



## EPILOGUE



*David Riesman* has established his reputation as a distinguished lawyer, sociologist and educator. He received his early education in his native Philadelphia and received his A.B. and LL.B. degrees from Harvard University. He served as a law clerk under Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis and practiced law in Boston before becoming a professor of law at the University of Buffalo. He also has served as a visiting research fellow at Columbia University and deputy assistant district attorney for New York City. Later he served as professor of social science at the University of Chicago and, in 1958, was named Henry Ford Professor of Social Sciences at Harvard. Among his published works are *The American Constitution and International Labor Legislation* (1941), *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (1950) and *Faces in the Crowd* (with Nathan Glazer, 1952). Although emeritus, David Riesman continues to supervise doctoral dissertations at Harvard Graduate School of Education, primarily when these deal with higher education, a subject area in which he has concentrated his research in recent years. He has been elected to memberships in the American Philosophical Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Education and the Century Association. He also is the holder of many honorary degrees. David Riesman is married to Evelyn Hastings Thompson, a writer and critic. They have four children and two grandchildren.



## REFRACTIONS AND REFLECTIONS



By David Riesman

**T**he existence of this volume testifies to two entirely unrelated strains in contemporary academic culture. One strain rises from the women's movements of the last several decades, whose intellectual and consciousness-raising bases have often been located in major university centers, unevenly influencing educated women (and of course to some degree men) in those centers and beyond. The other strain arises from the diminishing quality and effectiveness of academic leadership in a period not only of relatively declining budgets but also of the diminished authority of leadership in general. There are many aspects to that decline which are unnecessary to rehearse here, such as the greater demands for pre-audit as well as post-audit accountability, the growing impact of federal regulations, the rise, especially in many large states, of faculty unions embracing state systems, the rising tide of litigiousness, and the demands by organized interest groups for participation that often amounts to a virtual veto over the executive's room for maneuver. Many of us retain an heroic image of presidential leadership, and scan the horizon in search of college and university presidents who will use the "bully pulpit" of their positions to speak to salient national issues as well as to inspire their institutions intramurally. Many major institutions have been discovering that it is not easy to persuade capable individuals to assume a major presidency in the face of the mounting pressures on the president and the spillover of these onto the presidential family.

These expectations and tensions prevail widely across the academic landscape. However, the presidential spouses who have contributed to this volume, both in answering the survey submitted to them by NASULGC and in the chapters of the book, frequently face dilemmas which are not characteristic of the presidential partnership everywhere. The rapid growth of state systems has created a constellation where both a campus presidential couple and a system chancellor couple preside in the same community.

Particularly in situations where the system head has moved up in the first instance from the major flagship campus (as at Wisconsin and Illinois, and also



Texas, Texas A&M, and Chapel Hill), the two cooperating but competing couples must walk warily, not crowding one another by their respective social enterprises, especially since they almost inevitably crowd each other in terms of authority and influence. Which presidential couple is to host the significant parties for regents, the governor, and legislators, influential alumni and already courted donors at the home football games? Which president is to preside over the commencements of the constituent institutions, including the flagship campus once proud of its precedence and hence of that of its presidential/chancellor partners? These issues are implicit in Judy Ikenberry's essay, with its recognition of all the factors of history and precedence, negotiation and protocol. In these matters the tact and sensitivity of the wives of course are of great importance. Three spouses of heads of major systems are among the contributors to this volume: as just mentioned, Judy Ikenberry, Polly Davis, and Karen O'Neil. O'Neil illustrates by a "day in the life" from an archetypical diary of the partners the kinds of pressures both campus heads and system heads may be under; she describes the many days when the pair return from a survey trip hastily to change clothes to speak to an alumni group, steal a glimpse of the children, and prepare for a reception for several hundred guests—every one of whom will expect to be recognized and known by name. It is possible that heads of major systems, such as the O'Neils at the University of Wisconsin, have an even larger diet of travel than would a typical campus head within the system, some of whose external relations can be handled at the system level.

Indeed, one of the ironical problems of the presidential partners is that their positions appear to many non-intimate observers to be comfortable and even splendid. In those towns where the university is both a principal employer and "the main game in town," the president's spouse is socially and politically the "first lady" of the community. While her responsibilities grow incrementally and sometimes invisibly, her perquisites may appear lavish to many academics, staff, and townspeople. One of the concerns registered in responses to the 109 questions of the survey is the wear and tear on the wives' clothes resulting from the enormous amount of entertaining and socializing the partners engage in on behalf of the institution. The survey responses indicate a variety of entertaining which is not only staggering in quantity but in the demands it puts on the spouse for being present: many of the spouses log from 2500 to over 4,000 persons a year passing through the house that is hardly a home.<sup>2</sup> Several questionnaires reveal that the presidential mansions inherited by the current partners have become inadequate for the expected amount of entertaining: the kitchen may be too small or poorly arranged; the halls too narrow for post-prandial traffic; the bathrooms insufficient. Yet we can also learn from the spouses that few things excite as much animosity on a campus where there has been considerable



retrenchment as any seemingly luxurious expenditures for the presidential house, its furnishings (often subjected to rough treatment by careless or inebriated guests), or indeed any overt expenditures aimed at making the life of the partners healthier and more comfortable, such as the installation of a tennis court.

The questions in the survey cover many aspects of the role of hostess, of facilitator of campus events, and occupant of a sometimes showcase house. The survey also covers the work done in fund-raising and in community and alumni affairs. There are questions on support or, quite often, the lack of support or clear lines of support for the maintenance of the house, the provision for events, the secretarial help that comes in so handy where it exists—though as one spouse observes, an invitation from the presidential spouse is quite a different matter from an invitation sent by a secretary. There is a place for spouses to note the cost to them of babysitters and other child care which they can no longer provide and for which the university may not have any substitute; for the wear and tear on personal furnishings provided for the presidential domicile; for the career opportunities delayed which may make resumption of a career in a post-presidential phase more difficult. What stands out, less in the survey returns than in writings by spouses, is the major task not easy to describe in a contract: namely, helping to sustain the president in the face of the stress and frequent hostilities with which he must try to cope. The loneliness of the presidential position comes up over and over again in autobiographical comments. Single presidents, including a number of single and divorced women presidents, if they cannot find—and often they cannot—an appropriate and knowledgeable confidant (as members of Catholic religious orders sometimes are able to do within their religious communities), must have even stronger character than other presidential leaders.<sup>3</sup>

Altogether, it becomes clear that over the years, the responsibilities of presidential spouses have grown incrementally. The obligations they have in the way they entertain, for the purpose of supporting the institution both in the locality, among alumni, and outside, are conducted under the eyes of ever more critical audiences. In many ways, the wife acts as the person who “humanizes” the presidential office. She is often also the person who must be invisible in protecting that office by tactfully handling reasonable and unreasonable demands and expectations that constantly beset that office from many constituencies. Presidential partners have learned to eschew self-pity in public, and of course there are immense differences among them as among the rest of us in the degree of vulnerability to psychological wounds and to the frustrations of managing what at times seems an impossible schedule.



In her introductory chapter, Diane Skomars Magrath notes that the spouses report that dealing with professional university staff is often the most unpleasant aspect of their tasks. Adele McComas also states in her essay that the least enjoyable task for the spouse is supervision of staff.<sup>4</sup> In Karen O'Neil's account of a typical day, reference is also made to dilemmas for the spouse created by incompetence of staff. The spouse and sometimes the president have to fill in for that incompetence. There is also the possibility of enmity from buildings and grounds and other service people toward the spouse because that is seen as a relatively safe way to take out frustrations on the job or with salary, etc. These reactions may be modified or increased depending on the qualities of the predecessor spouse, in other words whether she was less demanding or, on the contrary, more demanding and difficult than the present spouse.

There is no inevitable connection between problems resulting from incompetence of staff and those resulting from inadequacies or non-existence of staff. McComas writes that 37 percent of the spouses do not have adequate secretarial help and are asked "to perform services that would not be required of other faculty and staff within the institution."

Except in terms of the age of the spouse, there are no breakdowns in the figures from the survey, and none which enable the reader to differentiate among types of institutions from which the reports come. For example, some of the less affluent institutions may not provide much secretarial help for anybody. Others may have been unionized and cut secretarial help so that the union can boast of having secured a substantial increase in faculty and/or staff pay.

The very nature of these often interpersonal issues in which the presidential spouse is involved puts into question the spousal role itself from the point of view of the contemporary revival of feminist ideals and ideologies. As I have already indicated, these movements have had perhaps their greatest psychological impact on the highly educated, especially, but not only, among younger generations. While women of all social strata are increasingly in the work force, it is the women's movements which emphasize the demand for careers, rather than part-time jobs and avocational interests—careers seen as a declaration of independent selfhood. For, in one of their aspects, the women's movements are an outgrowth of a large, almost seismic shift in American values toward greater freedom of expressiveness and greater interest in becoming aware of one's own feelings and in sharing these with others.

We are apt to have a nostalgic picture of the old-time college president and his efficient and retiring spouse. If such a wife had misgivings about unused talents and unrecognized but well-fulfilled responsibilities, she not only kept



them to herself, but she sometimes kept them from herself. In times when divorce was virtually unheard of, almost impossible to obtain, and severely sanctioned socially, even the most abused spouses generally accepted their fate.<sup>5</sup> As we have been reminded by some excellent historical writing encouraged by the current interest in women's studies, only occasionally did wives prior to the First World War have sufficient training for a career and sufficient independence from judgments by kin and friends, to leave husbands who provided economic security and the umbrella of their own social status.

Of course in that earlier period presidents were often clergymen. And there remain many parallels between the president's wife and the pastor's wife. Both are supposed to believe in their husband's cause, be it parish or academy or some combination of each. Dedication to tasks of nurturance, unspecified but no less serious for that, has also been expected of them and generally available. Both derive their status primarily from their husbands.<sup>6</sup> Both are supposed to be examples of conduct, not necessarily the most conservative, but surely sober, not spendthrift, in no way exposed to innuendoes of sexual scandal. Pastors' brats and presidents' brats are by our mythology considered likely to be a bit on the rebellious side, but only within locally tolerable limits, and it is the spouse who is held responsible for their proper and presumably more or less studious upbringing.

Pastors and presidents have something else in common, namely, they are of necessity entrepreneurs. As Alexis de Tocqueville observed when he came to the United States in 1831, parishes were not given in the landscape: priests and pastors in the first instance had to create and then maintain and, in the American idiom, enlarge a constituency and find and sustain the wherewithal to nourish them. Of necessity, their wives had to be instrumental in the enterprise. It was the same for founders of academies and colleges. Wives in their dress and manner had to consider their image carefully. Beatrice Chaikind Ross Winkler jokes, although with an understandably sardonic edge, about always being introduced as "the charming and gracious Mrs. . . ." The charm and grace of the pastor's wife or the president's wife must be of that time and that place: i.e., that station in life and in the life cycle; in egalitarian enclaves, to be too gracious or too charming would seem pretentious, uncalled-for and "out of place."<sup>7</sup>

Appearance in the sense of grooming and carriage as well as of clothing—"the presentation of self in everyday life"—is a statement to outside worlds. In the age of almost compulsory expressiveness, dress in this larger sense is a statement to oneself about that self, including a statement of where one stands on the tangled boundaries between feminism and femininity. Every trip the



spouses take on university business requires a judgment as to what set of selves one will pack in the suitcases, an issue which still remains more salient for women than for most men.<sup>8</sup> To some readers, concerns over clothing and over the wear and tear of travel will seem trivial. However, insensitive observers cannot appreciate that "trivia" are cumulative.

For example, the often complicated relations between the spouses of system heads and flagship campus heads already mentioned, will strike many as trivial. Thus, Ikenberry calls attention to issues not wholly in the control of either spouse: who has the bigger house, the larger budget, and more efficient services for entertaining? She notes that more system head spouses than campus spouses like to make speeches, perhaps reflecting the likelihood that most system heads have been campus heads earlier and, therefore, their spouses are more experienced. Yet the partners at the head of the system may well envy the partners on the individual campuses, who retain closer contact with the internal life of the academy, with faculty and students. In fact, a number of presidential partners have discovered, on occasion quite to their surprise, that their contacts with students, primarily undergraduates, are the least tension-filled and most agreeable of their endless round of meeting other people.<sup>9</sup>

My own interviews with spouses are congruent with the comments in this volume concerning the strain on the wives from anxiety concerning their husbands' physical and mental health in the face of redundant and frequently cumulative pressures. Redundancy is inevitable: it means hearing new generations of students and newly recruited faculty, new members of boards of trustees, newly elected or appointed political officials, all finding fault with the university for inattention or overattention to the multiplicity of constituencies who, varying across the academic landscape, have been given voice by an ever more participatory system of governance and an ever more populist politics.

With eye windward to demographic realities, the wives are often conscious of the likelihood of outliving their husbands. Moreover, they inhabit an academic and, at the margins, Bohemian subculture where many seemingly solid marriages break up. However, what president entering upon a presidency could imagine negotiating for the contingency that he and his wife will split up and that she even more than he will need a "golden parachute" to prepare for career entry or re-entry, and perhaps also to raise and educate the children? Presidents themselves have a hard enough time, in the absence of the "Japanese go-between" I have often recommended, to negotiate concerning their own exit, which seems hardly becoming at the point of entry. Certainly they are aware, as trustees may not be, of the relatively short half-life of NASULGC presidents, where the turnover rate approaches 25 per cent per year. Boards



may provide some assistance by increasing insurance on the life of the president, and by granting him tenure where appropriate in an academic field (including a law school). But only the most highly organized and hyperenergetic of presidents in the more sedately moving fields of scholarship can keep their hands in by teaching along with the presidential work. In a time of high interest rates and rising real estate prices, living in an institutionally provided house without an equity in a home of one's own is a sometimes unrecognized burden for the partners.

The spouse is aware, of course, of all these hazards. More immediately, she is also aware of the public and private attacks on her husband, about which she must remain tactfully silent. For example, the wife of the system head must remain mute when the campus heads attack her husband because he has not extracted enough money from the governor's budget bureau and the legislature, even though she is aware that the system head performed wonders to prevent the budget from being drastically cut, and that the campus heads are all aware of this and are seeking approval from their own faculty members by blaming the system head—and in some cases, attacking him for not publicly assailing the governor.<sup>10</sup>

This self-censorship in the face of attacks and snide private comments is not easy for wives who have been socialized in a culture which does not expect women to be passive or admire them for uncomplaining stoicism.<sup>11</sup>

It is at this point that the crescent women's movements of the last two decades have intersected with the escalating pressures on the partners, resulting in a quite altered situation for presidents' wives. Some have been caught unawares by the attacks of feminists against them in the role of the woman volunteer. The attacks are never aimed at volunteers who at the same time hold full-time paid positions. Men are not disesteemed for their volunteer work as trustees of colleges, art museums, or hospitals.<sup>12</sup> Career women, of course, can do volunteer work without incurring the wrath of feminists if they have traditional professions in law or medicine, or work in fields such as industry and finance, engineering, or electoral politics, and in fact are now in great demand to become trustees for all sorts of nonprofit institutions. Outstanding women are besieged with such invitations, and the more obviously competent presidential spouses can sometimes prepare for a career by use of such opportunities.

At the same time, the role of the unpaid woman volunteer, the traditional housewife-and-mother volunteer for the PTA, the symphony board, the board of a college of which she is an alumna, has been deprecated by the women's movements as another subordinate and unpaid role in service to patriarchal



society. To put it more generally, all unpaid and seemingly non-professional activities which women have historically undertaken with greater or lesser eagerness are regarded as not legitimate.

To be a presidential spouse is, as the survey by NASULGC indicates, to be a pretty nearly full-time volunteer, whatever else one does to keep a previous career going or to start a new one. The degree of hostility toward that role of volunteer will vary according to the number of career women on the faculty and administration and in the surrounding locality—women who, with somewhat less pressures on them, often manage by extraordinary effort and ingenuity to combine marriage and even a child or two with a career. But even apart from the sense of antagonism toward the volunteer role, many presidential spouses hear a resonating inner voice, raised consciousness sometimes at odds with conscientiousness, which is asking “why?” during the round of planning, note-writing, committee work, and other often fragmented activities that make up their day. As one former presidential spouse observed to me, she had “volunteered” when she married her husband that she and he would, if possible, spend their lives together; she has not “volunteered” to be a presidential spouse, asking: “what kind of a shadow am I, who is (ordinarily) not even listed in the university telephone directory, let alone the roster of administration and staff? Does even my husband know all the many things I do in the course of a week, let alone the agonizing decisions to resist some imperatives of things I should do for the university, for the locale, for the planet—my family, myself?”

The papers in this book should not be expected to speak to these inner questions; they are not intimate enough for that; rather, their message to potential presidential spouses is, in effect: “Don’t do it if you don’t enjoy people.” Volunteering brings one into contact with people. Ina Fitzhenry-Coor delineates in her chapter the interaction of genetic and cultural processes that lead most women to be more sensitive than most men to personal relations, to become the ties that bind, the social glue-and-repair person. Only as both sexes age, do the androgynous tendencies emerge, so that women may become more outspoken and sharp, men more tender and ruminative. Most presidents and their partners have generally not reached that stage.

“Consciousness-raising” women’s groups often began on the more liberal campuses, and today women’s studies departments and programs are scattered through the NASULGC institutions. While *Signs* is published at the University of Chicago and the Feminist Press is at SUNY-Old Westbury, the mounting printed output from both women and men scholars in this field reaches all major institutions.

Thus, along with the rising tide of criticisms of a society which has expected



women to be the volunteers arises the implied and frequently expressed critique of the role of presidential spouse. If that role is to be given professional recognition and seen as a career assignment rather than a volunteer's commonly mandated choice, one obvious solution would be a job description and appropriate remuneration, the theme dealt with in Sue Young's essay, *The Question of Remuneration*. Along with these signs of explicit recognition of the wife's contribution, few spouses have called for the same kind of periodic evaluation of their contributions as are now commonly requested by or, probably even more often, imposed upon university presidents in publicly supported institutions. In my own research on spouses in recent years, the insistence on being paid has come up frequently.<sup>13</sup> For the two editors and the contributors to this volume, the issue is a salient one. Diane Skomars Magrath observes that she is paid out of her husband's salary, thus aiming to recognize in a public way the obligations she assumes as a professional person for the university's public and community relations. Joan Clodius refers to the consciousness-raising that has gone on among many, especially of the younger presidential spouses tied to the aroused feelings of non-benign neglect of their contributions, their frequent sacrifice of independent careers, private personal interests, friendships, and, in all too many cases, family life. Remuneration for the spouse directly from the institution, which I have found in a few cases to be a new practice in several private liberal arts colleges, can of course be helpful in immediate financial terms. But its greater significance lies in allaying the anxieties that even the older and often traditional spouses harbor vis-à-vis their own post-presidential or post-marital futures: to have held a job, they believe, will make them more employable, for example, in paying executive positions in nonprofit agencies.<sup>14</sup>

Some financial problems of the spouse could be dealt with, for example, by providing reimbursement for expenses for child care made requisite by the spouse's university-related obligations, including travel.<sup>15</sup> Insurance and annuity provisions may be arranged to benefit both partners. Awareness of the relentless social schedule enjoyed or endured by many wives could take the form of ample secretarial help, a word processor, possibly even a clothing allowance. Assistance in such indirect forms might excite less political antagonism. However, when the issue of pay is pressed, it is even more important as a symbolic issue than in terms of money which might be differently allocated for the spouse's benefit. As already indicated, to be paid for a recognized position makes evident that one is a professional. One has continued a former career or begun a new one. Remuneration may help quiet some of the inner doubts as well, such as whether the ceaseless and frequently exhausting activities of the presidential partners are of value. As Sue Young reports in *The*



*Question of Remuneration*, there is a need for someone to say: "I need this recognition [remuneration] for my self-identity and proof to the outside world of my contributions to the university for the time that I am here." A third of the wives under 50 years of age considered remuneration to be desirable, as compared to a little over one-tenth of those 50 and over.

Paralleling the demand for pay comes the demand for a job description, negotiated with the board of trustees along with compensation. Joan Clodius notes that such a description would make less inchoate the statement on one's post-presidential resumé that one had been a presidential spouse engaged in a large multiplicity of institutionally useful activities. Diane Skomars Magrath reports from the survey that nearly 30 per cent of spouses believe a job description would have been helpful, and many suggest that a formal evaluation would be desirable.

In an earlier era, people in high positions were satisfied with tacit understandings; today many people at all levels of society want everything spelled out in lawyer-like fashion. This may be egalitarian, but there are also many difficulties. As in reports from faculty members required by government agencies or internal auditors, one can report the quantity of effort, e.g., hours on the job. But even then, one has to decide whether hours on an airplane (or packing and unpacking clothes) would officially be considered part of the job; this might seem to be carrying things a bit far.

The aspect of the presidential wife's job that, of course, cannot be assessed or reimbursed is the emotional stress involved. Many report that the most severe stress from which they suffer stems from their anxieties about their husbands' situation. In their detailed accounts they report that their role as confidante and sympathetic critic is at once their most difficult and most significant contribution, and is one that their husbands usually recognize. In fact, presidents often say that it is support from their wives that has enabled them to endure the strains of the presidency. The wives have the additional burden that they must bear and often read much abuse of their husbands without being able to answer back.<sup>16</sup>

It is impossible to design a job description which will include these all-important functions of the partners for one another. (Reflecting on these essays, readers can readily empathize with the loneliness of the president of either sex who lacks a partner.) In pondering what kinds of job descriptions could be written and what kinds of compensation could be offered, the essays suggest that one could take account of what it would cost to have a first-rate housekeeper and also presumably someone else, perhaps a social secretary, who could serve as a hostess at the incredible array of presidential functions, for



which not only culinary and logistical arrangements must be made, but which must be planned with sophisticated knowledge of the formal or tacit purposes of the occasion, the significance of the guests and their expectations in all their status-conscious diversity.<sup>17</sup>

It is interesting that, in spite of all that these essays and other commentators have said concerning the advantages of paying the spouse and of a job description of the tasks, the results of the survey show that only 20 per cent of the spouses would like to be paid and 30 per cent would appreciate a job description, whereas the large majority would not like either of these options.

A number of wives recognize that a job description would compel them to do things that they may want to do, but want occasionally to be able to refuse. If they were to be paid, in addition to the all too realistic demands for accountability, they might fear envy and petty spite if they declined to do something asked of them by a campus group. Moreover, suppose the spouse should decide to continue her education at her husband's or a neighboring institution, whether in order to prepare to undertake or resume a career or primarily out of personal interest, by how much should the stipend then be reduced? In this unexplored area there are many such imponderables. Further illustration would arise if the spouse's stipend were not increased when general raises are given out; would this signify that she is regarded as making less of a contribution, or simply that she is dealing with an altered or insensitive board? Indeed, would the demand for pay, as a practical matter, reduce increments granted her husband in periodic formal or informal evaluations by the board of trustees? And what about a successor spouse? Even if the present spouse is not concerned about the precedent she might set for someone who may follow her, the board of trustees is likely to have such an issue in mind.<sup>18</sup>

Many feminists believe that presidents of either sex should be chosen completely on their individual merits: there should be no inquiry whether there is a partner and what support and resources a spouse might bring to the partnership. I have been investigating search procedures for college and university presidents, presently with the cooperation of Dr. Judith McLaughlin of the Harvard Graduate School of Education.<sup>19</sup> It is evident that institutions and the search committees that more or less represent them are uneasy about an unmarried male president (but in no case to my knowledge about a single woman, whether unmarried, or divorced, or widowed), and that if a choice on individual merits is reasonably well balanced, major institutions and particularly residential campuses will prefer, as the old and now understandably deprecated saying goes, "two for the price of one." Or, in the case of wives with part-time careers, "one and a half for the price of one."



The formalization of procedures may present additional complications. Polly Davis, wife of the former president of the University of New Mexico who is now Chancellor of the Oregon State System of Higher Education, speculates that if the spouse insisted on a job description and clear delineation of tasks, ". . . affirmative action alarms would ring . . . and the board would end up picking someone else." The wife does not want to jeopardize her husband's chances by pushy questions. As Joan Clodius has pointed out to me, one of the objectives of books such as this one is to create a basis for the education of boards of trustees and of university officials. Presidential wives can also share such materials with one another, so that future candidates' spouses will know both what to ask and what to ask for. In states where open records or Sunshine Laws are interpreted as requiring any interviews with the board to be public, spouses will want to be prepared and not to appear on television and in the press in ways that could be interpreted as anxious, greedy, or presumptuous.

However final negotiations may be handled, it seems to me vital to include the wife at the time that the search committee is interviewing candidates and especially when two or more finalists are brought to campus for extensive exposure to the constituencies regarded as relevant. It is shocking that, while 84 per cent of spouses believed that they should have been part of the search interview, only half were included, as Vera Olson notes in her essay, "The Delicate Relationship with the Board." Vera Olson suggests some salient questions, "questions which the candidate and spouse should have resolved between themselves" prior to an interview, including the extent of travel which some spouses regard as a burden, while others see it as an opportunity to be briefly alone with their husbands, as well as a chance to meet interesting people and to visit interesting places.<sup>20</sup>

Olson thinks that information on support, budget, facilities, and staff should be made available to the spouse from a faculty committee or the predecessor spouse prior to an interview with the board. However, the only committee that seems to me likely to appreciate the issues is the search committee; and it is my belief that search committees should stay in being for a period after a president (when from outside the institution) has been installed. Perhaps a better "transition team" could be constituted from board members, including the board's secretary, who would be charged with specific responsibilities for facilitating the induction of the presidential spouse as well as ancillary informal help for the president whose usual channel is through the person chairing the board. Indeed, I think Olson is mistaken in believing that frank discussion with the board at the time of appointment will assure that future problems can be avoided. Many board members are likely to assume that there are tacit understandings as to the way the presidential couple should conduct themselves,



which do not need to be spelled out. Even if an attempt is made by the spouse to register her concerns, the board may not actually “hear” her. Olson reports, and so do many spouses with whom I have spoken, that relationships with board members and the latter’s spouses are generally friendly but superficial.

Olson notes that it is the outspoken feminists among the responding spouses who do not want to be included in interviews at the time of the search process. She has in mind the feminists who regard any attention to the spouse in the interview process as illegitimate, though there may be some wives who are reluctant to participate because they fear that any resistance toward expectations the board or search committee might have of their own roles might prejudice their husbands’ chances. As I have indicated, when the spouse is not included in the search process and in campus visits because of institutional attitudes, these may increasingly reflect reverberations of the women’s movements. Search committees are likely to be alerted, by their membership and by consultants or by counsel, to the requirements and the spirit and climate of Affirmative Action in the search process itself. Correspondingly, some have concluded that to ask a female spouse to come to campus would violate the amorphous periphery of Affirmative Action, or at any rate would violate the now powerfully preserved insistence on the independence of previously privatized wives.<sup>21</sup> But occasionally spouses are not brought to campus, especially in a public institution, if there is fear of criticism for the costs involved in the search. However, not to include the spouse not only may harm the chances of securing a desirable candidate, but will in some cases prejudice the initial and often crucial stages of an incumbency.

The real difficulties still lie, not in overreactions to the views of some feminists, but in the temptation of spouses of finalists to present themselves as competent in every dimension of the partners’ tasks and comfortable in every possible political and social circumstance, thereby avoiding clarifications or requests for assistance from the board which might make them seem unequipped and indecisive.

While 94 percent of the spouses neither have nor wish to have a formal contract, 20 percent of spouses would be happy to be asked to present a report to the board. Like faculty who make annual reports to their chairman or dean of what they have done, they want their work, much of it unseen, to be recognized. Wives feel about the immense array of activities they undertake as presidential partners much as many newly liberated women have come to feel about housework: there is no visible product, and it must be done over and over again.<sup>22</sup> In most presidential families, there can be little sharing of domesticity, whether of child-care or housework.



It is of course not only spouses who suffer from lack of recognition for their work, but also presidents themselves. To be sure, some college and university presidents are, like the media freaks among academic TV stars, very much in the spotlight and hunger for it. But it is rare that they receive any acknowledgment, for example, from a faculty member for whose promotion, new office or facility, or leave of absence the president has been the final negotiator and arbiter. The more distinguished the university, the more widely prevalent is the assumption that the president serves, to be sure in a formal sense at the pleasure of the board, but in a realistic sense in the service of and in any ultimate showdown, at the pleasure of articulate faculty. Many presidents also have the experience of finding board members unresponsive to their accomplishments in the face of endless difficulties, nor fully aware of the 80-hour week many presidents and quite a few of their spouses put into the service of the institution at least 11 months of the year. There is of course enormous variation in the degrees of diligence, political partisanship, and disinterested concern among board members, although one effect of Sunshine laws is to put pressure on board members to arrive on time and to appear awake!<sup>23</sup> In the public as in the private sector, the person chairing the board is a crucial person for the presidential partners, and the spouse of the board chairman is also likely to be a significant potential support.

Presidents frequently conclude that they are performing for audiences who come in late and are more critical than comprehending when they do attend. The NASULGC survey itself and the essays in this volume underline the extent to which their wives conclude that anything done by the president and his wife is official, taken for granted, part of the job, and therefore needs no personal response. It occurs to me that part of the lack of response to both partners is analogous to the failure to answer RSVP invitations to a function arranged by the spouse, or to write a thank-you note after an enjoyable party. But people also may fear, as some students fear to tell a teacher how much he or she has meant to them, that any courtesy or kindness would appear as ingratiating flattery.

Many of the wives, of an older as well as a younger generation, come to doubt whether fulfilling roles is fulfilling themselves, as contemporary psychological doctrine and indeed moral teaching invite and even insist that we all aim to accomplish. Ina Fitzhenry-Coor contributes a paper, "Self Identity." She is a full-time psychologist with a special interest in human development and identity, teaching and doing research at the University of Vermont, where her husband, Lattie Coor, is President. Drawing on the psychological literature, she explores some of the reasons why the female spouse of the university president is commonly described in terms that constitute a "shadow" or "re-



flected identity" rather than a strong and separate individuality. She hopes that the extensive literature on self concept, discussed in her paper, will help spouses realize what a sense of identity is and how to find it. Reviewing the responses to the survey, she discusses the degrees of constraint and control that spouses believe themselves to experience, and notes that they offer other spouses the common all-American advice, "Be yourself."<sup>24</sup> She suggests that boards of trustees should encourage the spouse ". . . to express those commitments that are uniquely her own." Those commitments, presented at the point of final negotiation, may be accepted by boards of trustees, especially if they are congruent both with emerging definitions of appropriate partnership and with the given institutional contexts. But suppose these commitments lead her, whether quietly or defiantly, to declare her intention to entertain gay liberation groups or other locally deprecated cenacles in the presidential house? Why should boards be so obliging if they have choices between a traditional couple and a "liberated" couple? Moreover, I have come across instances in which the husband may often be torn between looking after his own career and winning the job, or looking after his wife's "personal interests and commitments" and maybe losing the job.<sup>25</sup>

Fitzhenry-Coor, pondering both responses to the survey and the relevant psychological literature, hopes that spouses can move beyond a reflected identity toward a "truly personal and unique" self-identity. I fear that all the injunctions that in our individual and collective wisdom we give ourselves tend to break down in specific situations, even when people are clearer than they generally are as to what is the gamut of selves on which they care to draw, some of which are revealed only as actions and life proceed. Fitzhenry-Coor recognizes that it requires reflectiveness for the spouse to act rather than simply to react. It is, I have observed, an issue that arises when on installation the partners are flooded with invitations which are at once obligations and opportunities. One intellectually and morally alert president in her first position demurred over a sponsored membership in the local upper-class country club, a membership offered to her and taken for granted as a useful as well as pleasant opportunity by the board of trustees. She inquired and found that the club was exclusive and would cut her off from others in the local community; hence she declined. Some board members reacted as if a gesture of friendship had been spurned. Both women and men have difficulty in turning down particular requests tactfully. Indeed, the more attractive the woman, and the more enviable her company, the harder it will often be to turn down requests without wounding the egos especially of brittle males.

Kim Burse, spouse of the president of once predominantly black and now integrated Kentucky State University, notes in commenting on "My First Year



on Campus" that the spouse must be "an expert on small talk." She adds in ways that will resonate in many presidential mansions: "In addition, we learn to endure practically any event, no matter how boring." The slight signs by which a spouse might betray boredom or irritation are of course minutely scrutinized by not always friendly observers on campus, among alumni and alumnae groups, and in the many extramural representational functions which the partners perform together. However, particularly the younger spouses, obedient to the prevailing cult of candor, may find it more difficult than older ones to preserve an air of unrelenting friendliness, something they might come to regard as insincere and hypocritical.

However, according to Diane Magrath's introductory chapter, on most issues replies to the survey by the older spouse in the age brackets of 55 and over are not substantially different from those of the younger spouses, although the latter are likely to have had somewhat more education, often past the baccalaureate level.

Sue Young, in her own essay, "The Question of Remuneration," observes, "Frequently, women volunteers look to the president's wife as a role model. They identify with her generosity in giving of her time." But Sue Young also is aware, not only of the assault on volunteering by many feminists, but also of the fact that many faculty members and students do not take seriously what appear to them to be merely ceremonial duties, regarding them as bourgeois frippery or even extravagance, and as not requiring the high order of sensitivity and of energy that is in fact requisite. At the same time, although herself in favor of compensation for the spouse, Young realizes that, since the wives of vice chancellors, deans, and other hostesses on behalf of the institution are not compensated (though of course they have smaller constituencies), paying the spouse might implicitly deprecate unpaid volunteer efforts of other spouses down the academic hierarchy.

These observant spouses also appreciate the fact that a spouse can be too visible and appear too helpful. I have known cases in liberal arts colleges where faculty members resent the wife because she is too friendly with students and will learn of professors' incompetence or inattention; there is a general fear of the wife who "knows too much" and who obviously has a strong sense of mutuality with her husband. This is also a hazard in those instances where the wife works on campus, as a number of wives do in the public and private sectors, and where much depends on the size and other particulars of the institution, as to whether or not even the suspicion of nepotism gives critics fresh ammunition.<sup>26</sup>

For most presidents not close to retirement age, the question of when to



leave a position is both an exigent and difficult one. Some authorities believe that seven years is optimal; others use a decade as an appropriate period of incumbency, sometimes composed of two five-year contracts. I believe that even a decade can be too brief if one wants to have an impact on the quality and collegiality of faculty and staff. However, today, when many presidents in the public as well as the independent sector are in the midst of capital fund campaigns, enemies urge them to go while friends tell them that they are indispensable and must stay on. Perhaps spouses' judgment, for either sex, can be the most trusted verdict as to when enough is enough.

I would give a false impression of the survey, of the books and articles by former presidential wives, and of the essays in this volume if I focused only on the experiences both partners have of benign neglect alternating with non-benign hostility and malice. As many wives report, they meet interesting people who were not on their horizon when they were faculty couples or in similar professions. Not all the concerts and plays they attend are boring, and there are many visitors to campus whom even the blasé would enjoy meeting. There are vast differences in the quality of trustees, and interesting regional differences (as Roberta Ostar's *Myths and Realities* indicates) in the expectations for formal hostessing, and only the most uncurious would be allergic to the new milieu of the partners.

There is one support which comes up over and over, both in my own conversations with presidential partners and in these essays, and that is the meeting with others who are in the same boat. This project itself reflects a decision by the governing board of NASULGC to assign to spouses a recognized role in Association affairs which includes conducting their own programs at the annual meetings. Similar programs for spouses have been a feature also of the meetings and workshops of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.<sup>27</sup> Organizations with special concern for women in higher education, though primarily interested in promoting women as chief executives, also interest themselves in the role of the spouse, fearing that the existence of partners makes it more difficult for women to become presidents of those colleges and universities which expect to find a traditional couple.

One thing that presidential wives do not appear to be doing in large numbers is to divorce their husbands; the divorce rate of the spouses in the survey and in other surveys appears to be relatively small in comparison with groups of similar age and education.<sup>28</sup> It is still true in some institutions that a president who has an affair which results in a messy divorce will lose the confidence of his board and local support. (This is more likely to occur in smaller communities and in the South.) Male presidents also cannot "be themselves" and get away with



exposing their more raffish potential selves. Yet when all these elements of mutual entrapment are taken into account, I emerge from my reflections on this volume with the sense that these marriages have become in many ways exemplary. To be sure, few spouses have established themselves in lucrative professions and, where there are children not yet through their education, they cannot afford to leave, even if they would wish it. Many of the partners have married each other, not for money, but indeed for love, and at the same time with a mutual bet on mobility. The bet has paid off, and the discovery that it is lonely at the top comes belatedly. Ties are strengthened by the sacrifices the partners have had to make of their own private lives and even, in some degree, of time with one another. That time, as one essay puts it, becomes quality time. The close friends one has among other presidential couples and among board members or others outside of the institution (only rarely within the institution, since one is almost bound to disappoint one's former faculty friends) are intensely shared.<sup>29</sup> Marriages of presidential partners, like those of many of the rest of us, combine the camaraderie of combat veterans with mutually enhancing complementarities, interests (including privileged gossip), and curiosities.

## NOTES

1. Support for my research on presidents and their families has come from the Mellon Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the Exxon Education Foundation, and the Institute for Educational Affairs. For helpful discussion of issues raised in this Epilogue, I am indebted to Joan Clodius, Marguerite Corbally, Marian Gade, and Martha and Barry Munitz.

2. The *numbers* of people entertained appear to be somewhat less among the diverse institutions, some very large and some quite small, in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities; but the number of *occasions* on which the university-provided house is used for official functions can run as high as two a week, although it is interesting to see the regional breakdowns, with New England appearing only about half as sociable in these terms (where of course private institutions still hold hegemony) as the Southwest. See *Myths and Realities*, pp. 15-24, and Figure 8, p. 21. In addition to entertaining on behalf of the university, university-provided houses are in frequent demand for community functions, including various unofficial faculty gatherings. To a lesser degree, partners who have a home off-campus (for which the institution sometimes pays part of the cost) also use their facilities for such critical and unofficial events, but more sparingly; there is more reliance on facilities at the institution itself.



3. Only in small and often denominational colleges are presidents likely to be close to individual faculty members, even if these were friends prior to the assumption of the presidency, because this would imply playing favorites among faculty. The problem of lonely eminence is most serious in the smaller communities in which so many of the major flagship and land-grant institutions of this country were originally located, in part so that youth could escape the sinfulness of city lights. In metropolitan milieux the partners can find friendship among professionals and others in the locality, including presidential partners in non-competing institutions. The predecessor couple to Sue and Charles Young at UCLA, the Franklin Murphys, found friendships among business people, bankers, publishers, and so on in the Los Angeles area—connections of which some faculty and students were naturally critical. However, while non-academic friendships may assuage loneliness, they rarely can offer understanding support because there are virtually no other positions under the same kinds of pressure as is experienced by a college president. Foreign Service officers in hardship posts and big-city mayors seem to me to offer the nearest analogy, although few are under such diurnal stress as presidents today.

4. The McComas partners have served for seven years at Mississippi State University near Starkville, a small town in the Deep South where traditions of considerateness and politeness have not given way to metropolitan brusqueness, but where it is possible that these same traditions make it the more difficult to find fault with negligent or incompetent work.

5. In recent years we have learned that there are many wives, physically as well as psychologically tormented, who out of physical fear or psychic imprisonment, do accept their condition, although there are increasing efforts to alert them to the possibilities of rescue and help.

6. In *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Edward Albee presented as realistic the notion that a faculty member could improve his situation by marrying the president's daughter. A career as a faculty member or administrator can be helped in a small degree by money, and the wife's social status and patrimony might be of marginal help in cultivating the board of trustees, but of no value—or even of negative value—vis-à-vis faculty.

7. In Roberta H. Ostar, *Myths and Realities: 1983 Report on the AASCU Presidential Spouses* (November, 1983), p. 16, an archetypical guest at a partners' party is quoted: "Did you see her Ultrasuede dress? Do you know how much Ultrasuede costs?" In *It's Different at Dartmouth*, Jean Kemeny describes the ready assumptions of the wives of trustees that she belongs to the same income class that they do, and can shop at the same places about which they enjoy telling her.

8. To be sure, male presidents are not exempt from changing expectations in these matters. One president of a small institution was told by a search consultant that, unless he was willing to shave his fulsome beard, he would not be a successful candidate for one of the major public institutions—perhaps it was not so much the beard itself that made for friction, but the kind of idiosyncratic nonconformity this individual's beard seemed to symbolize. The



man in question reacted with indignation: he might on occasion be willing to tailor his opinions, but not his face!

9. However, the frequent experience of having live-in students who can act as babysitters and perhaps occasionally as bartenders can be a mixed blessing. It diminishes even further the residues of privacy a presidential partnership can maintain.

In this connection, the comment of one contributor is striking, that, when she first had a housekeeper who came in by the day, she would try to clean up the disorder created by any lively family in order not to have the housekeeper see messy rooms. It seems likely that most of the spouses were not raised in homes where live-in servants were taken for granted—and treated as if they were friendly non-persons, so that one was not ashamed of how one looked or how one's possessions looked. To use the term of Erving Goffman, there is little backstage for the presidential partners.

10. It is a sad testimony to the realism of faculty members that many seem to prefer chief executives who publicly fight with the political authorities even at the cost of modest incremental successes. Only the fighters appear to be on the side of righteousness. To be sure, when state funds are lost in reprisal against a combative president, faculty members and others will complain about the president's too assertive "style."

11. The wives of high status men are generally aware of the pressures their husbands are under, as well as of the excitements and indeed drama of the workplace. This is so even when the men say, as is common in the corporate world but rare in academia, that they do not bring their problems home with them. Of course, they do. But in the corporate world, the wives rarely know the players as well as the issues, whereas the wives of presidents and chancellors generally know the key players, whether on the board or within the institution, and are themselves sensitive to the issues. This is why the partnership at its best is a vital and enduring one. Correspondingly, however, when the wife disagrees with her husband's position on a controversial issue, she is torn among loyalties, a situation that would not be made much more exigent if the wife held an official university position and was paid as an employee.

12. However, since the 1960's, trustees have come under attack from left-oriented groups for the fact of being in most cases middle-class and white supporters of various supposed "establishments," removed from the lives of the ordinary people in whose name radicals speak. They are also aware of the new hazard of litigation, particularly in academic settings of high visibility—litigation of such capricious outcomes that it is hard to insure against.

13. See Riesman, "The President's Spouse: The University's Added Dimension," a paper presented in the 1980 annual meetings of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, published in the 1980 *Proceedings*; revised and reprinted as "Some Observations on the President's Spouse," #11 in the Occasional Paper Series of the Center for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Virginia.

14. Bea Winkler was an effective volunteer before becoming a president's



wife, and in "Building a University Community," she indicates the sorts of contributions an experienced volunteer can bring to an urban university: a particular interest in students in general and women in particular; a knowledgeable concern for the arts, and for the quality and appearance of campus buildings and landscaping; and outreach into the Cincinnati area. Mrs. Winkler regards these activities as non-partisan and non-political. However, her longtime concern with the position of women in academe and in society, and with the women's movements, suggests that she could well have become entangled in political arguments among women's groups polarized on such issues as abortion or homosexuality. Perhaps the combination of her tact and Cincinnati's long tradition of relative tolerance, possibly in part reflecting its earlier German heritage, helped the University escape controversy.

15. There appears to be a tendency even in major institutions to recruit presidents at younger ages, who are therefore more apt to have small children too young to be away at school and college. Moreover, educated parents today realize that they battle for their children's development against all the pressures of the peer culture toward relaxed standards of work and behavior, partly legacies of the counter-culture and the delegitimation of authority. Justifiably anxious parents want to spend more time with their children, precisely at the time when the husband is facing in his work what are simultaneously the greatest attractions and the greatest pressures. That these husbands are not indifferent to their children, although they appear to neglect them, is the finding of Robert S. Weiss in a study of high-status men and their families, which suggests that these men put their families first on their list of priorities, even though in terms of time and effort they are engrossed in their work.

16. I have known a few notable exceptions, even in the public sector; there come to mind several Southern wives of unconcealed sharp tongue and bitter sarcasm. Most wives must also avoid taking, as citizens, political stands that can compromise their husbands. Although most presidents of major academic institutions, whatever their sex, are likely to be politically liberal, it did not help the late John Elmendorf when he was trying to recruit financial backing for the innovative New College in conservative Sarasota, when his wife campaigned in the state for Eugene McCarthy. See Gerald Grant and David Riesman, *The Perpetual Dream: Reform and Experiment in the American College*, University of Chicago Press, 1978, pp. 234, 236.

17. In answer to question 58, "Please describe how you include potential donors in events you control," one spouse spoke for many in mentioning the careful determination given to the appropriateness of the event and of the guest list for it, and the necessary attention to seating at lunches or dinners. I have still to see a university catering service which could manage the diplomatic issues implicit in what is said in the text, no matter how capable the service might be in terms of culinary art and room decor. In any event, most spouses realize that a presidential house will be regarded as a personal home, a statement of the spouse's taste and concern, even if she has as little to do with it as she cares, or has had as little chance to alter what she inherited as is often the case where any



substantial renovations to suit the styles of the new inhabitants would engender resentment even if not paid for with public funds.

18. Several departing spouses have written helpful memoranda, at once to the board of trustees and to their presumptive successors. Charlotte Sorenson wrote such a statement when Charles Sorenson resigned as president of Babson College and a search was instituted for his successor. Elizabeth Friend did the same thing when Theodore Friend resigned from Swarthmore College, and has since published her memo. Elizabeth Pierson Friend, "The President's Spouse," *Change*, vol. 15, no. 7, October, 1983, pp. 24-33.

19. See Judith McLaughlin and David Riesman, "The Vicissitudes of the Search Process," *The Review of Higher Education*, and "Uses and Misuses of Consultants in Searches for College and University Presidents," forthcoming.

20. This writer noted the question whether the husband expects his wife "to be a tennis partner, available at the convenience of his demanding schedule," an expectation that the Riesman partners at home and occasionally en route have had of one another!

21. I suspect that in some such instances there are discreet unrecorded inquiries to determine whether the male candidate has a spouse and whether any behavior on the part of the spouse either casts doubt on the character of the candidate himself or might embarrass the institution. Correspondingly, a spouse with cultivation, vibrancy, and energy can hardly help but improve her husband's chances of being seen as an outstanding candidate. I recall one search for the president of an ailing liberal arts college where the trustees were attracted to a rather innocuous candidate because his wife possessed obvious abilities as a fund-raiser, demonstrated in her volunteer activities; when the couple were divorced, his chances disappeared.

22. Well-educated and active-minded women resented being regarded as "mere housewives" and simply as appendages of their husbands for generations prior to the much wider diffusion of feminist redefinitions during the last several decades. That half of the wives of presidents in the NASULGC survey who did not have visibly independent careers before they became presidential spouses no doubt experienced many occasions when they felt themselves to be disregarded by assertive career women and insensitive men. (For a short story turning on this theme, see Evelyn Thompson Riesman, "Pouring Tea," *Southwest Review*, vol. 43, no. 3, 1958.) The position of presidential spouse accumulates the scope of diurnal imprisonment, while increasing exposure to disrespect from members or supporters of some wings of the women's movements.

23. Miriam Wood studied boards of trustees and their relations with presidents and with each other in ten independent liberal arts colleges in New England and the mid-Atlantic states, including some of the most notable in the country. She reports widespread dissatisfaction among presidents and among conscientious trustees with the general tenor of board performance, whether in attentiveness to salient issues on which the president seeks counsel and support, or, perhaps less commonly, in fundraising. See Wood "The Board of



Trustees of the Private Liberal Arts College," doctoral dissertation, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1982.

24. In her pioneering and admirable book, *The Partners*, Marguerite Corbally makes the same comment on the "be yourself" slogan. See Marguerite Corbally, *The Partners: Sharing the Life of a College President*, Danville, Illinois, The Interstate Printers & Publishers, 1977.

25. Fitzhenry-Coor is the only contributor to this collection to follow the common European and Latin American pattern of recognizing both partners in her name. Arthur Levine, president of Bradford College, amusingly reports in an informal memoir that, at his installation, his wife, Linda Fentiman, who has kept her own name, put that on her name tag, until she realized that people were inquisitive as to whether she was a professional hostess, perhaps a "live-in" but unmarried partner, or whatever; to clear up confusion and potential rumor, she put "President's Wife" after her own name.

Carolyn B. DiBiaggio's essay, "The Duo-Career," was received too late for me to make adequate use of an essay at once scholarly and pungent. She has surveyed the growing literature on dual-career families and the strains from which these suffer, particularly in commuting marriages. She illustrates the latter among presidential partners from conversation with Anne Wexler, the well-known Washington lobbyist and former Carter White House aide, who commutes to energetic weekends of helping her husband, Joseph Duffey, in his position as Chancellor of the flagship campus of the University of Massachusetts. Carolyn DiBiaggio contrasts the duo-career where the non-presidential spouse is pursuing personal or career interests as well as participating in the partnership, with Hannah Papanek's often cited paper on the traditional two-person career, where it is the man's career that matters. See Hannah Papanek, "Men, Women, and Work: Reflections on the Two-Person Career," in Joan Huber, ed., *Changing Women in a Changing Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973. DiBiaggio is thoroughly at home in the sociological literature, including some of the notable feminist writings of the previous generation, such as Alice Rossi's "Equality Between the Sexes: An Immodest Proposal," in Robert J. Lifton, ed., *The Woman in America*, Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1964. The essay states some of the concerns of the women's movement in a way that combines challenge and sensitivity.

26. I have known presidential wives who prefer not to learn which members of the junior faculty are at the moment waiting for the tenure up-or-out decision, lest their behavior toward a couple slated for likely departure become too constrained; of course, many faculty members fear (or, rarely, hope) that the president's wife, as an additional pair of eyes and ears, may at least peripherally influence such decisions. To be sure, the life of professionals in most organizations is complicated by the mixture of friendship and power, and by the recognition that careers will rarely follow parallel trajectories. This recognition may be one source of the desire of some professionals, in medicine and law as well as in academia, to join unions as a (frequently tarnished) symbol of cohort solidarity.



27. Attention to the role of the spouse has been featured (by Marguerite Corbally, Clark Kerr, Barry and Martha Munitz, myself and others) at recent meetings of the Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities.

28. For example, there are 15 vignettes of corporate and financial managers, ranging in age from the thirties to the fifties, all of whom have been married and five of whom have been divorced and remarried (one widower has also remarried). See John P. Kotter, *The General Managers*, New York: The Free Press, 1982, Appendix D.

29. In my own observation, the best presidents of either sex build the closest possible ties with their immediate staff, their provost/vice presidents and major deans. The group of top administrators (and their spouses if any) can become a close circle of support and sociability. However, universities are neither Japanese organizations nor IBM and AT&T, where, in the past, promotions have come from within and there has been lifelong employment, generally accompanied by loyalty. The president who encourages and helps develop an administrative team is almost bound to lose some of them who are recruited for presidencies and other top positions elsewhere—a prospect all the more likely since the president himself or herself can of course offer no guarantee that he himself will stay on the job indefinitely, for while they may be able to mute their own further ambitions, they cannot of course guarantee that they will not fall into disfavor with faculties, governors, system heads, or boards of trustees.







## *Acknowledgements*

Our thanks to all those who have contributed their time and talents to this volume; to the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) for its sustaining commitment to making the role of the spouse more effective for the university, and the university more sensitive to the spouse, and to all spouses of university chief executives, past and present, without whose inspiration and experience we would have been unable to make this effort to bring about a better future. Specifically, our great thanks go to the authors of the individual essays in this book.

We also want to acknowledge the contribution of the University of Minnesota in this enterprise. Dr. Roger Harrold generously contributed his expertise in compiling and tabulating the survey and its results. And a special lady at the University of Minnesota—Marilee Ward—has contributed countless hours to this project and we wish to extend special recognition to her for her outstanding ability and for her never-failing graciousness. Our thanks go, too, to Martha Kvanbeck, Marilee Ward's diligent assistant.

Finally, we wish to thank all of the NASULGC staff members who have worked so assiduously to help produce this volume.

JOAN E. CLODIUS - DIANE SKOMARS MAGRATH