
Marital Roles



Jacobsen's Scale

Is the division of roles more equal today?



- At UC Berkley, a study found that the women had clear-cut expectations for the future.



- 80% thought a career was very important
- 97% expected to marry
- Most expected to interrupt their careers for a few years to have children



- What they did not seem to have thought out was how they would divide the work at home.



Scoring the Jacobson Scale

- Give yourself one point each time your answer matches the response listed by the corresponding number below. Total your score and write your rating at the bottom of the page.

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. SA, A | 7. SD | 13. SD, D, U |
| 2. SA, A | 8. SD | 14. SD, D, U |
| 3. SA, A | 9. SD, D | 15. SD, D, U |
| 4. SA, A, U | 10. SD, D, U | 16. SA, A |
| 5. SD, D | 11. SD, D | 17. SD, D |
| 6. SD, D | 12. SD, D | 18. SD, D, U |

METHOD OF RATING

15-18 = Extremely equalitarian 11-14 = Equalitarian

6-10 = Traditional 1- 5 = Extremely Traditional

Traditional vs. Equalitarian



- For many years, roles in marriage were defined as “masculine” or “feminine”. That division of labor is “Traditional.” In today’s society this means that the division of labor is most often NOT equal.



- Being an equalitarian couple does not mean that the couple does everything together or at the same time. The equalitarian philosophy means that the division of labor is equal but is not necessarily traditional.



Case Study 1

- Susan and Mike had been married for nearly 45 years. They were proud to have been married that long. They never really talked about who did what; that was just understood. Susan did all the cooking and cleaning, unless they were in the canyon, and then Mike took over. He made a delicious stew and Dutch oven cooking had become his specialty. The children loved their dad's Dutch oven potatoes. The children had been mostly Susan's responsibility. Mike had not done much with babies except beam when he announced, "Wow, we have got us another son. Think we will name this one after my brother, Jason." It was not until Jason Jr. turned about six that Mike's fathering really began. Now Jason Jr. could play all those games that Mike had always dreamed of playing with his son. They would play catch and wrestle on the lawn. Mike took care of the cars and all the bills. In fact, Susan had never put gas in the car or paid one bill in all those years. Mike always bought her flowers on Mother's Day and Susan always made fresh apple pie on Father's Day.



Case Study 2



- Ryan and Monica have been married seven years and have three children. Jamie is five, Kevin is three, and Amy is one and a half years-old. Monica is an accountant and Ryan is an advertising agent. At the end of a long day there is no therapy like kids to take your mind off your work. Ryan and Monica decided before they got married that they would both work. They always knew they wanted children but they were not quite prepared for the changes three little ones brought into their lives. Monica had to reserve all of her sick leave to use when Amy was born in case her short maternity leave was not enough. This meant that Ryan was usually the one to stay home when Jamie or Kevin got sick. However, he really did not mind—he enjoyed his kids and spent lots of time with them. Ryan spent most evenings giving baths to the children and straightening the house. Every other night was his night to fix dinner and he often included Jamie in the planning and preparation to give Monica more time with the two little ones. Monica often joked about how good he was at doing the laundry or changing the baby's diaper. "I sure married a wonderful wife," she teased.



Discussion Questions



- How do you think these two couples would rank on the Jacobson scale?



- Do you think these couples could have a happy marriage?



- What are the advantages of a traditional marriage?



- What are the advantages of a egalitarian marriage?



Case Study 3



- Angela and Justin had been married for two years. They both worked full-time and owned their home. They had settled into a regular routine each night. Justin loved to cook and Angela was grateful because she was never really very good at it. Each night Justin would fix dinner while Angela started a batch of wash and then went outside to work in the yard. The out-of-doors was her haven. Pulling weeds, watering, edging and mowing the lawn, and picking fruit from their trees were things she really enjoyed. After supper Justin cleaned up the kitchen while Angela vacuumed and straightened the house. Then they both folded laundry while watching a favorite TV show



Discussion Questions



- Is this marriage equalitarian or traditional?
- How do you think this couple decided who would do the different jobs?
- How do you feel about dividing roles in this manner rather than in the traditional masculine/feminine manner?
- Is there anything wrong with dividing roles this way?



- Do you think Justin and Angela had to compromise and do jobs they did not like?



- Do you know young couples today who have a very traditional marriage role division?



- Do you think equalitarian or traditional marriages are stronger?



- Which do you think will last longer?