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The Future is Familiar

Young Swedes Imagining Work-life Balance in Their Future Adulthood

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Abstract

This thesis explores the imagined futures of young Swedes with a focus on how they envision creating work-life balance and how they aim to divide their time between paid and unpaid work. This is done by analyzing written accounts of 168 upper secondary students from both university preparatory schools (UP) and vocational schools (VO) in a middle-sized town in Sweden. Three top-level strategies for creating work-life balance are identified in the study: *The Domestic Strategy, The Individualized Strategy*, and *The Having-it-all Strategy.* A feminist, intersectional lens is applied when analyzing how categories of class and gender intersect in imagined futures. Arlie Hochschild's (2012) concept of 'the second shift' is used to understand the gendered patterns of division of time between paid and unpaid work that prevails in the empirical material. Female participants illustrate more awareness of the future responsibility of the second shift than the male participants and appear more torn between the choice of a family or a career than the men do. Additionally, the concept of 'respectability' from Beverley Skeggs (2002) is used when understanding classed differences in future work-life balance. The VO-women more often imagine themselves in traditional marriages doing the larger part of the second shift than the UP-women. The thesis concludes that the men appear to be in a position where they have better access to create WLB than the women do, furthermore the UP-men have a better position than the VO-men. UP-women wish to a greater extent for more gender equality in future families than VO-women do, meaning that VO-women are the group who will have the hardest time creating WLB in the future.

Keywords: imagined futures, young people, work-life balance, gender inequality, the second shift, Sweden

Popular science summary

This thesis tells the story of young Swedes' imagined futures. I have asked 168 upper secondary students in a mid-sized town in Sweden to write texts where they imagine their lives at age 35. I have asked them to reflect on what this life will look like and how they imagine creating balance between work, the family, housework, and leisure time. I wanted to see if there were differences in how men and women imagined their future adulthood and specially to see if they thought differently about dividing their time between work and the home. I also wanted to find out if there were differences in how students from university preparatory schools (UP-schools) ("högskoleförberedande gymnasieskolor") and vocational schools (VO-schools) ("yrkesförberedande gymnasieskolor") thought about their future lives. I found three different strategies for how to create work-life balance to be present in the imagined futures: *The Domestic Strategy, The Individualized Strategy*, and *The Having-it-all Strategy.* I found that the women in the study gave more thought to housework and that they seemed more torn between work and the home than men did. The women tended to see it as their responsibility to be in charge of the home including the housework while the men did not see this as their responsibility to the same degree. I also found that the UP-students thought more about the importance of gender equality in their future marriages than VO-students did. UP-women talked more about wanting to share the housework equally with their partners than VO-women did. This means that VO-women will likely have to take on more housework in the future than UP-women will, meaning that they will be the group who have the hardest time creating work-life balance. Overall, there are clear differences between the genders and the students from different schools when it comes to imagine their future lives and in how to create work-life balance.

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Introduction

> *I live with my husband and two kids outside a larger city in Sweden but [I] also have a summerhouse in Spain. I work as a researcher within the field of natural sciences and make a decent amount of money. In my spare time I go to the gym and travel around in Sweden and the world to explore new places. I focus on the kids and their well-being but still I am successful at work. When I get home from the job there is housework to do which me and my husband do together, but there is also time for rest and recovery after this. The house is big, nice, and clean and we make a lot of delicious food. It's important to me to spend time with the people that I love […]* (#34)

This is how a female third-year student from a university preparatory program at a secondary school in Sweden talks about her imagined future life at age 35. This quote gives us a glimpse into the crystal-ball held in the hands of a young woman on the brink of adulthood in a mid-sized town in the welfare state of Sweden in the year 2022. In her present-day life when writing this, the Covid-19 pandemic has painted over most of her experience in secondary school. She is about to graduate from school and a new chapter awaits her. Which contemporary norms of the good, adult life play a role in how she envisions her life to be 16-17 years from now? Does her imagined future look different from those of the students attending a vocational school? Does it differ from those written by male students? These are some of the questions that I have asked myself when interpreting the written accounts of imagined futures by 168 secondary students in Sweden.

The aim of this thesis is to explore how young Swedes imagine creating work-life balance in their future adulthood, and specifically how they imagine dividing their time between paid work, housework, leisure, and family time. Central to my analysis are questions of how class and gender intersect when reflecting on how work-life balance will be created in the future. Further, it is the aim of this thesis to discuss how the differences between these intersections can be understood as relating to structural inequalities. This thesis departs from the theoretical frameworks of Arlie Hochschild (2012) and Beverly Skeggs (2002), studies situated

in an American and a British context respectively. The aim is to explore if Hochschild's (2012) concept of 'the second shift' and the gender inequality it entails can be found in a Swedish context and to discover if any positionings of being 'respectable' (Skeggs, 2002) prevail among the – especially working-class – participants.

Work-life balance in Sweden

Sweden is known for its strong values of gender equality and has as its pronounced goal to be a gender equal nation where "women and men have the same power to affect society as well as their own lives" (Swedish Gender Equality Agency, 2022). Internationally, the Swedish state is praised for its family-friendly policies that make it possible for all its citizens to combine work and family life; in Sweden no one should have to choose between work and family (Bergold, 2022, p. 7). The goal is to have what Nancy Fraser calls a 'universal caregiver model' where no one gender is assumed to be the primary caregiver of children (Fraser, 2013, pp. 215-216). These policies are being used to brand Sweden as an attractive place to work for a foreign labor force. An example of this can be found when looking at Lund University's job recruitment web page, which includes a list of why it is nice to work in Lund and in Sweden. One item on the list is that Sweden is "a country where you can achieve a good work-life balance" (Lund University, 2022), another is that Sweden "is a country where equality is key" (ibid). However, when looking at the statistics it becomes clear that paid work and unpaid housework is unequally distributed among men and women in Sweden, suggesting that 'achieving' work-life balance (from here: WLB) might not be in reach for everyone. Numbers from Statistics Sweden's (SCB) rapport on time-use from 2021 show that women spend 6.5 hours more per week on daily housework tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry than men. Additionally, women spend almost double the amount of

time per day than men do on routine childcare such as feeding and tucking in at night[1] (SCB, 2022a, pp. 14-15).

These inequalities not only have consequences in the individuals' lives but have consequences on a structural level in questions of financial means, health, and access to power (Swedish Gender Equality Agency, 2022; Andersson and Stüber 2020; Hagqvist, Lidwall and Leineweber, 2022; Bergold, 2022, p. 9). The question then is, are these inequalities filtered down into the everyday life of young Swedes when they reflect on their futures? By interpreting the written accounts of 168 young Swedes and analyzing their imagined life-choices I intend to deconstruct the normative framework that lies behind these choices. By showing how the participants of different classes and genders think differently about their futures, I will display how dynamics of power and structural inequalities play a role in the shaping of these futures. I will then discuss what consequences these inequalities have on a societal level.

Research questions

In order to explore my research issue and reach the aim of this thesis, I have constructed the following research questions which guide my analysis:

> *Which strategies for creating work-life balance can be identified in accounts of imagined future adulthood by young Swedes? Do gender and class norms play a role in creating these strategies, and in that case, how?*

The concept of work-life-balance will be defined and discussed in the previous research-section and gender and class will be operationalized in the research design-section of this thesis. Throughout the thesis I will be referring to students who attend either a university preparatory school (from here: UP) or a vocational school (from

[1] On a daily basis Swedish women spend 2h 43m on cooking, cleaning and doing laundry, for men this number is 1h 47m. Women spend on average 42 minutes on practical child-care tasks everyday compared to 22 minutes for men (SCB, 2022a, pp. 14-15)

here: VO), I will elaborate on the differences between these schools in the research design-section.

Positionality

I am a white, cisgender, heterosexual woman, who grew up in an upper-middle-class environment in Denmark[2] and who will soon hold a master's degree. I am aware of how the many privileges I hold inform my subjectivity and that the knowledge I produce is not isolated from my positionality, rather it is shaped through the lens it provides me. In my upbringing I have experienced what a lack of work-life-balance as well as inequality in the division of housework does to a marriage, a childhood, and a family. These experiences have informed the situation from where I am departing today and have fostered my great interest in not only the topic of my thesis but in feminist thinking in general.

As you will see in this thesis, I have allowed for perspectives that challenge my own lived experience, to take up space, and I believe that my personal engagement in these topics have mainly the positive effects of creating a spirited interest that beats like a heartbeat throughout the body of text you are about to read.

Disposition

Following the introduction, I will present the previous research that informs the academic context of my study, which I am comparing my findings to. Next, I will go through the theoretical concepts of 'respectability' (Skeggs, 2002) and 'the second shift' (Hochschild, 2012) that shapes the framework of my analysis. Then I will present my research design and will thoroughly describe choices and consequences of the method I have used, which will then lead me to unfolding the analysis. Finally, following the analysis, I will sum up my findings with a

[2] Though I am fluent in Swedish, I am not native to Sweden, which gives me an outsider-position when studying elements inherent to Swedish society and culture. This outsider-position can limit my understanding of aspects brought forward in the accounts but can at the same time enhance my abilities to critically study Swedish societal structures

conclusion and then elevate these findings by discussing them and their impacts on a structural level.

Previous research

Research on imagined futures

A number of studies in social sciences have used the method of collecting essays written by children or young people reflecting on their future lives as a way to explore contemporary norms and narratives (Halldén, 1998; Bulbeck, 2005; Elliott, 2010; Patterson and Forbes, 2012; Haldar, 2013; Mohme, 2014; Haukanes and Heggli, 2016; Andersen, Gubrium and Ulvik, 2020). Furthermore, other studies have shared the focus on young people's futures but used other methods such as interviews and surveys (Thomson and Holland, 2002; Gordon *et al.*, 2005; Pocock, 2005; Bjarnason and Hjalmsdottir, 2008; Cook, 2018; Forsberg and Timonen, 2018; Boytos *et al.*, 2020; Haukanes and Hašková, 2020). All the above-mentioned studies have found that gendered and/or classed patterns prevail to some extent in the narratives of future adulthood by young people. A study with this conclusion is the one by Patterson and Forbes (2012) who, departing from a qualitative study in New Zealand, find that the women in the study describe family-life in great detail and view it as compulsory, while the men only talk of family in vague and generalized terms and view it as complimentary. Additionally, men talk about their future jobs in specificities, while women describe this in more abstract terms (Patterson and Forbes, 2012). Patterson and Forbes conclude that their participants 'do' gender in a way that positions men and women as discrete categories of people. Drawing inspiration from Andersen, Gubrium and Ulvik (2020) I too decided to recruit from schools with different socioeconomic profiles in order to include class in the analysis. In their study situated in Oslo, Norway, they find that the male students talked more of their free time while the girls gave most space for describing their future identities as mothers. The narratives were most gender stereotyped among the working- and middle-class schools and most gender-neutral at the

cultural elite school, suggesting that gender equality in family- and work life becomes a class-privilege. The work by Haukanes and Heggli (2016) explores tensions between paid and unpaid work in the life-scripts of young boys and girls in Norway and the Czech Republic. Across the countries, they find that the idea of a woman who give priority to career over family does not appear as an imaginable option neither amongst boys nor girls. Interestingly, the discourse of unpaid care-work performed by women is almost non-existent in their material. The authors argue that this suggests that "aspects of care are still naturalized as female" (ibid, p. 165). Thomson and Holland (2002) focus on both class and gender in their study, which interviewed 107 young people from England and Northern Ireland about their imagined futures. Here they find that a normative model of the good life at age 35 exists and that it stems from the middle-class. This model includes being married and having kids, and it creates tensions between work and family for women. The model is supported the most by middle-class men and challenged the most by working-class women (ibid). Departing from a UK-context, Elliot (2010) shows that there were statistically significant differences in what themes boys and girls were more likely to write about in the National Child Development Survey from 1969. Examples of this are that girls are more likely to write about domestic work than boys and boys are more likely to write in detail about their future occupation than girls. Again, these findings are in line with the more recent studies which suggests that these gendered patterns of paid and unpaid work are historically deeply rooted.

These articles have inspired the method of choice for this thesis, they have shown that by allowing young people a space where they can imagine their future adulthood, they teach us something important about the contemporary norms that affect their lives. The studies illustrate how using a creative and different qualitative approach can allow for insights not achievable by a more traditional method like interviews. They display how the imagined futures follow familiar paths from the present and that gender roles tend to prevail, which led me to believe that I would find similar patterns in a Swedish context.

Research on work-life balance with a gender and class perspective

In their review of studies on the topic of WLB Kalliath and Brough (2008) find that there is no unified idea of what WLB is. They therefore construct their own definition of work-life balance that aims to incorporate the unifying ideas of others' conceptualizations: "Work–life balance is the individual perception that work and non-work activities are compatible and promote growth in accordance with an individual's current life priorities" (Kalliath and Brough, 2008, p. 326). I choose to use this conceptualization of WLB in my study because it gives space for the individual to judge whether their current life-situation makes their roles in work and in life compatible. However, I find that the definition used in the aforementioned article by Haukanes and Heggli (2016) to be very useful as well and to contain an even more operationalized idea of WLB. They defined WLB as: "not having work–family conflicts or negative spill overs between the two life domains and a more or less equitable time distribution between the very distinct activities" (p. 167). I therefore combine these two definitions in my conceptualization of WLB. When working with the concept of work-life balance, the concept of 'work' can be quite straight forwardly understood as engagement in paid work, while the definition of 'life' is not something the literature agrees on (Hagqvist, Gådin and Nordenmark, 2012, 2017; Hagqvist *et al.*, 2017; Hagqvist, Toivanen and Vinberg, 2019; Hagqvist, Lidwall and Leineweber, 2022). In my operationalization I am inspired by Hochschild's (2012) theory (which I will elaborate on later) when defining what the 'life'-sphere entails. I chose to focus on three activities of the life-sphere in analyzing strategies to create WLB: unpaid housework (including childcare) conceptualized as 'the second shift'; time spent with your family; and leisure time.

In their study of the everyday lives of couples who work in the ICT-sector in Stockholm, Peterson and Roman (2011) find that gendered patterns in relation to WLB prevail. In their sample, women expressed more ambivalence because of contradicting ideals and expectations. A pressure of achieving work-life balance was present in this study consequently resulting in this issue being understood as an individual responsibility rather than a structural problem. This individualization

of the WLB-issue is mirrored in the study by Eldén and Anving (2016) in the question of hiring help to do housework. In their study on nanny-employment in Sweden, Eldén and Anving (2016) find that a reason for hiring nannies is to create more WLB and to enhance gender equality in marriage. This way the norm of the dual-earner couple is enforced while WLB is achieved through outsourcing unpaid, undesired housework. Effectively making the question of the good family life and of creating WLB a question of money and thereby class. Also focusing on class and WLB is *The Swedish Trade Union Confederation in Sweden* who shows that the circumstances for combining work and family life are far from equal when comparing working-class parents to middle-class parents (Bergold, 2022, p. 4). The Swedish laws on parental leave are supposed to ensure families with flexibility and possibilities for creating a better WLB, but this does not in actuality apply to working-class parents involved in part-time- or temporary employment or in otherwise precarious working-conditions, the author argues (Bergold, pp. 15-16). The rapport concludes that you simply do not have the same opportunities to combine work and family life when belonging to the working-class as those of the middle-class and upwards do (ibid, p. 47), effectively making the question of how to create work-life-balance a question of class.

Swedish scholar Emma Hagqvist has focused on the consequences of work-life imbalance in many different studies (Hagqvist, Gådin and Nordenmark, 2012, 2017; Hagqvist *et al.*, 2017; Hagqvist, Toivanen and Vinberg, 2019; Hagqvist, Lidwall and Leineweber, 2022). Hagqvist, Lidwall, and Leineweber found in their study from 2022 that work-life interference is a risk factor for subsequent long-term sickness absence. They found no gender differences in the results. Additionally, Hagqvist, Gådin and Nordenmark (2012) investigated the relationship between well-being and work-family conflict across 25 European countries and found that the negative relationship between well-being and work-family conflict was stronger in countries with high levels of gender equality. The authors argue that the link between low well-being and work-family conflict in the more gender equal countries is to be understood as a consequence of the pressure of upholding the norms of gender equality while being affected by contradicting demands.

Consequently, they call for policies that support WLB for both men and women. (Hagqvist, Gådin and Nordenmark, 2012, p. 795).

These articles focusing on WLB offer a framework for understanding WLB that I will be applying in my analysis. Understanding the inequalities that dominate access to WLB in present day Sweden as well as what consequences a lack of WLB has , forms an important background from which my study operates.

Research on academic and vocational upper secondary students in Sweden

The study by Nylund, Rosvall and Ledman (2017) finds that the vocational and academic (UP) upper secondary programs are based on very different types of logics. The authors argue that the vocational students are not trained to take part in society's macro-discussions of justice and power. Instead, they are trained to adapt to the arrangements they will face in the workplace and to see them as given (ibid). The article questions the hegemonic norm of segregating vocational and academic subjects and concludes that the current distinction reinforces the division of manual and intellectual labor in society (ibid). Also questioning the taken-for-granted idea of separating academic and vocational students are Jonsson and Beach (2015) who find that academic students hold strong negative stereotypes against vocational students and argue that this enforces a division of a class-structure, since the academic students are predominantly middle-class and the vocational students are predominantly working-class (ibid). Therefore, they argue for a reform of the upper secondary school system that would merge the academic and vocational students in their common subjects which would work to dismantle the harmful, classed stereotypes. Also orientated towards the difference between academic and vocational students in upper secondary schools in Sweden is Ambjörnsson (2019) who explored how secondary school girls construct gender through categories of class and sexuality. Following a year-long anthropological fieldwork in a vocational- and a university preparatory class, she finds that the academic women embody the normative femininity where women are expected to be nice, kind,

happy, mild, and tolerant (Ambjörnsson, 2019, p. 74). Further, the vocational women are seen to perform a deviant sort of overtly sexual, cocky and loud femininity that is so unfeminine it becomes masculine (ibid, pp. 54-57). The power dynamic between the classes becomes visible in the normative construction of femininity as intersecting with class in this study, the correct form of femininity becomes a middle-class value (ibid, p. 78).

When analyzing the different ways students create their imagined futures and future WLB, these aspects of differences in performed femininity as intersecting with class are important to include. Additionally, Ambjörnsson's work lends its categorization of class to my analysis and has therefore been crucial in understanding class-differences in the imagined futures of the students. The studies mentioned here have been useful when familiarizing myself with the Swedish upper secondary system and understanding how the divide between vocational- and university preparatory students has consequences for class-reinforcement in society.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this thesis consists of the concept of 'respectability' developed by Beverly Skeggs (2002) in her UK-based study of white, working-class women's conceptualization of self as well as the concept of 'the second shift' developed by Arlie Hochschild in her study of working families in the US (2012). These studies are centered in national contexts differing from the Swedish; however, they still provide useful concepts for analyzing gender and class aspects in relation to WLB in imagined futures.

Respectability

Prominent feminist sociologist Beverly Skeggs conducted a qualitative study of 83 white, working-class women in Northwest England in the 1980s-90s over a period of 12 years which turned into the book *Formations of Class and Gender: Becoming*

Respectable (2002). In this book, her focus is on how these women (dis)identify with and negotiate class, gender, hetero/ sexuality, femininity, caring, and feminism (Skeggs, 2002, p. 2). Building on the theory of capital by Bourdieu (ibid, p. 8), Skeggs develops her theory of 'respectability', a concept which is understood as a central aspect to the working-class women's production of self. She writes that "respectability contains judgements of class, race, gender, and sexuality and different groups have differential access to the mechanisms for generating, resisting and displaying respectability" (ibid, p. 2) and shows how portraying respectability becomes a central tool for dis-identifying with being working-class to these women. Skeggs displays how the women want to move away from their working-class position which goes through acts of improvement (ibid, pp. 81-82). Respectability is a marker of class which sets the standard to strive for, and the desire for respectability is the desire to be associated with middle-class values (ibid, p. 3). The women at the same time resent the middle-class and long for the values that they possess (ibid, p. 93). The women are constantly measuring themselves against an imaginative (middle-class) other who sees what they do and judge their performances (ibid, pp. 74-78). Skeggs argues that their attempts to claim respectability hold them in a system of surveillance and of self-regulating and monitoring where they are produced as governable subjects (ibid, p. 162).

Skeggs finds that many of the working-class women do not identify with the feminist movement, as feminism is not seen as a movement for them, but rather as something made for the middle-class women (ibid, p. 147-153). Finally, Skeggs argues that the privilege of being regarded and regarding yourself as an 'individual' belongs to the middle-class and that the working-class women always see themselves as part of the 'masses' and as representing this. This means that rather than being able to do the introspective practice of 'working on themselves' as individuals, they must keep up appearances on a more superficial level (ibid, pp. 162-164). Skeggs writes that the reason the women turn to respectability is to create a legitimate way of being and to add value to their existence as working-class women which is otherwise perceived as valueless (ibid, p. 90-93).

It is important to note that Skeggs' study departs from a UK-context, where class differences are more pronounced than in Sweden. The two national contexts vary greatly in relation to questions of welfare policies and in the prevalence of the "universal caregiver model" (Fraser, 2013, pp. 215-216). However, Skeggs' conceptualization of class and how it intersects with gender has been widely used in studies outside of the UK, most relevantly for my study by Ambjörnsson (2019) in a Swedish context, but also by Cuzzocrea and Mandich (2016) in an Italian context and by Andersen et. al. (2020) in a Norwegian context, who both focus on imagined futures. Skeggs' study is useful in a Swedish context to Ambjörnsson when analyzing how young women perform their femininity differently depending on their class. Similarly, I have found Skeggs' conceptualizations useful when analyzing how femininity is performed in relation to WLB. Her findings on how the working-class women portray a respectable surface through personal looks and decorations of their homes became relevant when analyzing how especially the VO-women envision their future adulthood.

The Second Shift

The American sociologist Arlie Hochschild is one of the most prominent scholars working with the relationship between work- and intimate life. Her three books *The Second Shift* (first published in 1989); *The Time Bind* (first published in 1997); and *The Commercialization of Intimate Life* (2003) all center questions of the division of time between the work and home-sphere and the inequalities in who does the unpaid housework. In this thesis I will be using her findings and conceptualizations from *The Second shift* as a framework for my analysis. *The Second shift* is based on a qualitative study on working families in the U.S. through the 1980s with the focus on division of paid and unpaid labor among the couples. The study is built on in-depth interviews and in-home observations with fifty couples (Hochschild, 2012, p. 4). The book focuses in particular on the extra work at home that women do compared to men, which at the time of the study equivalated an extra month a year of 24-hour days. This applied, among others, to dual-earner couples – meaning that

women worked one ‘shift’ at their paid job and came home to work ‘the second shift’ at home: doing housework and child-care work. This resulted in a ‘leisure gap’ between men and women, Hochschild writes (2012, p. 4). Hochschild found that the women she interviewed appeared far more deeply torn between the demands of work and family than their husbands did (ibid, p. 7). The majority of the male participants did not share the second shift at home, meaning that the burdens of the second shift and the consequences that followed primarily effected the women of the study (ibid, p. 7). In the couples that did share the second shift, women still did two thirds of the daily work such as cooking which fixed them in a rigid routine, whereas men mainly did tasks such as changing the oil on the car, which did not need to be done daily and offered more flexibility in time (ibid, pp. 8-9). An important point in Hochschild’s book is that though these problems are presented as individual issues of a marriage and a family, they are in fact structural (ibid, p. 11). The inequality in the second shift was the cause of what Hochschild refers to as “the stalled revolution”. She talks of how there had been a “speed-up” in work and family life, as women had entered the labor market. The labor market had not significantly changed since women left the homes, and it continued to be designed as if all workers had a housewife at home who did the chores. Hochschild argues that the revolution had changed women’s position in the labor market but not how the labor market was made to fit the life at home

Hochschild found that among her participants there were gender strategies and gender ideologies behind the choices of how to deal with the struggle between work and life. “To pursue a gender strategy, a man draws on beliefs about manhood and womanhood” (2012, p. 15) Hochschild writes. A gender ideology on the other hand, defines what a person wants to identify with be it the home or work, and how much power one wants to have in the marriage be it less, more, or the same amount as now (ibid, p. 15). Among her participants, there were three gender ideologies present in marriages: traditional, a transitional or an egalitarian, and she found that crashes in gender ideologies within marriages led to tensions surrounding the second shift (ibid pp. 15; 201-202). Hochschild argues that the one way to ‘unstall’

the revolution is to begin valuing and sharing the duties of care among men and women more equally (2012, pp. 187; 269)

When using Hochschild's theoretical framework for the context of my thesis, it is important to note the differences in circumstances of family-life. Hochschild's work took place in the 1980s in the US, where institutionalized family policies were (and are even today) extremely limited, where things like paid parental leave and universal day-care facilities are rare and inaccessible as well as jobs not offering the same level of flexibility as in Sweden. On the contrary, Sweden offers generous parental leaves, universal daycare and to some extent job-flexibility to workers, and as mentioned earlier, it is one of the government's goals to have a society where no one needs to choose between work and family. When applying Hochschild's theory to this case in Sweden, it is therefore important to keep in mind that the societal contexts vary a great deal, and that 40 years have passed in between her study and mine. However, I will argue that the relevance of *The Second Shift* becomes clear when looking at the inequalities in class and gender that prevail in WLB in Sweden as shown in the introduction and previous research-section. Additionally, Swedish scholar Carin Holmberg's work from 1993 finds very similar patterns to those of Hochschild (2012) to prevail in Sweden (Holmberg, 2021). Holmberg finds clear tendencies of gender inequalities in who does the unpaid housework in the homes of young heterosexual couples and argue that this illustrates women's oppression in a patriarchal society. Therefore, I will argue that Hochschild's concept of 'the second shift' and the inequality it entails can still be useful in analyzing the imagined futures of young Swedes, bearing in mind the differences in national policies surrounding the topic of work-life balance.

Research design

The essay-writing method

To collect accounts of imagined futures, I used the method of essay-writing. I chose a qualitative method because I want to allow room for the complexities, nuances, ambivalences, and depths that the practice of imagining your future life requires (Mason, 2018, p. 114). Using this method with young people imagining their future can be a powerful tool when wanting to know more about what norms prevail in the present society. Young people's imagination of the future can be understood as reflecting contemporary norms and dynamics in both social, political, economic, and cultural spheres of life (Carabelli and Lyon, 2016). Instead of choosing younger students like Andersen et. al. (2020), I chose to sample third-year upper secondary students like Patterson and Forbes (2012). This age group is interesting, because they are just about to enter a new chapter of their lives; graduating from upper secondary school and deciding what is next. They are likely to write their accounts with fresh-in-mind reflections about the future that would naturally be brought up by the changing circumstances of their present day lives.

Working from an intersectional feminist, social constructivist epistemology, I understand the students' accounts as social products generated in a specific social and cultural context and as vessels to construct their self-representation (Andersen, Gubrium, and Ulvik, 2020, p. 537). Since I ask them to write down their reflections on their future, the data is not only constructed by the students themselves but also co-constructed by me, through setting the framework for the exercise. These accounts tell us something about which "available cultural resources and repertoires" (Andersen, Gubrium and Ulvik, 2020, p. 536) the young people draw on when imagining their futures. By exploring these imagined futures, we learn something new about the present.

Essay writing is an acknowledged type of qualitative method used to generate information about children and young people's imagined futures (Andersen, Gubrium, and Ulvik, 2020, p. 536). As argued by Andersen et. al. (2020), essay

writing “has the ability to disclose inequality- and power structures related to gender and class, as it takes individual stories to a collective level, showing how social structures become part of individual consciousness” (pp. 537-538). Essay writing is a qualitative method in which the social interactions between interviewer and participant play a less direct role than during a face-to-face interview (Mason, 2018, p. 113). Though it continues to be a (distanced) social situation, the researcher is physically absent from the situation and cannot react in real time to the participants’ replies. Hence, certain limitations arise, one being that it has not been possible for me to ask follow-up questions to the accounts to clear up any confusion or ask for further details. When working with possibly sensitive topics such as life ambitions, love life, family life etc., and when working with young people who might feel more insecure than more mature people talking about these issues, I will argue that it is beneficial to allow for more privacy than what a face-to-face interview could provide. I will therefore argue that essay writing is a highly suitable method when wanting to generate knowledge on imagined futures which is a creative practice that requires room for introspection.

Class-categorization

Like Andersen, Gubrium and Ulvik (2020), I chose to sample students from schools with different socioeconomic profiles in order to include a class-element into the analysis. I use Ambjörnsson’s (2019) framework for class-categorizing, where VO-students are understood as representing the working-class and UP-students as representing the middle-class (p. 33), and I therefore aimed to recruit half of my participants from VO-schools and the other half from UP-schools. Ambjörnsson acknowledges that this division is a bit harsh and that it can be criticized for reducing complexities and painting over deviances (ibid, p. 35). But none the less she argues that this division can be used comprehensibly when looking into class-patterns of students who attend these programs. Recruitment to the different programs on her sample-school had been following a skewed tendency where students who apply to the VO-programs tended to come from homes with parents with lower education, lower income, and lower living-standards than the students

who apply to UP-programs (Ambjörnsson, 2019, p. 33). She argues that this tendency reflects a national trend at the time of her study. This is supported in more recent studies which display that more VO-students tend to come from working-class backgrounds than UP-students who tend to come from middle- to upper-middle class homes (Nylund, Rosvall and Ledman, 2017; Jonsson and Beach, 2015). Not only do the students who attend VO-programs typically come from working-class backgrounds, the program also has an aim of preparing these students for jobs that will place them in the working-class in the future (Ambjörnsson, 2019, p. 33). Since Ambjörnsson's study was conducted, a reform of Sweden's upper secondary schools was implemented in 2011. Before the reform, both VO- and UP-programs granted students access to tertiary educations. After the reform, the VO-schools did not per default grant this access, rather you would have to take specific supplementary courses as a VO-student if you want to be able to apply to university educations (Sveriges Elevkår, 2014). This can be seen as further reinforcing class-differences between the programs that the previous reforms of 1994 tried and failed to eradicate (Jonsson and Beach, 2015). This argument is further emphasized when looking at statistics of students' socioeconomic backgrounds in secondary schools in Sweden in the school year of 2021/2022. On a national level, 43% of students who attend a VO-program have parents with a longer education than upper secondary school. For UP-students 66% of them have parents with a longer education than upper-secondary school (Skolverket, n/a). Furthermore, most UP-students tend to continue into the higher education systems whereas this only applies to 30% of VO-students (Jonsson and Beach, 2015).

Looking at the five schools from where the students in my sample come from, classed patterns are likewise prevalent for the cohort attending school in 2021/2022. 84% of the students attending the UP-school in my sample had parents with longer educations. At the four VO-schools that made up my sample, the share of students who had parents with longer educations ranged from 37-55%. This illustrates a significant difference between the two student-groups and further strengthens validity behind the construction of a working-class group (VO) compared to a

middle-class group (UP) used for analytical purposes in this study. Though this class-framework has a reducing effect on the groups and individuals of this study, and though it can be criticized for its simplifying nature, there is a political point in using this class-framework. Following a feminist, intersectional epistemology, and following in the footsteps of Ambjörnsson (2019) and Skeggs (1997), I intend to bring forward class- and gender-differences to disclose dynamics of power and domination in society. My intention with constructing this class-categorization is, quoting Ambjörnsson who paraphrases Skeggs (1997), to stress how "class is about conflict, power, and inequalities, rather than just being about different ways to organize your life" (Ambjörnsson, 2019, p. 37)

Recruiting and sampling

The recruiting and sampling process took place in a mid-sized town in Sweden during the period of mid-February till the end of March 2022. To gain access to upper secondary students I reached out to their teachers. My goal was to have 100 students participate in the writing-exercise, with a 50/50 share between VO- and UP-schools. I recruited students from both public schools and the private "free standing schools". These latter are not run by government but are still subsidized by public funding ("skolpeng"). Including both types of schools further ensured variation in class-background among students. In total I contacted 67 teachers from 10 different schools. I told the teachers about my study and asked them if they could spare 15 minutes from a class to present my study to their students and offer them time to participate. In case they did not feel comfortable presenting my study themselves, I also offered the choice of visiting the classroom and presenting the study myself. Through personal contacts with a teacher at one UP-school, I successfully recruited three of its teachers to present my study. In total these three teachers had 90 students participate in the study, meaning that I had reached data saturation in the case of UP-students. Recruiting students from the vocational schools turned out to be more challenging, due to students not being present at school but away in their respective working fields. However, as a result of persistent contact to many different schools, I recruited six teachers from four different VO-

schools. Three teachers taught at the same school and presented the study to each of their respective class. In total 78 VO-participants took part in the writing exercise, concluding the recruiting as well as the data generating process.

Prior to sending out the form, I conducted an informal pilot-test with my personal network and did subsequent editing of the wording. I then conducted a pilot-test of the digital form with one of the UP-teachers who was a personal contact. When I read the first 38 responses I received from her students, I gathered from the content of their accounts that they had understood the exercise as intended and that there was no need to adjust the content of the form further. Therefore, I included the accounts of these 38 students into my final sample rather than letting them function as pilot-answers only.

Below, a chart is provided which illustrates the division of the students by gender and school-type in the final sample.

Table 1: Division of participants: gender and school

Gender identity	*School*	
	Vocational	University Preparatory
Women	63	46
Men	13	44
Non-binary people	1	-
Prefers not so say	1	-

Representations of gender in the sample

The UP-school in my sample offers a variety of different UP-programs resulting in this study's participants to belong to different programs spanning from natural sciences to social- and economic sciences. As shown above, this meant that the gender division among students is very close to being 50/50. On the contrary, the gender division among the VO-students highly favors the women. The VO-

programs are highly gendered in the way men and women tend to group together in certain programs. Three out of four VO-schools included in the sample had a between 70-100% share of female students enrolled in VO-programs in the school year 2021/2022. Examples of programs with primarily female students are hairdresser/stylists, agriculture, and nursing. Interestingly, the teachers working at schools offering programs such as building and construction, electricity, and computer-programming, with a higher percentage of male students, did not return my emails. Therefore, my sample of VO-students is highly unevenly divided between male and female students. Since this is a qualitative study and I was not aiming for a representative sample, these uneven numbers do not play a significant role in my analysis. I have analyzed all accounts on the same terms and have not given any groupings more or less attention than others. But since I do make comparisons between the groups it is relevant to take into account that the group of male VO-students is significantly smaller than the other groups due to challenges in the recruiting process.

In the form I asked the students to define what gender they identify as. I offered five options: woman, man, non-binary, prefers not to say and "other". In the last category there was an option to elaborate on one's gender identity and use own words to define this. As shown in the table above, out of 168 participants only one person identified as non-binary and one other person said, that they preferred not to say. No one used the 'other' function. This means that I have a sample where the gender-binary between men and women dominates and I cannot say anything about the participants who identifies beyond the gender binary as a group. Since the number of people identifying beyond this binary is so small, I have chosen to exclude these people's accounts from my analysis. I cannot know if these people have disclosed their gender identity to people in their lives and there is a chance that their classmates would recognize them if reading this thesis, and I do not want to risk outing them (Eldén, 2020, pp. 135-136). I realize that by excluding their accounts I make a choice to only focus on the cis-heteronormative people in my sample and thereby reinforce the defining power of heteronormativity. I would have

wanted to include queer narratives in this study that challenge the dominating hegemonic norm of cisheteronormativity, but since the accounts are so few, I cannot include these narratives without risking doing more harm than good. Going forward I will be referring to and comparing men and women in this study, meaning that I exclusively focus on people who place themselves inside of the gender binary, though this does not reflect my ontological belief about gender identities since I will argue strongly that an analysis like this would only benefit from representing all nuances on the gender spectrum.

The writing-exercise

The writing-exercise was conducted digitally and individually by each student by filling out an online form in a classroom setting, and the students were given approximately 15 minutes to complete the exercise[3]. The lengths of the accounts vary from the shortest one consisting of 9 words[4] (#150) to the longest one containing 660 words (#88), but in the sample the standard length of an account is somewhere between 100-150 words.

I decided to collect the accounts digitally in a time of a pandemic to ensure safety but also to enhance anonymity. This meant that most data collection took part without my presence[5]. To ensure continuity in how the study was presented, I wrote an information-text aimed at the students about the study that I encouraged the teachers to use when presenting. The accounts share many similarities in writing-style and content across different classrooms, suggesting that communication about the exercise has been similar.

A possible limitation to proposing this exercise in a classroom setting without my presence is that the students might not take the exercise seriously and rather take it

[3] The accounts were written in Swedish; the subsequent analysis was conducted in English and the quotes have been translated from Swedish to English when included in this thesis.

[4] There are two accounts that are shorter than 9 words, one being just the one word "no" (#128) and the other consisting of 3 words (in Swedish) "*drifting in the Porsche*" (#120). Both accounts have so little content that it was not possible to draw any analytical meaning from them and therefore they are not included as the shortest accounts.

[5] Out of the nine teachers in total who agreed to present my study to their students only one wanted me to come and introduce the study myself.

as a chance to tease and ridicule each other and therefore might not respect each other's privacy. The alternative to this was to ask the students to write the accounts in the privacy of their homes. Though this approach would have reduced the participants' chance of ridiculing the exercise, it would most likely significantly have reduced the number of texts being written, since it would arguably be harder remembering to do the exercise hours after it was presented compared to mere minutes. Besides, it would most likely result in a selection-bias where only the most dedicated students would be the ones to hand in their accounts. Since I wanted to include a diverse sample of students, these cons outweighed the pros. Fortunately for the purpose of this study, it does appear that most accounts are written in tone of seriousness, and I therefore conclude that most students found the exercise meaningful and that the effect of students interfering with each other while writing the accounts was limited.

The digital form

The digital form includes an explanation of my study, what I will use their data for, and instructions for how to fill out the form. Additionally, there are four background questions that I have used for dividing participants into groups for analytical means. Here I asked them what school they attended, what program they studied (VO, a combination of VO and UP, or UP) and what focus their program had as well as what gender they identified as. Finally, the form contained the central question of the exercise asking them to imagine their future adulthood followed by a blank text box with no word-limitation where they could write their accounts. The English translation of the question posed to them reads:

Imagine what your life looks like when you are 35 years old and write a text about this. Answer these questions: Where do you live and with whom? What do you work with? What do you like to do in your spare time? Do you have kids? What are your reflections on the balance between work, kids, and housework? What is important

to you in your life? If you want to, then please add more details about your life as a 35-year-old.[6]

I chose for the students to imagine their life at age 35. Rather, than have them include a whole timeline of their life as Patterson and Forbes (2012), I wanted the students to focus on this specific time in their life. Like Elliott (2010) and Andersen et. al. (2020) I too aimed for an age in the future that the participants would associate with being an established adult in a secure place in life but chose an age older that 25 used in the National Child's survey in 1969 (Elliott 2010) and older than 30 used by Andersen et. al. (2020). As shown in the study by Thomson and Holland (2002) a heteronormative goal of marriage and children by the age of 35 exists in the UK-context. This is backed by data in Sweden, where the average age of first-time parents in Sweden is 30.1 years for women and 32.1 years for men (SCB, 2022c). Being a parent is a major factor that plays into the difficulty creating work-life-balance which is why I set the time of the exercise to be 35 rather than 30 to make room for the students to include this parenthood aspect.

Ethics

In order to collect informed consent from the participants the digital form provided all relevant information about my study, including what I would use the data for, and ensured that I would store it in accordance with GDPR (Eldén, 2020, pp. 40-43; 84-85). To ensure that participants were of legal age I asked teachers to present the study exclusively to students in their third year where the students are 18-19 years old. In order to collect informed consent to the collection of data and to guarantee that the students were in fact 18 years or older I had them check two mandatory boxes asking them about this before submitting the form.

When asking young people to imagine their future lives, sensitive topics are inevitable. I did not ask the students any questions regarding their sexual

[6] See Appendix A for screenshots of the digital form

orientation, religion, or ethnicity in order to follow the Swedish ethics law on collection of sensitive personal data (Eldén, 2020, pp. 34-38), but some students chose to include statements in their accounts that revealed information of this sort. Therefore, it was additionally important that the data was anonymized, which it was already when data was generated since I did not ask the students to share any identity markers so the unintendedly sensitive data was indeed never personal data (Eldén, 2020, pp. 130-131). In order to further ensure confidentiality, I have excluded any markers of geographical places and names used in the accounts (ibid, pp. 131-135). Finally, I was aware of noticing anything in the accounts that would arouse concern for the individual and made sure to contact the teacher whose class the students were in and share my concern, of course without sharing any specifics to respect the confidentiality between myself and the student.

Analytical Approach

My approach to analyzing the data has been simultaneously inductive and deductive and has departed from the Thematic Analysis Approach (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2012). Though I used an inductive approach to remain open towards elements emerging from the data, that I did not expect, I had in mind findings from previous research as well as theoretical concepts when analyzing, making it more deductive. When analyzing the data, I focused on elements in relation to paid work, unpaid work, family constructions, ideas of future occupations as well as ideas of how spare time would be spent. Working from a social constructivist, feminist epistemology, I, following Butler (1988), analyze expressions of femininity and masculinity as performative, as "stylized repetition of acts" (p. 519) which work to reproduce gender norms.

To secure rigor and reliability in the analysis, I followed all six steps for how to conduct a TA laid out by Braun and Clarke (2012). To be transparent and ensure continuity in my process, I kept a coding notebook on the side of coding the data, writing down what I had done in each step. I initiated the analytical phase with familiarizing myself with the data. I read and re-read all the accounts while making

initial annotations in text and on post-its. When I had familiarized myself with the data, I imitated the actual coding process by moving from working in hand to coding using the software NVivo. Before this, I created a preliminary analytical model based on my annotations that illustrated the tendencies that were emerging at this point, and I let that model guide me for creating the first list of codes in NVivo. When initiating the coding process in NVivo I had a list of 13 top-level codes with 31 sub-level codes. I conducted two circles of coding. When I had finalized step 2 of the TA and had coded all data, I continued to have 13 top-level codes but now had a total of 57 sub-level codes (see appendix B).

Moving on to step 3 in the TA: "Searching for themes" (Braun and Clarke, 2012) I used the query-functions in NVivo to generate overviews of my codes to construct themes. Generating the themes meant identifying areas of similarities and overlap between codes, as explained by Braun and Clarke (2012). An example of this is when I clustered together the codes "domestic values", "nuclear family", "adjusting work to family life" and "family spare time" which shared unifying features in relation to strategies to create WLB. This cluster became *The Domestic Strategy* when conducting step 4-6 in TA, revising, and naming themes and writing the report (ibid). Additionally, I aimed to achieve a level of analytical generalizability by elevating the empirical analysis through the theoretical framework of Skeggs (2002) and Hochschild (2012) (Bazeley, 2013).

I have constructed three themes categorizes as 'strategies', with subsequent four sub-strategies. The themes each describe an idealized version of a strategy for creating a balanced, functional adult life in the future presented by the participants. Since I depart from a social constructivist epistemology, I do not interpret the strategies as set-in-stone plans that the participants necessary intend to follow in the future but rather than they are ideal types of strategies created by the young participants when given the freedom to express a future they desire. Though I have been able to apply the strategies to almost all the participants' accounts, they are not entirely exclusive. The reducing nature of creating these ideal types means that

a certain level of simplification and exclusion will take place in this analysis. However, by zooming in on these ideal types, I show that these strategies are evident in the data and that gendered and classed patterns prevail when looking within the strategies and when comparing them to one another. I cannot illuminate all aspects and complexities of the accounts but through generating these three themes I have shone a spotlight on some examples of strategies used to create WLB in the imagined future amongst my participants.

Limitations

Since I could not legally collect information about the students' sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity and so forth, I cannot include these aspects into an intersectional analysis, and therefore, the analysis is limited to the intersections between gender and class. Related studies have pointed to the importance of bringing ethnicity into studies on gender norms and imagined futures (Patterson and Forbes, 2012; Andersen, Gubrium and Ulvik, 2020), and, unfortunately, this present study cannot bring forward this perspective either. An intersection of sexuality and gender would also have enlightened many elements of this analysis. Since the sample is very cis-heteronormative, I believe that it would have been meaningful and important to analyze how sexual orientation intersects with gender norms in creating inequalities in work-life balance. Future research should therefore aim to include categories of sexuality and ethnicity when researching imagined futures by young people.

Analysis

In the following I will present the analysis divided into two parts: first I will present some general themes that I have identified in the data and then I will go on to present the three identified strategies for creating work-life balance.

Section 1: General themes

The nuclear family

The students include reflections on the past, present and future when writing about their imagined futures. Many students tell stories of how their lives have developed from their current age in the upper secondary school setting (the past) to the *imagined* 'present' at age 35. For some, they even include remarks on the future life beyond the age of 35. In the time span from the age of writing the text to the imagined future aged 35, the students imagine having travelled; explored themselves and the world. Many imagine having finished an education which grants them access to the job they currently hold in the imagined present. Additionally, many imagine having met a life-partner with whom they are building a family. For some, the future life-partner is the person they are already dating at age 18. These findings are in line with those of Patterson and Forbes (2012), who found that young adulthood was imagined as a time for self-discovery and early adulthood was a time for family formation (p. 125). At age 35 the majority of students see themselves leading a stable life with a solid job, owning property and being part of a nuclear family; something very similar to the New Zealand context where Patterson and Forbes (2012) define this narrative as living the 'Happy, Stable and Contented life' (p. 125).

Supporting the findings of other similar studies (Thomson and Holland, 2002; Haukanes and Heggli, 2016; Andersen, Gubrium and Ulvik, 2020) this thesis finds the norm of the heteronormative nuclear family to be dominant across the accounts, transcending categories of gender and class. Most participants dream of living in a house or an apartment they own, with a husband/wife, 2-3 kids, and maybe a pet. Looking at the class- and gender groupings individually, more than half of the participants in each group want to have a nuclear family at age 35. This is the case for 74% of UP-women, 76% of VO-women, and 69% of VO-men; only the tendency is a little less dominant for UP-men where 57% see themselves having a nuclear family at age 35. For women, the high numbers across UP and VO-schools

suggest that class does not seem to play a large role in wanting a nuclear family, which contradicts the findings of Andersen et. al. (2020) where the women from the economic elite put less emphasis on motherhood at age 30 than the women from the cultural elite and from the middle- and working class (p. 540). This suggests that the pervasive norm of connecting womanhood to motherhood transcends class differences among the participants, and that the male equivalent of connecting manhood to fatherhood might not be as strong a norm given that it does not seem to transcend class boundaries to the same extent. Additionally, where most VO-men seem keen on taking on the role as father and husband, a bit more than 1/5 of UP-men imagine themselves living alone at age 35. Comparing this to their female counterparts less than 1/20 of UP-women mention in their accounts wanting to live alone.

Career

In my study I have a sample of young people who by and large are self-confident and know what they want in their futures. The participants are not only sure that they want a family by the age of 35, but many participants also share very clear ideas of their future jobs in their accounts. This is similar to the study of Haukanes and Heggli (2016) who find across a Norwegian and a Czech context that "the wish for a professional identity is strongly expressed both among boys and girls" (p. 172). However, it contradicts the findings of Patterson and Forbes (2012) in the New Zealand context, where the women expressed vague ideas of future professions and the men clear ideas of such. Among the participants in my study, women do not in general have vaguer ideas about their future jobs than men. Instead, male and female participants share equally clear goals and display ways to reach them when it comes to describing their future professional lives. The share of UP-women and men who have a clear idea of their future profession is the same; 61%. This is shown by mentioning specific job titles such as engineer, upper secondary school teacher, medical doctor, and lawyer as opposed to more vague, abstract statements about wanting a job that you like. For VO-students the number of students who have clear job ideas are even higher than those of UP-students:

68% of VO-women and 77% of VO-men know what they want to work with as adults. Examples of job-titles mentioned by VO-students are nurse, hairdresser, auto-mechanic, police office, and zookeeper, meaning that, unlike the case of Andersen et. al.'s study (2020), working-class or traditional manual labor professions were mentioned (p. 542). The classed difference here is likely linked to the different nature of the schools. The vocational-specific specific programs in VO-schools train students to take on occupations right after graduation. In comparison, the UP-schools provide a broader education with the aim of granting access to many different types of (university) educations and, later on, jobs.

For some participants, the clear idea of their future occupation is connected to big dreams and high ambitions. Among the participants, a narrative of high career ambitions prevails. Some students want to make a career within biomedicine, maybe even winning the Nobel Prize for inventing a new type of medicine (#30). Others share their entrepreneurial dreams of owning their own hair salons, equestrian schools, auto mechanic workshop or other types of businesses[7]. Furthermore, some students want to work with political issues, be it as a UN-staff member or a corporate lawyer working with human rights (#72-73). Climbing the career ladder is a dream shared equally by participants across gender. However, UP-students show examples of higher career goals than VO-students. This could be because UP-educations open the doors to a wider range of tertiary educations including those that can lead to a prestigious job; if you have high career aspirations you might choose an UP-school over a VO-school. Displaying high career ambitions could also be understood as a way of performing your class identity as an UP-student, as suggested by Ambjörnsson's study (2019). Here she shows how the UP-women perceive themselves as being ambitious, mature and aiming for getting good grades in school in order to secure a good life in the future (ibid, p. 54). This is held against the contrast of the VO-women who are seen as immature, irresponsible and not really caring about school (Ambjörnsson, 2019, pp. 54-55).

[7] Examples of this are #27, #106, #94, #118

Applying this argument to both male and female UP-students in my study, these students could be seen as presenting themselves as striving for an adult life with a high-paying, high-regarded job in the future as a way that of performing or reinforcing their identity as UP-students.

Although both men and women dream of high-achieving careers, it is evident in the sample that having both a career and a family proposes a dilemma to women that is near non-existent for men. Women are faced with the 'double bind' between being an involved, committed employee and a caring, engaged mother, what Hochschild conceptualizes as women being torn between two 'competing systems of urgency' (2012, p. 235). Though I did not suggest for the students to prioritize or to choose between the different elements of an adult life, many women describe themselves as having to make a choice between *either* career or kids. Similar reflections are very rare among the men which will be illustrated in the following analytical section.

Section 2: Three Ideal Type Strategies for Creating Work-life-balance

When I asked the participants to share their reflections on how to create work-life balance in their future adulthood, they provided different plans for how they would organize this, which varied greatly in levels of detail. In *The Second Shift*, Hochschild talks of her participants using gender strategies when handling the second shift, which are to be understood as plans of action as well as the emotional preparation that comes before acting (2012, p. 17). Like Hochschild, I have identified *strategies* for creating WLB and they entail plans of actions as well as emotional preparation. The three identified ideal-type strategies are: *The Domestic Strategy, The Individualized Strategy and The Having-it-all Strategy.*

Some participants did not explicitly include the concept of balance in their accounts, but the outlines of their future life gave enough insight into their thought-processes

in order to classify them as using a strategy for creating WLB. In the table below I will illustrate how I have divided the participants into the three different categories.

Table 2: Divisions of participants: Top-level Strategies

	Women (N = 109)		**Men** (N = 57)	
	UP (N = 46)	**VO** (N = 63)	**UP** (N = 44)	**VO** (N = 13)
Domestic	3	13	1	1
Individualized	11	11	13	2
Having-it-all	32	39	28	9

These strategies are not exhaustive but almost capture all participants. This is due to the broadness of the Having-it-all-category, which I will elaborate on later. Only three participants have not been placed in either of the three categories[8].

Ideal Type Strategy 1: The Domestic Strategy

The Domestic Strategy is defined by the emphasis put on everything within the home: the kids, the husband/wife, the physical environment of the house. I have identified 18 participants in total as using *The Domestic Strategy*, making it the smallest grouping out of the three strategies, and the least used strategy. Only 2 out of 18 participants using *The Domestic Strategy* are men. 13 out of the 16 women using this strategy attend VO-schools, suggesting that class plays a role in choosing this strategy. This is similar to the findings of Andersen et. al. (2020) where the child-centered narratives were more dominant among the middle- to working-class women than the women from the economic elite, suggesting that envisioning motherhood was a classed practice (p. 540).

[8] #120, #128, and #165 were not included in the categorization of participants into different strategies, since their accounts did not entail enough information to judge which of the strategies, they might use

Under the umbrella of *The Domestic Strategy*, I have constructed two sub-groups, who I will refer to as 'the Traditionalists' and 'the Neo-traditionalists'. I will go into depths with both in the following. Where the strategy of the Traditionalists is mainly rooted in historically more gender stereotypical norms of motherhood, the strategy of the Neo-traditionalists comes off as more critical towards many of the external norms regarding family- and work life but remains focused on everything domestic.

The Traditionalists

The group of participants I have identified as Traditionalists are made up entirely of women[9], of which there are 10[10]. This is similar to how the students who focused on parenthood and family-life in their accounts were most often girls in Andersen et. al. (2020). Like the women Hochschild classifies as having a traditional gender ideology, the Traditionalists would rather be associated with the home-sphere than with work (2012, p. 15). Being a Traditionalist woman means paying the most attention to your future family, husband, and home in your imagined future rather than describing your career or hobbies in great detail. In modern-day Sweden where egalitarianism rules the norm of the good life, this can be understood as a more traditional approach to life.

9 out of 10 participants belong to VO-schools. It is therefore almost exclusively VO-women who can be understood as Traditionalist, the one outlier among them is #50 who is the sole UP-woman in the group. This difference suggest that the construction of a femininity based on ideas of future motherhood and on the importance of the domestic sphere intersects with class since more working-class women than middle-class women perform this type of femininity. This connection

[9] One man, #165, could potentially have been identified as traditionalist, but he is hard to place because of his short and vague description of his future life, so he remains outside of any category. His account consists of this one sentence: "*Hopefully [I'm] married and have 11 kids and live in Australia"*

[10] #6, #10, #12, #50, #86, #89, #97-99, and #103

between class and a motherhood-focused femininity is prevalent in Skeggs findings, where the working-class women do not have the same type of entitlement to the public sphere as the middle-class women have and they therefore tend to base their sense of self on their domestic roles (p. 144). And the same time this contradicts the findings of Ambjörnsson (2019), where the working-class women perform a deviant type of femininity that is not linked to values such as being a caring mother, and the middle-class women on the other hand perform more of a caring, empathetic type of femininity not unlike that of a mother (pp. 54-57).

Overseeing the second shift

Like the women in Hochschild's study who find themselves in traditional arrangements, many of the Traditionalist women imagine themselves as being in charge of the second shift at home. None of the participants using this strategy mention sharing the second shift with their partner. Doing the house chores by herself is #97, the only participant out of the total 168 who wants to be a stay-at-home parent. She states:

> *When I am 35, I want to live in [name of another town] in a big, nice apartment and be married and have five kids and be a housewife. In my spare time I cook for my husband and take care of my kids. My husband works a lot, so I take care of all the household chores*. (#97)

#97 performs a very traditional type of femininity which was also evident among Skeggs' participants, where some women were opposing egalitarianism because they believed in obeying their husbands as important for their womanhood (p. 150). Similar, Hochschild finds that some of the traditional women prefer leaving the economic power to their husbands (2012, p. 15), which appears to be the case for #97 as well, since her husband is the sole provider for the family. Arguably, the case of #97 is a deviant one, since she is the sole female participant who sees herself as a housewife. But the fact that this idea of the housewife even occurs, whereas the male equivalent of a househusband is non-existent, says something about how traditional norms of motherhood continue to prevail today. In a similar situation is

#98, though she differs from #97 in that she wants to be employed as a hairdresser. Telling us about her life she says: "[…] In my spare-time I'm home with my husband and kids. My husband works and I'm mainly at home with the kids" (#98). Similarly, #6 mentions tending to the house: "I spend a lot of time at home and take care of the house and the family" (#6) and #99 says directly that she is the one in charge of the home. When #12 describes her typical weekday, it goes like this:

> *I wake up and go to work. When my workday is over, I get home and cook dinner. Later, when my husband is home, the whole family eat together and talk about what happened during the day. Afterwards we will have a cozy moment in front of the tv. On weekends we go somewhere and do something fun*. (#12)

These stories of tending to the kids, your husband and your home could have been taken out of Hochschild's work that took place in the 1980s (2012) and can be seen as examples of the 'naturalization of care' as described by Haukanes and Heggli (2016), where the woman doing the caring work (for the house or the kids) is seen as the natural thing (p. 167) and where the domestic sphere is understood as the woman's 'turf' (Hochschild, 2012, p. 72). There is something distinctly gender stereotypical about the division of labor in these accounts and #12's example suggests that she will do the majority of the second shift herself, again deeming this a traditional strategy. Yet another woman who considers herself in charge of the second shift in the future is #89. She wants to be a hairdresser who owns her own salon. Not only is this favorable in terms of ambition but it brings with it the perk of planning your own hours of work. #89 has already at age 18 thought ahead to how the responsibility of the second shift will fall into her court and has planned around it: "Since I will have my own salon, I will schedule my hours so that I'll have time with my family and time for housework" (#89). This woman sees herself as overseeing the housework in the future. It is her responsibility to make her work hours fit with dealing with the second shift. Nowhere in her account does she talk about her husband as someone who could chip in or take responsibility for the housework, again, indicating a process of 'naturalization of care' (Haukanes and Heggli, 2016, p. 167), where this responsibility is understood as falling under her

domain. With the exception of the housewife, these six women who talk of taking on the second shift solo, all mention being employed in paid work too. Practically, they are describing a future life where they will work both the first and the second shift and provide no traces of the second shift being shared with their partners.

Though these five women mention being involved in paid work, their descriptions of this work are brief and vague. Very similar to the New Zealand women in the study by Patterson and Forbes (2012), these women share detailed descriptions of their home life and vague descriptions of their professional lives. Where Patterson and Forbes (2012) find this tendency for vague job-description and detailed family description across the female accounts, here this is mainly evident among the Traditionalist VO-women. Once again this suggests that class intersects with gender since it is specifically working-class women who see themselves having traditional gender roles in their homes as a part of creating WLB.

Home is where the heart is

Besides being in charge of the second shift, what unites the Traditionalist women is a focus on the nuclear family, the marriage, and the home. They tend to describe spending their spare time at home with their kids and husbands rather than on hobbies or friends[11]. Actually, none of them talk about socializing outside of the family and refrain from using the word "friend" at all in their accounts. The domestic seems to trump the public life. Using Skeggs' theory (2002), we can understand this lack of leisure as a consequence of prioritizing the public appearance of respectability which the working-class women in Skeggs' study had to do. Instead of being able to prioritize time for self-centered activities like hobbies and seeing friends, it could be argued that the Traditionalist women prioritize the domestic sphere as a way to be seen as respectable (Skeggs, 2002, p. 164).

[11] #50, #97-98, #89 #12, and #6

Likewise, the role of the marriage appears as important. Four[12] of the Traditionalists women talk explicitly of being married and one even mentions that she wants to be married young at age 21-23 (#85), and another woman wants to be a young mother and would prefer to have kids before the age of 25 (#103). Both of these women want to live rurally on a farm. Given the fact that the average Swedish woman marries at age 34 and has her first child at age 30 (SCB, 2022d), both women want to be settled at a young age compared to the average young Swede. This tendency speaks to what Andersen et. al. (2020) calls the 'classed notion of delayed parenthood' (p. 544), where having kids young is perceived as deviant compared to the middle-class norm of delayed parenthood. Additionally, for three of the traditional women, their future spouse is the partner they are currently dating [13] . For #6 this current partner is actually already her fiancé. Meaning that these women are in committed relationships they perceive as serious enough to turn into marriages, which could be seen as a way to perform a respectable femininity where you are not overtly sexual but rather already committed to a life-partner at a young age (Ambjörnsson, 2019, p. 94).

The Traditionalist women put a lot of emphasis on the importance of having a nice, lovely home to spend your time in. As previously mentioned, some women want to live rurally on a farm (#85, #103) with a pool and a garden trampoline (#103). Some describe living in "a nice big apartment" (#97), a "big villa" (#6), or a "small villa" with the perfect size for the family's four members (#12). Another talks of living in a place with peace and quiet where nothing much happens (#10). According to Skeggs (2002), the home is a site where the working-class women creatively produce their sense of self through the use of consumer goods (pp. 88-89). Likewise, the respectable home is a way for the women to distinguish themselves from being classified as working-class, by investing in middle-class consumption. The Traditionalists women's emphasis on creating a respectable home can therefore be understood as a way of performing a normative, more middle-class femininity,

[12] #6, #10, #85, and #97
[13] #6, #85, and #103

distancing themselves from their identities as working class. The longing for a nice home can additionally be read as dreams of social mobility where material success is used as a marker of escaping the working-class (Skeggs, 2002; Elliott, 2010; Mohme, 2014)

In presenting these 10 accounts, it becomes clear that traditional ideas of gender roles and division of labor continue to exist in the present-day realm of the Traditionalists. Gender equality in the form of sharing housework, leisure time, and paid work equally in a marriage, is not a tool the Traditionalist women intend to use when trying to create work-life-balance.

The Neo-traditionalists

I have identified 8 participants[14] as "Neo-traditionalists". 4 of these students are VO-women, 2 are UP-women, 1 is a UP-man and 1 is a VO-man. What these 8 accounts have in common are critical stances to the norm of how to live a good adult life as a worker and a parent, with an emphasis on time spent with the family as more valuable than time spent at work. They also value the importance of nature and of living a simpler life with less modern-day distractions (#9, #113). They can be said to express a form of 'transitional' gender ideology (Hochschild, 2012, pp. 15; 141), in which they are not egalitarian in the way that they believe that both parents should work a lot, and not traditional (like the Traditionalist) in the way that they believe that motherhood and the domestic sphere is most important – but rather in between these two poles or somewhere outside of these two categories all together. These participants all want to be parents and to be employed in paid work. But their accounts reveal critical reflections on the many demands of parents and workers in modern-day Sweden. Rather than ascribing to the narrative of the 'super-kid', where the kids are understood as self-sufficient and their needs are reduced in order to accommodate the parents – a strategy used by some of Hochschild's participants (2012, p. 226) – the Neo-traditionalists dream of being involved parents

[14] #9, #51, #66, #86, #100, #109, #113, and #147

who depart from their children's needs when planning their lives. They dream of a slowed-down life close to nature, choosing what is simple over what is prestigious. They talk of their mental health, of taking care of themselves and of being careful to not getting too stressed with work. They are traditional in the sense valueing family above work, but neo-traditional in the way of appearing critical towards traditional ideas of gender roles in families. None of Neo-traditionalist women see themselves as solely in charge of the second shift but rather talk of hiring help to do this work, and many additionally share specific and/or ambitious career dreams[15]. Both male participants talk of sharing housework or finding a good WLB together as a couple, rather than the responsibility being only the woman's (#113, #147).

Rebelling against the norms of full-time paid work

The Neo-traditionalists challenge the idea that paid work should take place between 9-5 and to be done from a separate space than your own home and your kids. Deviating from the full-time employment norm is one UP-woman, who describes her life like this:

> *When I am 35, I want my life to be filled with happiness, love, and joy. I want to live at the countryside with a partner that I love and our 2 kids. I want to have my own business as a life coach where I have my office at our estate and work 75%. I want to have time off two days a week or have shorter workdays so that I can spend a lot of time with my family and do things that make me feel good. Like working out, being with our animals, be with my partner and our kids who I want to raise to be considerate and confident individuals. […] I want to ensure a good balance with kids, work, and the house so that I will be happy and can focus on my engagements. Because of this, I would prefer to only work 75% so that I can ensure a good balance […]* (#66)

This participant is very clear on how she wants to raise her kids and seems aware of what kind of involvement this will require. Her choice to not work full-time and thereby deviating from the full-time norm is motivated by her idea of what kind of

[15] #9, #109, 51, #66

parent she wants to be and of how she wants to take care of herself. Interestingly, no men in the study mention the option of working part-time even though it is a legal right of all parents of younger children in Sweden to reduce their working hours. This reflects the statistics of contemporary society where, as shown in the introduction, more women than men work part-time, and they mainly do it to take care of kids (SCB, 2022a; 2022b). Also challenging the norms of paid work is another UP-woman who wants to combine the sphere of work and family. Describing her life, she says:

> […] *my kids are in the same surroundings as me in my spare time, they don't have to do the same things as me, they can play or craft while we talk to each other. It is important to me to have a stable communication with my kids* (#51).

This again shows a participant in whose account the life-planning comes from a kid-centered point of view, where family and work is combined on the premises of family. She wants to have her own business within fashion and states: "Even though I plan on working a lot, I would still like to be a part of my kids' childhood" (#51). Here, it becomes clear that she is aware of the double bind between career and kids for women, and that she knows working a lot can lead to being a less present mother. But since being an involved parent is very important to her, she chooses to plan her working hours and spare time to be in the same physical surroundings as her kids in order to really be present. This woman has her priorities straight, and in challenging the norm of separating work and family by working where her kids are, she exemplifies the rebellious nature of the Neo-traditional strategy. Also showing signs of rebellion is UP-student #147 who is one of the two only Neo-traditionalist men. Like #66 and #51 he also sees himself as a very involved parent and states that his career is not his first priority:

> *I don't have any high ambitions for my career, I just want to be a good father and partner. […] I strive to become really good at cooking and to do a lot of the cooking in the household, and to be gender equal in relation to my partner/wife so that we help each other out with the housework* (#147)

This participant is the only one out of the 57 men in my study who explicitly states that his family is more important than his career. Thereby, the rebellious act lies in going against the dominating male norm of never putting your family before work. The dominant narratives of involved parenting support the findings of Andersen et. al. (2020), where "modern middle-class 'intensive parenting' styles" were present among girls who imagined their mothering practices, where what was important was to be tuned into your child's state of mind (p. 539). The normative practice of intensive parenting is interestingly most explicit among the Neo-traditionalist UP-students, and not only among the women, affirming that this practice is strongly associated with the middle-class (Hays, 1996; Faircloth, 2020).

For the Neo-traditionalist participants, the choice of not letting paid work be the most important thing in your life is not only motivated by wanting to be with your kids, but also by the drive to live a more balanced, healthy life with time for yourself and your hobbies. Many of the Neo-traditionalists emphasize the importance of peace and quiet in their future lives, exemplified by wanting to live far away from city-noise and to have time to grow your own vegetables and cook healthy meals (#9). Speaking of mental health, a VO-woman who in her account repeats on several occasions that she does not know yet what kind of job she wants, but it is very important that it is not a stressful job that takes up too much of her time. She argues that this is because she wants to spend a lot of time with her kids and to have time for a fun hobby (#100). Another VO-woman supports this by saying that she wants a job that she "gets along in and that it makes [her] feel good" (#86). The women with a traditional gender ideology in Hochschild's study do not have much leisure time to themselves and do not prioritize feeling good (2012). More so, they often neglect their own needs. As shown in the previous section, tending to your own needs is not a habit cultivated by the Traditionalist in my study either, but the Neo-traditionalist participants consider time to themselves so important that they plan their lives around it while at the same time having their focus primarily on their

kids[16]. This suggests that elements of respectability performed by having material success and a full-time job is not as important to the working-class Neo-traditionalist women as to the Traditionalist women. Rather, their individual needs are important, which challenges the findings of Skeggs (2002), where the working-class women prioritized their outer appearance as respectable over their inner, personal needs and further cements the differences between the Traditionalist- and Neo-traditionalist women (2002, p. 164).

Affording the Neo-traditionalist lifestyle

The Neo-traditionalists do not emphasize the element of housework in WLB to the same extent as the Traditionalists do. Most simply do not mention it, while two participants mention sharing it with their partner (#9, #147) illustrating the egalitarianism crossed with traditionalism that gives the transitional Neo-traditionalism. Another Neo-traditionalist admits to the costs of living a life so focused on her family and career and says that she will a hire a cleaner, since she will be too busy with work (#51). What is evident is the class-privilege that lies behind choosing a life like the one of #51. #51 is an UP-woman and she additionally sees herself as well-off in the future and states:

> *Another thing that is important to me is money. That is why I want to have my own business, so I don't have to rely on anyone else when it comes to my salary. My money will belong to my family and I additionally want my husband to make a lot of money* (#51).

Being able to outsource housework in order to create WLB and to be an involved parents is an economic privilege, as shown by Eldén and Anving (2016) in their study of well-off families that hired nannies and argued that this gave them more 'quality time' with their kids (see also Eldén and Anving, 2022). This is also shown by a VO-student who clearly strives for fleeing the working-class categorization (Skeggs, 2002) and states that: "Money will not be a problem so we can stay at

[16] #9, #66, #86, and #100

home with the kids as much as we want" (#9). Therefore, using the Neo-traditionalist strategy to create WLB becomes a question of class and of money.

Ideal type strategy 2: The Individualized Strategy

Choosing to not have kids is the defining aspect of the Individualized Strategy. Understanding WLB as consisting of the four elements: (paid) work, housework, family, and leisure, the people who choose this strategy reduce the family-element. This is of course not saying that sharing your life with a partner, friends, pets, or family of origin cannot be understood as having a family. Family constructions come in many forms and as society progresses, we are beginning to understand family as something beyond the nuclear one (Smart, 2007; May and Nordqvist, 2019). But in the context of creating WLB, the nuclear family plays a big role in what makes achieving this balance so difficult (Hochschild, 2012). Therefore, eliminating child-care from the equation becomes one way to create more balance which is what this ideal type of a strategy entails. I have identified 22 women[17] as using The Individualized Strategy, where 11 are UP-women and 11 are VO-women. There are also 15 individualist men[18] where only 2 are VO-men. Common traits in Individualist accounts are dreams of living abroad, of having time-consuming careers with big paychecks, of having pets, and of having a fun social life. It is a wish for freedom that prevail in these accounts. The cultural norm of young adulthood where individualization and flexibility are central elements pervade these accounts (Patterson and Forbes, 2012, p. 125).

The strategy is therefore widely used among both men and women which is similar to Andersen et. al.'s findings (2020), where the narrative of partnerships without children was evenly distributed among boys and girls (pp. 540-541). In my study about one in five among the women and men respectively do not want kids. The difference lies in the class-aspects as well as in how the participants talk of not

[17] #8, #18, #23, #26–27, #30, #38, #44–46, #49, #52, #56, #65, #69, #72, #80, #81, #84, #87, #91, and #107
[18] #114, #119, #121–122, #126, #129, #131, #137, #140, #144–146, #155, #160, and #163

wanting kids. The UP-women who do not want kids make up a bigger share of the total female UP-sample compared to the case of VO-women. 24% of UP-women do not want kids compared to 17% of VO-women. Almost exclusively UP-men talk of not wanting kids, comparable to the fact that all but two VO-men include tales of having kids in their accounts.

The Non-fathers: Why men do not want kids

About half of the male participants who do not want kids simply do not reflect on this question[19]. In their accounts, they do not seem preoccupied with the question but rather focus on career choices as well as how they want to spend their leisure time. An example of this is an UP-man who sums up the totality of his future life with these three sentences:

> *I think I live in LA with a model and I have three cars. I am a plastic surgeon and in my spare time I like to travel. What is important to me is my family, my cars, and my house* (#119).

It is hard to extract from this description if this man plans on being a father a not. For these men who do not reflect on having kids, rather than interpreting this as a future without kids, it could also be that they simply ascribe to the hetero-norm marriage and kids at age 35 (Thomson and Holland, 2002) which is why they do not see it as necessary to make these aspects explicit in their accounts.

When it comes to the men who are more explicit about not wanting kids, then most of them are non-decided, hesitant and are debating back and forth. Only two UP-men seem completely certain that they do not want kids at age 35. For #140 it is because "it does not suit [him] as a person", to #160 he aspires to live the life he wants to live and therefore does not want to have his freedom reduced by having kids.

[19] #114, #119-122, and #126

The other men who say they do not want kids seem to not want to close the door on the idea entirely. They keep the possibility of having them later in life open[20]. An example of doubts about fatherhood is shown by one UP-man who reflects on the moral dilemmas that come with bringing a child into the world who you cannot promise a good life (#137). Another UP-man who sees himself still living in the same town at age 35 where he lives now says that he does not plan on having kids but then adds:

> […] *staying in [name of mid-sized Swedish town] can be preferable if I do decide to have kids in the future, since the educations here are amazing and my kid/kids will have good prerequisites for creating a good life for themselves* (#155)

He shows that even though he says he does not want kids, he has thought of what life he could potentially give those non-existing kids.

Common arguments for not wanting kids are that they "require too much time" (#146) and that "they cost a lot" (#131). By reducing the family-element in the work-life-balance #131, #146 and #160 create more space in their lives to spend their money and their time on themselves and their hobbies. To the UP-men #131 and #146 it does seem like the choice to not have kids is influenced by wanting to prioritize their careers. Where #131 seems to want to establish his career and finances before considering having kids, #146 sees himself prioritizing his career, kids or not: "The majority of my time would most likely be dedicated to my job, the rest of the time would go to my kids if I have any, to housework and spare time" (#146). Thereby, if #146 did end up wanting kids he would probably use the "Having-it-all-strategy", since he wants to spend most time on his job even if he had kids.

Overall, these examples of why men do not want kids have very little to do with the double bind that women find themselves in. Though, as exemplified, some of these men do consider how kids would take away time from their careers or spare time,

[20] #131, #137, #146, and #155

it does not seem like an either/or situation to them to the same extent as it does to women, as we will see in the following.

The Non-mothers: Why women do not want kids

Unlike the male participants, the female participants who use this strategy are more vocal about not wanting kids. The vast majority of the Individualist women explicitly say that they do not plan on having kids, seem sure of it, and include more or less explicit reasons for why. One UP-woman even says it as bluntly as: "I have no kids, I want to focus on myself and my career" (#30). Only 4 out of 22 Individualist women do not explicitly use a no-kids-statement[21]. Among the women who plan on using this strategy there are many reflections on wanting an ambitious career and of being able to dedicate your spare time to yourself. This tendency is mirrored in similar studies (Mohme, 2014), and an example of this is how the economic elite girls in the study by Andersen et. al. (2020) "weighed priorities related to career and family" and saw it as a trade-off between work and family (p. 540). This stands in stark contrast to the norm of the nuclear family shown in *The Domestic Strategy*, where family appears to be the most important thing in life at age 35. Interestingly, not wanting kids is equally distributed among VO- and UP-women, suggesting that this is not a classed practice to the same extent as in Andersen et. al. (2020), where the girls from the economic elite were those who most often did not see themselves as future mothers (p. 541). However, since the percentual share of Individualist VO-women is smaller than that of UP-woman, and since VO-women dominate among the Traditionalists, this suggests that, among women, a classed aspect in wanting kids at age 35 does exist after all.

Though high career ambitions prevail across gender in the material, it is dependent on your gender whether having high career ambitions affect your family planning. As shown in the previous section of this analysis, only two men reflect explicitly on how having kids might affect the other spheres in their lives negatively. For

[21] #8, #38, #56, and #87

many of the career-oriented men in my study, having big career ambitions does not exclude the option to be a father. As a contrast, many of the career-oriented women see themselves in this double bind choosing between family and career. An example of this comes from an UP-woman who says:

> *I don't have any plans on having a boyfriend or kids. Maybe I will live with a boyfriend though, but I don't want any kids since that would mean that I would spend all my energy on raising them and not on my own life and success* (#52).

Being so sure of what kind of life she wants to lead; she has made a calculated choice of wanting to spend her energy on an ambitious career and living a nomad-style life rather than on bringing up children. She talks of wanting to be rich, have many income sources and be successful, contrasting this to a life with kids (#52). #52 is not alone in being explicit about prioritizing career over kids. Another UP-woman who wants to work within politics imagines leading a social life with lots of travels and parties:

> *I want to invest a lot of time in my job at the same time as I live a fun life, because of this I don't want kids until I am at least 40 and I definitely don't want biological kids*. (#69)

Again, the dichotomy between a fun, professionally ambitious life and a life with kids becomes apparent and manifests as the double bind for women. In order to prioritize her career and her social life, this woman imagines holding off on having kids until she us 40. The fact that she does not want biological kids could be interpreted as not wanting to go through possible physical challenges of pregnancy which might interfere with how much time she can invest in her work.

Also finding herself having to make a choice because of the double bind is a VO-woman who wants to work as a veterinarian. She sees herself having her own clinic and working as a dog-trainer and nail-artist in her spare time. She argues that "since I won't have any kids, I will have plenty of time to do these things" (#81). Like the Individualist men, some of the Individualist women also mention the monetary

benefits of not having kids, since without kids you can spend your money on yourself[22]. Besides prioritizing their careers, many Individualist women mention wanting to dedicate time to their hobbies, such as painting, baking, reading, socializing, working out, travelling, and partying[23]. Similar to the Neo-traditionalists, one VO-woman also mentions the importance of rest to her, which is something she will have more time for without kids (#26). Connecting the absence of kids with time to rest shows awareness of how the 'leisure gap' (Hochschild, 2012) is often evident for women faced with the double bind between family and work. Because they do more of the second shift, they have less time for leisure than their husbands.

Furthermore, some Individualized women show awareness of the difficulty of creating WLB when you have a demanding job, and state that they know they are going to be working many and long hours to reach their goals, which is made possible by the absence of kids[24]. When these Individualist women describe prioritizing working long hours it can be seen as the clear opposite to when the women from the Domestic and the Having-it-all explicitly say that it is important to manage their time at work, so it does not take time away from the kids. Thereby, both of these strategies – adjusting work hours to be with kids and not having kids so you can work long hours – can be interpreted as these women's awareness of and acquiescence to women's double bind between work and family life.

Dealing with housework through the Individualized Strategy

Almost none of the male participants who use *The Individualized Strategy* mention housework explicitly at all. One VO-man says that he will "*help out [his] wife*" in his spare-time (#114). What he will help with we do not know, but a guess could be that he would help with the housework. This phrasing reinforces the idea of the woman as primarily in charge of the second shift and the man as a mere helper

[22] #26, #49, and #52
[23] #18, #23, #26-27, #30, #38, #44-46, #56, #69, #72, #81, #91, and #107
[24] #65, #44, and #60

instead of displaying him as someone capable of overseeing the second shift (Hochschild, 2012, p 150). The only other man who talks about housework is this UP-man: ”The majority of [my] time would likely be dedicated to my job, the rest to the kids in the case I had any, to the housework and to leisure” (#146). This man is aware that some time is needed for housework, but it appears to be a low priority following his work, which will take up most of his time, and time spent with his kids. This behavior is also found in Hochschild’s study where men would rather do the fun part of the second shift such as spending time with kids rather than cooking or cleaning (p. 9), a finding also prevalent in a Swedish context by Forsberg, who found that fathers more often did fun activities like playing video games with their children than mothers did (Forsberg, 2009, p. 169)

The female participants who plan on using the Individualized Strategy differ quite significantly from the female Traditionalist participants when it comes to housework. The Individualist women imagine spending more leisure time on themselves than the Traditionalist women do and likewise they also imagine spending less time on housework than Traditionalists. Almost none of Individualist women talk about doing housework themselves in their time off. One of the only examples where housework is included comes from one UP-woman who vaguely touches upon this when she mentions that “it will be a bit stressful to find time for work, the home, and horseback-riding” (#30). However, she continues to say that she will manage because all these things are important to her. Like the case of the Neo-traditionalist women, some Individualist women mention that they plan on hiring cleaning help. Making time for her many cultural spare-time activities, such as going to the museum, to lectures and to the theater can be understood as feasible to this UP-woman because she has someone who cleans for her, though she or her husband like to cook dinner or eat out (#44). Additionally, giving us her take on housework, another UP-woman states: “Housework? If my partner is a man, he can take care of that, otherwise I guess it would have to be a shared responsibility. I plan on hiring people to clean my home because it is super boring” (#69). Interestingly, #69 flips the tables here, saying that the man in the household should

oversee the second shift. She challenges the cultural norm of women's responsibility for housework, unless her partner would not be male, then they would both have to do it. These examples are – like with the case of the Neo-traditionalists – signs of class privilege, since affording to hire cleaning help and eating in restaurants to cope with housework, is not affordable to everyone. Therefore, it is interesting to note that both of these statements come from UP-women who in striving for this level of material comfort can be associated with upper middle-class values. Hiring cleaning help or getting your husband to do the second shift are examples of how the Individualized Strategy challenges the traditional norms of woman- and motherhood prevalent among the Traditionalists. The Individualist women create WLB by refusing to fulfill traditional "women's roles" as mothers and house-workers and thereby challenge the double bind and rebel against the default coupling of the second shift with women. These are tendencies also expressed by women who hired nannies in order to escape the traditional women's work in the home (Eldén and Anving, 2016).

Ideal type strategy 3: The Having-it-all Strategy

The third and last strategy that I have identified in my empirical material is *The Having-it-all Strategy*. In many ways, the users of the third strategy combine elements of the two first strategies in wanting to have a family that they value highly as well as a thriving career. Comparing the participants who use this strategy to the others, they might be seen as those with the most 'egalitarian' gender ideology, since both men and women want to work and spend time with their families (Hochschild, 2012, p. 15). Differing from the two first strategies is the lack of substantial sacrifice rooted in the optimistic belief that you can indeed have it all, no need to cut down on work, or choose to not have kids. Interestingly, by far the largest group of participants fall into this category with 71 women and 37 men. Of the women 32 are UP-students and 39 are VO-students. For men, 28 are UP-students and 9 are VO-students. Like the case of *The Domestic Strategy*, *The Having-it-all Strategy* can be divided into two sub-categories: The Organizers and

The Improvisers. Both sub-groups share a tendency of describing both ambitious careers as well as a wholesome family life and a spare time filled with interesting hobbies and many social events, but they differ when it comes to the awareness of what it takes to "have-it-all". I will elaborate on these differences in the following sections.

The Organizers

38 participants[25] can be identified as Organizers, and only 10 of these are men[26]. 18 Organizers are UP-women, 10 are VO-women. 9 out of the 10 male Organizers are UP-students. The Organizers are aware of how much they are asking from life. They know that it can be difficult to create WLB and they are aware that they will need to cut some corners in order to make ends meet. A majority of the female participants who use this sub-strategy talk about the importance of sharing housework with your partner in order to make everyday life work[27]. An example of this is one UP-woman who describes how she and her husband will divide the second shift between them: "Both me and my husband work and have careers but we take turns in getting home early and prioritizing the kids. Additionally, we share the housework between us equally" (#42). Compared to the participants who are grouped into the other strategies and sub-strategies of this analysis, the female Organizers are by far those who talk about sharing housework the most. It becomes clear, that in order to have it all, these women know that they will need to share the second shift with their (mostly) male partners. They instinctively know that if they want successful careers and kids, they will need help with the second shift. Another clear example of this comes from a VO-woman who envisions herself like a future Elle Woods, the leading role of the 2001 romantic comedy "Legally Blonde" (#78). She stresses that she wants to be a successful businesswoman, who is also a mom, who cares about her looks and is smart, eloquent, and educated at the same time.

[25] The female Organizers: #11, #17, #19, #22, #24, #32-37, #39-43, #47, #54, #60-61, #63-64, #67, #78, #83, #95, #101, and #106
[26] #115, #127, #133-134, #136, #138, #143, #157-158, and #162
[27] #11, #17, #19, #22, #24, #32-37, #41-42, #60-61, #68, #78, #83, and #101

This future Elle Woods embodies the Organizing-strategy of how to have it all, when she emphasizes that:

> *I don't care how successful my husband is since I don't mind being the one in the relationship to bring home the bread, but he has to be present, understanding, respectful, a feminist, smart and loving and most importantly; a good dad (#78)*

In order for her to have it all, she transcends the traditional gender roles of the husband as the provider and the wife as the homemaker, and instead insists that she can be a caring mom and a business-woman at the same time, as long as her husband is there to support her, as a present and dedicated father. The wish for a partner who shares the second shift is also evident in the study by Haukanes and Heggli (2016) described a desirable partner as someone who knows "how to divide his attention and energy between the family and the job" (p. 174).

How do the men feel about sharing housework in the future then? Only 2 out of 10 male Organizers talk of sharing housework with their partners as a way of having it all (#134, #157). This shows how female Organizers too are aware of the double bind for women between career and kids and know that the responsibility of the second shift is likely to fall upon them. In order to not drown in work (paid and unpaid) they need to make sure that their husbands take on their part of the second shift. The male participants do not to the same extent reflect on the importance of sharing housework, something that can possibly be attributed to them not being affected by the same double bind and expectation of the second shift as their responsibility. These findings are mirrored by Haukanes and Heggli (2016), who find that it was only the female participants who saw how co-operating and distributing tasks between family members could be a solution to create more WLB (p. 176). Again, this is also similar to Ambjörnsson's (2019) findings, where the girls in group-work situations would take on the responsibility of getting the work done and letting the young men get away with not doing anything, which Ambjörnsson finds to be a way of performing maturity for the women (p. 61-63).

Suggesting, that when the Organizer-women who want to 'have it all' take on more responsibility for making this happen than the boys, it is a gender performance through the position as 'mature' and 'responsible', maybe even 'respectable' (Skeggs, 2002). Therefore, the double standard between men and women who want to "have it all" becomes very clear when looking at what kind of planning is necessary to achieve this for men and women respectively.

Another example of how the female and male Organizers differ in awareness of what it takes to create WLB is shown in the talk of having your kids in pre-school. Four female participants[28] all contemplate how it is practical for them to have their kids in pre-school so that they can go to work while their kids are being taken care off. Presenting her plan for this is one UP-woman who says:

> *If I have kids, I plan on working and have my kid in pre-school and not work too long hours. That way I can continue to work and make money whilst having enough time for the kid and the housework* (#54)

In describing this plan, it becomes evident that #54 has felt the need for figuring out a way where she can combine being involved in paid work and being an involved mother at the same time. By default, these two realms are not easily combined for women facing the double bind. In comparison, none of the male Organizers – or any of the male participants at all – mention how having your kids in pre-school enables you to be involved in paid work or even use the word 'pre-school' for that matter. Since having your kids enrolled in pre-school is the norm for parents of small kids in Sweden (Lundqvist, 2011), we can understand this to be implicit in many of the working parents' accounts. But the fact that a handful of women mention how pre-school-enrollment benefits your ability to work and none of the fathers share this reflection again suggests, like in the case of Andersen et. al. (2020), that the women are more aware of and imagine accommodating to the "time-crunch" (p. 544).

[28] #54, #61, #78, and #95

When trying to create work-life-balance, besides sharing housework, and having your kids at pre-school, the female Organizers talk of adjusting your work hours to fit with family life. They talk of sacrificing your own spare time to be involved in your kids' hobbies (#39). But they also mention how family is something that should not take over your life and how important it is to have an ambitious career, friends, and hobbies (#64). In this way, the female Organizers are closely related to both the Neo-traditional women and the Individualist women. They want to be involved mothers who take their kids to soccer-games on the weekends (#39) and at the same time be successful researchers within natural science who can afford a summerhouse in southern Europe (#34). Encapsulating the double bind as well as displaying the bridging nature of The Organizers' strategy is this UP-woman who states: "I focus on the kids and their well-being but still I am successful at work" (#34). The using of "still" in this sentence indicates how family and work have historically not been understood as compatible spheres for women. Using a similar phrasing is another UP-woman, a future HR-consultant and mother of two, who states:

> *Since I have flexible hours and can work a lot from home, it's possible for me to pick up my kids from pre-school and still be an engaged mother. Additionally, I have a husband who helps out a lot* (#61)

With the late statement, #61 again makes visible how being in charge of the second shift is perceived as the woman's tasks, since the man here is said to "help out", which suggests that she has the primary responsibility for the housework and he helps when instructed, rather than it being a shared responsibility (Hochschild, 2012, p. 150). Related to this is when UP-woman #57 says that she will be spending a lot of time at work while still spending a lot of time at home with her husband and kids. This suggests that these women find it necessary to display that they can be good, engaged mothers *whilst* being hard workers, as if they are defending the choice to have it all against some invisible opponent who accuses them of not being good future mothers. This way of defending yourself to an invisible other is similar to the way the women in Skeggs' study (2002) displayed respectability as a reaction

to the gaze of the middle-class other. Though these Organizer-women in question are middle-class themselves, I will argue that the double-bind presents them with the need to perform respectable motherhood, if they choose to want ambitious careers at the same time.

For the male Organizers, their suggestions of creating work-life balance while having it all are to plan your own hours as self-employed (#115), hiring help with housework (#133, #162) and spending as much time with your kids as your demanding career allows (#134, #138). Finally, there are the two aforementioned men who want to share housework with their partners (#134, #157), as well as four men who talk of taking time out of your busy day to be with your kids[29]. These last four men seem aware of how they will have to make some sacrifices in order to be involved fathers and thereby seem closer related to the female Organizers. They talk of taking care of the house and how this will take time away from their jobs and leisure (#143, #158) and thereby show examples of committing to handling the second shift. Interestingly, these four men are all UP-men, suggesting that class plays a role here in that the men with academic educations are more aware of taking responsibility for housework and childcare.

The Improvisors

The Improvisors appear as the most optimistic and spontaneous participants of the whole group, believing that things will work out in the future without getting into detail of how. Interestingly, they are also the largest sub-group of the whole study with 43 women[30] and 27 men[31], which also makes it the (sub-)strategy used by the largest share of men. Of these, 29 are VO-women, 14 are UP women. 8 are VO-men and 19 are UP-men. The Improvisors do not so much debate how to divide their time in order to be both parent and worker or reflect on how to achieve work-

[29] #127, #136, #143, and #158
[30] #2-5, #7, #13-16, #20-21, #25, #28-29, #31, #48, #53, #55, #57-59, #62, #68, #70-71, #73-77, #79, #82, #88, #90, #92-94, #96, #102, #104-105, #108, and #110
[31] #111-112, #116-118, #123-125, #130, #132, #135, #139, #141-142, #148-154, #156, #159, #161, #164, and #166-167

life-balance as they seem to have it figured out without disclosing how they got there. They are using what Hochschild calls the super-dad or super-mom strategy (2012, pp. 13; 17; 33). They talk of rich lives filled with success, hobbies, family, and travels and some talk of having great WLB, without mentioning sharing housework, cutting back on work hours, or of not having kids. Their accounts are sprinkled with sentiments that suggest no concrete action or planning such as "I believe that you can balance work and kids and housework but that depends on the situation" (#59) or "I want to feel like I'm balancing work and family-life in a good way, no stress" (#4). The Improvisors do not mention doing housework whatsoever. It appears that their way of creating WLB is by ignoring the housework-element of WLB. When reflecting on the writing prompt asking them how to achieve balance between work, kids and housework three of the Improvisors plainly say that they do not know how to achieve this[32], whilst 33 participants simply do not reflect at all on how to achieve WLB. Finally, another large group consisting of 25 participants state that the balance will be great, that they will aim for it to be good, that they hope it won't be bad, without sharing any details on how this balance will be achieved. Instead of mentioning plans of sharing housework, of adjusting work hours or other elements of sacrifice like The Organizers, these Improvisors simply have faith in the super-parent strategy to work. Others are again more skeptical, and this especially applies to the male participants. Two VO-men (#112, #116) and one UP-man (#148) straight up say that they will not be able to achieve a good balance between life's different elements. "[I] will probably work too much and as for housework – there won't be a lot of that" as #148 states. Like #148 many other of the male Improvisors appear occupied with having to work a lot and foresee that work will get in the way of the more domestic requirements of life. #130 states:

> *Since I like to live a fast-paced life something will always be happening, and I will most likely work more than what is considered healthy, but I will try to make time for family and spare time to the extent that this is possible* (#130)

[32] #13, #68, and #92

This attitude is additionally mirrored in the statements by four other male Improvisors[33] who predict their jobs to take up the majority of their time, with the kids and hobbies coming second. Though many female Improvisors also exclude housework from their accounts, they are not proclaiming that work will prohibit their engagement in housework as these men are. These men can already at age 18 imagine a future in which they can prioritize work over housework, a luxury not afforded to the female Improvisors. This suggests that once again the women tend to see the second shift as more of their responsibility, and the men can get exempted from working this shift, because their paid jobs are considered more important (Hochschild, 2012).

Conclusion and discussion

I have identified three top-level strategies that young Swedes use to create WLB when they imagine their future adulthood in relation to work and family life at age 35: *The Domestic Strategy,* which includes the sub-strategies *The Traditionalists* and *The Neo-traditionalists; The Individualized Strategy;* and finally *The Having-it-all Strategy* which includes the sub-strategies *The Organizers* and *The Improvisors.* Throughout the analysis I have shown how performing your gender and your class intersect when relying on a strategy, and how the different genders and classes think about what strategies they use. This displayed that the female participants are more affected than the males by the double bind between work and family when choosing a strategy, and that more middle-class than working-class participants plan on sharing the second shift with future partners. I set out to explore if Hochschild's (2012) concept of 'the second shift' and the gender inequality it entails could be found in a Swedish context and to discover if any positionings of being 'respectable' (Skeggs, 2002) prevailed among the – especially working-class – participants. I will conclude that the concept of 'the second shift' and its inherent inequality prevails in the participants' accounts in the way that many participants,

[33] #117, #124, #142, and #161

especially the female, talk of housework and child-care as tasks that will take up their time after their (paid) workday. They make time for the second shift; if they are Traditionalists, they minimize their engagement in paid work, if they are Individualists, they minimize the second shift by not having kids, and if they are Organizers, they demand of their male partners to do their share of the second shift. More UP-women than VO-women discuss housework, meaning that the inequality inherent in the second shift does not only apply to gender but to class in this Swedish context. Positionings as 'respectable' are to be found especially among the Traditionalists women in their emphasis on everything domestic, which mirrors the findings of Skeggs (2002). Additionally, these positionings can be found among the Organizers, who feel the need to defend their choice to be both a mom and an ambitious worker, as if they are afraid that due to the double-bind, the choice of "having it all" would not deem them respectable mothers.

Looking at the identified strategies of how to create work-life balance which prevail in the accounts of imagined futures, there are some striking differences in how the different groups of participants are divided into the strategies. Clearly, The Improvisors present the largest group of participants across gender and class, but the female participants also group together in other strategies, like *The Organizers*, *The Domestic Strategy* and *The Individualized Strategy*. The men also group together under *The Individualized Strategy* but are almost non-existent in *The Domestic Strategy* and few are Organizers. This gendered difference means, that men are primarily either choosing not to reflect explicitly about how to create WLB in the future, or they decide to not have kids in order to create more WLB. The women, however, more often reflect on prioritizing their family over their work in order to create WLB, on not having kids, and on trying to have it all while being strategic about it. This gendered pattern affirms what the findings of many studies that have been included in this thesis show: women still see themselves as more responsible for handling the second shift than men, and are more affected by the double bind between work and family than men , also among young adults in Sweden. These gendered tendencies suggest that women, to a larger extent than

men, are thinking already now at age 18 about what Andersen et. al. (2020) call the "time crunch" (p. 544) , namely satisfactory ways to combine a family and a job. It also suggests that young men do not have to think about the logistics of adulthood yet, because it is not to the same extent assumed to be their responsibility . And if they fail to have a strategy, the consequences are not as dire for them, as they are not faced with the double-bind like the women . As shown earlier on in the statistics, women work more part-time than men in Sweden and they do such to take care of the kids . They also take on more housework than men, especially that of child-care and routine jobs of the home. My study suggests that if women do not want to end up with the larger part of the second shift on their hands, they need to plan ahead to avoid this, e.g. by demanding of a partner to share, by cutting down work-hours, or by simply not having kids, which is mirrored in their strategies. It becomes clear that men are not affected by this to the same extent, when no man talks of cutting down work to be with his kids, or of the importance of finding a partner who "helps out" with the housework, because he is not assumed to do this all on his own. Arguably, this thesis could have had a stronger focus on men and masculinities to explore in further detail how practicing the second shift is connected to performing masculinity. However, because elements of housework were so absent in the accounts written by male participants, I chose to lay my focus more on where it was present, among the women. The theories used in this thesis exclusively focus on women and femininity, which could have been supplemented with theories on masculinity. However, the sole focus on men's relationship to housework is almost non-existent in research, since it more often includes a comparative aspect to women, meaning that the current research reproduces the association between housework and women. Future research could therefore look more into the connection between (the lack of) practicing housework and masculinity.

Similarly, to the gendered patterns, there are clear classed patterns prevailing among the strategies. The VO-women are either Improvisors or dominate *The Domestic Strategy* and the VO-men are grouping together as Improvisors. The Organizers are dominated by UP-students, meaning that more UP-men want to

share the second shift than VO-men do. The fact that so many VO-women are planning on using *The Domestic Strategy* supports Hochschild's (2012) findings in which more blue-collar workers presented a traditional gender ideology (p. 188). The Traditionalists essentially sign up for doing the second shift themselves which will likely reproduce gender roles in marriages. This will prohibit them from having "a more or less equitable time distribution" (Haukanes and Heggli, 2016, p. 167) between work and family, hindering them in achieving WLB according to the definition by these authors (ibid). Consequently, a gap in both income and leisure time in the marriage is produced (Hochschild, 2012, p. 265-266). Hochschild argues that in order to change the patterns of inequality in the second shift, young women need to speak up and demand that men get more involved (ibid, p. 256). As long as the VO-women either plan on "having it all" without discussing the division of unpaid labor in the home or they want to resort to traditional gender roles, the shift in the gender inequality will not come, and working-class women will continue to be more unable to create WLB than their husbands. Essentially, this means that VO-women become the "losers" in the fight for WLB, when comparing them to their UP-sisters, who are being more vocal about wanting partners who share. Ambjörnsson (2019) and Skeggs (2002) both show how the working-class women are not feeling included by the feminist movements, and Ambjörnsson (2019) argues that working-class women are being left out of public conversations about changing gender roles (pp. 303-304). This can be one of the reasons why more VO-women than UP-women in my study resort to traditional gender roles and demand less sharing of the second shift from future male partners than UP-women do. Therefore, if we want to include everyone in a change away from gender and class inequality in who can achieve work-life balance, it is important to include working-class women and men more in the conversations about gender roles in marriages and families

Additionally, it becomes clear that a class difference is inherent in the concept of WLB. When we understand WLB as work and non-work activities being compatible and promoting growth (Kalliath and Brough, 2008, p. 326), those who

can ensure this compatibility and growth are mainly middle-class people. Those who are offered flexible time solutions are employed in full-time work with a good income. As shown previously in this thesis, these are the same people who can afford to outsource the otherwise unpaid housework. Similarly to how the normative idea of what entails a good respectable life is derived from the middle-class (Skeggs, 2002), achieving WLB is rooted in middle-class lifestyles, and not available to everyone, essentially making the concept of achieving WLB an illusion. As long as WLB is treated as an individual problem in private homes (Peterson and Roman, 2011; Hochschild, 2012), the structural changes will not come.

Although Sweden proclaims as one of its official gender equality goals to have an equal distribution of the unpaid housework and care-work between men and women (Swedish Gender Equality Agency, 2021), and although reforms aiming to enhance citizen's WLB have been implemented since the 1960s (Ahlberg, Roman and Duncan, 2008; Lundqvist, 2011), as shown in this thesis, young men and women continue to reproduce gender roles in questions of time usage and division of labor. This suggests that it has been difficult to enact structural changes through reforms. Perhaps we are still waiting for the revolution of the labor market that Hochschild talks about (2012), – until then it appears we will not see any substantial changes of the inequalities in creating WLB. Though many gendered and classed patterns are reproduced among the young Swedes in this study, it is also important to note that a lot of women dominate the *Having-it-all Strategy,* meaning that they do not perceive a job and a family to be mutually exclusive. Though they might not have any concrete plans on how to make this happen, the fact that these young women perceive it feasible to be both a mother and a full-timer worker does suggest that the Swedish gender equality ideals have filtered down to the young people of today. Unlike the New Zealand women who to a large extent saw parenthood as something that put a stop to their careers or limited their career ambitions (Patterson and Forbes, 2012), many of the young Swedish women in my study believe in their ability to combine work and family-life in the future to the same extent as their male classmates.

In order to give every person of any class and gender the practical tools to create work-life balance, we need men to get more involved in the second shift, and we can only do such by beginning to value care-work more, as argued by Hochschild (2012, pp. 187; 211). I will add that if we truly want to give people the chance to create more work-life balance in the future, we need to challenge the capitalist system by reducing the value being put onto ‘work’ and emphasize the value being put into ‘life’.

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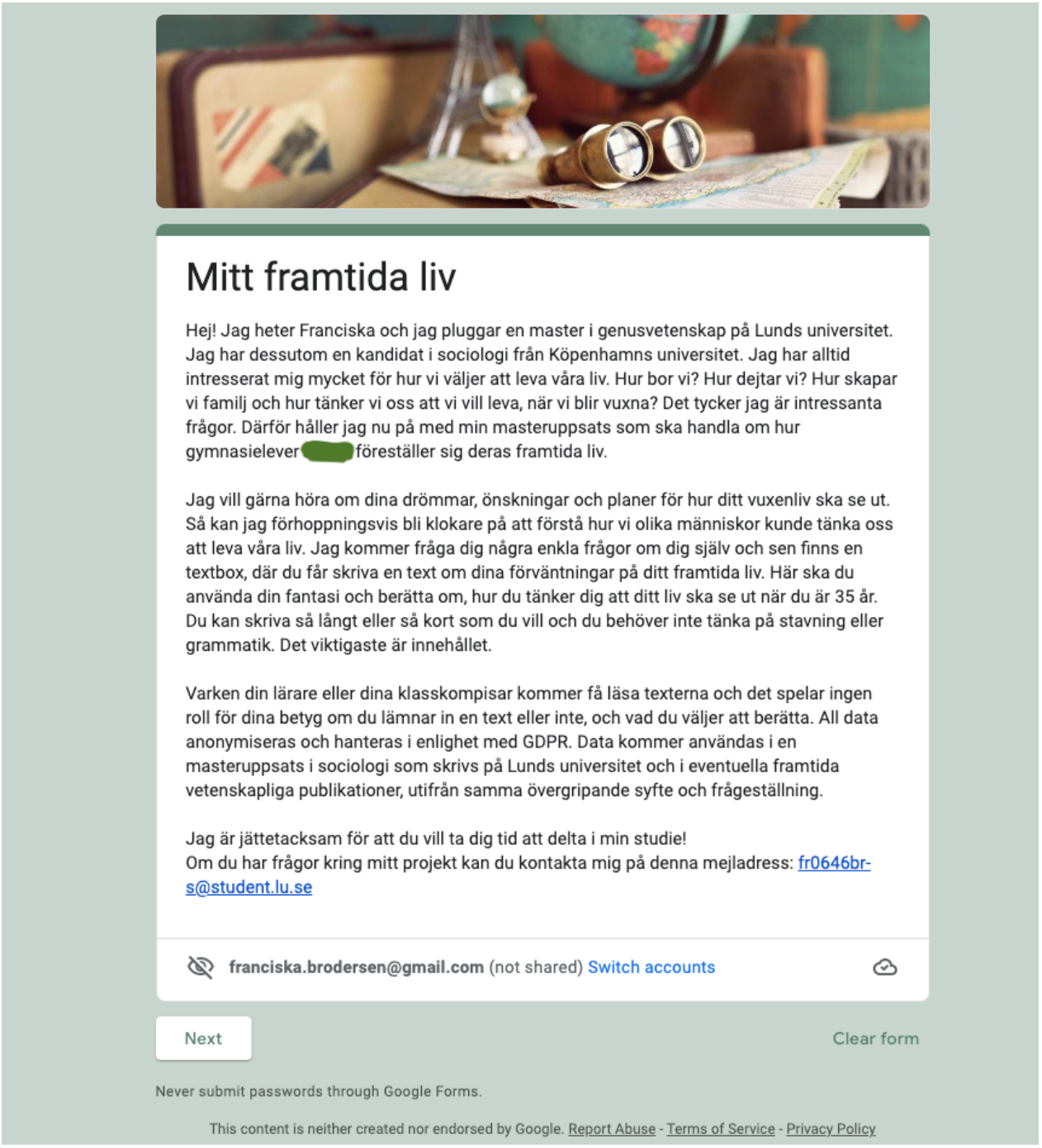
Appendices



Mitt framtida liv

Hej! Jag heter Franciska och jag pluggar en master i genusvetenskap på Lunds universitet. Jag har dessutom en kandidat i sociologi från Köpenhamns universitet. Jag har alltid intresserat mig mycket för hur vi väljer att leva våra liv. Hur bor vi? Hur dejtar vi? Hur skapar vi familj och hur tänker vi oss att vi vill leva, när vi blir vuxna? Det tycker jag är intressanta frågor. Därför håller jag nu på med min masteruppsats som ska handla om hur gymnasielever [redacted] föreställer sig deras framtida liv.

Jag vill gärna höra om dina drömmar, önskningar och planer för hur ditt vuxenliv ska se ut. Så kan jag förhoppningsvis bli klokare på att förstå hur vi olika människor kunde tänka oss att leva våra liv. Jag kommer fråga dig några enkla frågor om dig själv och sen finns en textbox, där du får skriva en text om dina förväntningar på ditt framtida liv. Här ska du använda din fantasi och berätta om, hur du tänker dig att ditt liv ska se ut när du är 35 år. Du kan skriva så långt eller så kort som du vill och du behöver inte tänka på stavning eller grammatik. Det viktigaste är innehållet.

Varken din lärare eller dina klasskompisar kommer få läsa texterna och det spelar ingen roll för dina betyg om du lämnar in en text eller inte, och vad du väljer att berätta. All data anonymiseras och hanteras i enlighet med GDPR. Data kommer användas i en masteruppsats i sociologi som skrivs på Lunds universitet och i eventuella framtida vetenskapliga publikationer, utifrån samma övergripande syfte och frågeställning.

Jag är jättetacksam för att du vill ta dig tid att delta i min studie!
Om du har frågor kring mitt projekt kan du kontakta mig på denna mejladress: fr0646br-s@student.lu.se

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Mitt framtida liv

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*Required

Frågor om dig

Vilken skola går du på? *

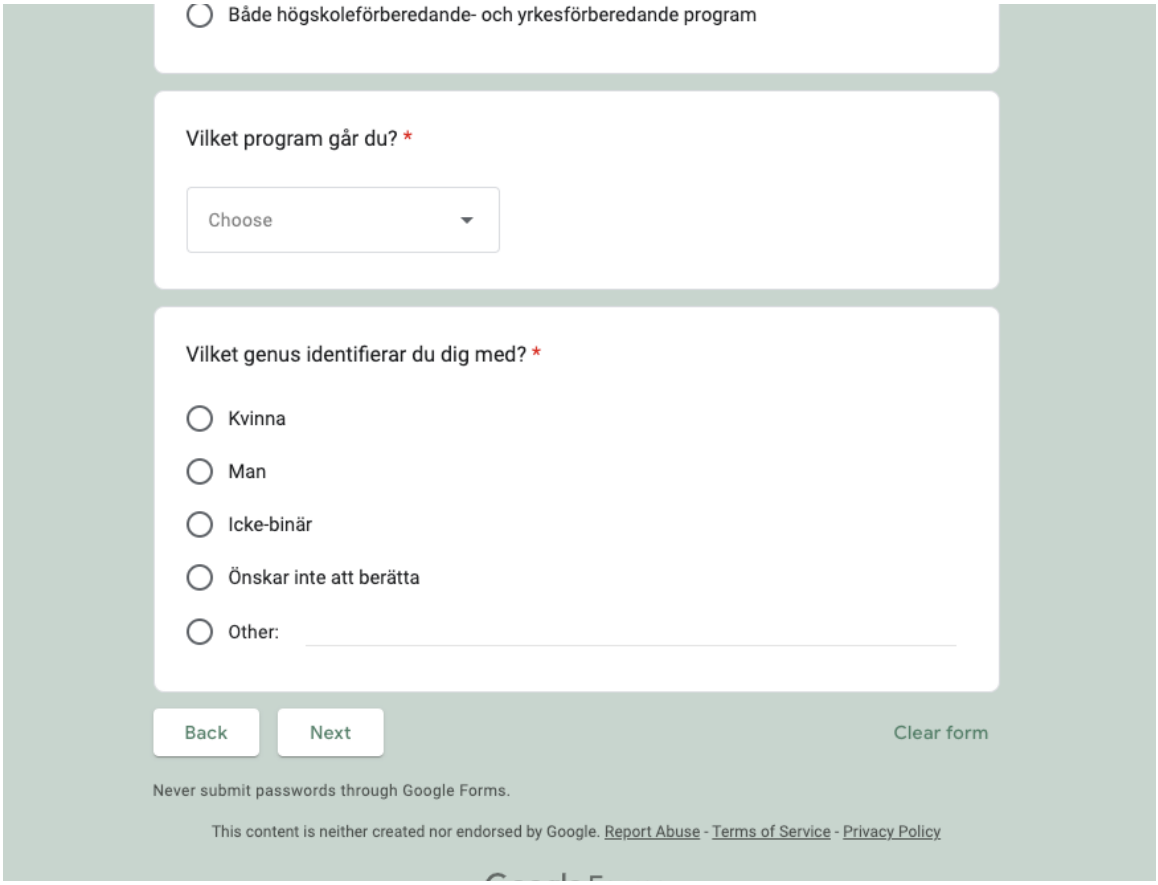
Choose

Vilken typ av program går du? *

- ◯ Högskoleförberedande program
- ◯ Yrkesförberedande program
- ◯ Både högskoleförberedande- och yrkesförberedande program

Vilket program går du? *

Choose


Både högskoleförberedande- och yrkesförberedande program
Vilket program går du? *
Choose
Vilket genus identifierar du dig med? *
Kvinna
Man
Icke-binär
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Other:
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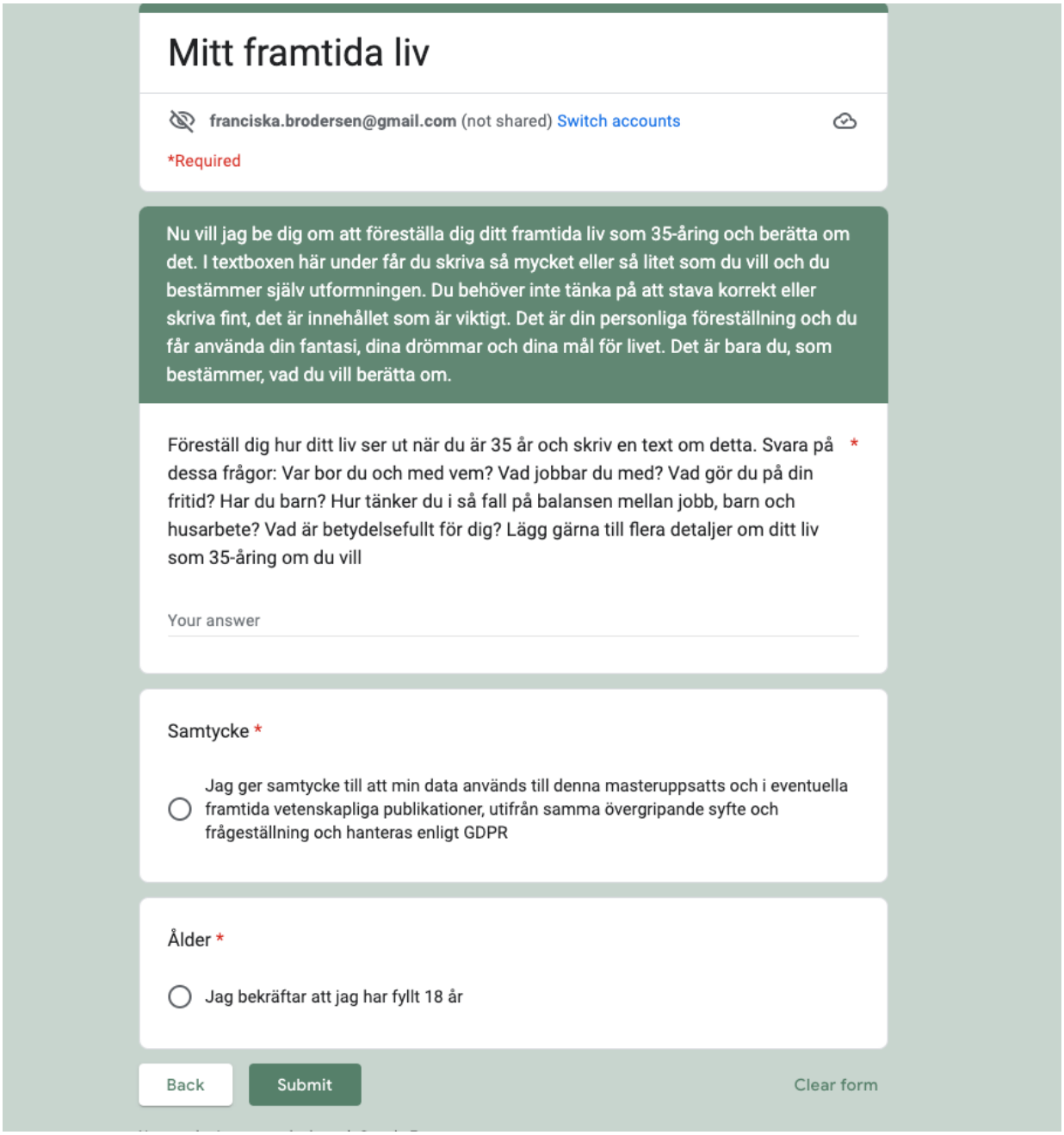
Mitt framtida liv
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Nu vill jag be dig om att föreställa dig ditt framtida liv som 35-åring och berätta om det. I textboxen här under får du skriva så mycket eller så litet som du vill och du bestämmer själv utformningen. Du behöver inte tänka på att stava korrekt eller skriva fint, det är innehållet som är viktigt. Det är din personliga föreställning och du får använda din fantasi, dina drömmar och dina mål för livet. Det är bara du, som bestämmer, vad du vill berätta om.
Föreställ dig hur ditt liv ser ut när du är 35 år och skriv en text om detta. Svara på dessa frågor: Var bor du och med vem? Vad jobbar du med? Vad gör du på din fritid? Har du barn? Hur tänker du i så fall på balansen mellan jobb, barn och husarbete? Vad är betydelsefullt för dig? Lägg gärna till flera detaljer om ditt liv som 35-åring om du vill *
Your answer
Samtycke *
Jag ger samtycke till att min data används till denna masteruppsatts och i eventuella framtida vetenskapliga publikationer, utifrån samma övergripande syfte och frågeställning och hanteras enligt GDPR
Ålder *
Jag bekräftar att jag har fyllt 18 år
Back
Submit
Clear form

Appendix B: Codebook exported from NVivo

Codes

Name	Description	Files	References
Attitude towards WLB	Will it be hard or do you naively believe that everything will work out? Reflections on how balance will be achieved between work and family life.	1	93
Career		0	0
Adjusting work (hours) to fit with fam. life		1	23
Clear idea of future job	Clear to semi-clear idea of what their future profession will be	1	110
Feminine job-values		1	7
High career ambitions	Wanting to work a lot in top-level positions	1	34
Vague idea of future job	Having a job that makes you happy, that you like, that you feel comfortable in, that makes you content, within a field you are interested in etc. but no specifics Vague to semi-vague idea of what their future profession will be	1	51
Working long hours		1	8
Working part-time or not a lot	This code also covers those few who do not mention having a job at all	1	13
Comments on study		1	2
Family		0	0

Name	Description	Files	References
Family of Origin		1	20
Lives alone	Mentions living alone or does not mention living with anyone/having any kind of family	1	15
Lives with partner (no kids or unsure of kids)		1	32
No kids		1	39
Nuclear Family	The dream of having a nuclear family: husband/wife, 2 kids, a house maybe a dog.	1	117
Parental leave		1	2
Pets		1	37
Queer or alternative family		1	8
Single parent		1	5
Future anxiety or pessimism	Anxiety over the state of the world in the future and what might happen. Thoughts on not being happy or not being alive at this time.	1	15
Gender Identity		0	0
Man		1	57
No gender		1	1
Non-binary		1	1
Woman		1	109
Housework		0	0
Doing housework yourself	No mentioning of anyone else contributing to the housework but	1	15

Name	Description	Files	References
	yourself		
Help from family of origin		1	2
Kids helping out		1	5
No housework actor	The housework will be done, it will work out, no mentioning of who will do it or when but just a statement that it will be done.	1	9
No mentioning of housework	Or no mentioning of how the housework will be done but only stating that it will work out/hopefully won't be too much	1	118
Paid help		1	6
Partner doing the housework		1	2
Sharing housework w. partner		1	25
Internationally based		1	25
Leisure - Spare time		0	0
Family spare time	Spending your spare time collectively with being with your family/your kids.	1	57
Friends	Or social life	1	54
Hobbies	Most hobbies will also count as individualised spare time	1	53
Individualized spare time		1	38
No leisure time mentioned		1	34
Sports or working out		1	41
Travelling		1	38
Working in your spare time		1	8

Name	Description	Files	References
Materialism		0	0
Being wealthy	A spectrum between making good money to being ultra-rich	1	23
Cars, big house and other status symbols		1	30
Economically independent		1	13
Modest or simple life		1	11
Summer-house		1	6
Partner characteristics		1	13
Sweden		1	3
Values		0	0
Ascribing meaning to job		1	40
Being busy		1	4
Being happy and grateful		1	23
Domestic values	Values of the home. Having a nice home, spending a lot of your time there etc.	1	85
Health & Rest		1	17
Knowledge		1	4
Nature	Being close to nature/having nature be a big part of your life/where you live.	1	10
Parenting ideas	Reflections on how to be a good parent, what kind of parent one wants to be, how ti be an involved parent, how ones' kids will behave etc.	1	30

Name	Description	Files	References
	Reflections on what one’s kids will like to do in their spare time.		
Personal freedom		1	9
Religion		1	1
Romantic love		1	16
Sacrificing		1	2
Self at the center	A strong sense of self. Importance in getting time to rest and be with yourself. Focus on self-growth.	1	20
Stability		1	10
Svenssonlivet		1	2
Volunteering	Political engagement	1	4