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Transition to parenthood: The effect of division of labor discrepancies on marital satisfaction

Alison Paige Done
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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TRANSITION TO PARENTHOOD: THE EFFECT OF DIVISION OF LABOR
DISCREPANCIES ON MARITAL SATISFACTION

by

Alison P. Done

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Psychology

Department of Psychology
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
December 1995

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Transition to Parenthood

The Thesis of Alison Paige Done for the Degree of Master of Arts in Psychology is approved.


Chairperson, Christopher L. Heavey, Ph.D.


Examining Committee Member, Christopher A. Kearney, Ph.D.


Examining Committee Member, Jeffrey M. Kern, Ph.D.


Graduate Faculty Representative, Robert Parker, Ph.D.


Interim Dean of Graduate College, Cheryl L. Bowles, Ed.D.

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
December 1995

ABSTRACT

In a longitudinal study of couples during the transition to first time parenthood, I examined several hypotheses regarding expectations and the division of labor between spouses. Seventy couples expecting the birth of their first baby filled out questionnaires late in pregnancy and three months postpartum. Before the birth of their babies an experimental group participated in a marital skills training workshop. Results indicated that husbands' and wives' expectations about the post-birth division of labor differed significantly from actual post-birth division of labor. This discrepancy affected marital satisfaction for wives but not for their husbands. The discrepancy also affected spouses' satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor. There was no relationship between marital satisfaction and satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor. The marital skills training workshop was not effective in mediating satisfaction with post-birth division of labor.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Few events in life have a more powerful impact on husband and wife than the birth of their first child. New parents often experience a multitude of positive as well as negative emotional reactions. They are required to substantially restructure much of their lives and marital relationship. A growing body of research is attempting to examine the transition to first time parenthood and the factors affecting a couples' adjustment to this major life change.

Marital Satisfaction

The transition to parenthood requires a reorganization of family life that produces happiness and gratification as well as stress, pressure, and tension (Belsky, Spanier, & Rovine, 1983; Cowan, Cowan, Coie, & Coie, 1978; Grossman, Eichler, & Winickoff, 1980; Meyerowitz & Feldman, 1966; Miller & Sollie, 1980; Ryder, 1973; Sollie & Miller, 1980). Simmel's role theory suggests that there is a disruption of affection and intimacy as a couple shifts from dyad to triad (Frisby, 1992). The costs of first time

parenthood: physical demands, strain on the husband-wife relationship, emotional distress, and personal confinement are high.

A survey of the relevant literature reveals that the transition to parenthood is consistently characterized by modest but significant decreases in marital satisfaction (Awalt, 1981; Belsky et al., 1983; Blum, 1983; Cowan & Cowan, 1987a, 1987b, 1988; Feldman & Nash, 1984; Glen & McLanahan, 1982; Grossman et al., 1980; Miller & Sollie 1980; Shereshefsky & Yarrow, 1973). This decline in marital satisfaction is from satisfaction measured during pregnancy to satisfaction after the birth of the baby. Thus, it is possible that the decline in satisfaction noted during the transition to parenthood is an artifact of a temporary increase in satisfaction during pregnancy followed by a return to baseline.

There are few studies that do not show this decline in marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood. Of eleven studies conducted in this area, only one (Meyerowitz & Feldman, 1966) found significant increases in marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood and one (Ryder, 1973) showed nonsignificant decreases in marital satisfaction. The additional nine studies demonstrated significant decreases across various measures of marital

satisfaction during the transition to parenthood (Cowan, Cowan, Heming, Garrett, Coysh, Curtis-Boles, & Boles, 1985).

Predictors of the Decrease in Marital Satisfaction

Increasingly more research is being devoted to the understanding of why, for many couples, marital satisfaction decreases over the transition to parenthood. It seems likely that this decline in marital satisfaction is multiply determined (Belsky, 1985). Those factors shown to affect the marital relationship during this time are examined briefly below.

Expectations. The relationship between expectations and marital change is based on the assumption that the stress of childbearing will be the greatest for those couples whose prenatal expectations are overly optimistic, either by underestimating the negative impact of the arrival of the baby, or by overestimating the positive effects (Belsky, 1985). Supporting this assumption are findings that violated expectations of the nature described above are associated with negative changes in the marital relationship. This is true especially for wives and specifically during the time from the last trimester of pregnancy through the third month postpartum (Belsky, 1985).

Leisure activities. The frequency of joint leisure activities has been found to decline significantly from the last trimester of pregnancy through the first three months

postpartum (Belsky, Lang, & Rovine, 1985; Belsky, Spanier, & Rovine, 1983). More recent investigations indicate that first time parenthood reduces the amount of time new fathers spend enjoying independent leisure activities. Time spent jointly pursuing activities enjoyed by the wife but not by the husband increased, and time spent jointly pursuing activities enjoyed by the husband but not the wife declined (Crawford & Huston, 1993).

Affective interaction. Significant declines have been found for the expression of positive affection from the last trimester of pregnancy through the first nine postpartum months as reported by both husbands and wives (Belsky et al., 1983). Ryder (1973) has also shown that women experiencing the birth of their first baby are more likely to report that their husbands are not paying enough attention to them than are a control group of childless women.

Sexual satisfaction. The birth of the first child has a tendency to alter the meaning of sexuality for new parents, although not always in the same way. Some spouses report an increase in desire for sex, whereas others report a decrease. Still others report patterns of fluctuation over the entire transition to parenthood (Osofsky & Osofsky, 1985).

Value similarity. New parents do not always agree about the way in which their new child should be raised. A study by Cowan and Cowan (1988) reports that the more husbands and wives differed in ideas about how to raise their child, the more dissatisfied they became with their marriage.

Communication and conflict management skills. A recent study has demonstrated that parents and childless couples differed in their overall levels of marital conflict and number of disagreements. Whereas conflict declined for childless couples, it increased for new parents from pregnancy to 18 months postpartum (Cowan, Cowan, Heming, Garrett, Coysa, Boles, & Boles, 1985).

Family of origin experiences. The transition to parenthood may be less stressful for spouses who have had similar family-of-origin experiences. For example, Lane, Wilcoxon, and Cecil (1989) found that similarity in spouses family of origin experiences were predictive of better coping during the transition to parenthood. Additionally Lane, Wilcoxon and Cecil found that husbands and wives who had healthy family of origin experiences experienced less of a decline in marital satisfaction than those with dissimilar experiences.

Division of Labor Across the Transition to Parenthood

Although the factors discussed above influence adjustment during the transition to parenthood, the division of labor between spouses appears to be a particularly important issue during this period of re-adjustment. The remainder of this paper will focus on the importance of division of labor and its effect on marital satisfaction during this time.

Current research reveals that in order to accommodate the added tasks involved with the birth of a baby, the instrumental role arrangements of couples change (Belsky, et al. 1985; Belsky et al., 1983; Cowan et al., 1978; Grossman et al., 1980). It appears that husbands increase their assistance with family chores during late pregnancy and early childbirth. However, as wives recover from the shock of delivery and first few postpartum weeks, they take over not only the responsibilities they had before the birth of the baby, but also more of the housework and most of the baby care tasks (Goldberg, Michaels, & Lamb, 1985). Thus, the withdrawal of assistance the wives receive towards the end of pregnancy often makes the transition particularly noticeable and more disturbing than it otherwise might be (Belsky & Pensky, 1988).

Roles tend to become more traditional in nature across the transition to parenthood with husbands being accountable

for stereotypically male responsibilities (e.g., yard work, household finance, auto maintenance) to a greater extent and participating less frequently in baby care and household tasks. Conversely, wives tend to adopt more stereotypically female responsibilities (e.g., laundry, dishes, changing diapers; Feldman, Biringer, & Nash, 1981; Garrett, 1983; LaRossa & LaRossa, 1981). This trend has been found irrespective of employment status or educational level of the wives (Hoffman, 1978), and independent of the couples pre-existing division of labor or sex-role ideology (Cowan et al., 1978; Stafford, Bachman, & diBonna, 1977).

Study results indicate that the reorganization required by the transition to parenthood may produce a shift towards a traditional (increased participation in gender-stereotyped tasks) division of labor, even in previously egalitarian families (Lewis & Cooper, 1988). Belsky (1986) found that marital satisfaction declines significantly when the division of household labor becomes more traditional, particularly from the wife's perspective of how the chores are being divided.

Research has consistently provided evidence that new fathers play a small role in the daily aspects of child care and household tasks compared to that of new mothers (Ruble, Fleming, Hackel, & Stangor, 1988). Liefer (1980) found that, whereas first time mothers wanted their husbands to

learn basic child care skills, only a few fathers actively participated. Similarly, Cowan and Cowan (1983) found that new mothers reported spending an average of 121 hours a week in child care related tasks, whereas new fathers spent an average of only 26 hours per week. Kotelchuck (1976) found that only 7.5% of fathers shared child-care responsibilities and that 75% did not take any responsibility for the daily care of their new baby.

Recent evidence reveals that wives' evaluations of the positive aspects of marriage declined the more the division of labor changed towards traditionalism (Belsky, Lang, & Huston, 1986). Similarly, Tomlinson (1987) has found that non-traditional sex-role attitudes and greater father involvement positively influenced mothers' evaluations of their post-birth marriages.

A decline in the mother's amounts of affectional expression has been found only for those females who were dissatisfied with their husband's role performance after the birth (Terry, McHugh, & Noller, 1991). Additionally, it was found that an increase in mothers' level of marital satisfaction was positively associated with the mothers' perception that their spouses were contributing satisfactorily to the performance of household tasks and child care.

In a study assessing couples at both 6 and 18 months postpartum, Cowan and Cowan (1988) found that marital satisfaction was consistently correlated with spouses' satisfaction with the division of household and child care tasks for both women (r values ranging from .47 to .62) and men (r values ranging from .27 to .64). Although some spouses were content with what would be considered a traditional division of labor, other spouse's preferred a more egalitarian division.

This disparity in division of labor across the transition to parenthood may help to explain why women seem to experience more of a decline in marital satisfaction than their husbands (Ruble et al., 1988). It seems that the responsibility for the bulk of the domestic tasks at a time when the new mother is likely to be physically and emotionally drained may lead to negative feelings towards her husband and their marriage. In fact Belsky et al., (1986) recently found that those women who experienced the greatest increase in domestic chores experienced the greatest amount of negative change in quality of the marital relationship.

It is clear from the studies cited above that division of labor significantly impacts a couples marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood. It seems, however, that these studies suggest that each spouses

feelings about how the tasks are divided are more important than the actual division of labor for new parents.

Division of Labor Expectations

It is likely that inequities regarding the division of labor in and of itself are not responsible for the decrease in marital satisfaction after the birth of a baby. Instead, the expectancy processes at work during the period of transition with regard to the division of labor may be responsible (Hackle & Ruble; 1992; Ruble et al., 1988). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggest that one way to cope with the uncertainty of becoming a new parent is to gather information about the event and construct an image of what it will be like. Hence, couples are likely to generate a set of expectations about their relationship after the baby is born. This may include, for example, how the housework and child care responsibilities will be divided.

As suggested above, many of the expectations generated during pregnancy are unlikely to be fulfilled after the birth of the baby. Ruble (1988) examined the extent of expectancy discrepancies during pregnancy and found that women expected the division of labor to be much more egalitarian than it actually turned out to be. Hatfield, Utne, and Traupman (1979) found that these feelings of inequity and the resulting tensions are likely to be particularly high for women who had come to expect

substantial support from their husbands but did not receive it.

Shared expectations concerning household responsibilities have been found to be particularly important to the maintenance of an ongoing intimate relationship. Empirical evidence suggests that agreement between husband and wife on instrumental roles within the marriage is related to marital satisfaction (Bahr, Chappell, & Leigh, 1983). In addition, division of labor seems to be particularly important to wives, whose feelings of well-being and depression have been found to be related to her husbands participation in household chores (Ross, Mirowsky, & Huber, 1983). The new demands related to baby care seem to add an additional dimension to the pre-existing division of labor, thus providing further opportunity for strain on the marital relationship (Ruble et al., 1988).

In his 1985 study, Belsky found that women whose postnatal experiences turned out to be more negative than they had anticipated, experienced declines in feelings of love and marital satisfaction and increases in feelings of ambivalence and frequency of conflict. For husbands, violated expectations were also associated with a decline in marital satisfaction, increases in feelings of ambivalence, and decreased efforts to work at the marital relationship.

Research suggests that there is a shift towards a traditional division of labor after the birth of a baby. In addition wives perceive their husbands as not contributing fairly to the post-birth division of labor. Consequently the decline in wives marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood may be due to changes towards postpartum traditionalism that actually violate the expectations they had formed during their pregnancy. The fact that husbands seem to be doing less of the household chores and baby care tasks than expected could account for the fact that their decline in marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood is smaller than wives. In conclusion, spouses whose prenatal expectations are too positive or insufficiently negative relative to their actual post-birth experiences are likely to experience the greatest decline in marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood (Belsky, 1985).

Rationale for Prevention

It is clear that during the transition to parenthood the probability of misunderstandings, disagreements, and conflicts of interests is high. Consequently, the desirability of empirically validated interventions to prevent division of labor misalignments and the other numerous problems that lead to declines in marital

satisfaction across the transition to parenthood is apparent.

In a longitudinal study of marital satisfaction, Markman (1981) found that dysfunctional communication patterns precede the development of future marital problems, and once dysfunctional interaction patterns form, they are difficult to modify (Raush, Barry, Hertel, & Swain, 1974). Thus we might expect future parents to benefit from marital communication training before the baby is born and before serious difficulties arise.

The predominant approach being used to treat marital distress is not rooted in prevention but aims at intervention after problems have developed and may have already had a negative impact on the marital relationship (Bloom, 1985). Studies suggest that these types of interventions do not necessarily increase a couple's happiness, but may simply reduce current levels of distress (Markman & Hahlweg, 1993). Therefore, it seems logical to implement a preventive intervention while couples are currently happy or experiencing only minor distress (Markman, Floyd, Stanley, & Storaasli, 1988).

The rationale behind programs designed to prevent marital distress consists of teaching couples the competencies associated with successful adjustment before marital difficulties arise (Markman et al., 1988). Research

has suggested that positive communication and problem-solving skills (e.g., Birchler, Weiss, & Vincent, 1975; Gottman, Markman, & Notarius, 1977), a sense of efficacy about handling relationship conflicts (Notarius, 1977), and realistic relationship cognitions (Epstein, 1982), are among the competencies necessary for successful marital adjustment.

There have been few studies addressing the role of marital prevention in maintaining a happy relationship across the transition to parenthood. In a study designed to reduce marital distress and strengthen marital relationships, Cowan and Cowan (1988) provided a preventive intervention for couples expecting the birth of their first child. Groups of expectant parents met once weekly over a six month period. Meetings were led by trained co-leaders and aimed at (1) bridging the transition from before to after the birth of the baby and (2) focusing primarily on men and women as individuals and couples rather than parenting skills. Their results indicated that marital satisfaction for those couples participating in the intervention declined slightly from pregnancy to six months after the birth, and leveled off over the next year. Those couples not participating in the intervention revealed sharp declines in marital satisfaction from pregnancy to six months after the arrival of the baby, and an even sharper

decline from six to eighteen months after the birth. Of the couples participating in the study, 12.5% of the non-intervention parents were divorced or separated by the time their babies were 18 months of age, whereas none of the intervention couples divorced or separated during the same period.

The results of the above study suggest that providing expectant parents with a supportive context for examining the structural and organizational changes during the period of transition may provide parents with a basic understanding of change that can act as a moderator of distress within the marital relationship (Cowan & Cowan, 1988). Clearly, more empirically validated research in this area is called for.

Intervention

Although there are a number of strategies designed to prevent marital distress (Gurney, 1977; Markman, Floyd, Stanley, & Storaasli, 1988; Miller, Nunnally, & Wackman, 1977) few have attempted to adapt these techniques expressly for use with couples expecting the birth of their first child. The current study aims to apply the general principles of the Premarital Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP, Markman et al., 1986) to couples experiencing the transition to parenthood with the goal being the maintenance and enhancement of their marital functioning across the transition period. The PREP program utilizes

cognitive-behavioral techniques that have been linked by theory and research to effective marital functioning (Markman et al., 1988). A detailed account of the PREP program can be found elsewhere (Markman et al., 1986) but it will be briefly reviewed below.

The primary goal of PREP is to provide an educational experience for couples that will enable them to increase their communication and problem solving skills. These skills have been associated with effective marital functioning and the prevention of future marital distress. Participants receive the PREP Manual for Couples which provides a complete set of reference materials for couples to follow along with the workshop lectures and to read at home to reinforce learned skills.

In sessions 1 and 2, couples are taught to recognize the kinds of patterns that lead to the breakdown of a relationship. Partners are then taught key communication skills designed to help them listen to and validate each other's points of view. A model for understanding ineffective communication is introduced to help couples think about why miscommunication often occurs.

The focus of session 3 is identifying and discussing major expectations and their hidden impact on relationships, as well as the general role and importance of fun in relationships. In session 4, couples learn how to solve

problems and disagreements. They are taught how to monitor behaviors, to make specific requests for behavioral change, and to use skills such as brainstorming and problem-solving techniques.

In session 5, the focus is on understanding and benefitting from commitment. Spiritual/religious values and expectations are also explored with attention to how they might affect a couples relationship.

Session 6, the final session, focusses on sensual/sexual education and enhancement. At the end of the workshop couples agree on a set of Ground Rules that they will use to handle current and future issues in their relationship.

Because this paper concentrates on the role of expectations with regards to division of labor across the transition to parenthood, that part of the workshop will be explained here in more detail.

As described above, session 5 is aimed at identifying and discussing major expectations regarding the transition to parenthood and their possible impact on the marital relationship. During the workshop couples are educated about the concepts of conscious and unconscious expectations concerning themselves, their spouse, their relationship, and their new roles as parents. Couples participate in an informal lecture covering the definition of expectations,

how they affect a couples' relationship, and expectations specific to the transition to parenthood.

Following this lecture couples discuss their expectations concerning their division of labor after the birth of the baby. To facilitate this discussion couples are given two questionnaires specific to expectations to fill out. The first asks couples to independently answer questions addressing expectations regarding leisure time, sex and intimacy, employment, financial matters, division of labor and others. The second asks couples to rate the extent to which each spouse will be responsible for a variety of household chores and baby care tasks on a Likert-type scale with 1 indicating father's will be entirely responsible, 7 indicating mother's will be entirely responsible, and 4 indicating equal responsibility. During this discussion couples are encouraged to utilize techniques learned previously in the workshop (e.g. active listening, expressive speaking, problem solving, and clarification of expectations). Couples also meet with their individual consultant to review their expectations, consider if they are realistic, and formulate a revised set of expectations concerning the division of labor following the birth of the baby.

Present Study

The present study was designed to investigate the effects of division of labor expectations on marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood. Participants were married couples who were in their first marriages and expecting their first child. They completed questionnaires assessing division of labor expectations and marital satisfaction before and after the birth of their babies. Those assigned to the intervention group participated in the PREP program before the birth of their babies.

The present study was intended to answer the following questions. First, were spouses pre-birth expectations regarding the post-birth division of labor related to the actual division of labor after the birth of their babies? Second, was the discrepancy between pre-birth expectations and the actual post-birth division of labor related to spouses satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor? Third, was the discrepancy between pre-birth expectations and actual post-birth division of labor related to post-birth marital satisfaction? Fourth, was satisfaction with post-birth division of labor related to marital satisfaction? Finally, were couples who participated in the PREP workshop more satisfied with their post-birth division of labor than control couples?

The hypotheses guiding this investigation were as follows:

- 1 - There will be significant discrepancies between spouses' pre-birth division of labor expectations and their actual post-birth division of labor.
- 2 - There will be a linear association between the magnitude of division of labor discrepancies (actual division of labor scores minus expected scores) and satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor.
- 3 - There will be a linear association between the magnitude of division of labor discrepancies and post-birth marital satisfaction.
- 4 - There will be a linear association between spouses' satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor and marital satisfaction.
- 5 - Couples who participate in the PREP workshop will be more satisfied with their post-birth division of labor than couples who do not participate in the workshop.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Subjects

Couples in the study were recruited through advertisements in local and university newspapers, employee newsletters, flyers displayed in maternity and specialty shops, and presentations to couples participating in prenatal classes. All couples met the following criteria: (1) they were in their first marriages and (2) having their first baby. There were 70 couples who completed the initial questionnaires. Of the original group, 53 couples had completed the three month follow-up questionnaires at the time of this report.

The intervention sample consisted of 30 couples and the control sample consisted of 23 couples. Of those couples assigned to the intervention group 13, did not participate in the workshop. Common reasons for non-attendance were scheduling conflicts and restriction of wives activities per doctors orders. Couples in the control group were paid \$75.00 for filling out the initial packet of questionnaires and \$50.00 for filling out the follow-up questionnaires. Couples in the intervention group did not receive financial

compensation for filling out the initial questionnaires but were offered the opportunity to participate in the PREP workshop. They were paid \$50.00 for filling out follow-up questionnaires.

The demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

	<u>Men</u>		<u>Women</u>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Average Age	31.7	8.7	28.5	4.3
Average Education Level (in years)	14.9	2.1	15.0	2.3
Race:				
Caucasian -	87.1%		90.0%	
Hispanic -	4.3%		5.7%	
African-American -	2.9%		1.4%	
Asian -	4.3%		2.9%	
Other -	1.4%		0.0%	
	M		SD	
Average Length of Marriage: (in years)	2.9		2.2	
Average Family Income:	\$53,063		\$29,977	

Measures

Demographic Inventory. Questions concerning age, race, education, religion, occupation, income, and family background were included to obtain demographic information from the participants.

Division of Labor Questionnaire. The Division of Labor Questionnaire (Christensen, 1994), was adapted for use with this study. The resulting questionnaire consists of two parallel forms. The Division of Labor Questionnaire-Expected (DLQ-E) is designed to assess couples' expectations during pregnancy about the division of labor after the birth of their baby. It is comprised of thirty-one questions. The first twenty-six questions ask each spouse to estimate how much they expect to participate in a list of basic household and baby care chores after the birth of the baby. Spouses rate typical chores (e.g., laundry, lawn mowing, auto maintenance, cooking, dishes, diaper changing, feeding, dressing, playing with baby) on a seven point Likert-type scale, with 1 indicating that they expect their spouse to complete the chore all of the time, 7 indicating they expect to complete the chore all of the time, and 4 indicating that they expect to divide the chore equally. In addition, for each chore listed, the individual estimates the total number of hours he or she expects to spend performing the chore in a typical week.

Four additional questions address the estimated number of hours the individual expects 1) to work outside of the home, 2) their spouse to work outside of the home, 3) to spend on household chores and baby care tasks and, 4) their spouse to spend on household chores and baby care tasks. A final question asks the individual to estimate how satisfied they would be if the division of labor matched their expectations.

The Division of Labor Questionnaire-Actual (DLQ-A) is designed to assess couples actual division of labor after the birth of their baby. The first thirty questions are identical in format to the DLQ-E except that they ask the individual to estimate the actual number of hours spent on each chore or task instead of what they expected to spend. Similarly the final question asks the individual to estimate how satisfied they are with the current division of labor. Copies of both the DLQ-E and DLQ-A can be found in Appendix I.

Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS). The DAS (Spanier, 1976) is designed to assess spouses' overall level of marital adjustment. It is composed of thirty-two questions divided into the following four subscales: Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Cohesion, Affectional Expression, and Dyadic Satisfaction. This study will employ scores obtained from the Dyadic Satisfaction subscale in its analyses. This subscale has a

mean score of 40.5 with a standard deviation of 7.2. Cornbach's measure of internal consistency yielded an alpha coefficient of .94 (Spanier, 1976).

Procedure

Couples participating in this study provided information about themselves at two points in time. At Time 1 couples filled out a battery of questionnaires prior to the birth of their baby. At Time 2 couples filled out a battery of questionnaires approximately three months after the birth of their babies.

Initial data collection (Time 1). Couples recruited for the study were given or mailed a battery of questionnaires including the DLQ-E and the DAS at approximately four to six months into their pregnancies. Couples were instructed to fill out all forms independently and return them by pre-paid mail. Because this investigation is part of a larger study, couples filled out additional questionnaires not pertinent to this investigation.

Upon receipt of a husband/wife pair of questionnaires, couples were randomly assigned to the control or the intervention group. In order to guarantee adequate participation in the workshop, 70% of couples were assigned to the intervention group. Couples in the intervention group were sent letters inviting them to attend the next

scheduled PREP workshop. Couples assigned to the control group were sent a letter explaining their group assignment and a check for \$50.00.

Intervention. Couples attending the workshop participated in the version of PREP described above and adapted specifically for use with couples entering the transition to parenthood. These couples ranged from being three to eight months into their pregnancies.

As discussed previously, the PREP program is designed to teach couples communication skills and ground rules for handling conflict and promoting intimacy. PREP's primary goal is to modify current dimensions of couple functioning in an attempt to help couples prevent marital breakdown and maintain healthy, satisfying relationships.

The PREP program is conducted in a group format. Couples spend some time listening to lectures presented by the group leader. The bulk of couples' time, though, is spent independently practicing skills or discussing various issues with the aid of a consultant. Couples are assigned homework and given optional readings from Fighting For Your Marriage (Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 1994).

The PREP workshop was lead by a Ph.D. level psychologist specializing in marriage and family therapy. Leader duties included delivery of lectures, direct

discussion, answering questions, and providing supervision for the consulting staff.

A consulting staff made up of graduate students in psychology at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, assisted the leader by conducting sessions with assigned couples and guiding them through practice of the exercises presented during the lectures.

In an effort to facilitate attendance, our workshops were conducted in a weekend format with couples attending approximately six hours on Saturday, four hours on Sunday and two hours on the following Wednesday.

The PREP program consisted of twelve lessons. Each lesson began with a brief lecture introducing the couples to the subject matter to be covered. Couples were then given the opportunity to discuss and practice the skills covered in the lecture and work independently with their consultants.

Lessons 1,2,3,4 & 6 were covered on Saturday. The first lecture introduced couples to the PREP program, its' history, goals, research on marital success, the importance of communication, gender issues, and learning to communicate in a safe and structured manner. During this lecture couples viewed a portion of the videotape entitled Fighting for Your Marriage. This segment addressed danger signs associated with distress and the break up of marriages. At

the conclusion of this lecture, each couple met with their consultant to discuss their own goals and expectations for the program.

Lecture 2 helped couples learn how to break communication down into pieces, understand miscommunication, and grasp techniques for effective speaking and listening. Following the lecture couples viewed the second portion of the Fighting for Your Marriage videotape. This segment dealt with rules for effective communication. Couples were then given 30 minutes to practice the problem discussion techniques. At the conclusion of this session, chapters 1 and 2 of the Couples Guide were assigned for homework.

Lecture 3 introduced couples to destructive modes of communication. Couples were then taught effective styles of communication and how to appropriately express feelings. Following the lecture couples chose a low conflict issue in their lives and discussed it using these techniques.

Lecture 4 addressed spouses expectations concerning themselves, their partner, their relationship, and their new roles as parents. The definition of expectations, how they affect a couples' relationship, and expectations specific to the transition to parenthood were explored.

Following this lecture couples discussed their expectations concerning their division of labor after the birth of the baby. To facilitate this discussion couples

were given two questionnaires related to expectations regarding post-birth division of labor to fill out (Appendix II). During this discussion couples were encouraged to utilize communication techniques learned previously in the workshop (e.g. active listening, expressive speaking, problem solving, and clarification of expectations). Couples also met with their individual consultant to review their expectations, consider if they were realistic, and formulate a revised set of expectations concerning the division of labor following the birth of the baby.

Lecture 6 introduced the couples to relationship enhancement. They were instructed on intimate talk, fun activities, and how to make a good marriage better. At the conclusion of this lecture each spouse took time to develop a list of fun activities they could do together. Lists were then exchanged and each spouse was asked to pick an activity from the others list and make it happen that evening.

Saturday ended with lecture 8 on friendship. Couples learned about the importance of friendship, how to keep friendship alive, and effective friendship communication.

Sunday's workshop began with couples meeting with their consultant to review their homework and process the workshop up to this point. Lessons 5,7,9 & 11 were covered on Sunday. Lecture 5 introduced couples to possible

unexpressed issues in their relationships. They learned the definition of hidden issues, how to identify them, and how to get hidden issues out into the open. In a meeting with their consultants couples used skills learned previously to discuss possible hidden issues in their relationships.

Lecture 7 introduced couples to effective problem solving. Couples were taught how to separate discussion of a problem from solution of a problem and then how to build an agenda, brainstorm solutions, compromise, and agree on a final solution. In a problem solving exercise couples took the opportunity to practice by raising an issue and working through the problem solving steps learned previously.

During lecture 9 couples were introduced to the concept of commitment. Areas addressed were the definition of commitment, the primary meaning of commitment in relationships, dimensions relevant to commitment in a relationship, and the implications of commitment.

Concluding Sunday's agenda was lecture 11 dealing with couples sensual/sexual relationships. Couples learned the definition of sensuality and sexuality, sexual arousal and anxiety, principles of enhancement, and possible areas of sexual problems after the birth of a baby. At the conclusion of this lecture couples were assigned homework designed to help couples develop sensitivity about their physical relationship. Each partner was to take a turn

giving the other a back or foot massage and each was to take a turn receiving the massage. Couples were instructed to give feedback to each other and focus on giving their partner pleasure.

Concluding the workshop on Wednesday were lessons 10 and 12. Lecture 10 addressed the impact of religious and spiritual dimensions on relationships. Research on religious involvement was presented and how religion affects a couples marriage. Couples were given time to discuss, explore, and clarify their own beliefs and values.

Finally, lecture 12 taught couples how to apply the skills they learned in their everyday lives. They were taught how to anticipate problems, apply the skills, lay ground rules, and practice continuously. In the exercise following each couple was given a list of skills and techniques taught during the workshop. Together they decided which ones they would use in their relationship and marked the appropriate box on the worksheet.

Six weeks after the birth of their babies couples participating in the workshop were offered a "booster session" with their consultant. Consultants visited couples in their homes and reviewed the skills learned previously in the workshop. Couples were asked to review the worksheet from the final lecture to assess how much they were currently using the PREP techniques. A separate set of

questions was designed to assess how each couple was adjusting to the role of parenthood (Appendix III). Finally, couples were given time to ask questions and troubleshoot any problems they may have been experiencing.

Follow-up data collection (Time 2). Three months after the birth of their babies, couples were mailed a second battery of questionnaires including the DLQ-A. Couples were instructed to complete the questionnaires independently and return them by pre-paid mail. Again, only a portion of these questionnaires were utilized for this particular investigation. Upon receipt of completed questionnaires all couples were paid for their participation in this phase of the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The findings of this study are presented in four sections. The first section addresses how spouses' pre-birth expectations regarding the division of labor relate to their actual post-birth division of labor. In section two I present findings regarding how the discrepancy between pre-birth expectations regarding post-birth division of labor and the actual post-birth division of labor relates to spouses' satisfaction with the division of labor. Section three addresses findings involving how the discrepancy between pre-birth expectations and the post-birth division of labor relates to spouses' change in marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood. In this section I also present results regarding the relationship between marital satisfaction and satisfaction with division of labor. Finally, I present the results addressing the impact of the PREP workshop on satisfaction with post-birth division of labor. Means and standard deviations for the primary variables used in these analyses are presented in Table 2. Also shown in Table 2 are the number of subjects who completed each measure. Due to missing data, the number of

subjects available for subsequent analyses varies slightly.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of Primary Variables

	<u>Husbands</u>			<u>Wives</u>		
	M	SD	N	M	SD	N
Expected DVLB RR	3.71	0.54	69	4.21	0.47	69
Actual DVLB RR	3.27	0.56	50	4.85	0.68	50
Satisfaction with						
post-birth DVLB	5.55	1.37	49	4.58	1.79	50
Pre-birth MS	41.2	4.76	69	41.2	5.21	69
Post-birth MS	41.4	4.36	50	40.1	6.03	52

Note. DVLB = Division of Labor, RR = Responsibility Rating, MS = Marital Satisfaction.

Expectations and Post-Birth Division of Labor

First, I computed a dependent samples *t*-test to examine differences between spouses' pre-birth expectations regarding post-birth division of labor. The dependent variable for this analysis was the average of each spouses' rating of the relative degree to which they would be responsible for the tasks listed on the DLQ-E. Henceforth, this will be called the responsibility rating. These results indicated that wives expected to have greater

responsibility for the post-birth division of labor than did their husbands, $t(68) = -5.05, p < .001$.

Next I computed two dependent samples t -tests to examine husbands' and wives' discrepancies between their pre-birth expectations and their actual post-birth division of labor. The dependent variables for these analyses were the discrepancies between husbands' and wives' pre-birth and post-birth responsibility ratings. Wives at pre-birth expected to have significantly less responsibility for housework and baby care tasks than they actually ended up having, $t(51) = -7.08, p < .001$. Conversely, husbands at pre-birth expected to have significantly more responsibility for housework and baby care tasks than they actually ended up having, $t(51) = 4.98, p < .001$.

Satisfaction with Post-Birth Division of Labor

Because some household chores and baby care tasks require substantially more time than others, I decided to adjust the relative weighting of each task according to the number of hours typically required to complete it. The first step in the weighting procedure was to subtract each spouses' actual responsibility rating from their expected rating for each task to yield an initial discrepancy score. The second step was to find the average amount of time all participants actually spent performing each task listed. Separate averages were computed for both husbands and wives

using the actual number of hours spent. Step three involved multiplying each discrepancy score by the appropriate average number of hours necessary to complete that task. This yielded an adjusted discrepancy score for each task listed. Finally, each individuals adjusted discrepancy scores were averaged to yield a final adjusted division of labor discrepancy score. A negative discrepancy score indicated that the individual did more than they had expected to whereas a positive score indicated that the individual did less than they had expected to.

To determine the extent to which division of labor discrepancies were related to satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor, I computed two Pearson correlations examining the association between spouses' adjusted discrepancy scores and their post-birth satisfaction with the division of labor. There was a significant positive correlation for wives, $r(49) = .32, p < .05$. This means that as wives' responsibility for the post-birth division of labor became less than what she had expected before the birth of the baby, her dissatisfaction with the division of labor decreased. Conversely, there was a significant negative correlation was found for husbands, $r(49) = -.29, p < .05$. This means that as husbands' responsibility for the post-birth division of labor became more than he had

previously expected, his dissatisfaction with that division of labor decreased.

Division of Labor and Marital Satisfaction

To examine the relationship of discrepancies between expected and actual division of labor with change in marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood, I computed four Pearson correlations between adjusted discrepancy scores and marital satisfaction change scores. To compute marital satisfaction change scores, I subtracted each spouses' pre-birth score on the marital satisfaction subscale of the DAS from their post-birth score on the same measure. A positive change score represented an increase in marital satisfaction whereas a negative change score represented a decrease in marital satisfaction. These correlations are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Relation Between Division of Labor Discrepancies and Change in Marital Satisfaction

		Change in Marital Satisfaction	
		<u>Husbands</u>	<u>Wives</u>
Discrepancy Scores	Husbands	-.09 (N=49)	-.32* (N=49)
	Wives	.06 (N=48)	.49*** (N=50)

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

As can be seen, wives' change in marital satisfaction was related to both their adjusted division of labor discrepancy score and to their husbands, whereas husbands' change in marital satisfaction was not related to either spouses adjusted division of labor discrepancy score. More specifically, wives change in marital satisfaction was positively correlated with her division of labor discrepancy score. This means that wives became more satisfied with their marriages as they contributed less than they had expected to the post-birth division of labor. Wives change in marital satisfaction was negatively related to her husbands' division of labor discrepancy score. This means that wives became less satisfied with their marriages as their husbands contributed less than they had expected to the post-birth division of labor.

To examine the relationship between spouses' satisfaction with their post-birth division of labor and their satisfaction with their marriages after the birth of their babies, I computed Pearson correlations between spouses' marital satisfaction change scores and their satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor. There was no relationship between satisfaction with post-birth division of labor and marital satisfaction, for wives or husbands, $r(49) = .21$, ns, and $r(47) = -.03$, ns, respectively.

Impact of PREP

To determine the effectiveness of PREP on spouses satisfaction with post-birth division of labor, a one way ANOVA was performed for husbands and wives. The dependent variables was spouses rating of their satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor. The independent variable had three levels: couples attending the PREP workshop, couples who were invited to attend the workshop but did not, and couples in the control group. The hypothesis concerning PREP and its' affect on satisfaction with post-birth division of labor was not supported for either wives or husbands, $F(2,47) = .91$, ns, and $F(2,46) = .50$, ns, respectively.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The results of this study showed that husbands and wives differed in their expectations about what the division of labor would be like after the birth of their babies. Wives at pre-birth expected to have greater responsibility for household chores and baby care tasks than did husbands. It seems that men expected a more "traditional" division of labor whereas their wives expected things to be more "egalitarian" after the birth of their babies. One can imagine that this divergence in spouses' pre-birth expectations has the potential to become a source of strain on the marital relationship.

Consistent with previous research (Belsky 1985), I also found that both husbands' and wives' pre-birth expectations about the post-birth division of labor were disconfirmed by the actual division of labor after the birth of their babies. Specifically wives took on more of the household chores and baby care tasks than expected and husbands took on less than expected. The difference observed in expectations at pre-birth becomes even more pronounced after the birth of the baby, thus increasing the potential for

damage to the relationship.

Lazarus and Folkman had suggested previously (1984) that one way to cope with the uncertainty of becoming a new parent is to gather information and construct a set of expectations about what life will be like after the birth of a baby. These results seem to suggest that, 1) spouses may not have enough accurate information to construct a realistic picture of the post-birth division and labor, and 2) spouses at pre-birth may not communicate effectively about post-birth expectations regarding division of labor.

The hypothesis that there was a relationship between spouses' division of labor discrepancies and their satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor was confirmed. As expected wives became more satisfied with the division of labor as they did less than they had expected to. This result supports the assumption that the division of labor is an important issue for wives experiencing the transition to parenthood. Surprisingly, men became more satisfied with the division of labor as they contributed more than they had expected to. It is possible that after the birth of a baby husbands perceive the division of labor as being unfair and consequently experience feelings of guilt when they do not contribute as much as they had expected to. In turn, as they take on greater responsibility for the division of labor, they may alleviate

their guilty feelings and thereby increase their satisfaction with the household chores and baby care tasks they are responsible for.

I predicted that there would be a relationship between spouses' division of labor discrepancies and their marital satisfaction. The study results revealed that wives' marital satisfaction increased as they contributed less to household maintenance and baby care than they expected they would and decreased as their husbands contributed less than they expected to. Wives were not only more satisfied with the post-birth division of labor when their husbands were contributing more, but they were also more satisfied with their marriages. It was interesting, however, that division of labor discrepancies did not affect husbands' marital satisfaction. It seems that division of labor discrepancies are not a critical determinant of marital satisfaction for husbands. If the pattern of discrepancies continues, however, husbands' marital satisfaction may be indirectly impacted in the future by the wives' growing dissatisfaction with the division of labor.

The hypothesis regarding the relationship between satisfaction with division of labor and marital satisfaction was not supported by the results of this study. This finding was somewhat surprising and it is not entirely clear why no relationship was found. It is possible that this

could be due to a restriction in range or poor measurement of satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor.

The results examined up to this point indicate that division of labor seems to be an important issue for couples experiencing the transition to first time parenthood. Husbands' and wives' seem to have divergent expectations about the post-birth division of labor even before the birth of their babies. After the arrival of the child these discrepancies become even more pronounced. Division of labor discrepancies are related to satisfaction with the division of labor for both spouses and satisfaction with the marriage for wives. Because division of labor discrepancies seem to be a central issue across the transition to parenthood, it would seem beneficial to help spouses to align their division of labor expectations before the arrival of the baby. Unfortunately, the PREP program was not effective in meeting this goal.

I predicted that couples participating in the PREP program would be more satisfied with their post-birth division of labor than couples who did not participate in the program. This hypothesis was not supported. Failure to find significant results in this area could be due to a number of factors.

First, PREP was designed for couples just entering marriage. Couples participating in this study had been

married for an average of 2.8 years. It is possible that PREP works for those couples just learning to communicate with each other but not for couples with established patterns of communication.

Second, the revised version of PREP used in this investigation was conducted in a weekend format to facilitate attendance. It was originally designed to run over the course of six weeks giving the participants ample time to practice workshop skills and incorporate them into their current repertoire of communication. It may be that the weekend format does not allow couples the time they need to practice and to incorporate the skills into their lives.

Third, the expectations session of the PREP workshop was modified from the original expectations session. The expectations formed in early pregnancy may be difficult to modify. It is possible that the exercises designed for this phase of the study were not powerful enough to produce the desired change in division of labor expectations and subsequent satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor and marital satisfaction. It may be beneficial for future interventions in this area to spend more time focusing on division of labor issues across the transition to parenthood and more time with couples discussing the specifics of their post-birth division of labor.

Fourth, previous research in the area has show delayed results of similar interventions (Belsky & Pensky, 1988). This analysis utilizes data from couples at three months post-partum. With additional time it is possible that results may vary. Finally, the Division of Labor Questionnaires are self-report measures. Participants may be biased in their responses or have inaccurate recall.

Two general weakness of this study must be considered when interpreting the results. First, all couples were volunteers with a with a relatively high degree of education, creating a non-random sample. These couples may have been functioning at a higher level than most average couples due to their education and interest in research about marriage across the transition to parenthood. Second, there was a high rate of refusal for the PREP workshop. It may be that the couples most in need of assistance at this time were the least likely to be motivated to participate in the workshop.

In conclusion, the current research suggests that unmet expectations about post-birth division of labor are an important predictor of satisfaction with the post-birth division of labor and marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood. Unfortunately, the PREP program did not seem effective in aligning expectations and preventing a decline in marital satisfaction or

dissatisfaction with the post-birth division of labor.

Future research needs to consider not only the importance of division of labor discrepancies across the transition to parenthood but also other determinants of the decline in marital satisfaction, and design effective modes of intervention to target these crucial areas.

APPENDIX I
QUESTIONNAIRES

Division of Labor Questionnaire-Expected

Directions: We would like to know how you expect you and your spouse will divide the chores that need to be done after the birth of the baby. Below is a list of the typical chores couples engage in after the birth of a baby. We would like to know how many hours you expect each of you to spend during a typical week performing each chore. We are also interested in who you expect to do each of these tasks more often, you or your partner? **Begin by writing the number of hours you expect to spend during a typical week on each task and then circle the number which best reflects you and your partner's expected participation in each task.** Circle "N/A" for "Not Applicable" if you expect neither of you to do the task.

	# Hrs/Wk	My spouse does this all the time			We do this equally			I do this all the time		
1. Household repairs -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
2. Doing the dishes/cleanup -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
3. Cooking meals -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
4. Vacuuming -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
5. Laundry -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
6. Taking out the trash -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
7. Grocery shopping -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
8. Taking care of lawn & garden -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
9. Automobile maintenance -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
10. Family Finances -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
11. Sweeping & Mopping -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
12. Dusting -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
13. Making the Bed -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
14. Cleaning Bathroom(s) -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
15. Miscellaneous Cleanup -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
16. Feeding the Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
17. Diaper Changing -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
18. Bathing the Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
19. Playing with the Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
20. Shopping for Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
21. Attending to Baby's doctor appointments -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
22. Attending to a Fussy baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
23. Getting Up at Night With Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	
24. Dressing the Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A	

25. Other: _____ - _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A
26. Other: _____ - _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A

27. On the average, how many hours each week do you personally expect to spend on household chores like those listed above, after the birth of the baby? _____ hours

28. On the average, how many hours each week do you expect your spouse to spend on household chores like those listed above, after the birth of the baby? _____ hours

29. On the average, how many hours do you expect to work outside of the home each week after the birth of the baby? _____

30. On the average, how many hours do you expect your spouse to work outside of the home each week after the birth of the baby? _____

31. On the whole, how satisfied will you be if the actual division of labor after the birth of the baby matches the expectations outlined above?

Very Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Satisfied

Division of Labor Questionnaire-Actual

Directions: We would like to know how you and your spouse actually divided up the chores that needed to be done after the birth of the baby. Below is a list of the typical chores. We would like to know how many hours each of you spent during a typical week performing each chore. We are also interested in who actually performed each of these tasks more often, you or your partner? **Begin by writing the number of hours you actually spent during a typical week on each task and then circle the number which best reflects you and your partner's actual participation in each task.** Circle "N/A" for "Not Applicable" if neither of you performed the task.

	# Hrs/Wk	My spouse does this all the time			We do this equally			I do this all the time			
1. Household repairs -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
2. Doing the dishes/cleanup -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
3. Cooking meals -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
4. Vacuuming -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
5. Laundry -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
6. Taking out the trash -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
7. Grocery shopping -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
8. Taking care of lawn & garden -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
9. Automobile maintenance -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
10. Family Finances -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
11. Sweeping & Mopping -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
12. Dusting -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
13. Making the Bed -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
14. Cleaning Bathroom(s) -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
15. Miscellaneous Cleanup -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
16. Feeding the Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
17. Diaper Changinf -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
18. Bathing the Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
19. Playing with the Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
20. Shopping for Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
21. Attending to Baby's doctor appointments -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
22. Attending to a Fussy baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
23. Getting Up at Night with Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	
24. Dressing the Baby -	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		N/A	

25. Other: _____ - _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A

26. Other: _____ - _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A

27. On the average, how many hours each week did you actually spend on household chores like those listed above after the birth of the baby? _____ hours

28. On the average, how many hours each week did your spouse actually spend on household chores like those listed above after the birth of the baby? _____ hours

29. On the average, how many hours did you actually work outside of the home each week after the birth of the baby? _____

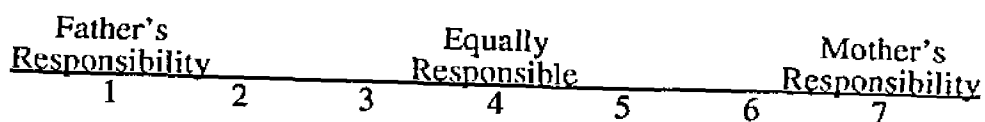
30. On the average, how many hours did your spouse actually work outside of the home each week after the birth of the baby? _____

31. On the whole, how satisfied are you with the actual division of labor after the birth of the baby?

Very Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Satisfied

APPENDIX II
EXPECTATIONS WORKSHOP HANDOUTS

Expectations



Using the scale above, please indicate who you expect will be responsible for each of the following tasks after the birth of you baby.

General Tasks

- _____ Planning and preparing meals
- _____ Cleaning up after meals
- _____ Repairs around the house
- _____ Housecleaning
- _____ Shopping
- _____ Money management
- _____ Washing and ironing
- _____ Making social arrangements
- _____ Looking after the car
- _____ Providing family income
- _____ Home decorating
- _____ Mowing lawn
- _____ Weeding, gardening, planting flowers
- _____ Outside painting
- _____ Birth control

Child Care

- _____ Feeding
- _____ Reading to, playing with
- _____ Health care appointments
- _____ Transporting to and from child care
- _____ Getting ready for bed/bathing
- _____ Rocking, soothing, holding
- _____ Caring for sick child
- _____ Getting up at night when baby cries
- _____ Diapering
- _____ Toilet training
- _____ Staying home from work when baby is sick
- _____ Disciplining

EXPECTATIONS ABOUT LIFE WITH YOUR BABY

**WHAT DO YOU WANT REGARDING...(OR HOW DO YOU THINK THINGS
SHOULD BE REGARDING)...AFTER THE BIRTH OF YOUR BABY?**

- 1. The division of household chores and tasks?**
- 2. The division of baby care responsibilities?**
- 3. Sexual contact and intimacy?**
- 4. How you will spend your leisure time?**
- 5. The employment status of you and your spouse?**
- 6. Who will respond when your baby is wet, hungry, crying, etc.?**
- 7. How you will discipline your child (who, how, how strict)?**
- 8. Financial matters?**

APPENDIX III
BOOSTER QUESTIONS

How did the birth go

How is the baby doing?

health, sleep, eating, temperament, etc.

How have each of you adjusted?

How are things going between the two of you?

How do you feel about how the new responsibilities are being
divided?

How is it compared to what you expected?

Have any issues come up that you have been able to
successfully resolve?

Have any issues come up that you have been unable to
resolve?

Are there any issues that you would like to discuss?

REVIEW GROUND RULES CONTRACT

Do you remember the skills?

Have you used the skills?

Have you found them to be helpful?

Do you have any questions or need any help with the skills
learned in the workshop?

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