

fix their own snacks; the husband may be working shifts and not expect dinner; the house may stay tidy because it is empty—yet part of housework is maintaining a communications link for others. Someone has to be there in case the metre-reader comes or the school calls or a pipe bursts (pp. 110-111).

For me, the "on call" component stretches far into the night when, in anticipation of a child's arousal, I find that I sleep less deeply than my spouse.

Kome's book touches on most of the relevant issues even if she sometimes does it in an irritating fashion. For example, while Kome pays rather casual lip service to some of the pioneers in the field, she is less than modest about her own contribution:

It's been very helpful to have Ann Oakley, Jessie Bernard, Gerder Lerner, Rae Andre,

Meg Luxton, Barbara Ehrenriech, and Deirdre English as reference points. But I do not think that any other book covers exactly the same territory as this one! (p. 14)

In actual fact, her book is really a popular précis of relevant academic literature. Most of her concepts are not original and any claim to Canadian content is not really valid. While I frequently recommend popular books over academic ones, in this instance Ann Oakley's work is so readable that it renders Kome's book unnecessary (to be fair, Kome does include ideas from several more recent pieces on housework published after Oakley).

A second criticism is methodological: Kome does not make much use of her newly acquired survey data. Rather, she rambles on in an anecdotal, unsystematic fashion with little reference to numbers.

While I'm not personally partial to the numbers game, it does seem a bit strange to organize a massive survey research project and then end up reporting in detail on only thirty four women. Kome offers us little in the way of statistical generalizations and concomitant explanations and she is somewhat vague about her methodological objectives.

In spite of these stylistic and methodological criticisms, and the book's general redundancy, Kome's book is an easy read and is readily affordable as a paperback. It is therefore an excellent gift for friends and neighbors (of both sexes). In fact, why not give a copy to your spouse or "roommate," or try taking it next time you're invited out to dinner instead of a bottle of wine?

Books Received

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Nym Hughes, Yvonne Johnson and Yvette Perreault, *Stepping Out of Line: A Workbook on Lesbianism and Feminism*. Vancouver: Press Gang, 1984.