes to get out barefooted and cut the grass, so it's ...one of those things where we're fighting over who gets to cut the grass (laugh).

In a parallel way Patrick stated that,

The domestic thing that we trade off is social duties--... we're both really good at it. He's better at making friends, and I'm better at throwing a party. But he throws a great party too and I ...made a ton of friends before we were a couple, so we will sort of trade off, like what the party is for, who has the free time right now, whether it's more people that he knows or that I know.

In contrast to this pattern of alternating the performance of tasks, the case of Grant and Hank illustrates a pattern of completing tasks together which they both enjoy doing. When asked, "Do you do groceries together always?" Grant replied,

Yeah, we go together, I mean 95% or more of the time we go grocery shopping together ...I think we both just like doing it. ...Actually, we paint well together because I like to roll and he likes to do trim, so it works well.

Hank supports Grant's statement by asserting that, "When we paint, ...he's the roller ...and I like doing the trim...so we're really great painters together." These examples once again point to interest as being a significant factor in contributing to the way in which partners choose to divide up household tasks.

Skill, Capability, and Physical Limitations

Eighteen of the 20 interview participants (including both partners in eight couples) identified skill and ability as significant factors in determining their particular division of household labour. For instance, when Brendan was asked, "How about being good at something, skill, competence?" he replied,

Yeah, definitely skill...[Andrew] ...has the interest in being a good cook, [and] ... has a very good ability at it... he ...can actually experiment. ...I was living on my own for three years, ... so I was cooking for myself, but ...he's better at it, he enjoys it more, so I'm fine with him doing that more.

When Nicolas was asked, "Is there anything ... that you're skilled at that [Michael's] not?" he responded, "Yeah ... I'm more competent when it comes to ... the gardening ... I think I'm more capable of doing it--I have more knowledge and insight on that subject." Similarly, Hank takes "care of the pool" because, "[Grant] has no idea how to test the

water for alkaline or ph balance, no concept of how the plumbing works.” Wyatt and Xavier, meanwhile, were both able to talk about various situations in which skill and ability affect who does what in the home. Wyatt stated that,

[Xavier] does the ironing because ...I've never been able to iron ...properly...I always manage to iron a crease ... into the shirt that I didn't want. ... he can iron very well (laugh) so he does all of the ironing.

When Wyatt was later asked who pays the bills, he replied, “[Xavier] does that--he's better with numbers and...doing the budget. ... I've never ...been good with budgets. ...He took my finances over and that was it, no worries about it.” Likewise, when Xavier was asked, “Are there things that require skill ...that only you do that he doesn't or vice versa?” he responded that,

I do ...the accounting ...When we got together, he was heavy in bills and I came up with a plan ...to get him financially stable, ...I'm very tough on accounting. ...I am a lot better with accounting and maintain[ing] the money.

Skill: Task Specialization

Participants who stated that skill and ability are significant factors in determining their division of unpaid labour typically made reference to situations where each partner specializes in doing different tasks (or set of tasks). In these situations, each partner takes over the particular domain that he is skilled at. For example, when Owen was asked, “Are there things that either of you are skilled at doing around the house?” he replied that,

[Patrick's] ...skilled at ...renovation things. He has more experience and skill ...I don't have the skills. ... He's a better cook ... I'm a better cleaner ..., we ... do what our stronger skills are.

Whereas Owen does, on average, 94.8% of the cleaning tasks, Patrick does 97.5% of the cooking. Similarly, while Jeremy has the skills and experience of doing household repairs

and construction, Ian is the more computer literate of the two. When Ian was asked if there is “anything that you guys are good at doing?” he stated that,

Yeah, ...maintenance, repairing, construction are all his things ...because he knows how to ...and has experience doing it and ... I have no experience and I’m terrified that I’m going to lose my hands! If [Jeremy’s] got a problem with the computer, ... then he knows he can always call me.

The case of Raymond and Steve represents a third example of partners carrying out certain tasks which they are each skilled at doing. When Raymond was asked, “What would you say you’re really good at?” he responded that,

My communication skills are really good...I’m the social secretary. ...I ...do all of that day to day planning and Steve is very happy to have me ...just let him know what’s happening, so that he doesn’t have to bother ..., because ... my strength as a teacher is that I’m a planner. ...On the other hand the stuff [Steve] does is ... invaluable because I’m not mechanically inclined when it comes to fixing stuff. I’ll wreck it more than fix it. ...When it comes to ... mechanical stuff, he’s really good. ... We’re each working from our areas of aptitude.

Here, both are clearly pleased to do what they are skilled at, while letting the other take over tasks which that partner is not skilled at. These examples make it evident that skill is significant in directly affecting each partner’s contribution to the division of household labour.

Capability and Higher Standards

Seven of the 20 interview participants (including both partners in two couples) made reference to situations where one partner took over certain household tasks due to having higher standards of how the designated task ought to be completed. In these cases it appears that one partner is more capable of doing the designated task properly. For instance, when Jeremy was asked, “Is there anything that [Ian’s] really good at doing?” he responded that,

[Ian] takes care of the finances, ... he pays the bills and makes sure that they're all sent out on time (laugh). ...It was terrible one time--he was here ... visiting ...and I had forgotten to mail out the cheque for the water bill and they cut off the water (laugh)--that's how bad it is! ...I was very happy to let him do it (laugh).

Ian supports this statement by stating that,

I handle ...the finances ... because I'm really anal retentive about financial matters... I had a slight incentive, ...my last visit ...before moving here, ...I got in the shower and there was no water because brain dead up there had received the water bill, had written the cheque out and put it in the envelope, and even put a stamp on it, but forgot to mail it (laugh). I swore to God I was never gonna let that happen again, so he was quite content to make sure that I took over that one.

Raymond and Steve divide some household tasks in a similar way. When asked, "Are there certain things that you do that he doesn't do or things that he does that you don't do because of some certain reason?" Raymond replied that,

Yeah, [Steve will] do the stuff where things could get broken, like vacuuming. ...When he moved in, I told him, 'if you put anything valuable on countertops or tables, then the likelihood is, if I'm doing the cleaning, they'll get broken.' ...So when he put his stuff there, he took the responsibility for those jobs ... he kind of learned the hard way...--I started vacuuming and the next thing you know, there was a crunch inside the vacuum hose, because I had knocked something over from the edge of the countertop, ... I don't mind dusting and stuff--I'll pick up a vacuum ...but he doesn't want me to because he's protective of his stuff.

As well, when Hank was asked who does the cooking, he responded that,

HANK: Neither of us likes it. ...I cook because nobody else is gonna cook, ... Grant ... almost can't even boil eggs like ...he boils them too long or he puts them in after the water boils and some of them burst, ... it's like how hard is it to boil eggs. ... that's not his strength, he doesn't think ahead very much in that way.

This case is different because Hank and Grant both dislike the task of cooking. However, it is similar to the previous two couples, in that Hank has taken over the task of cooking because Grant seems to be incapable of doing the task and Hank has higher standards with regard to how the task should be completed. Although each of these three examples are manifestly different, there are similarities. In all three cases, one partner (regardless of

whether or not he enjoys doing the task) takes over that particular task. He does this because he has higher standards of how the task ought to be completed and prefers to avoid any possible consequences which could occur, should he let the other partner complete the task. Therefore, one's capability for completing the task properly and having higher standards of how the task ought to be completed may affect the division of household labour.

Physical Limitations

While one participant, Patrick, stated that his and Owen's division of household labour could change in the event that either of them acquire any physical limitations, four interview participants (two couples) made clear references to situations in which physical limitations affected the division of household labour. Physical limitations included back problems, leg problems, knee problems, and allergies. For example, Jeremy stated that,

[Ian's] always [done] the laundry...because ... I have ...back and knee problems and ...I can't get the basket of laundry up and down [the] stairs. ... So Ian is very understanding about that. ...He's also seen me lying on the floor because my back gave out, so he doesn't want to see me in that situation again.

Similarly, when asked, "Is there anything in or around the house that you can't physically do?" Wyatt replied,

Yes, ... I can't really move anything ..., so Xavier does all that. ... [he'll] take the laundry down ...and ...[he'll] bring the laundry back up. ...I used to do [the groceries]..., but now I can't handle the bags, so we do it together.

Wyatt has leg problems that often force him to use a wheelchair. This restricts him from doing household tasks which require lifting and moving heavy objects. Xavier, however, is unable to take over all physical labour himself. Xavier stated for example, "I used to [do yard stuff] -- cutting grass is hard on me because I get hay fever real bad."

When Wyatt was asked, “What about the yard stuff, did you do that before [your leg became an issue]?” he supported Xavier’s statement by replying that,

Yes, ...it made him feel so uncomfortable--I didn't want to see him sneezing and sniffing and getting those headaches. ...When I'd have a project ...that I needed to work on, he would ...do the yard work, but it would make him so miserable, so ...that was ...out of my desire not to see him miserable.

Overall, it is clear that physical limitations of any kind may have a direct influence on the division of household labour.

Practicality and Conscious Sharing

Practicality and the Division of Unpaid Labour

Significantly, 18 participants (both partners in nine couples) said that practical reasons often determine who performs which task. These practical reasons include being the first or last one to come home, being the first or last person to leave the house, and being the first or last one to get out of bed. For example, Frasier said that, “I usually check ...and sort the mail, because I get here in the afternoon first.” When asked, “So if Evan came home first, he would check the mail?” he said, “Yeah.” The following quote illustrate a similar theme:

BRENDAN: I hate making the bed...which is ridiculous because...it takes no time...The irony [is] because he goes to work earlier, I ...make the bed every day.

Regarding taking out the trash, partners Michael and Nicholas said:

MICHAEL: It ...works on who leaves ...first in the morning, so some mornings I leave before him and some mornings he leaves before me, or say we leave at the same time, but because he pulls out before me, he pulls out the trash and then I lock up the house.

NICHOLAS: There’s times when he would do it and there’s times when I would do it....but we share, like if I’m leaving home before him, then I take out the trash and if he leaves home before me, then he takes out the trash.

Conscious Sharing: Fairness as an Objective

Clearly, practicality has an important role in affecting the division of labour, but these participants' statements are also indicative of a desire to share the completion of household tasks. A significant 14 participants (including both partners in five couples) spontaneously mentioned instances in which certain household tasks are consciously shared, primarily for what appears to be the purpose of being fair. For example, when asked who takes the trash out, Andrew replies that, "What happens is ...we usually kind of tag team it a little bit, like 'why don't you take the trash up and I'll take it out to the street,'--that's generally how it works." Brendan supports this by stating that, "We do it together--...I'll round up all the trash and bring it to the door, and he takes it outside and takes the trash can to the street." Although it is indirectly implied, if Andrew and Brendan are both home, they consciously share the task of taking out the trash because it not only makes the task easier to complete, but it is also fair to do so.

Similarly, when Daniel was asked who does the dishes, he stated that, "Usually the rule is ...whoever cooks doesn't have to clean up, so I cook mostly during the week, [Christopher's] supposed to clean up afterwards." When Christopher was asked who buys gifts for their family members, he replied that, "[Daniel] ...takes care of his family's gifts, and I take care of mine." Generally speaking, it appears that conscious sharing, primarily for the purpose of being fair, is a significant factor in affecting the division of labour.

Unassigned Tasks: Practicality and Sharing

Eight participants (including both partners in two couples) spontaneously referred to scenarios where the responsibility for performing tasks belongs to both partners, with

neither having a vested interest in doing them. For example, when Hank was asked who makes up the bed, he replied that, “Neither one of us makes the bed. If somebody’s coming over, we’ll both make the bed.” In a similar way, Jeremy stated that, “It’s more a matter of what needs to be done...I mean if I’m down here, and there’s dirty laundry lying on the floor and I notice it, I’ll start a load.”

In an analogous way Andrew stated that,

If we see that the floor needs to be vacuumed, then we vacuum it. If there’s dusting to be done, then it gets done. ...If somebody’s coming over, we both clean...We both do our own laundry, but the linens and the towels..., one of us will ...grab it up and throw it into the machine and it’s not like ‘well I did it last time so I’m not going to do it this time, you do it’--we don’t really get into that, if something ...needs to get done, one of us does it.

For some couples, it appears that certain tasks are not assigned to either partner specifically, but rather one partner or the other will decide to complete the task based on practical reasons. Therefore, since neither person is made to bear sole responsibility for certain tasks, these examples reflect a desire for shared responsibility for certain tasks.

Negotiation: A Problem-Solving Tool

On the whole, negotiation was used when factors, particularly interest, skill, and time, presented a conflict in getting tasks completed. A significant 14 participants (including both partners in five couples) stated that there were times when one partner would ask the other to complete a specific household task, because he strongly dislikes doing the task. For example, when asked who takes out the trash, Wyatt responded, “[Xavier] does... he’s always done the trash... it’s very unclean (laugh), I don’t like being around that much unclean (laugh).” Similarly, when asked who does what in terms of cleaning, Michael pointed out that, “[Nicholas] does ... the dishes all the time, because he knows I don’t like doing it...It doesn’t matter who cooks--I just don’t like doing the

dishes.” As in Xavier’s case, Nicholas has agreed to take over the task of doing the dishes. He does it regardless of who does the cooking and solely because Michael has a strong dislike for completing this particular task.

Similarly, when Owen was asked, “Have you ever had to negotiate who does what?” he replied that,

Negotiation is something that I’ve learned. I would be upfront. I told Patrick... [that] I only know the basic type of sewing. I can try to make a pillowcase but the result wouldn’t be pleasing, so he would do it if I don’t want to.

One can see from the above examples that there are instances when one partner agrees to take over a particular task because the other partner dislikes doing it.

Negotiation: Problem-Solving Strategies

With regard to the issue of negotiation, three problem-solving strategies were discovered: completing the task together, compromising, or hiring help.

Completing the Task Together

Six participants (including both partners in one couple) made specific reference to tasks which are completed together by both partners because they are tasks disliked by both partners. For example, when asked, “Can you think of any tasks where you would share it instead of alternating?” Kyle responded, “Yeah, ...cleaning out the closets, we wouldn’t want to tackle that by ourselves, it’d be easier to sort things together ...it’s easier sometimes to get things done together.” In a parallel manner, when asked, “Has there ever been a time when you guys ever had to negotiate?” Patrick responded,

Yeah, neither of us wants to get up on a ladder, neither of us wants to paint the house. ...If we know that we both dislike it, we’ll usually team up on it ...If we both hated to clean, then we’d hire a maid so fast! If we couldn’t afford it, we’d do it together...we would share it.

Both of these examples indicate that some couples agree to share tasks which they both dislike doing. By not placing the responsibility of completing the task on only one partner, this problem-solving strategy virtually ensures that both partners will feel that the designated task has been divided fairly and equally.

Compromise

Six of the interview participants (including both partners in two couples) in this study gave examples of situations in which both partners agreed to a trade-off. These trade-offs consisted of one of two scenarios: 1) partners agreed to rotate completing the task because both disliked doing the same task; or 2) when each partner disliked doing different tasks, they agreed that their responsibility could be relinquished by trading with the other partner. For example, Andrew stated that,

When we first moved in together, I said ‘I hate cleaning the shower,’ so he’s like ‘okay I’ll take care of that’ and ...that was okay, he’ll do that and I’ll take care of the toilet and the floor. ...So it’s okay ...if I take care of these five things and he just takes care of those three things, because I don’t want to do those three things and he doesn’t mind doing those three things. They might not be split evenly, but in terms of enjoyment or dislike, they’re split.

In a similar way, Kyle said:

We both despise cleaning bathrooms...he cleans his and I clean mine. We have separate bathrooms... and we have a third bathroom ... -- we sort of alternate doing it. Whenever it needs to be cleaned...we just say we have to do this but I’m not going to do more than I have to and you aren’t either--you take care of yours and I’ll do mine and when we have to, we’ll do that one.

When Kyle was then asked, “What if there was only one bathroom?” he responded that, “We would probably alternate ...so we wouldn’t have to do it again.” Supporting his partner’s statements, Luke, when asked, “Are there things that you both don’t like to do?” he replied, “Yeah, ... cleaning the bathrooms...he cleans his ... and I clean [mine] and the one in the hallway... it’s about 50/50.”. Whether couples choose to alternate

completing the designated task or make a trade-off, either of these problem-solving tools result in making the division of labour more fair.

Hiring Outside Help

Eight participants (four couples) hire help for tasks which both partners are either unwilling or incapable of completing. Incapable in this context is defined as an inability to complete the task due to time constraints, physical limitations, or dislike. For instance, when asked if Daniel is “good at home renovations?” Christopher replied, “Yeah he’s pretty good, ...but ...it’s often something that we hire out for ...because it’s really time consuming and ...it’s just not our idea of fun (laugh).” Xavier states that he and Wyatt chose to hire a lawn crew to do the yard work “because [Wyatt] can’t physically do it and I’m too busy. I’ve been usually averaging about 80-90 hours every week.” While Xavier works unusually long hours outside the home and prefers to not use free time to do yard work, Wyatt has major leg problems that impede his ability to do yard work. Therefore, they both agreed to hire someone to do the task. In the same way, Jeremy and Ian hire outside help. Ian states that they hire a lawn crew,

because... I just don’t want to do it. There’s so many more productive things for me to do and [Jeremy’s] got allergies ...so he doesn’t want to get anywhere near newly cut grass... [And] ...I have difficulty dealing with the heat and humidity here. ...We don’t own a lawn mower, I don’t want to buy a lawn mower, I don’t want to deal with the maintenance of a lawn mower, .I just don’t want to do it (laugh).

Ian and Jeremy also explain why they chose to hire a cleaning crew for inside the house:

JEREMY: We both hate dirty bathrooms. ... Leaning over and scrubbing a tub is not good for my back. ...We had to hire someone to come clean the bathrooms because neither of us could stand to clean the bathrooms, yet neither of us could stand the dirtiness (laugh).

IAN: We hire a ...cleaning crew. ...It’s ...time-consuming and I hate scrubbing bathtubs (laugh). I really hate it with a passion. [Jeremy] doesn’t mind doing it but

he has a bad back and a bad knee, so being on all floors and scrubbing stuff isn't ...healthy for him, and we're never home...so ...when we're at home, the last thing I want to do is dust (laugh).

It is evident that hiring help, if income is adequate enough, is also useful in ensuring that the division of labour is divided fairly.

Income and Hiring Help

Although the overwhelming majority of participants stated that in no way does income directly determine the division of household labour, it is significant that 13 participants (including both partners in three couples) stated that, should their combined income increase by a significant amount (due to either one or both earning more money), hiring help to complete domestic tasks would likely be considered for various reasons. Owen's comment illustrates this point. When asked, "Let's say that you work 75-80 hours a week and he was working 40, do you think the way things got done around the house would change?," he stated that,

Yeah, ...I'd be exhausted ...I wouldn't have the time to cook and clean. If the money was large enough, then we could just get a cleaner. ... Yes, time ... does alter the division of labour ...but money can alleviate some of the burden. ...I imagine working those ...hours we might be making more ...therefore there would be less stress on the other person if they don't like cleaning or cooking.

When Kyle was asked, "Say you were both working 40 hours a week, but your income was \$200,000 and [Luke's] was \$50,000, [would] the way you two divided things ...be different?," he responded that,

Yeah ...if we had that kind of income ... we would certainly hire somebody to come clean the house and ...do the yard, so we wouldn't have to worry about doing that in our free time.

When Daniel was asked, "Let's say you both spent 40 hours a week at work and Daniel earned \$200,000 a year and you earned \$50,000, would things change?," he stated that,

No, money doesn't affect the roles. The only way it could ...is if we had that much money that we could hire someone ...then we wouldn't have to worry about getting things done.

When his partner Christopher was asked, "Would you hire help if your combined income was that high?," he responded, "Yeah, and the person who was making more money would probably contribute more to the pot of money that goes to getting that stuff done." Again, it is made evident that hiring help, should income be adequate enough, would be a strategy in alleviating some of the burden of completing domestic tasks for the couples in this study.

Conclusion

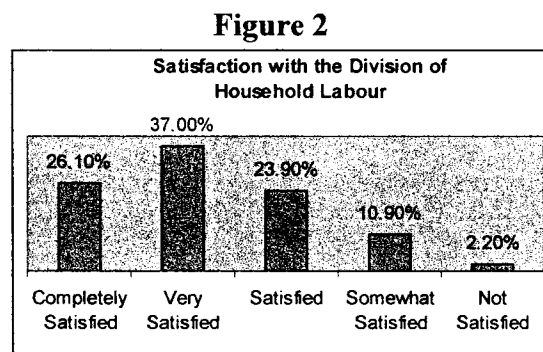
Generally, the discussion in this chapter reinforces the point made in the previous chapter that factors found to be important in determining the division of labour in heterosexual households were not relevant to this sample of male same-sex couples. Personal interest was found to be the most important factor. Time in paid labour, ability and skill, and practicality were the next most important factors. Additionally, compared to heterosexual couples, participants emphasized conscious sharing, negotiation, and hiring help as viable options in attempting to create and maintain a more equitable division of labour. It is worth noting that partners who chose to hire help did so by a joint decision, because both partners take responsibility for ensuring that tasks get completed. As the readers are now aware of the way in which couples in this study divide unpaid labour, as well as the factors which contribute to the division of labour, the following chapter will focus on participant's responses regarding satisfaction with the division of labour.

Chapter 5 – Satisfaction with the Division of Household Labour

This chapter examines data from both the interview and survey data, with particular focus on satisfaction with the division of domestic labour found amongst this sample of 92 participants (46 couples). Demographic variables found to influence satisfaction levels are presented. Following this, findings from the 20 interviews will shed light on the reasons participants had for holding particular satisfaction levels.

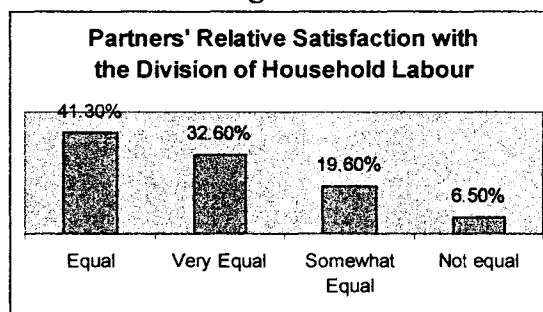
Satisfaction with the Division of Household Labour

The following chart displays the satisfaction levels of participants with regard to domestic labour:



From this chart, it is clear that the overwhelming majority of participants are at least “satisfied” with the division of domestic labour. Interestingly, 63 percent of participants were either “completely satisfied” (24 participants) or “very satisfied” (34 participants) with the division of household labour. Although the above chart is interesting, it is important to know how equal satisfaction levels were within couples. The following chart depicts the frequencies of relative satisfaction levels between partners:

Figure 3



Of the 46 couples, 41% (19 couples) had equal satisfaction levels and 33% (15 couples) had very equal satisfaction levels. Compared to heterosexual couples, these findings are interesting, in that the overwhelming majority of couples (74% or 34 couples) had similar satisfaction levels with regard to unpaid labour. This finding is discussed later in this chapter.

Factors Found to Affect Satisfaction Levels with Division of Domestic Work

Factors that have been found to affect satisfaction with the division of domestic labour for heterosexual couples are gender (sex) and relative time spent on household tasks, especially tasks designated as “feminine.” In this sample of same-sex couples, the former factor (sex/gender) was not applicable. As for the latter factor, the evidence based on the results was mixed. Looking at the completion of the most general groupings of tasks, no significant correlations were found between relative satisfaction levels and having primary responsibility for “all masculine” tasks; “all feminine” tasks; and “all domestic tasks.”

As this overall result is different from studies done on heterosexual couples, chi-square correlation tests were done to find out if having primary responsibility for any *specific* sets of tasks affected relative satisfaction levels between partners. There was no

significant correlation between having more responsibility for any of the “masculine” sets of tasks and relative satisfaction levels. Of the “feminine” sets of tasks, only two significant correlations were found. Relative contribution to meal-related tasks was significantly correlated with relative satisfaction with the division of household labour ($p < 0.01$). The association in this case was negative and modest ($\gamma = -0.223$), meaning that partners who had more responsibility for meal-related tasks were more likely to be *less* satisfied with the division of household labour. As discussed in the previous chapter, partners who spent more time in paid labour were more likely to spend more time on meal-related tasks, particularly cooking. Although this is only speculative, it is possible that having more responsibility for meal-related tasks becomes more burdensome because of working relatively longer hours.

The second “feminine” task found to be significantly correlated with relative satisfaction levels was relative contribution to household management and correspondence tasks ($p < 0.001$). Again, the association was negative and moderate ($\gamma = -0.300$)—that is, partners who had more responsibility for household management and correspondence tasks were more likely to be *less* satisfied with the division of household labour. Although this is only speculative, a possible explanation for this finding may be (as suggested by interview findings) that the types of tasks involved in household management and correspondence tasks are perceived to be different from the other household tasks. This is because it is likely that these types of tasks (i.e. making phone calls, writing letters and e-mails, planning, etc.) may be quite time-consuming and are likely to go unnoticed because the results are not as tangible as, for example, cleaning, doing dishes, doing laundry, etc.

Additional factors found to be significantly correlated with relative satisfaction with the division of household labour were relative time in paid labour per week ($p < 0.05$) and relative gender identity ($p < 0.05$). In the former case, the association was negative and modest ($\gamma = -0.276$)—that is, partners who spent relatively more time in paid labour per week were more likely to be *less* satisfied with the division of household labour. For the latter, the association was positive and moderate ($\gamma = 0.342$), indicating that having a more masculine gender-role identity was associated with higher satisfaction levels.

Reasons for Levels of Satisfaction with Division of Domestic Labour

The statistical data presented above is interesting in several ways. Generally, the sample was satisfied, very satisfied, or completely satisfied with the division of unpaid labour. Furthermore, the majority of partners had a similar (or same) satisfaction level, indicating that male same-sex couples differ from heterosexual couples. Additionally, it is interesting that having more responsibility for specific tasks did not affect satisfaction levels, with the exception of meal-related and household management and correspondence tasks. Finally, it is interesting that the only variables significantly correlated with satisfaction are gender-role identity and time in paid labour.

Although the statistical figures with regard to the satisfaction levels of unpaid labour may be interesting, they do not provide the *reasons* for selecting those particular satisfaction levels. Understanding the various reasons for *why* participants selected certain levels instead of others is much more meaningful for increasing an understanding of the division of labour amongst male same-sex couples. This section draws on the qualitative interviews to provide descriptive details and insight into the questionnaire

responses given by individuals. In particular, interview participants were asked to comment on why they answered the question about satisfaction in the way that they did.

Although 26% of questionnaire respondents said that they were completely satisfied with the division of household labour, Xavier was the only interview participant who chose this response. When asked why he checked the *completely satisfied* box with regard to the division of domestic labour, Xavier stated, "I don't cook, so [Wyatt] cooks, so I make up part of it by doing more of the cleaning, but then I work a lot so when I can't do it, he'll pick it up, between us I think it's pretty shared."

Interview participants were more likely than other questionnaire respondents to say that they were *very satisfied* with the division of household labour. Whereas 37% of questionnaire respondents chose this answer, 12 of the 20 interview participants (60%) chose this response. This raises the question of whether questionnaire respondents who were more satisfied with the division of labour were more willing to indicate interest in participating in a follow-up interview. A chi-square correlation test was done, and there was no significant correlation between satisfaction level and willingness to participate in interviews. Therefore, chance alone seems to explain why the interview sample had a higher proportion of respondents who chose *very satisfied* compared to the larger survey sample.

Participants offered a variety of reasons for choosing the response *very satisfied* as opposed to a different response. Daniel and Jeremy, for example, suggested that attaining complete satisfaction (with regard to anything) is unachievable. Daniel stated that, "You can't be 100% completely satisfied--there's no such thing," while Jeremy responded that,

There's always room for improvement. ...I don't ever feel completely satisfied because life changes and I like that ... I doubt I'm ever going to be completely satisfied ...so that's the only reason.

Another reason for selecting *very satisfied* as opposed to *completely satisfied* was offered by both Evan and Grant. These individuals feel that they should be contributing more time to household tasks. Evan stated that,

I feel that I sometimes don't contribute as much as Frasier...I think we have a pretty good balance, but I feel somewhat guilty ... that I can't put in as much as he does. ... I just don't have as much time ..., and I would like it to be balanced.

Similarly, Grant responded that, "I guess my first thought to that is it's probably a feeling that I should be doing more than I do, so I'm not really completely satisfied."

Yet another reason for selecting *very satisfied* as opposed to *completely satisfied* was because the individual felt that his partner does not complete certain tasks the way he prefers them to be done. Ian, for example, responded,

Occasionally there are certain chores that I'd like to get done by a particular deadline, and [Jeremy] doesn't always share my view of what the deadline is (laugh)...let's say ...we're expecting guests in a week's time, so I want to make sure that we ...clean up the house... over the course of the week, whereas [Jeremy] would much prefer to ...do mad panic type of cleaning...and then wonders why we're late (laugh).

Similarly, Patrick responded,

Yeah, if he picked his stuff up (laugh)...honestly, the dropcism,... it's like Owen, when he comes back home from shopping and he has three shopping bags of stuff, and he empties the bags and leaves the bags sitting on the floor--fold them up and put them in the closet or just throw them out. It's very minor though...and he knows it drives me crazy and tries not to do it, so I'm grateful that it's as petty and trivial as that.

The proportion of interview participants saying they were *satisfied* with the division of household labour (25%) was similar to the proportion of questionnaire respondents

choosing this response (24%). One of the five interview participants to choose the *satisfied* response is Nicholas, who said:

I am satisfied ...about 80% of the time. ...I'm very satisfied with the responsibilities [Michael] takes on and I think he's also very satisfied with the responsibilities I take on, but there are times when I feel, listen I need to relax, you need to do this, because I've had a very hard day at work, so those times, I'm not very satisfied, and there's times when I feel like he's doing too much, so there's reasons why, but overall, I'm satisfied, therefore my choice is based on overall.

Similarly, Andrew at times feels unsatisfied, but he is satisfied overall:

I think the split that we have right now is really good... it never goes much past balance,... there might be some things that we do where one of us does it more often than the other, and ...you kinda say why the hell am I taking out the trash every single time it needs to go out, but then at the same time, you're also not the one cleaning the bathroom every single time, so those might be some reasons why I put satisfied ... we've managed to ...not have any major problems with things that need to get done.

Andrew's partner Brendan also chose the *satisfied* response, and Brendan is clear about what would increase his level of satisfaction:

I didn't say very satisfied because I'm not incredibly enthusiastic about the way things work, ... maybe just more communication and discussion between us about what needs to be done and who's going to do what. I think we tend to just sort of do things without telling each other or asking each other ...which is fine but then maybe I think that can always lead to you potentially feeling like you're always doing something. ...I'll most often tend to do the housework type stuff if he's not here and vice versa, I think he tends to straighten out stuff when I'm not here either ...I think realistically it's probably more like 55 him /45 me, but ... it's hard to tell because I don't always know what he's doing when I'm not here ...I think 55/45 is very good. I think the fact that I'm even talking about things that little is sort of a clear indicator that essentially we're really nit-picking about really small things, and that in general the satisfaction and the balance between us is really good.

Just as questionnaire and interview participants chose the *satisfied* response in similar proportions, so did they choose the *somewhat satisfied* response in similar proportions (11% of questionnaire respondents, 10% of interview participants). The two

participants to check the *somewhat satisfied* level, Steve and Hank, did so for different reasons. Steve said that,

[Raymond] ...does some things that he doesn't finish ..., he ...jumps from here to here to here... I'm used to going in and working on a project and finishing it, ...I think where the difference is our satisfaction with what is okay...the remodelling of a bedroom, ...I'm not a sloppy worker, ...I like to get the mud up on the ceiling without getting any on the floor, his is messy, so I have to tell him slow down, and tell him that my way ... would make the job easier ...because you're not having to clean so much, he might be getting the mud up on the ceiling faster but I'm having to scrub a floor which is taking me three times longer because we could have done it nice in the beginning.

Hank responded, "I guess one reason is because I feel like I do more." I then asked Hank, "Do you feel like you're doing more or do you do more actually?" and he stated, "I do do more, I'd say 80/20, me/him." I then asked if his partner Grant would do more of the domestic labour if that is what he wanted. Hank responded, "Yeah, probably, oh yeah, I think so, yeah, it would just have to be negotiated, if that makes sense?"

None of the interview participants selected the "not satisfied" response with regard to satisfaction with the division of unpaid labour. Since only 2.20% of the entire survey sample selected "not satisfied," it was anticipated that there was an extremely small likelihood of having them participate in the interview.

A Closer Look at Participants' Responses Regarding Satisfaction

Similarity of Couple's Responses Regarding Satisfaction

With regard to heterosexual couples, research has consistently shown that men report having higher levels of satisfaction with the division of labour than women (Baxter and Western, 1998: 109; Himsel and Goldberg, 2003: 853; Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 519). Satisfaction with the division of household labour is also an important predictor of marital satisfaction for both women and men (Stevens, Kiger, and Riley,

2001: 514). Men who are more satisfied with the division of labour do less housework (Himsel and Goldberg, 2003: 843) and doing less housework is associated with higher levels of marital happiness (Amato, Johnson, Booth, and Rogers, 2003: 17; Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 520).

As a result of men not having to juggle the demands of paid and unpaid work to the same degree as women, men generally have more leisure time (Fast & Frederick, 2004: 21). Men in dual-earner couples also tend to be more satisfied with leisure time and general time use. As a result of an unbalanced division of labour, time is a source of inequality amongst most dual-earner couples, whereby men hold the position of advantage (Phipps, Burton, & Osberg, 2001: 7). Having higher satisfaction with the division of labour is also associated with lower levels of role strain. Therefore, another result of being more satisfied with the division of labour is that men have lower levels of role strain (Himsel and Goldberg, 2003: 855). It is clear that because of their higher satisfaction levels, men generally tend to be in the position of advantage.

As stated earlier in this chapter, of those who completed the questionnaire, 41% (19 couples) chose equal satisfaction levels and 33% (15 couples) chose very equal satisfaction levels. Therefore, it is important to note that a clear majority of couples (74% or 34 couples) chose similar satisfaction levels with regard to unpaid labour. This pattern of similar satisfaction levels for each partner in a couple is also found amongst the ten couples interviewed. Each partner in six (60%) of the ten couples interviewed chose the same response, each partner in two couples (20%) chose slightly different responses, and each partner in two couples chose very different responses. The only exceptions were Grant and Hank, and Raymond and Steve. Even in these two latter cases, on a scale from

“not satisfied” to “completely satisfied” (five options), the partners only differed by two levels. Again, this smaller sample of couples also had an overwhelming majority of equal or similar responses to the satisfaction question.

This sample’s patterns do not resemble those found in heterosexual couples. Having the same (or similar) satisfaction levels between partners may produce certain benefits. Perhaps the equality of satisfaction responses are a reflection and extension of the more egalitarian division of labour that exists in this sample. Perhaps, the inequality that exists in heterosexual couples, whereby men gain the advantages of being more satisfied with the division of labour, is not present to the same degree. Instead, equal satisfaction levels may be an indication of both partners sharing the benefits of a more egalitarian division of labour, such as more leisure time, less role strain, and higher marital/relationship happiness. The similarity in responses may indicate that, compared to heterosexual couples, *both* partners perceive the division of labour to be more fair.

Patterns of Responses Regarding Satisfaction

When examining the responses from the sample of interview respondents, several different types of responses emerged. When asked why they were not *completely* satisfied, Andrew stated that, “we’ve managed to not have any major problems”; Brendan stated that, “essentially we’re really nit-picking about really small things”; and Patrick stated that, “I’m grateful that it’s as petty and trivial as that.” Even in the cases of Ian and Patrick, both participants acknowledged issues about housework that present conflict, but both ended by joking and laughing about them, therefore trivializing the issues. These responses are not typically found in heterosexual couples when examining responses regarding satisfaction with unpaid labour. It is interesting that these four interview

participants stated or suggested that conflicts over issues regarding housework are *trivial* and that they are satisfied (or in Patrick's case, very satisfied), even after listing various complaints about how tasks are divided.

Taking these responses at face value would suggest that individuals feel that overall, the division of labour is fair and that housework generally does not present any major conflicts in the household. It is also possible that these responses are based on comparisons to their heterosexual peers. So for example, one could list several complaints about the division of labour, but then state that the complaints are minor and trivial because they are comparing their household to the generalized heterosexual couple. Or perhaps, listing various complaints about the division of tasks and then trivializing them is a sign of dissonance, specifically inconsistencies and discrepancies amongst responses. It is possible that participants were giving some responses based on what they thought would be considered acceptable, rather than being up front about housework conflicts. Or perhaps they may not have wanted to give honest answers for fear that their responses would portray gay relationships in a negative fashion. As stated in the methods chapter, using interviews brings several methodological issues with it. When inconsistencies are detected in participants' interviews, interpretation becomes a problem for the researcher.

Another interesting type of response was the assertion by two participants that they are not *completely* satisfied because they feel that they (self) should be contributing more to the completion of household tasks. For instance, Hank does the majority of household tasks. Not only does Grant agree with Hank, but he goes on to state that, "I should be doing more than I do, so I'm not really completely satisfied." Evan, although

acknowledging that their division of labour is quite balanced, asserts that, “I feel that I sometimes don’t contribute as much as [Frasier] and I would like it to be balanced.” Along the same lines, Nicholas said that, “there’s times when I feel like [Michael’s] doing too much.”

Typically, if men in heterosexual couples are unsatisfied with the division of household labour it is because they feel as if they are doing more than their fair share, which typically mean less than half of housework task completion (Frisco and Williams, 2003: 66), or because they feel the woman in the household should be contributing more (Himsel and Goldberg, 2003: 843). And conversely, typically it is the woman who is not satisfied because she feels that her male partner should be contributing more to household tasks (Baxter and Western, 1998: 109; Himsel and Goldberg, 2003: 853; Stevens, Kiger, and Riley, 2001: 519).

Therefore, Grant, Evan, and Nicholas’ responses reflect a type of response that is not found in published research on men in heterosexual couples. Once again, although interpretation of the interview findings is difficult, their statements could be explained in a few ways. Perhaps men in these same-sex couples are operating from a sense of obligation and responsibility that many heterosexual men are privileged to be able to ignore because they have a woman to do housework for them. An additional explanation could be that although these men are gay, they are still men and therefore may not want to emasculate or effeminize their partners by expecting them to do more than their fair share. It is then possible that, to some extent, these couples are operating from a sense of gender-appropriate behaviour.

Another type of response warranting further attention was offered by Brendan and Hank. Brendan, who chose “satisfied” stated that, “I’m not incredibly enthusiastic about the way things work,... maybe just more communication and discussion between us about what needs to be done and who’s going to do what.” Similarly, Hank chose “somewhat satisfied”--when asked if his partner Grant would do more of the domestic labour if that is what he wanted, Hank responded, “Yeah, probably, oh yeah, I think so, yeah, it would just have to be negotiated.” As Brendan and Hank’s choice of satisfaction level was not particularly high given the scale, these statements are interesting. Given that they are both not enthusiastic about how tasks are divided and that both have suggested a way to improve their satisfaction (communication for Brendan and negotiation for Hank), why would they not try implementing these solutions? There could be several explanations for this. Perhaps they avoid the issue because they anticipate conflict with their partner should they bring it up in conversation. Or maybe, despite their acknowledgement that their division of labour is not entirely satisfactory, perhaps the issue is not high enough in importance to bring about discussion—perhaps in some way they are content with being less satisfied. A third possible explanation is that Brendan and Hank may have never really thought about the division of labour issue until their participation in this study began. It is possible that the acknowledgement of the problem and possible solution only came about during the interviews, and the participants may have tried discussing this with their partner after the interview. As one recalls from the methodology section, qualitative research, particularly interviews, carry the potential of creating awareness about an issue.

An unexpected and rather unique response was the assertion by two participants that they chose their satisfaction level based on the idea that attaining complete satisfaction (with regard to anything) is unachievable, and therefore their immediate response was to choose the next level of satisfaction, *very satisfied*. Daniel stated that, “You can’t be 100% completely satisfied--there’s no such thing,” while Jeremy asserted that, “There’s always room for improvement... I doubt I’m ever going to be completely satisfied ...so that’s the only reason.” To my knowledge, no published research suggests a similar finding with regard to responses to satisfaction levels by either heterosexual men or women. Due to the logic of these unusual responses, it is fair to suspect that Daniel and Jeremy do not have any major concerns or conflicts over the division of labour. If they believe that “completely satisfied” does not exist, then selecting the “very satisfied” response indicates that they believe they are at the top end of the scale. They believe that that some flaws will always exist in the division of labour, but state that they are very satisfied despite those flaws—perhaps this is merely a realistic view and should be taken literally.

Conclusion

This particular chapter is a good example of where triangulation of data becomes a useful research tool, as this chapter looked at both the qualitative and quantitative findings. Factors found to affect relative satisfaction levels between partners were: contribution to meal-related tasks, contribution to household management and correspondence tasks, relative time in paid labour per week, and relative gender identity. As the quantitative data did not capture the feelings and subjective perceptions about satisfaction, the qualitative findings from the interviews provided more information and

valuable insight into the individual participants' reasons for having chosen those particular satisfaction levels over other choices.

Within responses to the satisfaction question, patterns that emerged included the following: trivializing issues of conflict that relate to the division of household tasks; believing that oneself should contribute more to household tasks; the belief that one cannot be completely satisfied with the division of household labour; and acknowledging areas of conflict and suggesting solutions. All of these patterns were interesting because they are uncharacteristic of typical responses by heterosexual men and women in studies done on the division of labour. Additionally, the similar choices of satisfaction levels between partners was an interesting finding, as the pattern found in this sample is unlike those found in heterosexual couples, whereby men tend to have higher satisfaction levels than women. In order to better understand their satisfaction levels, this chapter has shed light on the feelings and perceptions of the participants towards their particular division of paid and unpaid labour.

Using data from the 20 interviews, the next chapter focuses on participants' perceptions of the relationship between gender and the division of unpaid labour. Additionally, it discusses participants' perceptions of the relationship between sexual orientation and gender,

Chapter 6 – Perspectives on Sexual Orientation and Gender Roles

Using data from the 20 interviews, this chapter focuses on perceptions of the relationship between gender and the division of unpaid labour. First, the way participants define their roles is explored. Common responses included terms such as partners, equals, and other responses which are reflective of the couples' sharing of paid and unpaid labour. Following this, participants' perceptions of the relationship between sexual orientation and gender are discussed, with emphasis placed on the following ideas: how their situation creates the necessity for completing tasks which are conventionally regarded as women's work; 'coming out' and the acceptance of gender role non-conformity; and choice and negotiation as resulting from the lack of same-sex role models.

Self-definition of Roles

During many of interviews, a discussion emerged about how participants would define, describe, or categorize their division of labour in relation to the breadwinner/housewife and super-mom labels that are commonly used to describe the division of labour in the majority of heterosexual couples. Participants typically characterized their relationships in terms of equality, partnership, and sharing.

Being Equals

Nine participants used the terms "equality" or "equal" in their responses. For instance, Brendan stated that, "It's really just that we operate as equals...as equal partners in a household. I think that's kind of a key thing." Similarly, Nicholas affirmed that,

I don't think I see a distinction between me and Michael. I think it's more equality than anything else, so ...I would say equality describes it best ... [and] partnership...that's a more appropriate word as well.

Likewise, Michael supports Nicholas' comment by stating that, "It's more equal but not in a strict sense, you know where everything is split up where there are certain things that he does more, and certain things I do more."

Partnership

Nine participants used the term "partners" or "partnership" to describe their division of labour. The following examples illustrate this:

LUKE: This is where the term partner comes in really well, because we're working together towards a common goal and dividing duties as needed.

ANDREW: Everybody who we are close with and knows how we get along, they just kind of ... see us as a pair, as a partnership, we both do things equally.

CHRISTOPHER: It's sort of a negotiated partnership ... Part of it is because we just don't have the same role models, we don't have those norms that have been put on heterosexual couples, and even the language we use...partner, ...companion, all those words just seem to connote something more equal, on the same level than man/wife.

Although Luke, Andrew, and Christopher suggest that the terms partner or companion necessarily imply equality and a non-hierarchical relationship, these terms do not imply any such thing. By his comment, Christopher suggests that, compared to heterosexual couples, the dynamics of same-sex couples are different in that they are more equal, although again this is his perception and not necessarily a true reflection of same-sex couples.

Sharing

Five participants used terms such as "shared" to describe their division of labour.

For example:

PATRICK: It's shared based on ...what we want to do ...we've figured out which of these skills we each can do and we like to do and so we do them.

STEVE: Our household doesn't run the same way as some other households, ours is, we share and do everything together.

EVAN: I would definitely say that it's pretty balanced and pretty equal. I'm trying to draw some distinctions but I don't really think there are very many between us--it's really more just differences in interest in how we divide up the work around the house. I'm comfortable with ...the word partner ...[it] has a lot to do with sharing things and being equal and things like that.

Here, Evan managed to not only refer to sharing things, but simultaneously also referred to his relationship in terms of equality and partnership. In this way, he highlights the importance of cooperation and working together for a common purpose – themes also implicit in the comments of others quoted in this discussion of how the participants characterize their relationships.

Other Responses

Although not the most common responses, other words and phrases used by participants to describe their division of labour should be acknowledged. These included descriptions such as the following: “cohabitate,” “fluid,” “balanced,” “both breadwinners and both labourers,” “companion,” “other half,” and “practical.” For instance, Owen stated that, “We’re both breadwinners and we’re both labourers at home.”

Kyle responded, “I don’t think there’s an actual term, if there is then I’m not aware of it, but the best description of the way we handle things might be cohabitate.” Kyle’s difficulty with finding an appropriate term with which to describe his relationship with Luke resonates with the issue of language raised by Christopher in a previous section.

Altogether, these responses about how to characterize their relationships and refer to their partners show participants’ interest in comparing themselves to heterosexual

couples. It is remarkable, in fact, to see the frequency with which participants explicitly make such a comparison and imply that their way of doing things is better. This can be seen in many of the comments in the preceding sections, and Daniel's comment is exemplary in its implication that his relationship is better than a typical heterosexual marriage:

We think of each other as equals, not as one below the other, not hierarchical as heterosexual couples. ...when they get engaged, ...you never see the man wearing an engagement ring, I mean, for the roles that we take, they are fluid.

Primary Breadwinners and Primary Housewives?

Although the vast majority of interview participants described their division of paid and unpaid labour using terms such as *equal* and *partnership*, three participants described their division of labour using conventional terms such as *breadwinner* and *housewife*. For instance, Wyatt stated that,

I'd say that probably the way it's divided up is umm, in the older model with like him being the breadwinner because he earns more money, and I kind of take on more of the Victorian mistress of the house, it's not that I do everything, I do some of the stuff but I do a lot of coordinating of the cleaning, I'm the one who interacts with the yard workers and the housekeepers, I'm the one who interacts with all the service people, I take care of all that.

It is interesting that Wyatt referred to himself as "mistress of the house" rather than homemaker, while he referred to his partner Xavier as the "breadwinner". It is also significant that Wyatt apparently places emphasis on the fact that Xavier earns more money (Wyatt earns approximately \$38,000 per year, and Xavier earns approximately \$60,000 per year), even though Wyatt works more hours per week than Xavier. Although this may suggest that income may be a factor in contributing to the way Wyatt and Xavier divide household labour, recall from Chapter 4 that Wyatt claims to be highly obsessive

about having things clean and he loves to cook—two of the most time-consuming household tasks.

Hank and Grant's case is in some ways similar to that of Wyatt and Xavier's. When asked, "If you had to categorize or characterize how you two do things around here, what would you say?" Grant replied that,

[Hank's] ...more classified as the breadwinner, because ...he's always made more money than me, and...he has been the one with ... the bigger job, more important position, more money than me.

DAP: Do you think in a way he is sort of resembling the super mom?

I don't know ...but does he earn more and do more in the household, yes,...but at the same time, ...I work one and a half jobs, which I think is hard to do too.

Although Grant, like Wyatt, claims that his partner Hank is more of the breadwinner, he does not refer to himself in any way as Wyatt did. This is likely because Hank, by conventional definitions, is both the primary breadwinner and primary homemaker. Recall from Chapter 4 that Hank does the majority of housework because Grant works longer hours, and also because Hank claimed he was obsessive about having things clean and because of his claim that Grant is unable to perform many tasks, such as cleaning and cooking, to Hank's standards. On the other hand, when asked the question, "We see this concept of the housewife/breadwinner ...if you had to describe your situation, how would you describe it?" Hank responded, "I am the primary homemaker (laugh)." I then stated, "But you're also the primary breadwinner though," to which he replied,

We both, ya know, last year he had a killer year in real estate. I think in the big scheme of things, I'd say we're pretty equal [and] ...I think we have a pretty nice life.

Hank, by conventional definitions, does constitute the primary breadwinner. However, he claims that he is also the primary homemaker, and goes on to state that overall, he feels that the division of labour between Grant and himself is fairly equal. Recall from the previous chapter, Hank reported being only “somewhat satisfied” with the division of household labour, and that he mostly attributed this to the fact that he feels that he does 80 percent of the housework. Here Hank contradicts his earlier statement regarding satisfaction, and it appears that he is working hard to justify Grant’s lack of participation in domestic work. It is possible that Hank avoided being fully honest about how he really feels about the fact that he does a tremendous amount of housework, out of fear that this may portray negative reflections of same-sex couples.

Grant and Wyatt described their particular division of labour using the term breadwinner, and Hank was the only participant who referred to himself as a homemaker. It is important to point out participants’ willingness to use the term breadwinner and their reluctance to use the term housewife or homemaker. As these terms have gendered implications, it is possible that these are examples of gender deviance neutralization. These participants may be adhering to the culturally sanctioned idea that associates men with being breadwinners.

Same-Sex Couples: The Necessity of Crossing Masculine Boundaries

With regard to the division of labour, four participants shared the idea that necessity partly explains why gender boundaries are likely to be blurred by same-sex couples. The majority of household tasks are conventionally regarded as women’s work. However, many of these tasks need to get done on a daily basis. Therefore, it would be virtually impossible for male same-sex couples to avoid doing all tasks which have been

constructed as women's work. At least one partner needs to routinely engage in what is conventionally regarded as women's work. The following quotes illustrate this point:

ANDREW: I wouldn't say that the things I do around the house make me more effeminate, I wouldn't say that I do them because I am effeminate. I do them because, well, they need to get done...the way I see it is, whether we're challenging the gender roles or not, there are things that still need to get done regardless of who is in the household, and they just need to get done...it wasn't like, 'well let's go kick down those doors and we're gonna do these jobs whether it's a woman's job or not,' it just needed to get done.

OWEN: Given that we're both males, since we don't have the opportunity to have a wife, we expect to do all the stuff that is typically done by the woman in heterosexual relationships, so we have to adapt to the situation by learning how to do those things. ...I mean, I've never made beds in my life, because my mother would always do it. [I was raised in] what I would call an Asian family ...where the woman is expected to do most of the kitchen stuff and house stuff, and I never learned those skills, but when I went to college, I learned that I had to learn to do some of them in order to live on my own because it was a necessity, and also because I'm gay and I won't have a wife to do all those things for me, then I have to learn how to do things myself out of necessity

WYATT: I have done a lot of the feminine tasks, but it doesn't bother me because it needs to get done, somebody's gotta do it, and I don't know, I never really bought into that whole 'this is a man's job, this is a woman's job' kind of thing.

Again, these comments reflect a resistance to categorizing their relationships in terms of breadwinner/homemaker. These men emphasize that, although they may perform tasks which are conventionally regarded as women's work, this does not make them any less of a man. These comments point to the perceived importance of maintaining a masculine identity—regardless of what they do, they are still men.

Sexual Orientation: The 'Coming Out' Process and the Acceptance of Gender Role Non-Conformity

The coming out process refers to the period of time when an individual begins to raise questions about her/his own sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Five of the interview participants shared the idea that the coming out process has several advantages

for gays and lesbians. Generally, it was thought that the coming out process generates a higher level of introspection, whereby the person looks within one's self more than the typical heterosexual individual. The coming out process not only brings with it the realization that there is a lack of legitimate correspondence between sex and gender, but it can also lead the individual to question other socially constructed aspects of one's life.

The following two quotes illustrate the views of participants:

CHRISTOPHER: I just think as people, we find ourselves. I think we're much more introspective [and] we're much more likely to discover who are we as people, not necessarily as, 'I'm a man, I'm a breadwinner, I'm gonna get a woman, I'm gonna get married, I'm gonna have children,' ya know, 'who am I, what do I want to do' ... we as gay men and women really try to discover who we are without preconceived roles that we're supposed to fit into.

GRANT: My sexual orientation goes so against the norms of society, ya know, what's considered acceptable and what's not, ya know. I think that a lot of gay and lesbian people have to kind of go inside themselves and sometimes I feel like on some levels, we get to know ourselves better, because we have to dig deep inside of ourselves and figure out who we are, and by coming out, you're kind of saying, 'I'm not going to let the rest of society kind of dictate to me who I am and what I'm going to do,' and I think that can follow into gender roles too.

Sixteen participants claimed that because they have already refused to conform to the social expectation of being heterosexual, they have learned to accept other forms of non-conformity, particularly those regarding gender roles. For example:

IAN: All the assumptions go out the window, so there's a lot more conscious thought that has to go into why we do what we do and how we negotiate our roles. We can't just assume anymore that because I'm male that I'm going to do these particular tasks to the exclusion of these other tasks because they're too girly for me, it just can't work. So once we throw away the original assumptions, everything becomes negotiable. So I have to stop and question myself--why I'm doing certain things or why I want to do particular things. Am I doing it because I like it? Well that might still be conditioning by my gender but I'm doing it because I decided to ... or ... I'm comfortable doing it, rather than it simply being assumed that I'm male, so I have to do this.

NICHOLAS: Gays and lesbians are basically challenging ... the stereotypes of the heterosexual, ... when you start coming out, you start opening up your eyes

and looking at everything. You start challenging everything else. ...there's no such thing as feminine or masculine...it's just your behaviour ...and there's nothing wrong with you. ...Maybe over time heterosexuals will start experimenting with roles.

Although gay men may be challenging the assumed correspondence between sex and gender (i.e. a male must be masculine), it is important to remember that this is being increasingly challenged by heterosexuals as well.

Gender Role Non-Conformity: Choice and Empowerment

Although all men have the personal choice to conform or not conform to masculine gender roles, Nicholas felt that gay men are more likely to feel that they can use this opportunity of choice. He stated that, "A gay or lesbian person would feel much more opportunity or feel that they can choose somewhere other than the extreme."

Adding to this idea Raymond said that, "The beautiful thing about being gay is once something is selling short, the world is open for you and you're not stuck in convention."

Seven interview participants expressed the belief that having the choice to not conform to masculine gender roles is empowering and liberating. The following three quotes illustrate this feeling:

BRENDAN: I sort of recognize that it's empowering to be able to be more than just one thing. How boring would it be to just be one thing or to essentially not have that option of the whole spectrum of behaviours and interests and to be able to do what you want.

CHRISTOPHER: We just don't have the same role models that our heterosexual brothers and sisters have, and so we have the freedom, thankfully and gratefully, we have the freedom to say, 'you know what, this is how I feel, I feel like I'm right here,' ...I just think we find ourselves.

XAVIER: What I love about who I am is that I can be whatever I want to be. If I want to do something feminine, that doesn't bother me. If I don't, then fine, I know that I have some masculine traits, and I know I have some feminine traits, and I can juggle back and forth between them all the time, and I love it because I

can do whatever I want, I can go back and forth, it's great...I feel like it's empowering, because ... I have the choice to do whatever I want.

For these participants, the choice to not conform to rigid masculine gender roles is freeing and empowering. Several participants spoke about how confining it can be for men to fit the extreme definitions of masculinity. Wyatt, for instance, spoke about how men are taught to not cry or show emotions because it is feminine and a sign of weakness. He then spoke about how these rules confine and restrict men, and the end result of repressing one's emotion can be detrimental to one's emotional and mental health. Whether it be knowing how to cook for themselves, do their own laundry, clean up after themselves, or show emotion, these participants have come to realize that having control over one's self is empowering. This control allows these men to act the way they want to act and to do things that they want to do. Essentially, one can not assume that, just because they are men, that they are going to take on typical masculine traits; rather, they can be whoever they want to be.

Relating this idea of choice to the division of household labour, 13 participants shared the belief that their division of labour (and other more general behaviours) often results from consent and choice, rather than out of feelings of obligation and preconceived gender roles. For example, when asked, "How would you say things fell into place with regard to this issue when you two first started living together?" Brendan responded that, "I would say that the answer is much more practical things, things like personal preference ... it would never just fall into place because of an assumption." Similarly, Kyle stated that,

We're not confined by an assumption of roles. ... We're both responsible for creating a life that works for us and we're not just fitting into a role that some society has said you have to be.

Frasier supports this by stating that,

I know straight couples where the man has lost his job or something or they've had kids and he quits his job because she earns more. Some men have really gotten into doing the housework so I think some of those things are changing ...whereas I guess gay couples are probably doing that faster because we don't have any preconceived roles of who has to do what--we just kind of make it up as we go and negotiate if need be.

Of the 13 participants who spoke about consent and choice, four expressed the belief that for gay men, there do not exist the same kind of gay role models that heterosexuals have had for several generations. Therefore, since the typical heterosexual models do not fit their lifestyle, gay couples are able to create their own models. Christopher, Owen, and Daniel illustrated this finding when they said that,

CHRISTOPHER: We were really looking forward to ...the whole setting up of the household, and not really having those traditional roles was sort of an adventure for the both of us ... so it was all very interesting, ya know, negotiation as we sort of went through it to figure out who was going to cook and who was going to clean and what things we were going to do together. ...Part of it is because we just don't have the same role models—we don't have those norms that have been put on heterosexual couples.

OWEN: I think that as gay people because of our unique situation, we are not bound by the traditional set of rules, so we can make the best of the situation...I think because of our unique situations, we're forced to adapt because there are no role models for gays and lesbians, I think we are more open minded to do certain things, or not to do certain things, rather than a heterosexual couple.

DANIEL: I really think in gay couples ...all the roles that you take on in the relationship are chosen, because there isn't anything external that's putting pressure on you to do certain things a certain way, there's no gay TV show that shows you how to do it, whereas there are TV shows that show how heterosexual couples have to do things. ...If only heterosexual people would realize that they can make their own roles too. Just because your parents did something a certain way doesn't mean that you have to do things the way they did.

The Need for Negotiation

These ideas beg the question then, “What if the division of labour in some same-sex couples resembled that of typical heterosexual couples—would it be the same or different?” This discussion arose with five participants, and all of them shared the belief that, should the division of labour in same-sex couples resemble that of a heterosexual couple, it would be different because the roles would have resulted from consent, choice, and negotiation, rather than out of gender role assumptions or feelings of obligation. The following three quotes illustrate this finding:

PATRICK: We have a gay male couple next door exactly like that...they negotiated it, they didn't do it because [one] told [the other] to stay at home, they did it because [one] said, 'you make enough alone, if you do this, I can do all the things around the home, and we could have a better life,' and [the other] said 'sure,' if it wasn't going to hurt his career at all and he would not have as much of a burden sharing responsibilities around the house that he didn't want to take on, so yeah,...it's two different people who have chosen a different way life

BRENDAN: If it did happen to resemble a heterosexual couple, it would be by choice, which is a big difference; it wouldn't be out of any sense of obligation.

IAN: If one partner was staying at home and the other was working full time, I presume that they've negotiated these roles in some function, or there is some external reason why the other person isn't working--on medical disability, or retired, yeah so my first assumption would be that there would be a reason why he's not working, and I would assume that they negotiated it--I couldn't imagine that it just fell into place like that. ...yeah so...if I saw a same-sex couple doing that, I'd assume that there's some other extraordinary factor or reason that they're doing things that way, or they've negotiated it for some type of mutual benefit.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presented several findings related to the perceptions of these participants with regard to the relationship between their sexual orientation and gender roles. As males, gay men have been generally socialized to be masculine men. However, masculine men are traditionally defined as heterosexual. Given the situation, these participants began to question and challenge many other societal norms, especially those

which pertain to gender roles. Through questioning where gender roles come from, these participants have come to realize that there is a lack of legitimate correspondence between sex and gender. The world has not been constructed to fit their reality, and therefore, they generally learn to accept non-conformity. It can no longer be assumed that gay men have to do things because it is expected of them; instead, it becomes negotiated individually. When same-sex couples begin cohabitating, they must negotiate their own household roles. They must figure out who is going to do what based on factors such as those discussed in Chapter 4. They are put in a situation to have to do it this way because it can not be based on gendered assumptions.

When heterosexual couples move in together, there is often an assumption of roles with regard to who is going to do what in the home. Their division of household labour is usually based on sex and gender roles. This by no means implies that either partner is obligated to fulfill every single gendered assumption, as many heterosexual couples are beginning to share housework more equally than before. However, the argument here is that it may be easier for same-sex couples to get past the conventional assumptions more quickly because the mainstream models do not fit them. If two men in a couple have both been socialized to be masculine, these gendered assumptions do not work for them in many ways.

These participants felt that in comparison to heterosexual couples, same-sex couples do not have role models that are widely acknowledged as such, and therefore there is a need to invent ways of doing things. Along the same lines, terms such as “husband” and “wife” have a long history of established usage by heterosexual couples, but gay partnerships do not have a similar history to draw upon when deciding how to

refer to their unions. Terms are still in the process of evolving and there is no consensus about which terms are best. When characterizing and describing their relationships, participants were clear that they do not fit the typical breadwinner/housewife roles; instead, these participants used terms such as partnership, equality, and shared to describe their division of labour, thus implying that both partners assume responsibility for paid and unpaid work.

Although the social construction of the breadwinner/housewife gendered model seems to be rigidly dualistic, the lines are very blurred for same-sex couples. As this study has shown, both partners in a male same-sex couple are likely to perform what are traditionally defined as the breadwinner roles and housewife roles. Additionally, as seen in this study's findings, individuals in a same-sex couple often times do not perceive themselves in these types of roles altogether. Unlike heterosexual couples who begin living together, there can not be an assumption of roles when same-sex couples begin cohabitating because their roles have yet to be socially defined. Hopefully, this chapter has helped the reader gain more understanding into the relation between sexual orientation and gender and a better appreciation of the complexities revolving around the issue of the division of labour and male same-sex partners.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

General Findings from this Study

Research on dual-earner heterosexual couples consistently indicates that a gendered division of labour exists, whereby women do a significantly greater share of housework than men (Baxter, 2005; Bittman, England, Folbre, Sayer, & Matheson, 2003; Chandler, 2003; Gazso-Windle & McMullin, 2003; Himsel & Goldberg, 2003; Kroska, 2004). In the present study of gay male couples, however, it was found that the division of household labour was more equitable. Similar to findings from Bialeschki and Pearce's (1997) study on lesbian couples, domestic responsibilities for these couples did not follow any pattern of gendered behaviour, and both partners took responsibility for completing tasks. This finding is also similar to what Kurdek (1993) found in his study on same-sex couples.

Similar to what Bialeschki and Pearce (1997) found, interest was found to be the most important factor contributing to how couples divided unpaid labour. Also, mutually disliked tasks were usually shared or rotated, in a conscious effort to divide domestic tasks fairly. The present study also found ability, skill, and practicality were important factors, resulting in one person not being primarily responsible for completing tasks. As Bialeschki and Pearce (1997) found, participants in the present study emphasized sharing and negotiation in an attempt to create and maintain a more equitable division of labour. Time in paid labour was an important factor, which mirrors the findings of Bialeschki and Pearce's (1997) study and some previous studies on heterosexual couples (Arrighi & Maume, 2000; Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Gazso-Windle & McMullin, 2003).

Married men have been found to spend less time on housework than cohabitating men (Baxter, 1997; South & Spitze, 1994). As same-sex marriage is not an option for men in this sample, no analysis was offered. However, the division of labour was more equal for couples who have lived together the longest. Although no previous studies suggest this, couples who have lived together longer were more likely to hire outside help. As Bialeschki and Pearce (1997) found, these couples emphasized hiring help as a viable option for alleviating some of the burden of domestic work.

Unlike previous studies (Arrighi & Maume, 2000; Gazso-Windle & McMullin, 2003; Presser, 1994), this sample has demonstrated that there is no necessary relationship between being the primary income earner and performing less housework. Differing from previous findings (Cunningham, 2001; Myers & Booth, 2002), childhood training and parental influence were not reported as being related to what tasks participants perform as adults. Educational attainment (Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Ciabattari, 2004; Gazso-Windle & McMullin, 2003; Presser, 1994; South & Spitze, 1994), age (Arrighi & Maume, 2000; Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Baxter, 1997), and occupational status (Gazso-Windle & McMullin, 2003; Kroska, 2004; Presser, 1994) are factors found to contribute to the way heterosexual couples divide unpaid labour. Overall, relative age is inadequate in explaining the division of labour, and similarly, relative occupational status and relative educational attainment did not affect the division of unpaid labour among male same-sex couples.

Different from previous studies (Amato, Johnson, Booth, & Rogers, 2003; Himsel & Goldberg, 2003; Stevens, Kiger, & Riley, 2001), having more responsibility for all “masculine” tasks, all “feminine” tasks, and all domestic tasks did not affect relative

satisfaction levels. Unlike the case for studies of heterosexual couples (Baxter & Western, 1998; Himsel & Goldberg, 2003; Stevens, Kiger, & Riley, 2001), partners tended to choose the same or very similar satisfaction levels. Patterns of responses regarding satisfaction were different from Frisco & William's study (2003), and included trivializing issues of conflict, believing that oneself should contribute more to tasks, believing that one can never be completely satisfied, and acknowledging areas of conflict and suggesting solutions.

In line with the findings of Kurdek (1993) and Bialeschki and Pearce (1997), participants emphasized that as a couple composed of two men, performing housework results from choice and is not based on gendered expectations or feelings of obligation. Supporting Kinsman's arguments (1987), men in this study indicated that they are in a position to re-construct gendered meanings of housework, which results in their ability to perform "feminine" tasks without focusing on gender roles. They felt that gay couples are likely to redefine masculinity, which is in part due to the practicality of the situation in which they find themselves. These participants emphasized that socially constructed gendered meanings of housework are based on a heterosexual model, and that as same-sex couples, these models do not fit their lifestyles. Also, participants emphasized the lack of same-sex role models and the resulting effect of having to invent new ways of dividing labour.

In accord with Kinsman's arguments (1987), participants in this study indicated that throughout the coming out process, they began to question many other societal norms, especially those pertaining to gender roles. By doing this, participants have come to realize that there is a lack of legitimate correspondence between sex and gender. As the

world has not been constructed to fit aspects of their reality, they have learned to accept non-conformity. It cannot be assumed that these men must act according to gendered expectations; instead, behaviours become negotiated individually. Therefore, when same-sex couples begin cohabitating, they must negotiate their own household roles.

Implications of these Findings

Generally, quantitative factors found to be of importance in determining the division of labour in heterosexual households were not relevant to this sample of male same-sex couples. Instead, other factors such as interest, ability and skill, and practicality were of primary importance. As these primary factors were revealed only through the qualitative interviews, one must question the overwhelming emphasis placed on quantitative methods by those who do research on the division of labour, and research more generally. Typically, researchers use quantitative methods to study factors and qualitative methods to study perceptions regarding satisfaction. Placing a higher emphasis on qualitative research would likely produce new and interesting findings regarding factors contributing to how couples (whether they be same-sex or opposite-sex) divide unpaid labour as well as perceptions regarding satisfaction and gendered meanings of housework.

Participants were clear in indicating that, because the heterosexual models do not work for them, they have invented ways of dividing unpaid labour. One could assume that heterosexual couples base their division of labour on heterosexual models and would probably feel that same-sex models would not fit them either. Although this may be the case, there is one important implication of these findings. As the participants stated clearly, there exists a lack of same-sex role models for the gay community. If same-sex

couples are dividing unpaid labour in a way that differs from heterosexual couples, then they may be creating new models for future generations of same-sex couples.

These male participants made it evident that there is no necessary correspondence between learning to perform tasks as a child and performance of tasks as an adult. If this is true, then it appears that parental influence and childhood learning are inadequate in explaining why men continue to avoid housework—it appears that gendered learning becomes an excuse for not doing housework. Conversely, as participants in this study pointed out, not having a woman in the house to do domestic work makes learning and completing housework a necessity. Therefore, not only do many heterosexual men avoid doing housework, but their female partners also perpetuate those gendered beliefs and behaviours. This leads one to question whether the division of labour in heterosexual couples remains gendered because on some level, both men and women continue to accept conventional gendered meanings of housework.

Participants' emphasis on the issue of choice leads one to consider how many heterosexual couples divide household labour. The issue may not be that women are the primary housewives (regardless of whether or not she works outside the home) and men are the primary breadwinners. The issue may be the fact that these roles often result from assumptions, preconceived gender roles, and feelings of obligation. Some women may claim that the roles they have taken on have been chosen. However, conventional gender ideologies remain so deeply embedded in value systems that perhaps the term *choice* may not be an entirely accurate description of how decisions are made. With regard to the division of paid and unpaid labour, if women really chose their roles, it would be much more likely that their satisfaction levels would increase.

Men who continue to identify with the provider role do so in order to conform to socially constructed norms of heterosexuality and masculinity (Kinsman, 1987: 116-117). This alignment with the breadwinner role maintains and perpetuates the current unbalanced division of unpaid labour in heterosexual couples. However, there are in fact no tasks which are only appropriate for women to do and vice versa. As made evident through the interviews, these tasks were socially constructed as being gendered when there is no need for it to be that way. If tasks have been socially constructed to have gendered meaning, then logically it is possible for the tasks to be reconstructed to lose their meaning. Gay men have learned, and continue to learn, how to challenge sexual and gender norms in a way that often aligns them with feminist goals (Kinsman, 1987: 116-117). According to Kinsman (1987), gay men have had to question the institutions of heterosexuality and masculinity, and they have also had to question the assumed link that exists between heterosexuality and masculinity. Findings from this study suggest that there exists the potential for men to renegotiate and redefine socially constructed aspects of masculinity, particularly those aspects which have served to maintain and further the marginalization of women.

Recommendations for Future Research on the Division of Labour

As a result of conducting this study, several areas for future research became apparent. With regard to methodology, the qualitative responses revealed a lot of important, different, and interesting findings, and therefore it is recommended that qualitative methods be incorporated when conducting future research. As this sample consisted of couples who were primarily from one geographic area, it would be useful to study samples from other areas, particularly more rural areas. As the overwhelming

majority of couples in this study did not have children residing in their household, it would also be useful to study same-sex couples with children in order to study the similarities and differences found. As the research on same-sex couples continues to very limited, it would be important for researchers who are interested in studying the division of labour to not exclude same-sex couples. Participants in this study placed emphasis on the idea of necessity and men performing housework was emphasized. Therefore, it would be valuable to do research on men who do not have women residing in their households, such as single men, men residing in group homes with other men, single divorced men, and single widowed men. Another issue that participants emphasized was the relation between being openly gay and having to renegotiate gender roles that have been socially defined by the mainstream. It would be beneficial then to do research on the perceptions and feelings that non-heterosexuals have with regard to socially defined norms and gender roles.

Works Cited

- Abercrombie, Nicholas, Hill, Stephen, & Turner, Bryan S. (2000). *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology*. England: Penguin Books.
- Amato, Paul R., Johnson, David R., Booth, Alan, & Rogers, Stacy J. (2003). Continuity and change in marital quality between 1980 and 2000. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(1), 1-22.
- Ambert, Anne-Marie. (2003). *Contemporary Family Trends: Same-Sex Couples and Same-Sex-Parent Families: Relationships, Parenting, and Issues of Marriage*. Toronto: The Vanier Institute of the Family.
- Arrighi, Barbara A., & Maume, David J. (2000). Workplace subordination and men's avoidance of housework. *Journal of Family Issues*, 21(4), 464-487.
- Artis, Julie E., & Pavalko, Eliza K. (2003). Explaining the decline in women's household labor: Individual change and cohort differences. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(3), 746-761.
- Babbie, Earl. (2002). *The Basics of Social Research, Second Edition*. California: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.
- Baber, Kristine M. (2004). Building bridges: Feminist research, theory, and practice. *Journal of Family Issues*, 25(7), 978-983.
- Bach, Michael. (1993). Uncovering the institutionalized masculine: Notes for a sociology of masculinity. In Tony Haddad (ed.), *Men and Masculinities: A Critical Anthology*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Batalova, Jeanne A., and Cohen, Philip N. (2002). Premarital cohabitation and

- housework: Couples in cross-national perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64(3), 743-755.
- Baxter, Janeen. (1997). Gender equality and participation in housework: A cross-national perspective. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 28(3), 220-247.
- Baxter, Janeen. (2005). To marry or not to marry: Marital status and the household division of labour. *Journal of Family Issues*, 26(3), 300-321.
- Baxter, Janeen, & Western, Mark. (1998). Satisfaction with housework: Examining the paradox. *Sociology*, 32(1), 101-120.
- Beaujot, Roderic, & Liu, Jianye. (2005). Models of time use in paid and unpaid work. *Journal of Family Issues*, (forthcoming), 1-22.
- Bialeschki, M. Deborah, & Pearce, Kimberly D. (1997). "I don't want a lifestyle—I want a life": The effect of role negotiations on the leisure of lesbian mothers. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 29(1), 113-131.
- Bittman, Michael, England, Paula, Folbre, Nancy, Sayer, Liana, & Matheson, George. (2003). When does gender trump money? Bargaining and time in household work. *American Journal of Sociology*, 109(1), 186-214.
- Brennan, Robert T., Barnett, Rosalind Chait, & Gareis, Karen C. (2001). When she earns more than he does: A longitudinal study of dual-earner couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(1), 168-182.
- Brewer, John, & Hunter, Albert. (2005). *Foundations of Multimethod Research: Synthesizing Styles*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Brown, Reva Berman. (1994). Knowledge and knowing: A feminist perspective. *Science Communication*, 16(2), 152-165.

- Bungay, Vicky, & Keddy, Barbara Carter. (1996). Pearls, pith, and provocation: Experiential analysis as a feminist methodology for health professionals. *Qualitative Health Research*, 6(3), 442-452.
- Burns, Maree. (2003). Interviewing: embodied communication. *Feminism and Psychology*, 13(2), 229-236.
- Carrington, Christopher (1999). *No Place Like Home: Relationships and Family Life among Lesbians and Gay Men*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Chafetz, Janet Saltzman. (2004). Bridging feminist theory and research methodology. *Journal of Family Issues*, 25(7), 963-977.
- Chandler, Bill. (2003). *The Value of Household Work in Canada*. Ottawa: Minister of Industry.
- Chan, Raymond W., Brooks, Risa C., Raboy, Barbara, & Patterson, Charlotte. (1998). Division of labor among lesbian and heterosexual parents: Associations with children's adjustments. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 12(3), 402-419.
- Ciabattari, Teresa. (2004). Cohabitation and housework: The effects of marital intentions. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66(1), 118-125.
- Connell, R. W. (1995). *Masculinities*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Crespi, Isabella. (2003). Gender socialization within the family: A study on adolescents and their parents in Great Britain. For *BHPS* (unpublished), 1-36.
- Creswell, John W. (2002). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Cunningham, Mick. (2001). Parental influences on the gendered division of housework. *American Sociological Review*, 66(1), 184-203.

- Deem, Rosemary. (2002). Talking to manager—academics: Methodological dilemmas and feminist research strategies. *Sociology*, 36(4), 835-855.
- DeMaris, Alfred, & Longmore, Monica A. (1996). Ideology, power, and equity: Testing competing explanations for the perception of fairness in household labor. *Social Forces* 74(3), 1043-1071.
- Deutsch, Nancy L. (2004). Positionality and the pen: Reflections on the process of becoming a feminist researcher and writer. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(6), 885-902.
- Dunne, Gillian A. (2000). Opting into motherhood: Lesbians blurring the boundaries and transforming the meaning of parenthood and kinship. *Gender and Society*, 14(1), 11-35.
- Eichler, Margrit. (1997). Feminist methodology. *Current Sociology*, 45(2), 9-36.
- Fast, Janet, and Frederick, Judith. (2004). *The Time of Our Lives: Juggling Work and Leisure over the Life Cycle*. Ottawa: Minister of Industry.
- Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava & Nachmias, David. (2000). *Researcher Methods in the Social Sciences*. New York: Worth Publishers.
- Frisco, Michelle L., & Williams, Kristi. (2003). Perceived housework equity, marital happiness, and divorce in dual-earner households. *Journal of Family Issues*, 24(1), 51-73.
- Gazso-Windle, Amber, & McMullin, Julie Ann. (2003). Doing domestic labour: Strategising in a gendered domain. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 28(3), 341-366.
- Greaves, Lorraine & Wylie, Alison. (1995). Women and violence: Feminist practice and

- quantitative method. In S. Burt and L. Code, eds. *Changing Methods: Feminists Transforming Practice*. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 301-326.
- Greenstein, Theodore N. (2000). Economic dependence, gender, and the division of labor in the home: A replication and extension. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 322-335.
- Hamdad, Malika. (2003). *Valuing Households' Unpaid Work in Canada, 1992 and 1998: Trends and Sources of Change*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
- Harding, Sandra. (1987). Introduction: is there a feminist method? In S. Harding, ed. *Feminism and Methodology*. Bloomington: Indiana University, 1-14.
- Health Canada. (1999). *Health Implications of the Work-Family Challenge: A Literature Review of Canadian Research*. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development.
- Himself, Amy J., & Goldberg, Wendy A. (2003). Social comparisons and satisfaction with the division of housework: Implications for men's and women's role strain. *Journal of Family Issues*, 24(7), 843-866.
- Holland, June & Ramazanoglu, Caroline. (1994). Coming to conclusions: Power and interpretation in researching young women's sexuality. In M. Maynard and J. Purvis, eds. *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*. London: Taylor and Francis, 125-148.
- Holliday, Ruth. (2000). We've been framed: Visualizing methodology. The Editorial Board of *The Sociological Review*, Blackwell Publishers, 503-521.
- Jansen, Sue Curry. (1990). Is science a man? New feminist epistemologies and reconstructions of knowledge. *Theory and Society*, 19(2), 235-246.

- Johnson, Robert & Kuby, Patricia. (2000). *Elementary Statistics*. California: Brooks/Cole.
- Kimmel, Michael S. (2000). *The Gendered Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kinsman, Gary. (1987). Men loving men: The challenge of gay liberation. In Michael Kaufman (ed.), *Beyond Patriarchy: Essays by Men on Pleasure, Power, and Change*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Kinsman, Gary. (1993) 'Inverts,' 'psychopaths' and 'normal' men: Historical sociological perspectives on gay and heterosexual masculinities. In Tony Haddad (ed.), *Men and Masculinities: A Critical Anthology*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Kroska, Amy. (2004). Divisions of domestic work: Revising and expanding the theoretical explanations. *Journal of Family Issues*, 25(7), 900-932.
- Kroska, Amy. (2003). Investigating gender differences in the meaning of household chores and child care. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(2), 456-473.
- Kurdek, Lawrence A. (2004). Are gay and lesbian cohabiting couples really different from heterosexual married couples?. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66(4), 880-900.
- Kurdek, Lawrence A. (2003). Differences between gay and lesbian cohabiting couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 20(4), 411-436.
- Kurdek, Lawrence A. (1993). The allocation of household labor in gay, lesbian, and heterosexual married couples. *Journal of Social Issues*, 49(3), 127-139.
- Lyons, Lenore & Chipperfield, Janine. (2000). (De)Constructing the interview: A critique of the participatory model. *Resources for Feminist Research*, 28(1/2), 33-48.

- Maher, Jane Maree, & Singleton, Andrew. (2003). "I wonder what he's saying": Investigating domestic discourse in young cohabitating heterosexual couples. *Gender Issues, 21*(1), 59-77.
- Maynard, Mary. (1994). Methods, practice, and epistemology: The debate about feminism and research. In M. Maynard and J. Purvis, eds. *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*. London: Taylor and Francis, 10-26.
- Myers, Scott M., & Booth, Alan. (2002). "Forerunners of change in nontraditional gender ideology". *Social Psychology Quarterly, 65*(1), 18-37.
- Nakhaie, M.R. (2002). Class, breadwinner ideology, and housework among Canadian husbands. *Review of Radical Political Economics, 34*(2), 137-157.
- Oakley, Ann. (1981). Interviewing women: A contradiction in terms. In H. Roberts, ed. *Doing Feminist Research*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 30-61.
- Olesen, Virginia. (2005). Early millennial feminist qualitative research. In Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research: Third Edition*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc., 235-278.
- O'Neill, Brenda. (1995). The gender gap: Re-evaluating theory and method. In S. Burt and L. Code, eds. *Challenging Methods*. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 327-356.
- Phipps, Shelley, Burton, Peter, & Osberg, Lars. (2001). Time as a source of inequality within marriage: Are husbands more satisfied with time for themselves than wives?. *Feminist Economics, 7*(2), 1-21.
- Pini, Barbara. (2004). On being a nice country girl and an academic feminist: Using

- reflexivity in rural social research. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 20(1), 169-179.
- Poulin-Dubois, Diane, Serbin, Lisa A., Eichstedt, Julie A., Sen, Maya G., & Beissel, Clara F. (2002). Men don't put on make-up: Toddlers' knowledge of the gender stereotyping of household activities. *Social Development*, 11(2), 166-181.
- Presser, Harriet B. (1994). Employment schedules among dual-earner spouses and the division of household labor by gender. *American Sociological Review*, 59(3), 348-364.
- Reinharz, Shulamith. (1992). Feminist multiple methods research. In *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 197-213.
- Shelton, Beth Anne, & John, Daphne. (1996). The division of household labor. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 22(1), 299-322.
- South, Scott J., & Spitze, Glenna. (1994). Housework in marital and nonmarital households. *American Sociological Review*, 59(3), 327-347.
- Speer, Susan A. (2002). What can conversation analysis contribute to feminist methodology?: Putting reflexivity into practice. *Discourse and Society*, 13(6), 783-803.
- Speer, Susan A., & Hutchby, Ian. (2003). Methodology needs analytics: A rejoinder to Martyn Hammersley. *Sociology*, 37(2), 353-359.
- Statistics Canada. (2004). *Women in Canada: Work Chapter Updates*. Ottawa: Minister of Industry.
- Stevens, Daphne, Kiger, Gary, & Riley, Pamela J. (2001). Working hard and hardly working: Domestic labor and marital satisfaction among dual-earner couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(2), 514-526.

- Taylor, Verta. (1998). Feminist methodology in social movements research. *Qualitative Sociology*, 21(4), 357-379.
- Veltman, Andrea. (2004). The Sisyphean torture of housework: Simone de Beauvoir and inequitable divisions of domestic work in marriage. *Hypatia*, 19(3), 121-143.
- Walker, Alexis J. (2004). Methods, theory, and the practice of feminist research. *Journal of Family Issues*, 25(7), 990-994.
- West, Candace, and Zimmerman, Don H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender and Society*, 1(2), 125-151.
- Zukewich, Nancy. (2003). *Work, Parenthood and the Experience of Time Scarcity*. Ottawa: Minister of Industry.

Appendix A – Recruitment Flyer

SEEKING GAY MALE COUPLES TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR

As a member of the queer community, I am conducting a study on the division of labor in male households for my Master's thesis in Sociology at Lakehead University (Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada). I am seeking male couples who have been living together with or without children for a minimum of two years. This study is also limited to male same-sex couples who live only with each other (i.e. no other adults, such as parents, siblings, friends, etc.). If you and your partner are willing to take part in this study, please e-mail me at gaycouplestudy@hotmail.com, providing your names and contact information (phone # or e-mail address). If e-mail is not accessible to you, you may contact me at (703)-999-5347. Please be assured that anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed.

**Deirdre Pinto
Lakehead University
Department of Sociology
Graduate Program**

Appendix B - Characteristics of Survey Sample - 92 participants (46 couples)

Factor	Range	Average	Additional Details
Age	26 – 72	43	
Age Difference	0 - 20	5.37	
Annual Individual Net Income	\$0 - \$ 300,000	\$57,686.55	
Highest Education	High school or less – Ph.D	Undergraduate degree	
Occupation			Executives/managers (13), professional (25), front-line workers (22), entrepreneurs (6), skilled tradespersons (9), clerical/service workers (9), and retired, disabled, unemployed, and students (8).
Length of Cohabitation	1 – 33 years	10.34 years	
Physical limitations			(11) -- asthma, allergies, seizure disorder, hearing-impaired, back nerve damage, diabetes, disabled leg, partial blindness, AIDS, depression, fatigue, bi-polar disorder
Gender Identity	1 – 7	3.64	
Difference in Gender Identity	0 - 5	1.34	
Ethnicity			17 ethnicities were identified—majority identified as “Caucasian/White,” other responses included African-American, Black, Irish, Asian, Mexican-American, Hispanic, Polish-American, Canadian, Italian, Asian-American, German, Russian, Chinese-American, Indian, and Cherokee.
Birthplace			U.S. (75), Canada (5), England (2), Zimbabwe (1), Mexico (2), South Africa (2), Hong Kong (1), Thailand (1), Panama (1), Germany (1).
Place of Residence			D.C. (36), Virginia (22), Maryland (16); other states included Texas, Pennsylvania, Washington, Hawaii, and Tennessee.
Children in Household?			8 participants (4 couples).
Religious Affiliation			(34)--Christian (26)--included Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Unitarian, Baptist, Methodist, and Mormom); Jewish (4)
Religious Participation	Weekly - never	Annual	Weekly (6 participants); Never (43 participants)

Appendix C - Couple Profiles

(NOTE: All names of participants are pseudonyms)

Couple 1 -- Andrew and Brendan → **length of cohabitation:** 4.5 years

Andrew

- **age:** 28
- **occupation:** organization fundraiser; theatre house manager
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 61 hours
- **income:** \$26,0000
- **highest education:** M.A. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** satisfied

Brendan

- **age:** 31
- **occupation:** marketing coordinator
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 41 hours
- **income:** \$21,000
- **highest education:** M.A. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** satisfied

Couple 2 – Christopher and Daniel → **length of cohabitation:** 25 years

Christopher

- **age:** 45
- **occupation:** non-profit organization manager
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 53 hours
- **income:** \$53,000
- **highest education:** university undergraduate degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Daniel

- **age:** 48
- **occupation:** information technology team leader
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 42.5 hours
- **income:** \$64,500
- **highest education:** some college – no diploma
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Couple 3 – Evan and Frasier → length of cohabitation: 6.5 years

Evan

- **age:** 43
- **occupation:** software developer
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 45 hours
- **income:** \$71,000
- **highest education:** M.A. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Frasier

- **age:** 47
- **occupation:** teacher (9 months of the year)
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 47 hours
- **income:** \$33,000
- **highest education:** M.A. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** satisfied

Couple 4 – Grant and Hank → length of cohabitation: 6 years

Grant

- **age:** 42
- **occupation:** social worker; real estate agent
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 66 hours
- **income:** \$90,000
- **highest education:** M.A. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Hank

- **age:** 47
- **occupation:** airport executive
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 49 hours
- **income:** \$130,000
- **highest education:** M.A. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** somewhat satisfied

Couple 5 – Ian and Jeremy → length of cohabitation: 8 years

Ian

- **age:** 37
- **occupation:** computer programmer
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 50 hours
- **income:** \$57,700
- **highest education:** university undergraduate degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Jeremy

- **age:** 43
- **occupation:** paralegal
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 41.5 hours
- **income:** \$45,000
- **highest education:** university undergraduate degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Couple 6 – Kyle and Luke → length of cohabitation: 7 years

Kyle

- **age:** 40
- **occupation:** bookkeeper (is currently not employed because he is renovating their home for future bed and breakfast business)
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 2 hours
- **income:** \$5,000
- **highest education:** university undergraduate degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Luke

- **age:** 48
- **occupation:** software engineer; caterer
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 47 hours
- **income:** \$84,000
- **highest education:** M.S. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Couple 7 – Michael and Nicholas → length of cohabitation: 1 year and 1 month

Michael

- **age:** 36
- **occupation:** economist
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 52.5 hours
- **income:** \$60,000
- **highest education:** M.A. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** satisfied

Nicholas

- **age:** 34
- **occupation:** accountant
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 65 hours
- **income:** \$20,000
- **highest education:** university undergraduate degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** satisfied

Couple 8 – Owen and Patrick → length of cohabitation: 8 years

Owen

- **age:** 42
- **occupation:** attorney
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 51 hours
- **income:** \$68,000
- **highest education:** J.D. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Patrick

- **age:** 42
- **occupation:** office management consultant
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 38 hours
- **income:** \$45,000
- **highest education:** M.A. degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Couple 9 – Raymond and Steve → length of cohabitation: 1 year

Raymond

- **age:** 57
- **occupation:** retired
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** n/a
- **income:** n/a
- **highest education:** university undergraduate degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Steve

- **age:** 49
- **occupation:** tax preparer (4 months of the year)
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 100 hours
- **income:** \$35,000
- **highest education:** college diploma
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** somewhat satisfied

Couple 10 – Wyatt and Xavier → length of cohabitation: 6 years

Wyatt

- **age:** 32
- **occupation:** glass artist (self-employed and works from home); teacher
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 78 hours
- **income:** \$38,000
- **highest education:** university undergraduate degree
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** very satisfied

Xavier

- **age:** 38
- **occupation:** police officer (crime scene investigator)
- **average time in paid work per week (including travel time):** 70 hours
- **income:** \$60,000
- **highest education:** high school
- **satisfaction with division of household labour:** completely satisfied

Appendix D - Chi-square and Gamma Results

Note: The following tables show chi-square and gamma results obtained from the 92 questionnaires. When $p < 0.10$, the relationship between the variables was considered statistically significant within the sample. If a relationship was statistically significant, a Gamma association (γ) test was done in order to find out the direction (positive or negative) and strength of the relationship between the variables. Association values are placed in the right half of split cells.

Table 1 - Relative Contribution to “Feminine” Tasks

	Cleaning		Social		Meals		Clothes	Household Management and Corresp.		Gardening and Indoor Plants
Cleaning	n/a		.095*	.338	0.527		0.913	0.441		0.202
Social	.095*	.338	n/a		.058	.385	1.000	.003*	.595	0.670
Meals	0.527		0.058*		n/a		0.695	0.913		0.407
Clothes	0.913		1.000		0.695		n/a	0.676		0.967
Household Management and Corresp.	0.441		0.003**		0.913		0.676	n/a		0.967
Gardening and Indoor Plants	0.202		0.670		0.407		0.967	0.967		n/a
Relative Satisfaction with division of labour	0.396		0.163		.004*	-.223	0.814	0.001*	-0.300	1.000

Table 2 - Relative Contribution to Tasks

	Lawn and Yard		Trash and Recycling		Household Maintenance	Vehicle
Cleaning	0.926		.013*	.411	0.388	1.000
Social	0.500		0.794		0.900	0.301
Meals	0.023*	.674	0.527		0.900	0.587
Clothes	0.500		0.976		0.999	0.995
Household Management and Corresp.	.023*	0.674	.003*	0.095	1.000	0.875
Gardening and Indoor Plants	0.023*	.674	0.132		0.819	0.327
Lawn and Yard	n/a		0.997		0.500	0.320
Trash and Recycling	0.997		n/a		0.781	0.943
Household Maintenance	0.500		0.781		n/a	0.276
Vehicle	0.320		0.943		0.276	n/a
Relative Satisfaction with division of labour	0.401		0.999		0.708	0.141

Table 3 - Factors Influencing Relative Contribution to Typically “Feminine” Tasks

Factors (Relative to partner)	Cleaning		Social		Meal-Related		Clothes-Related		Househo ld Manage ment and Correspo ndence	Gardening and Indoor Plants	Pets	
Age	0.803		0.543		0.905		.000*	-.180	0.989	0.960	0.961	
Gender identity	.102		1.000		0.396		0.362		0.964	0.715	0.411	
Income	0.909		0.218		0.976		0.737		0.494	0.857	0.676	
Religious Participation	.041*	.126	0.819		0.949		0.381		0.808	.011 *	- .270	0.050*
Time in Paid Labour (incl. travel time)	0.211		0.404		.006*	.533	0.913		0.913	0.905	0.267	
Time in Paid Labour per week	0.905		.02 7*	.3 55	0.285		0.989		0.699	0.951	0.483	
Occupational Status	1.000		1.000		0.972		0.965		0.125	0.877		
Education	0.118		1.000		0.422		0.854		0.332	0.941		

Table 4 - Factors Influencing Relative Contribution to Typically “Masculine” Tasks

Factors (Relative to partner)	Lawn and Yard		Trash/Recycling		Household Maintenance	Vehicle- Related
Age	0.003*	0.632	0.044*	0.215	0.985	0.400
Gender Identity	0.210		0.856		0.886	0.103
Income	0.935		0.881		0.994	0.944
Religious Participation	0.580		0.768		0.535	0.371
Time in Paid Labour (including travel time)	0.023*	-0.674	0.794		0.388	0.118
Time in Paid Labour per week	0.190		0.640		0.985	0.400
Occupational Status	0.445		0.989		0.939	0.482
Education	0.047*	.503	0.562		0.845	0.812

Table 5 - Factors Influencing Relative Contribution to all “Feminine”, “Masculine” and Total Domestic Tasks

Factors (Relative to partner)	Feminine Tasks		Masculine Tasks		All Domestic Tasks	
Age	0.803		0.115		0.976	
Gender Identity	0.276		0.102		0.867	
Income	0.009*	.447	0.993		0.032*	.391
Time in Paid Labour	0.095*		0.165		0.211	
Time in Paid Labour per week	0.027*		0.349		0.027*	
Occupational Status	0.641		0.082*	0.000	0.368	
Education	0.587		0.162		0.301	

Table 6 - Relationship between Equality of Contribution

Equality of X factor	Contribution to Meal-Related Tasks		Contribution to All Cleaning Tasks		Contribution to All Social Tasks	Contribution to All Clothes-Related Tasks		Contribution to All Household Management and Correspondence Tasks		Contribution to All Gardening and Indoor Plants Tasks
Income Contribution	.003*	.018	0.261		0.008*	0.000*	-.146	0.012*	.090	0.025*
Contribution to Paid Labour per week	.000*	-.074	.065*	.139	0.102	0.000*	-.476	0.009*	-.210	0.002*
How Equal Their Ages Are	.000*		.005*		0.001*	0.005*		0.069*		0.803
How Equal are their gender identities	.014*		.006*		0.004*	0.000*		0.039*		0.001*

Table 7 – Couples’ Length of Cohabitation and the Division of Household Labour

Relative across sample	Satisfaction with division of household tasks	How equal are their satisfaction levels with division of household tasks	How equal is their contribution to all domestic tasks	How equal is their contribution to all masculine tasks	How equal is their contribution to all feminine tasks		Do they hire paid workers	
Length of Cohabitation	0.130	0.121	0.263	0.286	0.047*	.021	0.072*	.368

Table 8 – Factors Affecting Relative Satisfaction Levels

Factors (Relative to partner)	Relative Satisfaction with Division of Domestic Labour	
Age	0.791	
Gender Identity	0.017*	0.342
Income	0.680	
Religious Participation	0.353	
Time in Paid Labour (incl. travel)	0.717	
Time in Paid Labour per week	0.044*	-0.276
Time Spent on “Masculine Tasks”	0.384	
Time Spent on “Feminine” Tasks	0.163	
Time Spent on All Tasks	0.396	
Occupational Status	0.882	
Education	0.119	

Appendix E - Questionnaire and Coding Scheme

Responses were recoded using the following scheme:

--(except for all predictions about how the other partner would respond--for these use the rule: 1 = self; 2 = partner)

who does more; who earns more; who spends more time on.... = 1

who does less; who earns less; who spends less time on... = 2

equal responses = 8

--how equal are their ages? - range of age differences between partners is 0-20

0-2 = 1 = extremely equal

3-5 = 2 = very equal

6-9 = 3 = somewhat equal

10-14 = 4 = not very equal

15-20 = 5 = not equal

--how equal are their gender identities? - range of gender identity difference between partners is 0-5

0-1 = 1 = extremely equal

2 = 2 = very equal

3 = 3 = somewhat equal

4 = 4 = not very equal

5 = 5 = not equal

--for all columns dealing with equal to not equal (based on percent of contribution to paid labour, domestic labour, income, etc) here is the coding scheme

45.00-50.00/50.00-55.00 = 1 = extremely equal

44.99-37.50/55.01-62.50 = 2 = very equal

37.49-30.01/62.51-69.99 = 3 = somewhat equal

30.00-20.01/70.00-79.99 = 4 = not very equal

20.00-0.00/80.00-100.00 = 5 = not equal

Chi-square tests (p) were performed in order to find out whether relationships between variables were statistically significant within the sample. Relationships were determined to be statistically significant if p was less than 0.10. As p approaches 0.000, the relationship is determined to be more significant. When relationships were found to be of statistical significance within the sample, Gamma association tests (γ) were performed in order to find out the strength and direction of the relationship (positive or negative). In order to understand the quantitative analysis, it is important to clarify how γ values were defined: values between 0.01 and 0.10 were extremely weak; values between 0.11 and 0.19 were weak, but worth noting; values between 0.20 and 0.29 were modest; values between 0.30 and 0.39 were moderate; values between 0.40 and 0.49 were moderately strong; values between 0.50 and 0.70 were strong; and values between 0.71 and 1.0 were very strong.

Questionnaire

A - The first number(s) corresponds to the number of the couple. The last number corresponds to each partner. (ex. 11 and 12 = couple # 1, the former being the first partner, the latter being the second partner)

Directions: Each participant in this research study is asked to **please sign the consent form** prior to completing this questionnaire. Partners in each couple are required to **complete one questionnaire per person. Please mail the two completed questionnaires back** to the researcher, **enclosing both questionnaires in the one self-addressed stamped envelope** provided to you. Additionally, partners are **asked not to confer with each other about the answers to this questionnaire (until they have been mailed back to me)**. Please be as accurate as possible when completing this questionnaire. If you are given a question that has one allotted space for your response, please be as accurate as possible. If you are given questions with a list of categories to select from, please place an X or check mark next to the most accurate answer. If the question is not applicable to you, please indicate that with a "n/a".

Part A. The Basics

1) What is your age? _____

B - Numerical value of age in # of years

2) What is your sex?

_____ male

_____ female

C - 1 = Female; 2 = Male

3) Have you ever had a sex change operation?

_____ yes

_____ no

D - 1 = yes; 2 = no

4) What is your sexual orientation?

__1__ gay

__2__ bisexual (primarily gay)

__3__ bisexual

__4__ bisexual (primarily heterosexual)

__5__ heterosexual

__6__ other: please specify: _____

E

5) (Please read before answering this question-->Gender roles are roles/characteristics/attributes that are designated to a person based on his or her sex--that is, males are supposed to act masculine, and females are supposed to act feminine. Typical stereotypes of what it means to be masculine include (but are not limited to) the following: being tough, assertive, independent, active, aggressive, playing sports, smoking cigars, drinking beer, and being good at repairing things, technology, and computers. Typical stereotypes of what it means to be feminine include

(but are not limited to) the following: being passive, dependent, nurturing, taking on ballet or gymnastics, sitting with your legs properly crossed, not drinking beer out of the bottle, wearing dresses, wearing make-up, being overly concerned about weight and/or appearance, and taking care of others.)

If 1 = very masculine and 10 = very feminine, how would you rate yourself? (please circle #)

(*very masculine*) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (*very feminine*)

F - simply the # circled

6) How long have you been living with your current partner? _____

G - # of years

7) What is your occupation? _____

additional column for OCCUPATIONAL STATUS: coded as the following: and also do relative to partner

1 = executive/manager/director

2 = profession (requires an advanced university degree)

3 = front-line workers (requires specialized undergraduate degree)

4 = entrepreneur

5 = skilled trades

6 = clerical/service industry

7 = retired/disabled/unemployed/student

H and I -

1 = computer programmer = 3

2 = paralegal = 3

3 = architect = 2

4 = archivist = 3

5 = international development specialist/international business development manager = 1

6 = human resources = 3

7 = not employed/house husband = 7

8 = software manager/software developer/software engineer = 2

9 = nonprofit management professional = 1

10 = informational technology team leader = 3

11 = retired = 7

12 = tax preparer = 5

13 = biologist = 2

14 = disabled = 7

15 = meeting planner/program specialist = 3

16 = facility manager/office manager = 3

17 = teacher = 3

18 = consultant = 4

19 = manager of network operations and support = 2

20 = board of director = 1

21 = real estate investor/real estate agent = 5

22 = dancer = 5

23 = carpenter = 5

24 = technical writer = 5

25 = administrative assistant = 6
 26 = senior marketing manager/director of marketing = 1
 27 = director/talent manager = 2
 28 = program analyst = 2
 29 = telecommunications specialist = 3
 30 = project director/manager = 1
 31 = freelance writer = 4
 32 = M.A. student = 7
 33 = budget officer = 5
 34 = professor = 2
 35 = executive assistant = 5
 36 = NGO fundraiser = 3
 37 = list and data manager = 3
 38 = CEO president = 1
 39 = attorney = 2
 40 = president of consulting firm = 1
 41 = physician = 2
 42 = engineer = 2
 43 = healthcare quality analyst = 2
 44 = salesperson = 6
 45 = assistant director = 2
 46 = website manager = 5
 47 = librarian = 3
 48 = research analyst = 2
 49 = artist = 4
 50 = police officer = 3
 51 = social worker = 3
 52 = airport executive = 1
 53 = museum executive = 1
 54 = social scientist (researcher) = 2
 55 = accounts receivable clerk = 6
 56 = law firm host = 6
 57 = theatre house manager = 2
 58 = digital artist = 4
 59 = vendor = 6
 60 = mail administrator = 5
 61 = chef = 5
 62 = purchasing agent = 6
 63 = accountant = 2
 64 = computer systems analyst = 3
 65 = cook = 6
 66 = university administrator = 2
 67 = hair stylist = 5
 68 = international educator = 2
 69 = customer service team leader = 6
 70 = economist = 2
 71 = secretary = 6
 72 = fueler = 6

8) How long have you been in this occupation? _____

not using this question

9) How long have you worked for your current employer/organization? _____

not using this question

10) What is your annual individual net income (take-home once taxes are deducted)?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | \$0 to \$9,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 | \$60,000 to \$69,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | \$10,000 to \$19,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 | \$70,000 to \$79,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | \$20,000 to \$29,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 | \$80,000 to \$89,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | \$30,000 to \$39,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 | \$90,000 to \$99,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | \$40,000 to \$49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 | \$100,000 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | \$50,000 to \$59,999 | | |

J

11) Please give a more specific estimate of your annual individual net income: \$_____

K

12) My partner's income contribution is:

- 1 less than mine
- 2 approximately the equivalent to mine
- 3 greater than mine

L

13) What is your highest educational level attained?

- 8th grade or less
- high school or less
- college diploma
- university (undergraduate) degree
- university (M.A.) degree
- university (Ph.D.) degree
- other: please specify: _____

- 1 = 8th grade or less
- 2 = high school or less
- 3 = college diploma
- 4 = trade certification
- 5 = Tech School
- 6 = university (undergraduate) degree
- 7 = MA
- 8 = MFA
- 9 = MBA
- 10 = professional degree in architecture
- 11 = MSC
- 12 = MD
- 13 = JD
- 14 = PhD

M

14) If you are currently a student, what level are you at? _____

N - 1 = currently a student; 2 = not currently a student

- *O*** - 1 = college
2 = undergraduate degree
3 = MA
4 = MBA
5 = MSc
6 = PhD

15) Do you consider yourself to be a member of any ethnic group(s)? If so, please specify:

P - 1 = yes; 2 = no

Q,R,S -

- 1 = Caucasian/White
- 2 = Irish
- 3 = Jewish
- 4 = Black
- 5 = Asian-American
- 6 = Italian
- 7 = African-American
- 8 = Polish-American
- 9 = Canadian
- 10 = Hispanic
- 11 = Asian
- 12 = Mexican-American
- 13 = German
- 14 = Russian
- 15 = Chinese-American
- 16 = Indian
- 17 = Cherokee
- 18 = Appalachian

16) Are you a member of any religious group/denomination?

_____ no

_____ yes - If you answered yes, please specify which religious group/denomination?

T - 1 = yes; 2 = no

U - religious group

- 1 = Jewish
- 2 = Christian
- 3 = Conservative
- 4 = Lutheran
- 5 = Non-denominational
- 6 = Episcopalian
- 7 = Catholic
- 8 = Unitarian

- 9 = Mormom
- 10 = Baptist
- 11 = Methodist
- 12 = Unity
- 13 = Hindu

V - religious denomination

- 1 = Jewish
- 2 = Christian
- 3 = Conservative
- 4 = Lutheran
- 5 = Non-denominational
- 6 = Episcopalian
- 7 = Catholic
- 8 = Unitarian
- 9 = Mormom
- 10 = Baptist
- 11 = Methodist
- 12 = Unity
- 13 = Hindu

17) Over the past year, how often have you participated in religious services?

- 1 daily
- 2 weekly
- 3 monthly
- 4 annually
- 5 never

W

18) Would you consider yourself to be a person with any physical limitations or disabilities?

- no
- yes - If you answered yes, please explain:

X - 1 = yes; 2 = no

Y,Z,AA -

- 1 = asthma
- 2 = allergies
- 3 = seizure disorder
- 4 = rather not say
- 5 = hearing-impaired
- 6 = nerve damage on back via right leg
- 7 = type 1 diabetes
- 8 = lower left leg is disabled - walks with cane/often in wheelchair
- 9 = blind in left eye
- 10 = AIDS

- 11 = depression
- 12 = fatigue
- 13 = Bi-Polar disorder

19) In which country were you born? _____

AB -

20) For how long have you lived in the United States? _____
 State of current residence - coded from addresses to which questionnaires were sent

- 1 = Washington, DC
- 2 = Virginia
- 3 = Maryland
- 4 = Texas
- 5 = Pennsylvania
- 6 = Washington
- 7 = Hawaii
- 8 = Tennessee

21) Are there any children living in your current household?

- 2 no
- 1 yes

Part B. Division of Labor in the Household

(For the completion of this entire section, if it is easier to estimate in daily, monthly, or annual terms, please note that in your answer -- for example --> **30 hours/month** or **25 hours/year** or **1.5 hours/day**. PLEASE NOTE: if you answer "3.5"-- this will be interpreted as **3.5 hours per week**)

22) Over the past year, how much time have you spent on the following tasks (**average estimate per week**):

- _____ vacuuming
- _____ dusting
- _____ sweeping (indoors, front porch, driveway, deck, etc)
- _____ mopping
- _____ waxing floors
- _____ polishing furniture
- _____ cleaning windows
- _____ cleaning mirrors
- _____ tidying up/straightening things/picking up things off the floor
- _____ wiping countertops, stovetop, fridge, oven, microwave, and other appliances
- _____ cleaning out the fridge
- _____ cleaning and organizing cupboards, closets, and other storage spaces
- _____ cleaning out the fireplace

- _____ interaction with people who come to repair/service your home (i.e. appliance repairers, phone company workers, etc.)
- _____ planning dinner parties
- _____ planning large-scale events (i.e. weddings and other major special occasions/holidays)
- _____ entertaining guests
- _____ repairing or sewing clothes for your family
- _____ maintaining and updating family photo albums
- _____ maintenance of family calendars and/or schedules
- _____ writing and mailing cards to family and family friends on behalf of your family/e-mail and e-mail greetings to family and family friends on behalf of your family
- _____ shopping for gifts for family friends and children
- _____ wrapping presents
- _____ taking care of indoor plants
- _____ cleaning the bathroom
- _____ cooking
- _____ setting the table for dinner
- _____ clearing the table after dinner
- _____ drying/putting the dishes away
- _____ doing the dishes
- _____ doing laundry
- _____ ironing
- _____ folding and putting away clothes
- _____ changing linens
- _____ making up the bed(s)
- _____ getting/sorting the mail
- _____ writing grocery list
- _____ cutting coupons for groceries
- _____ grocery shopping (include travelling to and from and putting groceries away)
- _____ looking after the finances/paying the bills
- _____ gardening
- _____ lawn and yard maintenance
- _____ indoor repairs/fixing broken appliances
- _____ window replacement
- _____ remodelling projects/home renovations
- _____ assembling furniture
- _____ outdoor repairs
- _____ car washing/repairs/maintenance
- _____ painting
- _____ separating recyclables and taking them out for collection
- _____ taking out the trash
- _____ other: please specify:

23) Over the past year, how much time do you think **your partner** has spent on the following tasks (**average estimate per week**):

- _____ vacuuming
- _____ dusting
- _____ sweeping (indoors, front porch, driveway, deck, etc)
- _____ mopping
- _____ waxing floors
- _____ polishing furniture
- _____ cleaning windows
- _____ cleaning mirrors
- _____ tidying up/straightening things/picking up things off the floor
- _____ wiping countertops, stovetop, fridge, oven, microwave, and other appliances
- _____ cleaning out the fridge
- _____ cleaning and organizing cupboards, closets, and other storage spaces
- _____ cleaning out the fireplace
- _____ interaction with people who come to repair/service your home (i.e. appliance repairers, phone company workers, etc.)
- _____ planning dinner parties
- _____ planning large-scale events (i.e. weddings and other major special occasions/holidays)
- _____ entertaining guests
- _____ repairing or sewing clothes for your family
- _____ maintaining and updating family photo albums
- _____ maintenance of family calendars and/or schedules
- _____ writing and mailing cards to family and family friends on behalf of your family/e-mail and e-mail greetings to family and family friends on behalf of your family
- _____ shopping for gifts for family friends and children
- _____ wrapping presents
- _____ taking care of indoor plants
- _____ cleaning the bathroom
- _____ cooking
- _____ setting the table for dinner
- _____ clearing the table after dinner
- _____ drying/putting the dishes away
- _____ doing the dishes
- _____ doing laundry
- _____ ironing
- _____ folding and putting away clothes
- _____ changing linens
- _____ making up the bed(s)
- _____ getting/sorting the mail
- _____ writing grocery list

27) Over the past year, approximately how many hours have you worked in total (on average) per week? _____

28) Over the past year, approximately how many hours have you worked in total (on average) per day? _____

29) Do you work from home?

_____ no

_____ yes - If you answered yes, over the past year, approximately how many hours have you worked from home (on average) per week? _____

30) Do you arrange your paid work schedule around housework/childrearing responsibilities?

_____ no

_____ yes - If you answered yes, please explain:

31) What difficulties do you have in managing time between paid work and domestic tasks?

32) While living with your current partner, have you ever turned down a job opportunity or promotion because of household/childrearing responsibilities?

_____ no

_____ yes - If you answered yes, please explain:

Part D. Childrearing

(For the completion of this entire section, if it is easier to estimate in daily, monthly, or annual terms, please note that in your answer -- for example --> **30 hours/month** or **25 hours/year** or **1.5 hours/day**. PLEASE NOTE: if you answer "3.5"-- this will be interpreted as **3.5 hours per week**)

33) How many children are living in your household? _____

34) Do you have part-time custody of any of your children?

_____ no

_____ yes - If you answered yes, please explain when:

35) What is/are the age(s) of your child(ren)?

36) Are you the biological parent of any of the children in your household?

____ no
____ yes - If you answered yes, to how many children in your household?

37) Is your partner the biological parent of any of the children in your household?

____ no
____ yes - If you answered yes, to how many children in your household?

38) Through which means was/were your child/children acquired (please check all that apply)

____ previous relation with a woman
____ adoption
____ surrogate mother
____ other: please specify: _____

39) a) Over the past year, have you used babysitters?

____ no
____ yes

b) If you answered yes, for approximately how many hours per week? _____

c) If you answered yes, why?

40) Over the past year, have you placed your child in daycare?

____ no
____ yes

b) If you answered yes, for approximately how many hours per week? _____

c) If you answered yes, why?

41) In the event that your child has a school event that he/she needs a parent to be there, who would most likely attend?

- me
- my partner
- both of us
- neither of us

How would this decision be made? _____

42) In the event that your child has a medical appointment during the time you and/or your partner are working, who would be most likely to take your child to the appointment?

- me
- my partner
- both of us
- neither of us

How would this decision be made? _____

43) In the event that your child gets sick and needs to be taken home from school, who would pick up your child from school?

- me
- my partner
- both of us
- neither of us

How would this decision be made? _____

44) Over the past year, how much time have you spent (on average) **per week**:

- _____ playing with child(ren)
 - _____ feeding child(ren)
 - _____ bathing child(ren)
 - _____ dressing child(ren)
 - _____ changing diapers
 - _____ calming child(ren) down
 - _____ settling disputes amongst children
 - _____ other: please specify:
-
-
-
-
-
-

45) Over the past year, how much time do you think your partner has spent (on average) **per week**:

- _____ playing with child(ren)
- _____ feeding child(ren)
- _____ bathing child(ren)
- _____ dressing child(ren)
- _____ changing diapers
- _____ calming child(ren) down
- _____ settling disputes amongst children
- _____ other: please specify:

46) Over the past year, how much time have you spent (on average) **per week**:

- _____ preparing kids for school
- _____ taking kids to and from school
- _____ taking part in school activities
- _____ assisting children with homework
- _____ other: please specify:

47) Over the past year, how much time do you think your partner has spent (on average) **per week**:

- _____ preparing kids for school
- _____ taking kids to and from school
- _____ taking part in school activities
- _____ assisting children with homework
- _____ other: please specify:

Part E. Pets

(For the completion of this entire section, if it is easier to estimate in daily, monthly, or annual terms, please note that in your answer -- for example --> **30 hours/month** or **25 hours/year** or **1.5 hours/day**. PLEASE NOTE: if you answer "3.5"-- this will be interpreted as **3.5 hours per week**)

48) Do you have any pets?

 2 no

1 yes - If you answered yes, please indicate what kind(s) and how many you have of each kind

	<u>kind of pet</u>	<u>/</u>	<u># of kind of pet</u>
1)	_____	/	_____
2)	_____	/	_____
3)	_____	/	_____
4)	_____	/	_____
5)	_____	/	_____

49) Over the past year, how much time have you spent (on average) **per week**:

_____ playing with your pet(s)
_____ feeding your pet(s)
_____ bathing your pet(s)
_____ walking your pet(s)
_____ taking your pet(s) to the vet
_____ cleaning up its/their messes
_____ other: please specify:

50) Over the past year, how much time do you think your partner has spent (on average) **per week**:

_____ playing with your pet(s)
_____ feeding your pet(s)
_____ bathing your pet(s)
_____ walking your pet(s)
_____ taking your pet(s) to the vet
_____ cleaning up its/their messes
_____ other: please specify:

****who is estimated to spend more time on pets? (compared responses to 49 and 50)**

1 = self
2 = partner

51) Do you hire paid workers to complete any tasks?

 2 no
 1 yes - If you answered yes, which tasks?

52) Does your partner hire paid workers to complete any tasks?

 2 no

1 yes - If you answered yes, which tasks?

53) Overall, how would you rate **your** satisfaction with the division of household tasks between you and your partner?

- 1 not satisfied at all
- 2 somewhat satisfied
- 3 satisfied
- 4 very satisfied
- 5 completely satisfied

54) Overall, how do you think **your partner** would rate his satisfaction with the division of household tasks between you and him?

- 1 not satisfied at all
- 2 somewhat satisfied
- 3 satisfied
- 4 very satisfied
- 5 completely satisfied

****who is estimated to be more satisfied with division of household tasks? (compared responses to 53 and 54)**

1 = self

2 = partner

55) Overall, how would you rate **your** satisfaction with the division of paid labor between you and your partner?

- 1 not satisfied at all
- 2 somewhat satisfied
- 3 satisfied
- 4 very satisfied
- 5 completely satisfied

56) Overall, how do you think **your partner** would rate his satisfaction with the division of paid labor between you and him?

- 1 not satisfied at all
- 2 somewhat satisfied
- 3 satisfied
- 4 very satisfied
- 5 completely satisfied

****who is estimated to be more satisfied with division of paid labour? (compared responses to 55 and 56)**

1 = self

2 = partner

57) Overall, how would you rate **your** satisfaction with the division of child-rearing tasks between you and your partner?

- 1 not satisfied at all

- 2 somewhat satisfied
- 3 satisfied
- 4 very satisfied
- 5 completely satisfied

58) Overall, how do you think **your partner** would rate his satisfaction with the division of child-rearing tasks between you and him?

- 1 not satisfied at all
- 2 somewhat satisfied
- 3 satisfied
- 4 very satisfied
- 5 completely satisfied

59) If you are willing to participate in a follow-up interview (approximately 1 hour in length), please give your contact information. Please note that I may not be able to interview you even if you are interested."

Name: _____
Telephone (home): _____
Telephone (work): _____
Telephone (cellular): _____
E-mail address: _____

Appendix F - Interview Guide

Discussed in the interviews were many of the following issues (Note: As the interviews were semi-structured, participants were asked questions based on their responses in the questionnaire. Therefore, it is important to clarify that not all participants were asked the same questions, order of issues differed, and each interview was unique from others.):

- When they first began living together, how did they decide how household tasks would be divided?
- Would those reasons for how they divide household tasks be the same if they were living with a different same-sex partner?
- Would the division of labour be different if he was living with a female partner?
- If the division of labour were to change, what would cause that change?
- Why do you do more of the housework?
- How do they divide specific tasks, such as taking out the trash, grocery shopping, checking the mail, etc.
- Using the “breadwinner/housewife” dynamic as a reference point, how would they describe or characterize their relationship?
- If they were dividing labour in a way that resembles the “breadwinner/housewife” dynamic, would it be the same or different compared to heterosexual couples?
- Does income play a role in the way they divide household labour?
- Inquire into why they hire help (if applicable), or if/why/when they would hire help.
- Does time in paid labour play a role in the way they divide household labour?
- Describe what their parents did and how they divided paid and unpaid labour.
- Did they have to do any housework as a child? If so, what kind of tasks?
- If both of you did not like to do a particular task and neither of you were skilled at doing the task, how would you divide the task?
- Their attitudes about gender roles and masculinity
- Why did they select that response with regard to the satisfaction with the division of household labour? Would anything make them check a higher level?
- Criticisms and feedback with regard to the questionnaire