**Roles within domestic labour are equal**

According to sociologists Michael Young and Peter Willmott (1973) domestic labour within the family are becoming more equal. They argue that domestic roles within the family have become more symmetrical over time and husbands and wives are more equal in sharing household chores and childcare. Young and Willmott stated that men and women may still be taking on different roles within the family but there is still greater equality between the two.

The arguments of Young and Willmott have been further supported by other sociologists such as Jonathan Gershuny (1994); he found that wives who worked full time jobs did less domestic tasks. His research showed that the longer the wife had been in paid work the more likely the husband was to help out at home. Gershuny explains that couples whose parents had highly equal roles were more likely to share domestic work themselves.

Silver and Schor (1993) – the commercialisation of housework; Silver and Schor argued that newer products (such as washing machines etc.) have made housework easier and more efficient which has influenced more symmetry within conjugal roles. Due to women being more involved with paid employment, they have learnt to take on responsibilities that encourage them to share roles as a necessity.

A study conducted by *The Future Foundation* (2000) shows that since the 1960s, roles within the household between men and women have become much more equal: men, on average, now partake in 50 minutes of housework daily, compared to partaking in 10 minutes daily in the 1960s. Women also now do an average of 90 minutes daily in contrast to the 110 minutes in the 1960s. This highlights an evolvement of symmetry between gender roles within domestic labour. The survey also showed that in 2000, 60% of men claimed to do more housework than their fathers did, and 75% of women claimed to do less housework than their mothers.