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Capturing the Golden Ring of Tenure

On February 12, 2010, a forty-two-year-old biology professor walked into a faculty meeting at the University of Alabama at Huntsville. Amy Bishop, a Harvard-educated mother of four, had that same day been denied an appeal of her negative tenure decision. Drawing a pistol, Bishop shot three of her colleagues dead. Two other faculty members and an assistant were wounded.

In the days that followed, a strange outburst of empathy for the accused shooter emerged. Despite numerous reports that Bishop had a long history of erratic and violent behavior, many observers chose instead to blame the tenure system. Consider a typical post on the *New York Times* website: "Tenure strains institutions in ways that would never happen in industry. This tragedy is evidence of how the ivory tower is bent to breaking by the bizarre all-or-nothing prize of a job for life. . . . Tenure is costly. For it warps the behavior of those within the tower in two ways. Either they can be paid unduly while coasting, or they endure the drama of being denied that chance by peers who use tenure to enforce inflexible orthodoxy. And now murder."[1] Another *Times* reader went even further, implying that anyone denied for tenure was at risk for a shooting spree: "May we learn lessons from this event? Perhaps it will heighten our understanding of and sensitivity to the emotional states of individuals who have invested twelve or more years of their post-baccalaureate lives and have succeeded to the point of being evaluated for promotion with tenure."[2] Despite the misguided attributions of blame, these posts tap into a common sentiment in the academy: tenure is a tremendously fraught commodity. For young scholars, years of investment in an academic career hinge on a single up-or-out decision. The stakes are equally high for universities in that conferring tenure will lock the institution into a lifetime commitment of employment.

Some onlookers sought to explain Amy Bishop's shooting spree on the basis of gender; she was a woman (and a wife and a mother) in a man's world. "I can't help but observe that this was a woman in a male-dominated institution in a male-dominated field in a conservative part of the country," wrote one *New York Times* reader.[3] Compounded by a negative tenure decision, this was ostensibly enough to push her over the edge. Prominent observers also see a gender problem with tenure. Princeton University president Shirley M. Tilghman argued that the tenure system should be dropped because it makes huge demands on women at a time when they are already stressed out with young families.[4] Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson, a Texas Democrat and senior member of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, introduced legislation that would, among other reforms, stop the university tenure clock for scientists with newborn children. "Federal policy makers must be more proactive in stopping the leaky pipeline that results in women departing at every major transition point while pursuing careers in engineering, physics, technology, and related fields," Johnson said.[5]

The Road to Tenure

The road to tenure can last up to ten pressure cooker years, although five to seven years is more common.[6] Job security is tenuous, and publishing peer-reviewed articles (or monographs, depending on the field) is necessary for survival. In the sciences, most assistant professors must also secure grant funding in order to subsidize their research—an increasingly difficult challenge, as federal investment in basic science research has declined in recent years.[7] Although some colleges and universities ease the process with close mentoring and regular feedback, many do not. New faculty are under daily pressure to prove that they are good teachers and are good citizens in their departments and universities and, most of all, that they have what it takes to become noted scholars. Teaching colleges, which once required only good performance in the classroom, are now more likely to require publications. One of our colleagues, now a full professor in political science, recounted his first years on the job: "The first two years I had to teach four new courses, two of which [were in subjects] I had never studied myself. One class was a large lecture, three hundred students, with six TAs. I'll bet I spent fifty hours a week just on that course and at the end the students gave me evaluations that truly stank. It got better, but at the end of two years I had only written about twenty pages—I still had a book and three articles to complete for tenure."[8]

When judgment day arrives, a candidate's credentials are carefully scrutinized both within the university and outside it. The process can be agonizingly long and the result, if negative, a crushing defeat. Assistant professors denied

tenure must leave the university. Furthermore, the chances of finding another tenure-track position at a similar institution have been tarnished by a tenure denial. A recent sample of schools in the Association of American Universities suggests that just over half of assistant professors get tenure.[9] The rate is higher at schools where research is less important.[10]

The Winners and Losers in the Tenure Race

At the end of the day, women are less likely to get tenure than are men. The previous chapter told a clear story: marriage and children explain why women enter tenure-track positions at a far lower rate than do their male colleagues. We might expect a similar result for women's tenure decisions. It seems obvious that children should make it more difficult for a female assistant professor to complete the work necessary for promotion, but the Survey of Doctorate Recipients reveals that the story is more complex and appears to depend on the academic discipline. Our results raise questions about the possibility of gender discrimination not directly associated with motherhood. An ongoing series of Title VII lawsuits have pursued this theory, with, as we shall see, mixed results. And finally, there is the current debate about tenure itself. Does it inherently put women at a disadvantage? What would an academic world without tenure look like? Can tenure be reformed without being fundamentally undermined?

Looking at all academic disciplines, women are 21 percent less likely to get tenure than are their male colleagues.[11] However—and to our surprise—this result does not vary by either marital status or the presence of young children. Married women fare no better or worse than do single women. The mothers of young children are no less likely to get tenure than are childless women.[12] In all cases, women do worse than men.

The story is very different when we focus just on the sciences (including the social sciences). Having young children dramatically reduces the likelihood of tenure for female faculty members in the sciences. A female scientist with a preschool-age child (in other words, a child under six years old) is 27 percent less likely to get tenure compared with a man who has a small child. If that same woman does not have a young child, she is only 11 percent less likely to get tenure than is a male scientist.[13]

Why are the scientific disciplines particularly hard on mothers? As we have seen, the pool of women scientists who enter the tenure track is already shallow. For the women who do persist, the lack of female colleagues in some science fields may contribute to a work environment that's especially inhospitable to mothers. Angelica Stacy, a professor of chemistry at UC Berkeley, recalls bringing her newborn child and her mother (as a babysitter) to a scientific conference some twenty years ago: "There was no childcare, there were no children,

and, in fact, there were very few women. They threw my mother and my baby out of the conference. They said it was unprecedented."[14] This would not occur today, but cultures change slowly.

The need to put in long hours in a lab and the requirement to secure competitive funding almost certainly put mothers at a disadvantage in the race for tenure. These are challenges that scholars in the humanities generally do not face. And federal grants, the source of funding for most scientific research, offer little accommodation for childbirth and motherhood.[15] Securing grant funding is a critical component of tenure success for faculty and researchers in the sciences. Among academics working at major research universities, professors are 65 percent more likely to achieve tenure when directly supported by federal grants.[16] Obtaining funding is so critical to success that its importance is nearly equal to making a significant scientific discovery, as Steven Cohen, director of Columbia University's Earth Institute, recently lamented: "Over the past two decades, I fear that we have reached a tipping point, where our top scientists are spending a larger and larger portion of their time raising funds and less and less time devoted to science."[17] Grants are extremely competitive, applying for them is laborious, and the revision process that follows can take an additional year or more—a long time to wait for young scholars who have only six or seven years to get tenure while simultaneously caring for young children. Unsuccessful applicants have to decide whether to revise further and submit later on, submit elsewhere, or shift the focus of their work. Regardless of the outcome, applying for funding requires a significant time investment, which necessarily means sacrificing time at the bench, working on papers, or on household and caregiving duties.

The Survey of Doctorate Recipients shows that tenure-track faculty women who are married with young children are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to grantsmanship. They are 21 percent less likely than tenure-track men who are married with young children to have their work partially or fully supported by federal grants or contracts on a year-to-year basis in the sciences. Compared with married tenure-track women without children, these mothers are 26 percent less likely to have full or partial grant support, and compared with single women without children, mothers of young children are 19 percent less likely to have grant or contract funding.[18] Federal grants are all but necessary for tenure in many scientific fields at research universities, so these figures shed light on why young children make tenure less likely for women in the sciences.

The Benefits of Marriage and Older Children

Only young children are a liability to women's tenure decisions. In contrast, children over the age of five increase by between 14 percent and 16 percent the likelihood

that men and women alike get tenure. This result holds for all academic fields. Older children may require less continuous attention than babies and toddlers, but they still take up time that could otherwise be spent doing the research, teaching, and service necessary for tenure. Clearly older children must provide some benefit that outweighs the time it takes for care for them. Virtually no respondents in our University of California survey and no posters on the online forums and blogs devoted to higher education say anything like "My children make me a more productive scholar." Still, these older offspring may exert a stabilizing effect on women that more than offsets the time lost in caring for them.

We suspect that the beneficial effect of older children on tenure decisions may reflect the efforts of women (and men) who have best figured out how to negotiate both parenthood and academia. In many cases, these children were under six when scholars were completing their doctorates or searching for academic positions. Academics, especially women, who manage to finish graduate school and obtain tenure-track employment while simultaneously caring for young children may be especially skilled in balancing the conflicting demands of work and family. They may receive more support from their partners, or have learned to be better at managing their time. They have survived the initial cut by getting tenure-track jobs while caring for younger children, so they may be well disposed to excel as assistant professors. We should also keep in mind a finding presented in the previous chapter. Some mothers take adjunct positions, in lieu of tenure-track professorships, straight out of graduate school. They had young children before they joined the tenure-track race. Some of these mothers will get tenure-track jobs after spending time off the tenure track. They are now the mothers of older children, not of labor-intensive infants, during the years they are striving for tenure.

To our surprise, marriage also offers a benefit in the sciences (but not in the humanities). Male or female, married scientists are 11 percent more likely to get tenure than are their unmarried colleagues. Why is this the case? For starters, married scholars seem to publish more than do their unwed colleagues.[19] This can be attributed, we suspect, to the broadly salutary effects of marriage: generally speaking, marriage makes adults happier, healthier, and more productive.[20] This higher productivity should confer an advantage when assistant professors go up for tenure. Elisabeth Rose Gruner, now a tenured professor at the University of Richmond, described the benefits of a supportive husband after becoming a mother for the second time: "That's right: in the early days of parenting (and many other times) I had a 'traditional wife,' but one who knew how to change the oil and put up drywall too. His career sacrifice enabled my success, and I am grateful for the benefits that accrued to me."[21]

Discrimination

Whether or not they are mothers, women are less likely than men to get tenure. Economist Donna Ginther and other researchers have suggested that discrimination is the primary reason why women lag behind men when it comes time for promotion.[22] Yet only one-quarter of a recent sample of American faculty believe that discrimination is responsible for the paucity of female scientists.[23] Psychologists Stephen Ceci and Wendy Williams assert that "evidence for recent sex discrimination—when it exists—is aberrant, of small magnitude, and is superseded by larger, more sophisticated analyses showing no bias, or occasionally, bias in favor of women." They acknowledge that real barriers exist, particularly for women in math-based sciences, but point instead to motherhood as the primary obstacle.[24]

Discrimination is a slippery concept that spans complex and varying prejudices, including discrimination against mothers. Sometimes this discrimination, particularly in the physical sciences, may reflect the lingering belief that women do not have the same aptitude for scientific thought that men have. In 2005, Lawrence Summers, then the president of Harvard University, speaking at an academic conference on women and underrepresented minorities in science, raised the question of whether innate gender differences might help explain why fewer women succeed in science and engineering professorships.[25] Summers's remarks, delivered to a small group of professors, were soon heard around the world.[26] They have been viewed as evidence that some highly placed academics still harbor retrograde ideas about women.

But discrimination may not concern just aptitude. The bias against caregiving in academia (and outside it) is well documented.[27] Some scientists may believe that women who have families (or may have families at some future time) cannot be serious scientists, because academic science demands exclusive attention to research. This attitude pervades other disciplines as well, where the ideal professor is still perceived to be a man whose first commitment is scholarship, and provides the origins for one notorious dismissal of female academics: "She's on the mommy track." Yet male academics are never said to be on the daddy track.

Fighting Back

Some women who believe that their tenure denial was based on discrimination fight back with lawsuits, and a few win. Since the 1980s, the American Association of University Women's Legal Advocacy Fund has supported more than sixty of these women in their long court battles.[28] Many additional contested tenure cases presumably don't come to the public's attention.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sex, race, national origin, or religion. The Pregnancy

Discrimination Act is an amendment to Title VII that prohibits discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.[29] What protection those laws offer has been the subject of evolving interpretation by federal courts. In the 1980s, a forty-one-year-old English professor named Julia Prewitt Brown fought to overturn a tenure denial by Boston University, pursuing her case all the way to the federal First Circuit Court of Appeals.[30] She prevailed, obtaining tenure and winning a large settlement, in part because she had direct evidence that the university's president had commented to another woman professor who had at the time also been seeking tenure, "Your husband is a parachute, so why are you worried?" The plaintiff also supported her case by showing that her male peers with similar teaching and research records had been granted tenure.

During the past two decades, changing judicial interpretations have made it more difficult for a plaintiff in a tenure case to prove discrimination. The common reason why colleges and universities deny tenure is that the candidate's research or teaching doesn't meet departmental standards. But since the 1990s, a plaintiff has had to prove not only that the university's assessment of her work was flawed but also that the real reason for the denial was sex discrimination. If discrimination can't be proved, even if the department is found to be intentionally lying about a tenure candidate's research, other reasons for the denial, such her lack of collegiality, can be upheld.[31]

One important tenure-denial case, *Fisher v. Vassar College*, began in federal court in 1994 and eventually was heard in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in 1997. Cynthia Fisher, a biologist, alleged that Vassar had discriminated against her based on her sex, marital status, and age. Fisher prevailed in her first trial, proving to the federal district court judge that she was equally or more qualified for tenure than comparable scholars. She also cited statistics showing that Vassar had a history of denying tenure to married women. But ultimately the circuit court rejected her case. It stated: "Individual decision makers may intentionally dissemble in order to hide a reason that is nondiscriminatory but unbecoming or small-minded, such as back-scratching, logrolling, horse-trading, institutional politics, envy, nepotism, spite, or personal hostility. . . . The fact that the proffered reason was false does not necessarily mean that the true motive was the illegal one argued by the plaintiff."[32] As Fisher pointed out, most academics are too smart to publicly state that "married women should stay home and take care of their families."

In a sex-discrimination lawsuit, plaintiffs may be awarded compensatory damages, back and front pay, or even reinstatement with tenure, as well as legal fees and costs. In practice, few plaintiffs are reinstated, and most compensation packages do not financially justify the enormous time and expense of the lawsuit and the shame of replaying a failure in the public eye. Moreover, your

colleagues may avoid you. You may be labeled a troublemaker, which reduces the chances that you will receive another job offer. Still, the success of a few tenure cases has changed the atmosphere at many universities where administrators seem to be realizing that, as with sexual-harassment suits, a small investment in prevention is better than an expensive lawsuit. At UC Berkeley, for instance, several sex-discrimination suits were brought in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Three were resolved out of court, with the women receiving both tenure and a settlement. In a fourth, the court awarded a large settlement. As a result of those cases, the tenure process on the campus became more transparent and candidates are now overtly informed of their rights. This was a win for both men and women.[33]

The hopeful news is that because of the discrimination suits that have been pursued over the years the tenure process is more open and fair on most campuses, reducing the chances for discrimination. And there are several studies, cited earlier in this chapter, that suggest that discrimination may no longer play the role it once did in keeping women out of the sciences.[34]

Reforming Tenure

There is much discussion about the end of tenure, and many colleges and universities are moving in that direction. This trend has presumably been motivated by the prospect of short-term economic gain. Abolishing tenure, however, is a bad move both economically and intellectually. A university without tenure would not foster a creative, challenging environment in which discovery and scholarship flourish. It would be, instead, a corporation staffed by part-time and contingent employees who could be hired or fired at the whim of the corporate administrators. That would be a loss for students, for faculty members, and for the future of knowledge and innovation. Academia would no longer attract the best and the brightest. Who would choose a career of insecurity and comparably low wages when other options were available? The reputation and value of American universities is predicated on the freethinking, creative faculty they have been able to attract and retain.

The tenure system, for all its faults, should be expanded, not dismantled as is now happening at many colleges and universities. But it must be made more flexible to level the playing field and suit the modern realities of professors' lives. Most universities now provide some relief in the form of policies that allow faculty to stop the tenure clock for childbirth.[35] Although that is a welcome measure, our research at the University of California suggests that tenure-clock stoppage is not used unless (1) it is an entitlement rather than something received by special request (with this in mind, a number of research universities now make tenure-clock stoppage opt-out rather than opt in),[36] (2) it is used

by fathers as well as mothers, and (3) it is supported and enforced by campus culture and regulations. The same support and enforcement is necessary to promote paid childbirth leave and relief from teaching. In our 2002–2003 survey of faculty members at the University of California system, 51 percent of eligible mothers who did not use the teaching-relief policy gave as their reason "because it might have hurt my chances for tenure or promotion."

A major step toward reforming the tenure system is to create policies that will actively involve fathers in the critical tenure years. Our account of the difficulties of academic motherhood should not be read as an indictment of women's husbands and partners. As we have seen, fathers typically do not put in a full second shift, but they do help out at home. Let us also acknowledge the social and institutional barriers that may prevent academic men from doing more. Consider the following account, from a bench scientist at the University of California:

> For our daughter's (a special needs child) first couple of years, I took her to physical therapy three times a week, losing about seven hours of work time. I was pre-tenure at that point. Everyone assumed that my wife (also a tenure-track scientist) was the primary caregiver, including the male chair and female dean and provost, so she was offered special consideration on scheduling classes and such. She had to tell them that I was the primary caregiver with respect to physical therapy, since our daughter wanted to nurse, not work, when my wife was there. No special scheduling was then offered to me. I think their minds simply couldn't get around the idea of a man being the primary caregiver.

In 39 percent of American families women are the primary or only earners.[37] Yet universities perpetuate a culture that assumes that mothers will take on the lion's share of caregiving and that men are the breadwinners. This assertion is borne out by the findings of our survey of the Association of American Universities. We found that 58 percent guaranteed at least six weeks paid leave for faculty mothers, but just 16 percent provided one week paid parental leave.[38] This is a remarkable difference.

Over the years academics have sat at many conference tables arguing with colleagues about whether new fathers should be allowed to stop the tenure clock, or receive modified duties with respect to teaching and other work. The opposition is always the same: "Men won't use the time for parenting; they'll use it to write another book or publish more articles." Fathers, for their part, even if they are full participants in parenting, don't often use parental accommodations, because, like mothers, they fear they will be considered marginal tenure candidates—why did they need the extra time to get tenure?—or less committed to their institutions. The counterargument is that unless we engage fathers in a flexible workplace, the culture will not change.

There is disagreement among the universities that do offer fathers accommodations for caregiving—usually a semester off—on what level of caregiving is required to qualify. The University of California's most recent modified-duties policy requires the academic appointee to submit a written statement certifying that he or she is responsible for 50 percent or more of a child or newborn's care. The University of Utah has a similar policy. The terms of Harvard Law School's parental and personal leave policies are more flexible, taking into account that a week contains 168 hours: "A qualified faculty member must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Dean, substantial and sustained responsibility for his or her child. 'Substantial and sustained responsibility' shall be deemed to be sole full-time care-giving of at least 40 hours per week, for at least one semester during the term of the initial appointment or any previous extension thereof. Care-giving shall not be deemed 'sole full-time' when any part of the required 40 hours is performed by someone other than the faculty member."[39]

A Flexible Career Track

A bolder policy than stopping the tenure clock or offering more flexible parental leave would be a part-time tenure track that allowed faculty to switch from part time to full time, depending on their family circumstances. Our survey of University of California faculty found wide support among men and women of all ages for allowing faculty members to shift to part-time status and back again; more than 60 percent of women and a third of men were interested in a flexible, prorated tenure track that would allow them to return to work full time at some point. Women support the policy mainly as a way of balancing their work with the obligations of raising small children. Both men and women mention elder care (of parents or in-laws) and phasing into retirement as reasons for supporting a flexible tenure track. Yet despite the demand for such policies, they remain relatively uncommon in academe. According to a 2001 report sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, a longtime sponsor of research on work and family, only 2 percent of tenure-track faculty in the United States had half-time appointments. And just 6 percent of the colleges and universities surveyed allowed half-time faculty to obtain tenure.[40] By way of contrast, a contemporaneous study of 1,057 corporations by the Families and Work Institute in New York found that 57 percent allowed employees to shuttle between half- and full-time employment.[41]

The difficulties of half-time tenure-track positions are well understood. As one female chemist at the University of California acerbically put it, "I don't think it is possible for a professor in the sciences to work part time. You can't partly run a research group." Kathleen Christensen of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation viewed part-time professorships as untenable, "because a culture of long

work hours and [a focus on] speed to tenure meant that the part timer was seen as working in a deviant fashion."[42] Certainly a part-time tenure-track faculty member would have fewer teaching responsibilities, but this would not necessarily lower a tenure committee's expectation that the candidate demonstrate a strong research track record; committee members might assume that the smaller teaching load would free up more time for research. Half-time policies are far easier to implement for senior faculty, when there is no need to calculate what half the research necessary for tenure might be. In fact, the balance of half-time appointments described in the Sloan study were men in the twilight of their careers who were ramping down for retirement.[43] But this does nothing to help the faculty most in need of half-time positions: women early in their career struggling with both children and tenure requirements.

In 2001, when we began to explore serious reform of the University of California's policies for faculty parents, we were surprised to discover that a vague policy was already on the books for a part-time tenure track. This was news to every faculty member we interviewed, and to most of the personnel staff as well. There is a very long stretch between adopting a written policy and having it actively used and supported by university culture. Upon further investigation we were again surprised to learn that some faculty members already had part-time tenure-track appointments. Most were scientists and engineers who used the flexibility of a part-time faculty position to do consulting work or start their own companies. All those arrangements, including extended leaves, had been privately negotiated with department chairs and involved only faculty members who already had tenure.

The right to return to full-time work is the key for part-time tenure-track faculty appointments. A permanent part-time position may appeal to some faculty members, but for most people it means permanently low wages and marginalization in their departments. The vague policy already on the books at the UC system did not clearly include the right to return to full-time employment. This existing policy would of course be of dubious value to a mother, whose need of a part-time position generally wanes as her children grow up.

Given the limited utility of the existing policy, we decided to craft a new policy that would accommodate faculty members' family obligations at any point in their careers. As always, the devil was in the details. Ten University of California campuses and the systemwide academic senate all had to agree to the policy. The concerns focused mostly on how to assess the productivity of a part-time, pre-tenure career and, to a lesser extent, on evaluation at regular merit reviews throughout a career. In drafting the policy, we had to choose between two options: preserving the traditional six-year "publish or perish" period but modifying the tenure standards for part timers, or maintaining the standards and lengthening the probationary pre-tenure period. Ultimately, we obtained

faculty agreement on extending the tenure clock, but not on modifying the standards for tenure. We also ran up against a firm policy instituted by the University of California Board of Regents that allowed no more than ten years to elapse before a tenure vote. Even the restricted plan we came up with took two years to pass through the many levels of faculty governance and university bureaucracy.

The jury is still out, since the policy only became available in late 2006. At that time, one mother at the University of California, a history professor, told us, "I'm so glad you are doing this, but I could never have used it. I couldn't have afforded to receive half pay." On the bright side, many of the other new reforms the University of California adopted to ameliorate the inflexible tenure clock—such as offering two semesters free from teaching for mothers and one for fathers (at full pay)—appear to have been more widely invoked.

Conclusion

It is already well known that women are less likely than men to get tenure. We add to the conventional wisdom by demonstrating the important role that family formation plays in tenure decisions. A female scientist with a child under six years old is 27 percent less likely to get tenure compared to her male colleagues, whereas a childless woman is only 11 percent less likely to get tenure. The latter figure shows that motherhood does not completely explain women's lower tenure rates in the sciences (including the social sciences). Perhaps discrimination is part of the story, but we cannot know for certain.

Both marriage and older children affect tenure decisions, but not in the ways we anticipated. Married professors in the sciences, both men and women, are more likely to get tenure than are their unmarried colleagues; so too are faculty with children six years of age and older. The consequences of marriage for tenure decisions make sense given the extensive benefits of marriage for personal and social well-being. The effects of older children on tenure decisions are more difficult to understand. Certainly older children take up a lot of time, although not quite so much as preschool-age kids. But the liabilities of older children are apparently outweighed by their benefits: perhaps they signify that college faculty, both men and women, have arrived at a relatively stable time in their lives. Future scholars who become parents in graduate school (or before) are the assistant professors most likely to have older children when they come up for tenure. In this respect, graduate school appears to be the best time for academics to start families.

The exceptions to these patterns are the analyses that include humanities faculty. Here we find that neither marriage nor young children have an impact on tenure decisions (although married mothers are far less likely to enter the

tenure track in the first place). The obvious explanation is that academic culture is different in the humanities than it is in the sciences, although with the data at hand we are unable to know for sure. The bench sciences demand very long hours in the laboratory, a place where children are not welcome. And compared to the sciences, few scholars in the humanities depend on federal grants and the lockstep professional progress they entail.

Although fathers are more likely to get tenure than mothers, they still experience tension between work and family. Counting both domestic and professional responsibilities, mothers put in many more hours a week than do men, but most men do make a noteworthy contribution to housework and caregiving. Indeed, many fathers want to spend more time with their family, but feel that professional demands won't allow for it.

We advocate reforming the existing tenure system, not replacing it with an insecure fungible workforce. A part-time flexible pre- and post-tenure track with the right to return would be a major step in this direction. Other supports for young faculty, including stopping the clock before tenure, teaching relief following childbirth, and childcare assistance, will be revisited in the last chapter of this book.