That's All a Mule Can Do: The Ethics of Balancing Work at Home and on the Job

My title, "That's All a Mule Can Do: The Ethics of Balancing Work at Home and on the Job," demands an explanation. Scholars, reporters, and working parents attempt to describe the balance between work on the job and work at home with many different metaphors. Indeed, the word "balance" is itself one of the most common.[1] Some have objected to the use of balancing language because, among other things, it suggests something precarious and subject to imbalance or falling.[2] Of course, that may be precisely why people choose the metaphor of balance to describe the interaction between employment and family—because imbalance is always a near possibility and often a present reality.

There are other images used to describe this tension—juggling, navigating, even white-water rafting.[3] Of course, depending on the state of the water, the size of your boat, and the quality of your crew, navigating and rafting seem more than a little precarious. And juggling is just as subject to falls and errors as balancing, though not normally quite so dangerous—depending on the objects juggled. In the end, however, the biggest downside of all of these images is not so much that they are precarious, but that they are a little too exciting and creative to fit the sweet drudgery and ordinary homeliness of much of our work on the job and in our homes.

So, I have come up with another image that comes from a work-related Southern saying: "That's all a mule can do." My mother recently reminded me of this as we were talking about the many sayings that praised hard work. One of the favorite work maxims in my family, a family of extremely hard workers, was passed on by my schoolteacher grandmother, who had grown up in a sharecropping family and escaped the poverty of her childhood through hard work, a passion for education, and her relentless obsession to give her family a better life than she had had in rural eastern Arkansas.

Wagging her finger, she admonished her family, "Good, better, best. Never let it rest, until your good is better and your better is best." Some family members and I are convinced that this saying and the obsession looming behind it are responsible for our own obsessive

work habits on the job, at home, and in our communities. If we want to remind each other of the seemingly excessive expectations of our heritage, we have only to wag our finger and say, "Never let it rest."

My grandfather also worked hard but held a different view of work and success. He had a sixth-grade education and was a clerk and handyman in a small town shoe store for many years. Six evenings a week, he would come home at sunset at the end of his work day, sit down in his easy chair, and, to my grandmother's inquiries about how work had gone, he would shake his head and reply, "Well, Dora, I worked pretty hard. That's all a mule can do."

I asked members of my family about the origin of this saying "That's all a mule can do." According to my family, there is a biological explanation. Horses and mules work differently. You have to watch a horse because it does not know how or when to stop and will work itself to death if given the opportunity. It literally will never let it rest. A mule, on the other hand, will work hard until it is tired and then will work no more. It knows when it has had enough. It knows when to let it rest.

I do not know if this bit of animal husbandry/folk wisdom is true or not. My Internet search turned up nothing. And I have to admit that certain members of my family, when asked a question whose answer they do not know, prefer making up an answer to having no answer. But fact or fiction, this saying recently has become as important a phrase for me as my grandmother's "Never let it rest." When I have had enough, I shake my head and echo the words and weariness of my grandfather, "That's all a mule can do."

And thinking about how mules and horses work (or are alleged to work) makes me wonder how humans work. What are the natural patterns of human work? What are the moral obligations for work in human life? And under what conditions do we shake our heads and say, "That's all a human can do." What would it look like if we worked not like horses or even like mules, but like humans?

As it happens, this was something I was thinking about before I was reminded of my grandfather's saying. It is a part of a larger project in which I examine changing work patterns in U.S. life— including work on the job, work caring for homes and families, and work as other service in communities—and ask how older theological

and ethical reflections on work and vocation can illuminate these changes. I see myself building on several conversations including the following:

First, I am working from family studies by mainline Protestants and Catholics that aim to help people think more creatively about family changes in U.S. society and to bring theological resources to the discussion. Don Browning's Family, Religion, and Culture Project is the best known example and his co-authored book, *From Culture Wars to Common Ground,* is the best introduction. These family projects address many issues including how changes in employment have impacted families.[4]

Second, I am building on numerous studies on balancing family and employed work by the U.S. government, businesses, social scientists, nonprofit institutions, and others. These studies ask how work on the job and work at home are impacted by each other. The early studies began with concern about rising numbers of women in the workforce, especially those who have dual roles as employees and mothers. It quickly became clear, however, that the subject was relevant for working fathers, workers without children, and the overall health of businesses and the larger society.[5]

Third, I am building on studies about the marked decline in community service and civic engagement chronicled so graphically and thoroughly in Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone*. Although the title refers to the waning of interest in league bowling, the book itself covers the decline not only of communal leisure activities but also of civic and religious service. Some have suggested that the increased time spent on the job is in part to blame for this decline.[6]

Finally, my work builds on older Christian, Jewish, and ancient Greek discussions of human work and vocation as family members, citizens, employees, and people of faith. Many of our contemporary ideas about and theologies of work come out of these ancient traditions. It is difficult to reflect on how humans should work without looking at these larger resources.[7] I will talk about these larger theological and ethical issues of vocation and work later, but, first, let me give you a composite picture of the lives of typical middle-class U.S. workers with children.[8]

A Composite Picture of U.S. Working Families

Many studies confirm that American patterns of work have changed dramatically over the last 30-50 years and have created ripple effects in families, churches, and other community organizations.[9] You may have read about some of these studies and seen the changes in your own life or in the lives of people you know. In the first half of the 20th century, the average hours worked each week declined, and many predicted a continued decline in work hours and a resulting rise in leisure hours. Some experts worried what Americans would do with an abundance of free time. It turns out that those worries were unnecessary.

According to several studies, American workers steadily increased their hours of paid labor since the 1940s, and more dramatically since the 1970s, so that average workers put in more hours than workers in any other industrialized economies (and some say agricultural ones, too). When you add up the extra hours put in each year, several studies report that average employees work a month longer a year than employees did 25-30 years ago. Juliet Schor estimates an increase of 164 hours from the early 1970s to the early 1990s.[10] Some recent studies report an increase of approximately 175 hours from the 1977 to 1997.[11] More conservative studies of work hours see smaller increases overall but significant increases for full time professionals, managers, and some blue collar employees. Although researchers disagree about the exact numbers, many studies have shown a significant rise in work hours over the last 30 years.[12]

Clergy are among the hardest working. Seventy percent of clergy report working over 60 hours a week.[13] In one study where clergy averaged 55 hours a week, the clergy group reporting the highest level of stress, resentment, and job dissatisfaction worked the longest hours (averaging 62 hours a week) and did not take regular days off. The pastors working from 45 to 50 hours a week and taking vacations and regular days off reported the highest levels of job satisfaction.[14] Similar patterns emerge in other jobs. Those working the longest hours, not taking their vacation time, and also feeling the most overworked report higher levels of job resentment and dissatisfaction.[15]

Because of these long hours on the job, vacation and other leisure time is down.[16] Americans have short vacations in comparison with

those of industrial nations, even agricultural ones. Leisure and vacation days are not the only thing lost as we work more. Two-thirds of Americans are sleeping an hour or more less than they should each night.[17] This trend is worsening. Forty-three percent of Americans reported sleeping less in 2001 than they did five years before. You may have seen recent reports on sleep deprivation as a major cause of accidents. Those working longer hours get less sleep, on average. Employed mothers of young children are the most sleep-deprived. (This is no surprise to me as the mother of two young daughters.)

From these studies, we also know what people are not doing with the hours saved by not sleeping. They are not having more sex. Frequency of sex is down, especially among people working long hours. (This statistic alone might be sufficient motivation in some quarters of the population to decrease work hours!)[18] The hours given to personal time or free time for employed parents also has decreased by more than 40 percent from 1977 to 1997.[19] This statistic is important because decreased personal time is associated with higher levels of stress and stress-related health problems.[20]

As U.S. employees work more hours on the job, they have less time for food preparation and for eating itself.[21] Consequently, they eat more meals out, often at fast food places. This phenomenon is one factor blamed in the steep rise in obesity among American adults and children to its highest levels ever and is thought to be one factor in the rise of weight-related medical problems.

These long work hours, accompanied with the feeling of being overworked, are themselves associated with higher stress and stress-related medical problems as well as higher levels of mistakes on the job, anger at bosses, frustration with co-workers, and more sleeping problems. Long work hours have been linked in numerous studies with higher rates of cardio-vascular disease, high blood pressure, weight gain, and higher rates of alcohol and cigarette consumption.[22] Evidently, some humans, like some horses, are capable of literally working themselves to death.

Adults also have cut back on the time given to socializing. Organized card playing, league bowling, dinner parties, and other social activities have declined dramatically.[23] And, lest you think we have simply forgone the trivial, note that many of us also have forsaken engagement in public service. From the 1950s to the 1990s

the percentage of parents belonging to the Parent Teacher Association, for example, was cut more than in half.[24] Church attendance and involvement are also down, especially among those who work longer hours.[25] Putnam estimates that over the last "three or four decades" church attendance has dropped from 25 to 50 percent.[26] From the early 1970s to the early 1980s the number of people who attended a public meeting in the past year was cut almost in half.[27] The numbers are also way down for volunteering and participation in service organizations.[28] One critic of the time pressure caused by rising work hours, asks if this pressure "is leading us toward not only a parent-free home, but also the participant-free civic society and the citizen-free democracy."[29]

The increase in work outside the home by both men and women has placed additional pressures on families.[30] At the same time that work hours have risen for average workers, mothers have been joining the labor force in increasing numbers. In the mid 90s, almost 70 percent of women with children at home were in the workforce.[31] The number continues to rise, and some project that 80 percent of mothers with young children will be employed by 2005.[32] Surprisingly, mothers are more likely to work outside the home than women without children. While part-time employment is a common choice for mothers of young children, in three-fourths of these dual-income families, both parents are working full time.[33] Although working mothers tend to work fewer hours on average than their female co-workers without children, the same is not true for fathers. Fathers tend to work longer hours then their male colleagues who do not have children at home.[34]

With both parents employed and many working longer hours outside the home than a generation ago, time with children has been affected, although not as much as many assume. The bad news is that mothers' time with children initially decreased as more mothers were employed and as overall work hours rose. Time with children dropped about 10 hours a week from the 1960s to the 1980s.[35] The good news is that, more recently, mothers' hours with their children have leveled off or are up slightly, and, surprisingly, employed mothers spend almost as much time in direct activities with kids as stay-at-home moms—although they do not have as many hours in the child's presence.[36]

That's All a Mule Can Do

Another piece of good news is that fathers' time with children, though still considerably shorter than mothers', is way up—thirty minutes per workday and over an hour per non-workday since the late 70s.[37] This is an important trend, because children with highly involved fathers generally have higher self-esteem and score higher on various scales: intellectual, social, and emotional.[38] Because of this sharp rise in the hours that fathers spend with children, the average child today has more time with parents each week than the average child of the early 80s.[39] It is interesting to note that higher-earning fathers generally spend less time with kids. "Every $10,000 increase in his earnings is linked with a five-minute decrease in average weekday involvement with his children." Parents with higher salaries not only spend less time with children, including less time helping children with their homework, but they also tend to have their children in day care for longer hours.[40]

Given the increase in work hours, it is not surprising to hear that day care hours are up overall, not simply among those making the most money. The good news is that kids in day care do pretty well, as long as it is good quality day care and the hours are not excessive. Many families with two employed parents do very well. In fact, in some studies, dual-income families report higher levels of satisfaction than more traditional families.[41]

The bad news is that, according to some studies from the 1990s, 12-21 percent of day care is so bad that it is estimated to be dangerous to "safety and development."[42] Given the importance of good day care for the well-being of our children, the United States needs better regulations and support, especially for poorer families who cannot afford better quality care.

As child care hours increased, so did "latchkey kids" who stay home alone regularly while their parents are at work. There were 7.5 times more latchkey kids from the 1970s to the 1990s. This statistic is significant because, according to several studies, these children generally have substantially higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse. Again, some studies show that professional families and wealthier families are more likely to leave their kids home alone, sometimes saying that it builds independence.[43]

Another factor in the balance of work in and outside the home is the tremendous gender gap in housework and care for children.[44] Many studies have shown a large difference between male and female work hours in the home, even when employment hours are the same. When both are working full time, some studies (especially earlier ones) report that women tend to put in 15-17 hours more per week in combined hours in and outside the home. Some of these studies indicate that husbands whose wives are employed full time spend only slightly more time doing housework than their colleagues whose wives are homemakers—about three to five hours a week. Even many of the more optimistic studies have shown women doing almost 70 percent of the housework. Surprisingly, blue-collar men, who are more likely to say they should not be doing more traditionally female tasks, tend to share more equitably than professional men, who think they should be sharing.[45] And in one small study, feminist dads were found to spend only 6 percent more time on housework than non-feminist dads.[46] (Not surprisingly, gay and lesbian couples tend to be the most consistently egalitarian in the sharing of household chores.)

This gender gap creates additional tensions in the household and marriage. Some studies suggest that wives and husbands tend to be more satisfied if husbands do a somewhat more equitable share of the work—a share that the wife thinks is fair. In my favorite study, women were 3 percent less likely to think about divorce for every five chores their husbands did regularly around the house.[47] Gentlemen, get out those vacuum cleaners. Here's another odd factoid. Men in second marriages tend to do more housework than those in their first. Maybe they are trying harder the second time around. There is one exception. Men who committed adultery in their first marriage and then married women whose first husbands committed adultery, are doing less housework in their second marriage.[48] I guess they are both just so proud he is not sleeping around. Who cares if he takes out the garbage!

There is good news on this front. The latest studies show the housework gap between employed men and women is narrowing, not simply because men are doing more but also because employed women are doing less.[49] The bad news is that our houses are dirtier than ever. Of course, this is no news at all to many of us.

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The most recent studies on this topic suggest not only that women are doing less housework but also that men are doing somewhat more. According to one study, in 1997 men spent an hour more and women 36 minutes less per day on housework than they had in 1977.[50] And note that, even though employed fathers do not spend as much time as employed mothers with children or doing housework, they are still, on average, spending much more time in these activities than a generation ago.[51] When you add this increase in work hours at home to the overall rise in employment hours for average workers, you see that fathers' total work hours, like mothers', are up significantly.

As parents try to fulfill responsibilities at home and at work, they often feel guilty. Not surprisingly, dad's guilt is up and mom's guilt has plateaued at high levels.[52] Seventy percent of employed parents feel that they spend too little time with their kids.[53] Arlie Hochschild refers to parents' employed work as the first shift, their work at home as the second shift, and their worry and guilt about shifts one and two as the third shift.[54]

How Do People Compensate?

Given the pressure on time at the home, how do people compensate? One way many parents seem to compensate with their children is with extra toys. Toy purchases were up 150 percent from the 80s to mid-90s and are still rising.[55] Parents who work the longest hours, generally spend the most on their kids. Some also compensate with organized, highly structured leisure activities. This has led some to dub middle-class kids the "new leisure class."[56]

What other ways to people compensate? Arlie Hochschild claims that workers compensate with emotional asceticism in the family.[57] They minimize what they think family members need—not only their children and spouse, but also themselves. As I noted before, personal time, or free time, is down more than 40 percent. Christopher Lasch has criticized the culture of narcissism and its self-centeredness. Hochschild writes in response, "For many working parents . . . 'narcissism' has taken an odd turn. Adapting to the rigors of time-bound lives, they steel themselves against both the need to care for others and the need to be cared for. Emotional asceticism then, is one defense against having to acknowledge the human costs of lost time at home."[58]

Hochschild also claims that many U.S. working parents compensate by regimenting and rushing the time that is available at home. While many management theories encourage relaxing the atmosphere at the workplace, many families are trying to bring greater regimentation and efficiency to the time left at home. And from some children's perspectives, time with parents does feel rushed. In one study, children were almost five times more likely than their fathers to think their time with their fathers was "very rushed."[59] And children were also much more likely than their parents to say that the parents were stressed and tired by work. These statistics are important because children who felt the time was rushed with mom or dad or felt that their parents were stressed by work, were also less likely to feel loved and accepted by their parents, and said they were less likely to talk with them about a problem.[60] Many of the families who have less time and are more rushed are middle-income.

How else do U.S. workers compensate for the time squeeze? Many workers cut back on community service and social engagement. As I noted previously, time given to civic and religious organizations has plummeted in the last four decades. On the good side, this decline does protect time so that it can be given to children and the household. On the bad side, the declining participation in civic and religious organizations undercuts the very institutions, relationships, and human communities that could provide support and a larger framework of meaning and purpose for working parents and their children.[61]

With all these pressures on the family, you would think that employees would be looking for ways to cut back at work by going part-time, job sharing, or reducing hours, for example. And some employees have done just that. This is enough of a trend to have a name—downshifting. In one study from 1990-96, almost 20 percent of workers claimed to have voluntarily made a decision to downshift by forgoing a promotion, changing jobs, or decreasing hours.[62] Most of these downshifters are not advocating radical change of lifestyle, but are simply stepping back their workload and making modest changes in their lives. By one report, 85 percent of voluntary down-shifters were pleased in retrospect that they had made the shift.[63]

This downshifting trend is not surprising when you consider the reported levels of stress in U.S. working families. In one study, 90 percent of workers said that they experienced these time conflicts. Only 9 percent felt that they balanced responsibilities at work and home well.[64] In another study, almost two-thirds of workers reported that they would like to work fewer hours. This is up 17 percent from 1992-97.[65] A 2001 study indicates that the pressures are increasing. In 2001, 58 percent of workers felt that it was harder to "juggle work and family demands" than it had been only four years before.[66] Given these statistics, what *is* surprising is that *only* 20 percent have downsized and that many workers do not use the opportunities that are provided to cut back, to take leave, or to take fewer hours.[67] Why are more people not cutting back?

Why Are More Workers Not Cutting Back?

First, some suggest that many working family members do not cut back their hours because the U.S. does not have the policies and a family-friendly culture in place to support these decisions. We need, then, better social policies, government and private policies, along with a culture and workplace that values family. There are many new studies looking at the effect of family-friendly policies on the bottom line. These studies ask what policies help employees and their families the most and what policies increase productivity and profits. Several studies indicate that no policy, or a policy that is not family-friendly, is bad, not only for employees but also for the bottom line, because it increases absenteeism and worker dissatisfaction while lowering retention rates. Allowing employees flexibility to change their hours to meet the needs of family members increases productivity and profits. Allowing employees to spend some of their work hours at home also increases productivity and employee satisfaction with the job. At the same time, however, it increases the employee's sense that work and home are imbalanced. Numerous studies have demonstrated that many family-friendly policies are also work and profit-friendly policies.[68]

Second, some suggest that people do not cut back at work because they actually like working. There are different ways of looking at this love of work, as a positive or a negative development. On the nega-

tive side, the job, according to Arlie Hochschild, has become a refuge for many harried parents who are stressed at home. We have witnessed profound changes in the pace and nature of work at home and in the labor force. With increased time pressures, time at home is becoming more regimented. Simultaneously, many companies are working to humanize the workplace. While men report that they are in a more "positive emotional state" at home, employed women report they are more likely to be in a "positive emotional state" on the job.[69] For many workers, especially women, employment is the primary place they make friends, feel appreciated, and feel good about their work. Instead of the home being "a haven in a heartless world," work becomes, for some, a respite from the chaos and dehumanization of home! Hochschild writes, "In this new model of family and work life, a tired parent flees a world of unresolved quarrels and unwashed laundry for the reliable orderliness, harmony and managed cheer of work."[70]

Others suggest that workers' enjoyment of their jobs is not a reflection of their unhappiness at home. Indeed, Galinsky and others insist that positive feelings about home tend to "spill over" into positive feelings about work, and vice versa.[71] In addition, from some religious perspectives, it is a good thing for people to like their work. Many Jews and Christians, for example, see work as a good part of human nature and a way that humans join with God in maintaining creation.

Third, another reason that some workers do not cut back is that many jobs do not provide a living wage.[72] Barbara Ehrenreich's gripping account of her failed attempts to live on her paycheck from low wage jobs has given wider public attention to the difficulties faced by the working poor even under the best of circumstances. The working poor, especially those with children, find it extremely difficult to secure affordable housing, child-care, food, transportation, and health care.

A fourth factor driving the increase in work hours is the rising level of American consumption and the subsequent increase in debt, described so vividly by Juliet Schor in *The Overspent American*. Schor argues that increased spending and consumption necessitate increased work hours to keep up. In addition, the spending is thought

to be a form of personal emotional compensation for working so hard. It becomes a therapy of the material for stressed, harried American workers.

This spend and work cycle becomes especially hard to exit when people go into debt. And, of course, that is what often happens. Credit card debt rose 100 percent from 1990 to 1996.[73] Recent reports indicate that it is even higher now. Household savings rates in the U.S., already much lower than in many other industrialized cultures, are down. In one study in the mid-1990s, 45 percent of American families (many of them middle-class) had not saved anything that year.[74] Consequently, many families, including many middle-class families, do not have much cushion to help them if they were to cut back their work hours or take unpaid family leave. Schor estimates that 60 percent of U.S. households "have so little in the way of financial reserves that they can only sustain their lifestyles for about a month if they lose their jobs."[75]

The high level of debt and low level of savings help me to understand a recent study in which 1,225 women were asked what they would be willing to give up for "the perfect body." Sixty-one percent said they would be willing give up chocolate. (I do not believe that for a minute.) Twelve percent said they would give up a limb to achieve the perfect body. (Evidently, neither the study creators nor the study participants would give up their tongues, which appear to be safely planted in their cheeks!) And 31 percent said whey would give up their life savings for a perfect body. This is a lousy trade unless, of course, these are the same people who have no life savings or, even better, negative savings. In either case, it is certainly a better deal than losing the chocolate.[76] (Someday, I would like to do a study on what kind of people dream up these wild studies!)

In spite of this increased debt and spending, many studies show that Americans are dissatisfied with what they have and want more. In 1987, when people were asked how much they needed to "fulfill their dreams," the average said $50,000 a year. Seven years later, the amount had more than doubled to $102,000.[77] Levels of perceived "need" have also risen. Asked if they could afford everything they "really need," those answering "no" included 42 percent of those making $50,000 to $75,000 and 27 percent of those making over

$100,000 a year.[78] When asked in the late 1990s what constitutes the good life, Americans included more consumer goods on their lists than they had in the 1970s. Ironically, even though families had more of these consumer goods, they were less optimistic about their odds of ever reaching the good life.[79] We see, then, higher levels of desire, increased dissatisfaction, and a sense of falling behind. Schor writes, "The story of the eighties and nineties is that millions of Americans ended the period having more but feeling poorer."[80]

What's happening here? Schor suggests that this ratcheting up of consumption and desire is driven by a change in our "reference groups," i.e., those with whom we compare ourselves.[81] We are less likely to compare ourselves with our neighbors (the Joneses), who likely make near the same amount we do, and more likely to compare ourselves to co-workers, especially those in the corner offices, who may make much more, and particularly to television characters who, on average, have much higher standards of living than the typical U.S. citizen. And we are much more familiar with the living rooms and lifestyles of these affluent television characters than we are with the living rooms and lifestyles of the people next door. It is no surprise that those who watch more television have a more inflated notion of what other Americans make.[82]

Schor also claims that competitive spending drives the process. People tend to buy more expensive, name-brand products when purchasing visible goods, but stick with cheaper generic products when the goods are less visible. A study of Harvard students, for example, indicated that they purchased higher-end lipsticks, which are often pulled out in public, but lower-end, generic facial cleansers, which are hidden safely at home in the medicine cabinet.[83] Ironically, according to *Consumer Reports*, expensive and inexpensive lipsticks are quite similar in quality, while the better facial cleanser is often much better than the generic variety.[84]

Given these statistics, it is not surprising that in one study 70 percent of those polled worry that our culture as a whole is "very materialistic." Even so, only 8 percent thought of themselves as too materialistic.[85] Religious people are not immune from this problem. In Robert Wuthnow's study of American materialism, he found that 89 percent of those polled felt that "our society is much too materialis-

tic," and 71 percent felt that "society would be better off if less emphasis were placed on money and that 'being greedy is a sin against God.'" But in the very same study, 84 percent said that they wanted more money, and 78 percent said that "having a beautiful home, a new car and other nice things" was "very" or "fairly important." Wuthnow notes, "What religious faith does more clearly than anything else is to add a dollop of piety to the materialistic amalgam in which most of us live."[86]

Let me highlight key images from this composite picture I have drawn. We have looked at patterns of overwork, at the resulting time-crunch with its effect on children, families, and broader communities; at the decline of leisure, sleep, and community service; and at the rise of emotional asceticism—minimizing the needs of self and family members and regimenting the time available at home and for oneself. This harried life, especially for the middle class, seems to be driven in part by overconsumption and increased desires that are never sated. Indeed, dissatisfaction continues to grow, along with consumption. Looking at these problems in U.S. families, you have to wonder, "What is going on here, theologically and morally?"

What Happened? Self-Orientation and The Therapeutic Mentality

There was a sign posted in the university gym where I used to exercise. The sign read: "There are Three Kinds of People in the World—Those Who Make Things Happen, Those Who Watch Things Happen, and Those Who Wonder, 'What Happened?'"

The sign was designed, of course, to inspire student athletes to go out and "make things happen" on the field and in the world. But I always thought to myself, "It is probably just as well to have a few people around whose job it is to wonder what happened, to wonder how we got to where we are today." That is a part of my job and the job of others working in educational and religious institutions.

When many experts—from social scientists and culture critics to theologians and politicians—look at problems with the family and the wider U.S. culture, what do they see as the underlying problem? Though the list of nominations for chief culprit is long, one of the most frequently assailed is the so-called "therapeutic culture" or "therapeutic mentality." This pervasive and popular argument,

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building on the work of Phillip Rieff, Christopher Lasch, Robert Bellah, and others, goes like this. (This is my composite summary of a widespread, popular argument and not specifically of Lasch, Bellah and Rieff themselves.)

Earlier traditions in our culture emphasized the fulfillment of obligations or responsibilities to family and larger community, often at the cost of one's own immediate happiness or fulfillment. In contrast, with the emergence of a therapeutic mentality in the 1960s and its growing pervasiveness in later decades, Americans experienced a shift in their model of the moral self that created, not so much a ripple effect, as a tidal-wave effect, especially in families and in public life. The self and its feelings became the primary reference point. Many Americans, this argument goes, came to focus not on obligation to others but fulfillment of self, not on delayed gratification but immediate gratification, not on sacrificial love but on self-love, not on community service but self-service, not on the fulfillment of duty but on the pursuit of pleasure. As Philip Rieff puts it, "Religious Man was born to be saved. Psychological Man is born to be pleased."[87]

There are hundreds of examples of this widespread argument, but I will highlight only two.[88] In Barbara Dafoe Whitehead's book, *The Divorce Culture*, she describes the transition "from an ethic of obligation to others and toward an obligation to self," including the "moral obligation to look after oneself," and outlines the "profound impact" this transition has had on U.S. ideas about family. The family is no longer centered on "voluntary commitment, duty, and self-sacrifice." Instead, people have come to judge "family bonds according to their capacity to promote individual fulfillment and personal growth." The family becomes "yet another domain for the expression of the unfettered self."[89]

Likewise, Sylvia Hewlett, in *When the Bough Breaks*, derides the "search for self-fulfillment" that began with a shift to the therapeutic mentality and outlines the devastating impact of this shift on children. She writes, "Not so very long ago love meant submission to a higher loyalty. . . . This kind of love was intermingled with selflessness, even self-sacrifice. But these old-fashioned notions strike the therapeutic sensibility as oppressive nonsense, guaranteed to get in the way of personal goals and private pleasures."[90]

So, when diagnosing the systemic sickness of our culture, particularly of our families, many point a suspicious finger at the therapeutic culture. While these assessments are partially accurate, I wonder if they get at the heart of the problems facing many U.S. families. Think again about the dual-income families described above and the ones you know in your extended families, religious communities, and workplaces. Do they fit this pattern?

Have they, under the sway of the therapeutic culture, allowed the value of self-fulfillment and the pursuit of personal pleasure to trump the fulfillment of obligations and responsibilities to others? The parents I have described are working hard in the labor force, often well over 40 hours a week. They like their work and take pride in doing a good job. They work many additional hours at home caring for their households, particularly their children, wanting to spend as much of their "free" time as possible with them. With increasing time in the workforce and with their children, they have less time for sleep, vacation, leisure, socializing, and sex. They minimize their own physical and emotional needs. They work hard and loaf little, yet they often feel guilty about neglecting job and family. Can we fairly accuse these people of failing to take their responsibilities seriously? Can we fairly accuse them of being overfocused on their own pleasure and fulfillment?

One Christian ethicist, outlining the shift to a therapeutic mentality with its focus on self-fulfillment, describes the problem of the family as a crisis of responsibility. She writes, "The majority of ethical problems faced by pastors in their offices and their own homes involve failures of responsibility."[91] Does that really fit our typical dual-wage family? I think not. By the way, that quotation is from a book called *The Pastor as Moral Guide*, by Christian ethicist Rebekah Miles. I guess H.L. Mencken was right. For "every human problem" there is a solution that is "neat, plausible, and wrong."[92]

But if the critics of therapeutic culture were right about the problem, the appropriate moral response, then, would be to encourage people to fulfill their obligations and to help them move away from excessive self-love and to choose, instead, either sacrificial love of others or a mutual love as equal regard that balances love for self and love for others. And this is precisely the direction the discussion often

takes. We find wide-ranging discussions of the proper place of sacri-
ficial love, mutual love (or love as equal regard), and self-love in
human relationships, especially in the family.[93] These discussions of
love are fruitful and are good examples of the way that religious
voices can bring crucial theological and moral categories to the table
of public discourse to help us think through matters of common
import. But what if their description of the problem is not quite
complete?

Let's take a moment to consider the ironies and conflicts of the
people I have described here. (I am taking liberties with some terms,
but you will know what I mean.)

• In their work life and habits, they are "Puritans without a
Purpose," working extremely hard, but often without the underlying
sense of divine calling and little leisure or Sabbath. You also could
call them "Puritans without a Sabbath."

• In their spending and consuming habits, they are "Epicureans on
a Fast." They value physical pleasure as much as any generations in
recent history and purchase wildly to obtain the objects of their
desires, but they have little time or energy left to indulge and to enjoy.

• In their family and relational habits, they are "Emotional Ascetics
who love to feel good." They value expression of emotion and
feeling, perhaps as much or more than any generation before them,
but have little time or energy for long, emotionally fulfilling
conversations, few people to talk with because they haven't the time
to keep up the relationships, and not much to talk about emotionally
because there is so little time left in their lives to reflect on life and
emotions, much less to have a high degree of self-consciousness
about their inner lives, so that they can come up with something to
talk about!

What Happened? Disorientation and Human Sin

When I think about these people, about the adults in this typical
dual-wage family I have been describing, working very hard to meet
their obligations to their employers and to their children, harried by
the competing claims on their time, having their desires shaped by
sophisticated marketing techniques, spending too much, but having
little time or energy left for basics like eating, housecleaning, and

sleep—much less for seeking after wild, gluttonous pleasures—I wonder if their problem is not self-centeredness, but the loss of their center altogether. Is theirs ultimately a problem of the self exalting itself and its feelings? Or is the problem more about the self losing account of itself and its feelings in finite things outside of itself? The problem may be rooted less in self-orientation and more in disorientation or misorientation. The self does not so much turn in on itself in pride or the intentional pursuit of self-fulfillment, but turns toward and loses itself in material goods and activities—in work, in consumption, and even in parenthood. From the perspective of Christian theology and ethics, we can see these as age-old problems of wrong desire and misdirected will.

Christian discussions of sin from Augustine to Reinhold Niebuhr to Rosemary Ruether and other Christian feminists offer a helpful resource for our reflections. Looking at ideas about human sin and sickness, we see the problem of the therapeutic self a little differently. In much Christian theology, sin is seen as turning away from God. Often we hear of sin as pride or self-centeredness—the turning away from God and turning inappropriately toward self.

Christians also speak of sin in another way—the turning not toward self, but toward some other thing or activity in the world.[94] People can lose both themselves and their proper central focus on God by overfocusing or inappropriately focusing on a child or mate, a job, alcohol, obsessive spending, and so forth. In the first kind of sin, the self is the center. In the second, the self is de-centered, diffused, or lost in the focus on something, someone, or some activity. Many feminists have rightly noted that Christian theology talks a lot more about sin as pride or self-centeredness than sin as loss of self or de-centering of self.[95]

Theologians like Reinhold Niebuhr have tended, when giving examples of this second kind of sin, which Niebuhr calls the "escape from freedom" or the "sin of sensuality," to think more about the loss of self in the misuse of substances or activities like sex and drug addictions.[96] Some feminists, drawing on and criticizing Niebuhr's model of sin, insist that for women and others with little social power, the problem is not so much self-centeredness *or* loss of self in addictive substances, but loss of the self in relationships or failing to take

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responsibility for one's self. Judith Plaskow refers to "the failure to take responsibility for self-actualization," and Susan Dunfee to the "sin of hiding."[97]

What does this discussion have to do with the hectic lives of our typical working parents? Feminist theologians, Niebuhr, and others remind us to see not just the sin of the self-centered, prideful person, but also the sin of the de-centered person. Perhaps, when we look at our culture, these definitions of sin might be relevant not only, as some feminists emphasize, to the powerless, but also to the powerful. Perhaps they are as fitting for the overprivileged as for the under-privileged, as suitable for the prosperous as for the poor.[98] If my description and diagnosis of the underlying problem are correct, then several other theological and ethical discussions are in order.

What Wondrous Love is This?

Given this analysis of human sin or sickness, how do we direct discussions of love? What I find interesting about the dominant discussions of love in the family debate and the criticisms of the therapeutic culture is that they are predominantly about the proper relationship of different kinds of loves between humans: sacrificial love, mutual love, self love, and so forth. This makes sense if you begin from the assumption that our problem is that we are self-centered. If our primary problem is undue self-centeredness and excessive interest in self-fulfillment, as the critics of the therapeutic culture claim, then it is appropriate to focus on how people can balance proper love of self with proper love for others, even self-sacrificial love.

But if you begin from the perspective that the sickness of many Americans is not so much self-centeredness as de-centeredness, then the discussion of love should move in other directions as well. There are other topics to consider beyond the typical focus on love between humans. First, in the good life, what is the proper love not just for other humans but also for material things (like consumer goods) and for human activities (like work)? This conversation is noticeably absent in theological and ethical discussions of family and work.

Second, if the ultimate problem is that the self has turned away from God, then surely a part of the remedy, if one is working from the

perspective of Christian theology, is reordering our loves in relation to God. Consequently, we need to engage in a discussion of the love of God and the ways that human love for God and God's love for humanity reorder other loves, including human love for family, work, possessions, and so forth. This discussion is also largely missing from the family debates.

Who Do We Think We Are?

Second, in these family and work discussions, many have focused on and criticized the emphasis in American culture on individualism, self-sufficiency, and individualistic pursuits of personal pleasure to the exclusion of, or even denial of, human embeddedness in and responsibility to community. I wonder if that is, in reality or in practice, the operating model of the self.

When I look at the fundamental disorientation of many Americans, at patterns of consumption, and at the ways that we inculcate desire for material things in our citizens, including children, through sophisticated, targeted marketing, I wonder, are we really fostering independence and self-sufficiency in our populace, or simply a disoriented dependence masquerading as independence and self-sufficiency? We need to ask, then, what sort of self are we, in practice, promoting in our culture? And what sort of self do we wish to promote? Religious and educational institutions are in a crucial place to engage in these discussions and to offer alternate models of the self.

What Then Shall We Do?

Third, if our problem is the loss of self in things or activities, or the misdirection of will or wrong desire, we may also ask what is the fitting response of theologians, ethicists, and other leaders of key institutions, whether religious or educational, business or political? Back to my sign at the swimming pool: we not only "wonder what happened," but we also ask what we might do to "make things happen" a little differently. For example, what would childcare, human resources management, counseling, preaching, social service, business management, public policy, or education (including education for work) look like if geared not to the therapeutic self always seeking its own fulfillment and avoiding its obligations, but the frazzled, de-centered self caught in and distracted by multiple

obligations and multiple avenues for fulfillment, but with little time to reflect on the various options and responsibilities?

To Till The Ground and To Keep It: Rethinking Human Vocation

The Vocation of Employment

One fitting response, especially for those of us in educational and religious settings, is to think more carefully and creatively about work and vocation using the resources of our religious and moral traditions. I focus here on a few areas of work and vocation where church-related universities and other religious institutions could help to rethink and shape our ways of working and our ideas about work.

First, church-related universities and other religious institutions could help their members (especially their younger members) and their larger communities to rethink employed work as vocation, as a way that humans participate in God's work in the world. Mission and service are not just the voluntary, extra things we do, but they can encompass our everyday jobs. I have been delighted to learn of the many new programs for students on work as vocation in colleges and universities across the country.

There are important religious resources for this reflection on work. We read in the creation story in the first chapters of Genesis that God works to create and maintain the world, and that God creates humans for work, "to till the ground and keep it." (Genesis 2:15) The ancient Christian Symeon the New Theologian, commenting on this passage, writes that humans were created "with a nature inclined to work . . . a natural bent for work."[99] Protestants and Catholics alike now see ordinary work, not just religious work in the church, as vocation or calling. Young people today will give a huge portion of their lives to their employment. It is crucial that church-related universities and communities of faith offer them resources for understanding their work on the job as vocation and for thinking carefully about the kind of work they will choose.[100]

Even the work of students and scholars can be holy work. Simone Weil writes of the way that ordinary study—conjugating verbs and working out mathematical problems—is a practice in spiritual attentiveness. She writes, "every school exercise . . . is like a

sacrament. . . . Paradoxical as it seems, a Latin prose or a geometry problem, even though they are done wrong . . . can one day make us better able to give someone in affliction exactly the help required to save him, at the supreme moment of his need." Philip Zaleski and Paul Kaufman reflect on Weil's claim. "As Weil sees it, schoolwork constitutes an exercise in attention. The memorization of grammar charts, the unraveling of geometry problems, the deciphering of an obscure Latin ode: each of these mundane assignments demands attention. . . . Attention is the essence of love, for it allows us to see our neighbor with empathy. Attention is the essence of prayer, for to pray is to attend with all our being to God. Weil's observations on schoolwork can easily be extended to any work carried out with loving attention, for all such work enlarges heart and soul; thus the famous Benedictine monastic saying, *laborare et orare* ('to work is to pray')."[101] In the end, that very attentiveness, whether learned by conjugating verbs, cooking dinner, or reading a manuscript, is the heart of faithful, loving presence.

Of course, as we uplift ordinary work as service and vocation, we can easily go too far. Our culture has an exalted view of employed work. It is the center of life in capitalist culture (and communist, too, for that matter) and is often the defining piece of who we are. If, as I am arguing, an underlying problem of our culture is that people tend to lose themselves and any vision of a larger center of value by overfocusing on finite activities, like work, then raising the value of work can never be the ultimate solution.

So, not only do we draw on scriptural, theological, and moral themes that exalt work as participation in God's work in the world, we also can use them to offer a realistic and even a lower view of work. It is surprising how little is said about work in Scripture. And when it is mentioned, it is often negative or pragmatic. On the negative side, in the third chapter of Genesis, work and toil are described as the punishment for Adam's disobedience. Work, the reason for human creation in chapter two of Genesis, becomes toil in chapter three. God tells Adam, "Cursed is the ground because of you, in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life." (Genesis 3:17) Reflecting on this passage, John Wesley wrote, "His business before he sinned was a constant pleasure to him; but now his labor shall be a weariness."[102]

Some ancient Christians claimed these punishments from God on Adam and Eve were a way of keeping humans in check, a "curb" to prevent their "further running riot," and a constant reminder of their disobedience.[103] The punishment of pain in human work, according to Chrysostom, provides "continual guidance in keeping to limits and recognizing your own makeup."[104]

This ancient ambivalence about work is not foreign to many of us today who sometimes recognize this "curse" of work. In a recent essay on the oddities of modern work life and the joy of the Sabbath, Martha Mendelsohn writes, "In this long post-Eden stretch, the punishment has become the prize. Lack of a work ethic is not the problem: the temptation is to spend all our time working. Stalked by technology, snared by our own creations, we have become our own worst taskmasters. We work late and work out weekends, honing our bodies, dulling our souls. Overtime is the norm. 'I am still at the office!' boasts a friend one Friday night at 10, in the tone she might have used in the past to announce she was in Paris or Hawaii. We worship a new idol: the God of Work. Should we relive the Exodus each Passover only to re-enslave ourselves the rest of the year?"[105]

Many scriptural references are not so much negative as simply pragmatic or realistic. By working, we are able to feed our families and ourselves and to care for the poor. Here, work is not exalted as the center of life, but as a prudential means to provide the necessities for one's household and for those in need. In the larger vision of Scripture it is not work but faithfulness or devotion to God that is the proper center of one's life. So, while rethinking work as vocation or as human calling to participate in God's work in the world, one also can affirm a more realistic view of work so that one not only thinks big about work as vocation, but also thinks little about work as one small but necessary part of life—a life whose ultimate end is found in God.

One religious resource for rethinking work in this smaller way is the book of Ecclesiastes. The writer of Ecclesiastes notes repeatedly that work, along with other human pursuits, is fleeting. He asks, "What do people gain from all the toil at which they toil under the sun?" (Ecclesiastes 1:3) The answer is, "not much." Work is vanity. This Hebrew word, *hebel*, often translated as vanity, absurdity, or meaninglessness, means "vapor." The Anchor Bible reads, "Vapor of vapors. All is vapor." Poof! Human work is fleeting.

Ecclesiastes writes again and again about the fleeting nature of human work but also insists again and again, nine times, that work is a good gift from God that brings pleasure. He writes, "I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil." (Ecclesiastes 3:12-13) Human work is not ultimate. It is always fleeting—a vapor. And yet, for Ecclesiastes, our work is not bad. On the contrary, work is a gift from God, and it, along with eating and drinking, is pleasure.

We see both in Scripture and in our culture, then, a tension. On the one hand, work is a part of our nature and our connection with God and God's purpose for us. And yet, the stories of the fall remind us that our work is toil and pain, and this toil reminds of our separation from God and the loss of what was intended for us. Ecclesiastes, for all its pessimism, brings both sides together. Work is fleeting. And work is a gift from God in which we should take pleasure.

The Vocation of Parenthood

We also need to rethink our work or vocation as parents (or others who provide care for children). Clearly, in much of the Christian tradition work as parents and family members is often considered, along with work on the job, to be vocation or religious calling. Caring for children is seen as holy work and a tremendous responsibility for people of faith. And many parents in the United States highly value their work caring for their children. Think about the parents I describe here, spending every extra hour they can find with their children, even if it means loss of sleep, loss of personal time, and less sex. At some level, most parents get it. They know that parenting is important.

Religious and educational institutions can help parents and future parents think about their work as parents more clearly and carefully. What are crucial tasks for raising children, especially in our time? What do parents provide for their children and want for them? And what *should* they provide and want? In a study reported several years ago, parents were asked what they wanted more than anything for their children. By wide margins, parents chose first not status, not wealth, not health, not even happiness. Their first desire was that their children grow up to be good, moral people. And yet, the material provision that these same parents offer their children and that our

culture offers to its children may not, in the end, support the ultimate goal that they become good, moral people. We give them more toys and money. We provide more organized leisure activities. And as a culture, we expose them to marketing that shapes and even misshapes their desire. Are we giving them what they need to become good, moral people?

I have been thinking about the many classic stories where the very provision that parents supply for their children's well-being leads to the children's downfall. The Trojan Queen Hecuba sends her young son Polydorus to the safety of another kingdom with a vast treasure that will provide for his needs should their kingdom fall. And, of course, it is precisely because of this treasure that Polydorus is killed. And there are other stories more familiar to many of us. Jacob gives his beloved son Joseph a coat, and that very coat, a gift of love, proves to be Joseph's undoing. Brothers Jacob and Esau are divided because of their struggle over their father's blessing and inheritance. God gives Adam and Even, his beloved children, a garden. And a tree in that garden, a gift of love, proves to be their downfall. How often we see that the very provisions offered for their children's care turn before the eyes of the parents into the instruments of their children's destruction. Might we, as parents and as a larger culture, be offering gifts that turn to curse?

Let me focus on one aspect: our material provision for our children and their participation in our consumer culture. As we have seen, parents today spend more on children than parents in the past. And many of our children, rich and poor alike, are keenly aware of spending and of the status that material goods convey. In several studies, children proved themselves to be masters at linking particular brand names with social status. They know how to read the status markers of a consumer society.[106] And, not surprisingly, they are concerned about having a piece of the pie for themselves and their families.

In one study, children were asked what one change they would like to see in their parents' work lives. Parents, by a huge majority, thought kids would want more time with their parents and for their parents to work less. But the number one things kids wanted as a change for employed mothers and fathers, was not more time, but that their

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parents would make more money.[107] Children's concern for money and material goods and their keen ability to read status from consumer goods have not emerged by accident. Not only have they learned by example, watching the larger culture around them, but they, along with the rest of us, are also now targets of specific marketing designed to increase their desire for consumer goods.

One of the ironies of the recent flaps over violence and sex on television is that so little is said about another danger—the intentional cultivation of desire—what many of us would call wrong desire, to sell products. Through World War II, marketing research focused on the question "What are consumers likely to buy?" After World War II, marketing research shifted, asking instead, "How can advertising shape what consumers like to buy? How can it form consumer desire?" As one shrewd senator from Wisconsin put it, "Our problem is not too much cheese produced, but too little cheese consumed." And we could add, "Too little cheese desired."[108]

Of course, making the amount of cheese that people want is quite different than making people want more cheese. And if it were just about cheese, we would not be having this discussion. There is a natural upper limit to how much cheese anyone could be convinced to purchase, much less consume. But it is not only about creating desire for cheese, but also for Chucky Cheese, Cheetos, and cheeseburgers in special kids' meals; for the newest, sexiest CDs, DVDs, and BVDs; and for more powerful cars, bigger houses, and the most perfect body that money can buy.

If we want our children to grow up to be, above all, good, moral people, and if we ourselves want to be good, moral people, how do we cultivate proper desire? How do we train and form our children so that they will be the people we want them to be, the people they should be? How do we love them and teach them to love, so that their loves will be properly ordered? How do we take care that our material provisions, given in love, do not prove to be their undoing? Educational and religious institutions have a crucial role in helping rethink and reshape desire. We need education to help us see through marketing and shape desire in proper ways. (University service learning programs may be a piece of this education.)

How do we help parents, or the people among us who may someday be parents, rethink their notions of the roles and responsibilities of parents in providing not only for the material needs of their children but also for their spiritual and moral training? By reminding people that parenting is vocation or religious calling, we can help them to remember the centrality of spiritual and moral formation in parenting. So, we need, in part, a higher sense of the work of parenting as vocation or calling with spiritual and moral ends.

But that is not the whole story. We also need a lower, more realistic view of parenting.

Yes, it is important for parents to focus on their children, but they can also overdo it or do it in the wrong ways. If an underlying tendency in our culture is to lose ourselves in finite activities and things outside of ourselves, then perhaps we face the danger of over-focusing on our children.[109] I hear anecdotal reports from teachers that many parents are now inappropriately invested in their children, intervening about their children's grades and assignments in ways that were less common even a few years ago. Many professors have told me stories of parents calling up to complain about the grade their 19 or 20-year-old son or daughter made on an exam.

Some have suggested that this overinvestment comes from our loss of community and meaning beyond the child. If the traditional saying goes "It takes a village to raise a child," the contemporary reality may often be that, in the absence of a village, the child becomes our village—our source of community and of meaning, and the focus of our attention and our aspirations.[110]

Perhaps this line of thinking helps explain the phenomenon of parental violence and other misbehavior at children's sporting events. Some parents may be overly invested in their children and in their children's success precisely because they have lost touch with the ordinary social communities that not only would have provided support for the families and children, but would also have provided a larger frame of reference—and especially with religious communities that would have provided a much larger frame of reference and center of value.

The irony, then, is that, at some point, parent's overinvestment in or overidentification with their children is bad for the children. It is

good for children to see that they are not the center of the world and that their parents value things that are larger than them and the family. They need to see their parents involved in communities and working with others for the larger public good. This overfocus on children also can be bad for parents. Parents, along with everyone else, need a larger center of value. Children, however extraordinary, are not the ultimate center of the world. They and their parents need to know that. While it is good and even holy to focus on children, it is dangerous to make idols of them. Our children are not our village. Our children are not our gods.

The Vocation of Citizenship

We also need to rethink our work as service to our communities beyond our employment and our families. Perhaps we could borrow the religious language of vocation to speak of civic engagement as calling. As we saw above, rates of civic engagement and service to community, whether in political, fraternal, educational or religious institutions, are way down—especially for the generations born between 1946-64 and 1965-80, popularly known as Boomers and Generation Xers.[111]

Of course, these downward trends are not inevitable. Universities and religious institutions that provide programs for young people have an important role in shaping a new generation for community service. Indeed, many universities and religious institutions are now emphasizing and even requiring community service. Perhaps as a result, the number of young people volunteering is on the rise. These efforts in universities may help create a new culture of community service.

This transition to a culture of service may prove to be difficult. In a study of people who graduated from college in the 1990s, 66 percent reported that volunteering was important or very important to their sense of well-being. And yet, only 15 percent regularly volunteered. The article asks why these recent graduates are "more likely to talk the talk than walk the walk?" The author suggests that the discrepancy may be linked to the work-dominated lives of many of the graduates. They simply do not have time, because they are working hard on their jobs. The author suggests that their failure to volunteer may also be traced to changes in our social climate away from valu-

ing public, community goods and toward valuing private, personal goods.[112]

Robert Putnam asks similar questions when he looks at changes in civic and social involvement in the last half of the 20th century.[113] The generations born earlier in the century had high levels of civic engagement, much higher levels than the generations of Boomers and Xers that come after them, and *also* higher levels than the generations before them. Why does this group have such high levels of civic-mindedness and civic participation? Putnam suggests that their civic temperament was shaped as they grew up and came of age in a time of national crisis facing war and depression, and as they were called upon by political, religious, and educational leaders to engage in patriotic and civic service to help the nation and their neighbors.

Our national and world crisis post-September 11th offers similar opportunities for the formation of the generation of young people now coming of age (and perhaps even for the transformation of some of us in older generations). To form and transform us for a renewed civic life, we need intentional calls for civic engagement and service in response to our crisis.[114] In the wake of the tragedy, the primary things we were called on to do by our president, by the mayor of New York, and by other national leaders were to work and to shop. From the perspective of the presentation I have given today, these activities are not the ultimate answer. Indeed, in excess they can be a big part of the problem. Clearly, if a new generation is to be shaped for service, commitment, and sacrificial living, we will need a call for something more.

In some of President Bush's recent speeches, given since this lecture was first delivered, you can see that he recognizes this need for a revival of voluntary community service. He and many commentators are now calling for greater commitment to civic vocation and responsibility. What is the nature of this new civic vocation? What is its center? One possibility is that the call to patriotism around the current war on terrorism will provide the focal point for renewed civic-mindedness. But is it preferable to shape civic-mindedness around something other than war? Might we, for example, shape civic-mindedness around compassion and justice and fellow feeling for those who suffer?

Counselor and self-help author Michelle Weiner-Davis objected to the claims that our national despondency after September 11th was caused by post-traumatic stress disorder. This is not a psychological disorder, she replied. This is our human condition. It is our nature to grieve when others grieve. It is our nature to suffer in the face of the suffering of our fellow humans.[115] What would it mean to build a civic spirit and a culture of civic engagement not around the call to war but around compassion and solidarity with fellow suffering wherever it is found?

Along with a call for a renewed civic engagement as a key part of human vocation, we also need a lower view of civic engagement. Given my larger claim that many in our culture tend to lose themselves in activities and things outside themselves, it will not do if we simply turn away from our ordinary focus on employment and home only to lose ourselves in overexalting country. However we frame the call for renewed civic life, people of faith must also remember that, however important one's loyalty to country, there is a higher loyalty. War and patriotism are grounds for civic spirit, but can become dangerous ground. Compassion at the suffering of others may be just as compelling and unifying, but with less risk of turning to idolatry—especially if the ground of compassion is one's ultimate loyalty to and love of God, who has created humans for love and compassion in the face of suffering. Civic vocation may at its best, then, be linked to the vocation of faithfulness.

The Vocation of Faithfulness

Many today would accept the overriding claim of Scripture and much Christian theology that the primary human vocation is the vocation of faithfulness to God expressed in the love of God and love of neighbor. This larger vocation as people of faith includes all the other aspects of work and vocation addressed here. And more important, the vocation as people of faith not only encompasses but also reorients all of those other parts of life and vocation. It is precisely as one sees one's vocations in relation to something larger than oneself—to God—that all other human activities find their proper place.

But the irony is that if the rest of our lives take up so much space and time that we have little space and time left for a life of faith, then

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it becomes very difficult to imagine how we might reorient our lives, or reshape desire, or understand our other work in the light of our ultimate vocation. To reflect on the chaos of our overwork, the frantic pace of our time, and the strange disorder of our lives in any thoughtful and transformative way takes time. And that is precisely what we do not have.

To rethink work and vocation and to reorient our lives, we must renew the Sabbath. Our captivity to work will only be broken in moments of rest in the presence of God, who not only frees us from captivity to distorted desire and to addiction but also puts in human hearts a desire for a life of freedom in God. We renew the Sabbath as a participation in the cycle of rest initiated by God in creation and given to humans as divine command and gift.

Abraham Heschel, in his book *Sabbath*, criticizes Philo, the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher of the first century, for his understanding of the Sabbath. Philo, responding to Roman charges that the Jewish practice of the Sabbath was a sign of sloth, argues, to the contrary, that the Sabbath refreshes the worker for more work. Heschel counters that Philo's claim about the Sabbath is not the point of the Sabbath at all. Heschel writes, "To the biblical mind . . . labor is the means toward an end, and the Sabbath as a day of rest, as a day of abstaining from toil, is not for the purpose of recovering one's lost strength and becoming fit for the forthcoming labor. The Sabbath is a day for the sake of life. Man is not a beast of burden, and the Sabbath is not for the purpose of enhancing the efficiency of his work. . . . The Sabbath is not for the sake of the weekdays; the weekdays are for the sake of the Sabbath. It is not an interlude, but the climax of living."[116]

Perhaps we are not beasts of burden. Like my grandfather, we may reach a point, at the end of our work, when we shake our heads and say, "That's all a human can do"—or even better, "That is what a human is to do." The Sabbath rest is what we were made for. "It is a day for the sake of life. . . . It is not an interlude, but the climax of living."

The Sabbath is not to be observed for some pragmatic, instrumental purpose or simply for personal pleasure. It is not a short burst of leisure—a weekend for Miller time—or a break to leave us refreshed for more work. And yet, by honoring the Sabbath for itself,

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for the sake of life, we might just stand a chance of remembering who we are and returning to work not simply refreshed for the grind, but with a renewed sense of a higher calling and higher allegiance that reorients all work and all of life. Perhaps, then, we will know how to work and live not like mules or horses, but like humans.

A Personal Postscript

As you have probably gathered, this subject is not just a matter of scholarly interest for me. My husband and I, the parents of two preschool daughters, are familiar with many of the same problems that bedevil other working families. We were not always so typical.

After marrying 21 years ago, we spent the 1980s out of sync with the trends of our culture. In the first half of the decade of greed, we were living in VW campers in the United States, Mexico, and Europe and eating macaroni and cheese out of frisbees. In the second half of the 1980s, we were living a sweet, spartan life in student housing while attending seminary and graduate school. But in the 1990s, we became frighteningly typical of many dual-income professional families. (It was frightening to us, anyway.) We worked long hours at our jobs—putting in over 80, and even 100, hours each week (and proud of it), letting our household, friends, family, and church slide, and accumulating a lot of high-end leisure equipment for people who had no leisure. (We even built a storage shed when our garage filled up. Storage unit rentals and sales are at an all-time high in the United States) Our spending was considerably higher than in the VW years. We ate not macaroni and cheese on a frisbee in the camper, but fettuccine alfredo on china in restaurants. (Of course, fettuccine alfredo is really nothing more than macaroni and cheese with fancy noodles and a fancy name.)

We kept that up until something happened that overturned our world—the birth of our first child. I have described life with a baby, now with two young children, as grueling bliss and enchanting servitude. Speaking of the alternating happiness and horror of life with young children, the reviewer of a new book on motherhood wrote, "How can one speak of this without sounding like a greeting card on the one hand or Medea on the other?"[117]

The pressures of work inside and outside the home became so intense after Anna's birth that we began to rethink how we worked. At

Anna's baptism, as at the baptism of Katherine and hosts of other little Methodist babies, we joined the congregation, saying, "We will so order our lives after the example of Christ that this child, surrounded by steadfast love, shall be established in the faith and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal." Standing there at the altar holding our daughter and surrounded by family, friends, and our church family, we began to think seriously about what it would mean to "order our lives" so that our child, now our children, would be "established in the faith." My husband, Len, left his job as a hospital chaplain to become a full-time dad and is now also in a part-time training program in spiritual formation and direction. I made a commitment to reduce my hours and slow my writing timetable. (My book on work and family would have been finished long ago if I had no family—except, of course, that I never would have started the thing or had much interest in these issues if I had no family!)

With Katherine's birth, chaos was added to chaos and joy to joy. I hate to admit that, given the chaos of our lives and the tastes buds of our girls, we have reverted back to a diet of macaroni and cheese. All these years of married life spanned by love, faithfulness, tender memories, and the same old bad food. (And, come to think of it, with all the dishes we have broken lately, frisbees are looking better and better!)

We changed our patterns of work, but I have found it difficult to carry the changes through. The work ethic of my grandmother took a little too well. Most days I "never let it rest." I wake up early and work hard, but it is never enough. I am always behind on my job. And my children miss me when I am not home and miss my full presence when I am home but preoccupied with thoughts of work. At the end of the day, I often shake my head and echo the words and weariness of my grandfather, "That's all a mule can do." And I wonder "What am I to do?" "How should a human work?"

Every time we baptize a little baby at our church and every time I think about our girls' baptisms, I wonder: How can we "order our lives" so that my children and all children—including the grown ones like us—are "surrounded by steadfast love?" Work is an ongoing struggle in my life. For me it is not just a mathematical problem about

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the number of hours in the day or the number of dollars needed to pay the bills. It is not simply a question of prudential calculation, but a question of who I am, what I love, and how I order my life.

Endnotes

1   For the use of balancing language, see, for example, Daphne Spain and
     Suzanne Bianchi, *Balancing Act: Motherhood, Marriage, and Employment
     Among American Women* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996);
     Melissa Milke and Pia Peltola, "Playing all the Roles: Gender and the Work-
     Family Balancing Act," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 61 (May 1999):
     476-490; and Douglas Hall and J. Richter, "Balancing Work and Home Life:
     What Can Organizations Do to Help?" *Academy of Management Executive*
     11 (1988): 213-23.

2   For a discussion of common metaphors used to describe this "balance," see
     Ellen Galinsky, "Navigating: A New Concept," *Ask the Children* (New York:
     William Morrow and Company, 1999), 223-25.

3   See, for example, Faye Crosby, *Juggling: The Unexpected Advantages of
     Balancing Career and Home for Women and Their Families* (New York: Free
     Press, 1991); Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 223-25.

4   Don Browning et al, *From Culture Wars to Common Ground: Religion and
     the American Family Debate* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press,
     1997). For more information about the Family, Religion and Culture Project,
     see its Web site at http://divinity.uchicago.edu/family/. See also Penny
     Becker's, Religion and Family Project at http://hirr.hartsem.edu/research/
     family_Becker-projectindex.html#full%20reports. The Catholic Theological
     Society of America also sponsored a series of discussions about the family at
     the request of the United States Catholic Bishops' Committee on Marriage
     and Family that will be published in a book edited by William P. Roberts.

5   The Families and Work Institute, "1998 Business Work-Life Study,
     Executive Summary," New York: The Families and Work Institute, 1998
     (found at http://www.familiesandwork.org); The Families and Work Institute
     (James Bond, Ellen Galinsky, Stacy Kim), "Feeling Overworked: When
     Work Becomes too Much, Executive Summary," New York: The Families
     and Work Institute, 2001 (found at http://www.familiesandwork.org); The
     Families and Work Institute (James T. Bond, Ellen Galinsky, and Stacy Kim),
     "The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive
     Summary," New York: The Families and Work Institute, 1998 (found at
     http://www.familiesandwork.org); Ford Foundation, "Rethinking Life and
     Work: Toward a Better Future, Executive Summary," New York: Ford
     Foundation, 1997; Alan L. Saltzstein, Yuan Ting, and Grace Hall Saltzstein,
     "Work-Family Balance and Job Satisfaction: The Impact of Family-Friendly
     Policies on Attitudes of Federal Government Employees," *Public
     Administration Review* 61 (July 2001): 452; and Christine Siegwarth Meyer,
     Swati Mukerjee, and Ann Sestero, "Work-Family Benefits: Which Ones
     Maximize Profits?" *Journal of Managerial Issues* 13 (Spring 2001): 28.

6   Robert Putnum, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American
     Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000). Putnam claims that
     increasing employment hours account for a modest percentage (10%) of the
     decline in social engagement. Juliet Schor sees the rise of work hours as a

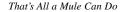more significant factor. Juliet Schor, *The Overworked American* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).

7   See for example, Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1958); Jacques Ellul, "Work and Calling," in *Callings*, ed. J. Holloway and W. Campbell (New York: Paulist Press, 1974), 18-44; Abraham Heschel, *The Sabbath* (HarperCollins Canada Ltd., 1951); Leland Ryken, *Redeeming the Time: A Christian Approach to Time and Leisure* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 1995); Miroslav Volf, *Work In The Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). I dealt with this topic in chapter three of *The Pastor as Moral Guide* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999).

8   Although I am focusing here on workers with children in the home, many of these statistics apply to other workers as well.

9   Many studies have documented these changing work patterns over 50 years. For information on these changes and their impact on family life, see especially Schor, *The Overworked American*; Arlie Hochschild, *The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998); Rosalind Barnett and Caryl Rivers, *She Works/He Works: How Two Income Families are Happy, Healthy, and Thriving* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996); and the studies from the Work Life Institute and other studies cited in note 5 above.

10   Schor, *The Overworked American*, 30-32. These numbers are based on information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

11   The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 8. The same study also reports women working 250 hours more on the job. Others (e.g., Ellen McGrattan, Richard Rogerson, John Robinson, and Geoffrey Godbey), claim that overall work hours are down and leisure is up. The difference in numbers can be accounted for, in part, by inclusion of young retirees and other nonworkers in these latter studies. See Robinson and Godbey, *Time for Life: The Surprising Way Americans Use Their Time*, 2nd ed. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1999) and McGratten and Rogerson, "Changes in Hours Worked Since 1950," *Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Quarterly Review* 22 (Winter 1998): 2-19, quoted in Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 190 and 474. See, also, Godbey and Robinson, "Are Average Americans Really Overworked?" *The American Enterprise* 6 (September-October 1995): 43ff; M. Peyser, "Time Bind? What Time Bind?" *Newsweek* 129 (May 12, 1997): 69; and Alan Haight, "Padded Prowess: A Veblenian Interpretation of the Long Hours of Salaried Workers," *Journal of Economic Issues* 31 (March 1997): 29ff. Although the numbers are disputed, the evidence is compelling that full time United States employees—particularly professional, managers, and some blue collar workers—are putting in significantly longer hours.

12   Thirteen percent of wage and salaried employees hold a second job. The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 8. One point of disagreement is whether (or how much) workers, especially salaried professional workers, over-report overwork. In a Veblenian reflec-

tion on work, service workers in our contemporary economy are compared to empty handed hunters who must feign exhaustion to prove their effort because they do not produce an obvious product that proves their hard work. Haight, "Padded Prowess."

13 F. Minirth et al, *How to Beat Burnout* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 83.

14 David Briggs, "Clergy are Workaholics," at www.webedelic.com/church/clergyworkf.htm. This study was also reported in *Christianity Today*.

15 The Families and Work Institute, "Feeling Overworked: When Work Becomes too Much, Executive Summary."

16 Schor, *The Overworked American*, 22, and Ryken, *Redeeming the Time*, 41.

17 For more on changing sleep patterns, including the affect of overwork on sleep, see Schor, *The Overworked American*, 11 or 22; Catherine Golub, "Sleep-Starved Americans: How To Keep Your Body Clock On Schedule," *Environmental Nutrition* 23 (October 2000): 1.

18 Terence Kealey, "Slaves to the Status," *New Scientist* 163 (July 10, 1999): 53.

19 The National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 6. See also Schor, *The Overworked American*, 22.

20 The National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 2 and "Long hours may be hazardous to your health," *Worklife Report*, 12 (Summer 1999): 4.

21 J. Walljasper, "The Speed Trap," *UTNE Reader* (March-April 1997): 46. See also V. Bielski, "Our Magnificent Obsession," *The Family Therapy Networker* 20 (March/April 1996): 27.

22 For information on health problems related to overwork, see "Long hours may be hazardous to your health," 4; Kate Sparks, Cary Cooper, Yitzhak Fried, and Arie Shirom, "The effects of hours of work on health: a meta-analytic review," *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* 70 (December 1997): 391; and Terence Kealey, "Slaves to the Status." *New Scientist* 163 (July 10, 1999): 53.

23 Putnum, *Bowling Alone*; Schor, *The Overworked American*; and Hochschild, *The Time Bind*.

24 Putnum, *Bowling Alone*, 57.

25 Penny Edgell Becker, "It's a Matter of Time Exploring the Relationship between Time Spent at Work and at Church," *Religion and Family Project*, 2000 (found at http://hirr.hartsem.edu/research/family_Becker-time.html).

26 Putnum, *Bowling Alone*, 72.

27 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 243

28 The volunteer numbers are up, however, for young people, perhaps because universities are emphasizing and even requiring service.

29 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 243-44.

30 Although I am focusing here primarily on two-parent, mother/father households, the statistics and problems are also relevant for single-parent households, gay and lesbian households, etc.

31 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 6.

32 Barnett and Rivers, *She Works/He Works*, 112. (I have never seen the

statistics on the percentage of fathers employed.)

33 The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 2.

34 Ibid., 8.

35 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 6.

36 Barnett and Rivers, *She Works/He Works*, 105.

37 The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 6 and Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 61.

38 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 236, and Galinsky, *Ask the Children*.

39 The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 2 and 5-6.

40 Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 141, 143, and Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 199.

41 A brief summary of the effects of day care and maternal employment on young children can be found in Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 51-57. Also, it is interesting to note that 55% of children in dual-wage households are cared for not by child care workers but by family members. The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 6. See also Melanie Brown-Lyons, Anne Robertson, and Jean Layzer, *Kith and Kin—Informal Child Care: Highlights from Recent Research* (New York: National Center for Children in Poverty, 2001, found at http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu: 80/dept/nccp/kithkin.html, April 2002).

42 Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 16.

43 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 224, 10; Sylvia Hewlett, *When the Bough Breaks: The Cost of Neglecting our Children* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 84.

44 For a more complete examination of the gender gap in housework see Francine Deutsch, *Halving it All: How Equally Shared Parenting Works* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Arlie Hochschild, *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home* (New York: Viking, 1989); The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary; Barnett and Rivers, *She Works/He Works*, 175-88; Suzanne Bianci, Melissa Milkie, Liana Sayer, and John Robinson, "Is Anyone Doing the Housework? Trends in the Gender Division of Household Labor," *Social Forces* 79 (September 2000): 191.

45 Deutsch, *Halving it All*, 252.

46 Paul Bauman, "You Will Eat Again: On the Front Line of the Gender Wars," *Commonweal* 128 (May 4, 2001): 8.

47 Hochschild, *The Second Shift*, 214.

48 Deutsch, *Halving it All*, 264.

49 Bianci, Milkie, Sayer, Robinson, "Is Anyone Doing the Housework?" 191.

50 The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 6. Bianci, Milkie, Sayer, and Robinson, "Is Anyone Doing the Housework?"

51 The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 6.

52 For reflections on parental guilt see Galinsky, *Ask the Children*; Barnett and Rivers, *She Works/He Works*, ch. 2; and Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 11.

53 The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 6.

54 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 83.

55 From $6.7 billion in 1980 to $17.5 billion in 1995. Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 217.

56 Ryken, *Redeeming the Time*, 67.

57 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 221-29.

58 Ibid., 229. Looking at the statistics on how working parents are spending their time, I am more skeptical that parents are practicing emotional asceticism with their children. They seem to be spending much of their available non-working hours with their children at a cost to time as individuals and couples. Emotional asceticism in relation to self and spouse does not seem to fit the statistics.

59 Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 88. Note that this is a small percentage of children—14%—who think the time with dads is "very rushed." Another 23% felt that the time with dad was "somewhat rushed."

60 Ibid., 88-89 and 173-77. Galinsky found kids who felt that their time with their fathers was rushed rated their fathers lower on "appreciating me for who I am" and "being someone I can go to when I am upset."

61 Schor claims that the decline in civic engagement is linked with rising work hours. Putnam sees increased work hours as one small part of the problem.

62 Juliet Schor, *The Overspent American* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998), 113.

63 Ibid.

64 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 199-200.

65 The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary, 8, and Alan L. Saltzstein, Yuan Ting, Grace Hall Saltzstein, "Work-Family Balance and Job Satisfaction: The Impact of Family-Friendly Policies on Attitudes of Federal Government Employees," *Public Administration Review* 61 (July 2001): 453.

66 American Association of University Women, "Survey finds work and family demands increasing," *Providence Business News* 16 (August 27, 2001): 7B.

67 Several authors have noted the failure of many working parents to use these policies. See, for example, Saltzstein, Ting, Hall Saltzstein, "Work-Family Balance and Job Satisfaction;" Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 26ff; Ann Vincola, "Cultural Change is the Work-Life Solution," *Workforce*, October 1998, 70-73.

68 For summaries of these studies showing the effects of family-friendly policies on profits, absenteeism, productivity, etc., see Saltzstein, Ting, Hall Saltzstein, "Work-Family Balance and Job Satisfaction;" Siegwarth Meyer, Mukerjee, and Sestero, "Work-Family Benefits: Which Ones Maximize Profits?" 28; The Families and Work Institute, "Feeling Overworked: When Work Becomes Too Much, Executive Summary;" and The Families and Work Institute, "The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Executive Summary."

69 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 40-41. See also, Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 170-71, and Barnett and Rivers, *She Works/He Works*. Putnam claims that workers' sense of satisfaction on the job declined in the late 1990s, and that they were happier off the job than on the job. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 91.

70 Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 44. See also Hochschild, *The Time Bind*, 35-52. Hochschild's claim has been widely criticized. Galinsky, for example, insists, contra Hochschild, that in her studies workers experience greater stress at work than at home. Parents report feeling "very stressed" by work 4 times as often as they do feeling very stressed by care for their children. Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 158.

71 Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 168-97. See also Barnett and Rivers, *She Works/ He Works*.

72 See Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2001). For more on this topic, see Christine Hinze's unpublished work on family and the living wage and many Web sites on current initiatives to enact a living wage. This paper focuses more heavily on middle-class families. The issues themselves, however, are highly relevant for poorer families. This subject will be addressed more fully in other parts of the project.

73 Schor, *TheOverspent American*, 72.

74 Ibid., 20.

75 Ibid.

76 "What Women Want," *American Way*, October 1, 2001, 48.

77 Schor, *TheOverspent American*, 14.

78 Ibid., 6-7.

79 Ibid., 15-17.

80 Ibid., 18.

81 Ibid., 74-83.

82 Ibid., 80.

83 Ibid., 48-54.

84 Ibid., 51.

85 Ibid., 83.

86 Robert Wuthnow, "Pious Materialism: How Americans View Faith and Money," *The Christian Century*, March 3, 1993, 239-42.

87 Quoted by William Kilpatrick in "Faith & Therapy," *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* no. 90 (February 1999): 21. Note that there are differences in Rieff, Lasch, Bellah. This composite argument that I describe above is quite common in academic and popular discussions.

88 In word searches on Infotrac in the spring of 2001, I found 144 articles that addressed "therapeutic culture," along with many others on therapeutic society, therapeutic ethos, and therapeutic mentality. These references are quite common, especially in the last five years. While this criticism of the therapeutic mentality has been associated with neoconservatives, it is in wider use now.

89 Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, *The Divorce Culture*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 4-5.

90 Sylvia Hewlett, *When the Bough Breaks: The Cost of Neglecting Our Children* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 105-06.

91 Miles, *The Pastor as Moral Guide*, 36.

92 H.L. Mencken, "The Divine Afflatus," *Prejudices: Second Series* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1920), 158.

93 See, for example, Browning and his co-authors with their focus on mutual love and equal regard within the family. Browning, *From Culture Wars*.

94 See, for example, Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation* Vol. 1, *Human Nature* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941), 185ff.

95 See, for example, Daphne Hampson, "Reinhold Niebuhr on Sin: A Critique," *Reinhold Niebuhr and the Issues of Our Time*, ed. Richard Harries (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986); Valerie Saiving, "The Human Situation: A Feminine View," *Journal of Religion* 40 (April 1960): 108-10; Judith Plaskow, *Sex, Sin, and Grace: Women's Experience and the Theologies of Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1980); Judith Vaughan, *Sociality, Ethics and Social Change: A Critical Appraisal of Reinhold Niebuhr's Ethics in the Light of Rosemary Ruether's Works* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983); and Susan Dunfee, *Christianity and the Liberation of Women* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Claremont Graduate School, 1985). For an analysis of feminist and Niebuhrian understandings of sin, see Rebekah Miles, *The Bonds of Freedom: Feminist Theology and Christian Realism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

96 Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, 185-86.

97 Plaskow, *Sex, Sin, and Grace*, 3, and Dunfee, *Christianity and the Liberation of Women*. Note in these discussions of sin that it is not wrong or sinful to focus on or to love the self and other people, activities, or substances in the world, but that, in turning away from God, these good human loves tend to get out of kilter. The love of God, then, reorders these other good human loves.

98 Robin Lovin also suggests that this second kind of sin is particularly appropriate for some sectors of Western culture today. Robin W. Lovin, *Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Realism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 147-49.

99 Symeon the New Theologian, in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Genesis 1-11*, ed. Andrew Louth (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 60-61.

100 Encouraging students to think about all honorable work as vocation does not preclude encouraging them to choose explicitly religious vocations when appropriate. A colleague of mine has an explanation for the high numbers of second-career students in seminaries across the country. My colleague believes that they were called to ordained ministry much earlier, but that their churches and universities failed to provide the context and support for them to hear their calls to ordained ministry until later in life.

101 Philip Zaleski and Paul Kaufman, *Gifts of the Spirit* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 60. Zaleski and Kaufman are quoting Simone Weil from her essay "Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God," *Waiting On God* (London: Fontana Books, 1959), 75-76.

102 John Wesley, *Notes on the Old Testament*, Genesis 3:17.

103 Chrysostom, in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Genesis 1-11*, 92-93.

104 Ibid., 95.

105 Martha Mendelsohn, "Observing the Sabbath," *Tikkun* 11 (May-June 1996): 43.

106 Schor, *The Overspent American*, 37-39, 47, and 87-88.

107 Galinsky, *Ask the Children*, 93-95.

108 John Easton, "Consuming Interests," *University of Chicago Magazine* 93 (August 2001): 16.

109 Daniel Kindlon, *Too Much of a Good Thing: Raising Children of Character in an Indulgent Age* (New York, Hyperion, 2001).

110 See Deborah Luepnitz, *Child Custody: A Study of Families after Divorce* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1982), and Luepnitz, *The Family Interpreted: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and Family Therapy* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002).

111 Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 247-276.

112 "Practicing What You Preach: Gauging the Civic Engagement of College Graduates," *Change*, November 2000 (from http://www.findarticles.com on September 26, 2001).

113 Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 247-276.

114 For a similar argument, see Robert Putnam, "A Better Society in a Time of War," *The New York Times*, Friday, October 19, 2001, A19.

115 Michelle Weiner-Davis, e-mail message from "SmartMarriages," e-mail newletters archived at http://www.smartmarriages.com.

116 Heschel, *The Sabbath*, 14.

117 Julie Stephens, "The Mask of Motherhood: How Mothering Changes Everything and Why We Pretend It Doesn't" (book review), *Arena Magazine* no. 35 (June-July 1998): 51.

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