



The Shift is Dying but Evening Work is Thriving: Primetime Work and the Work-Life Balance

Michael R. Corey

Department of Sociology • University of Chicago

Introduction

- ◆ Current research examines the effects of working evening and night shifts on social and family time.
 - Shift workers spend less time with spouses and friends.
 - They may spend more time in solo childcare.
- ◆ However, the nature of employment has changed dramatically in recent decades.
 - There has been a move from manufacturing to service occupations.
 - Work hours have lengthed in all sectors.
 - Service and long hours both encroach on the evening hours.
 - There have been dramatic drops in working night shifts.
- ◆ The majority of findings about evening and night shift implicitly refer to *the evening*.
- ◆ Work that is not 8 hours long doesn't fit well into shift paradigms.
 - Short hours that start in the afternoon, 12-8pm, are day shift despite going deep into the evening.
 - Working more than 10 or 12 hours on a day shift also means working deep into the evening.
- ◆ It is work in the evening and at night that cause these effects, not the shift that is worked.
 - This can be measured with time diary data, survey questions that ask about the evening, or through open-ended interviewing.
 - Evenings remain the prime social and family times.
 - Focusing on work during these times provides a more accurate picture of the work-life conflict than fitting work into an industrial shift.

Hypotheses

- ① Measuring work in the evening will be a better estimator than measuring shift.
- ② Evening work will be strongly associated with decreased time in time delimited, social, and care activities.
- ③ Evening work will not be strongly associated with changes in the time spent in personal and solo activities.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Shift Work		Primetime Work		Overall
	Day Shift	Evening Shift	No Primetime	Primetime	
Day Shift	---	---	98.0%	61.0%	90.0%
Evening Shift	---	---	2.0%	39.0%	10.0%
Primetime Work	15.0%	86.0%	---	---	22.0%
Work Hours	8.3 (2.22)	7.6 (3.27)	7.8 (1.90)	9.6 (3.14)	8.2 (2.35)
N	18919	2041	16413	4547	20960

Notes: Standard deviations are in parentheses where applicable. All results are unweighted. The sample is restricted to individuals working at least two hours on a weekday interview day (n=20,960).

Figure 1. Estimation Results for Effects of Evening Shift or PTW specifications on Minutes in Personal Activities.

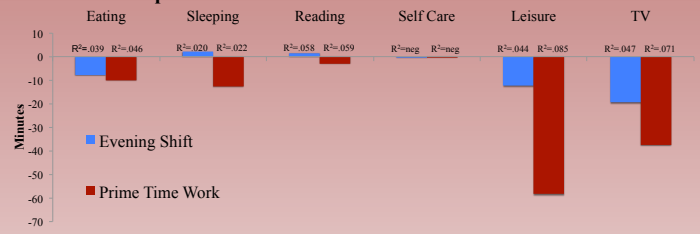
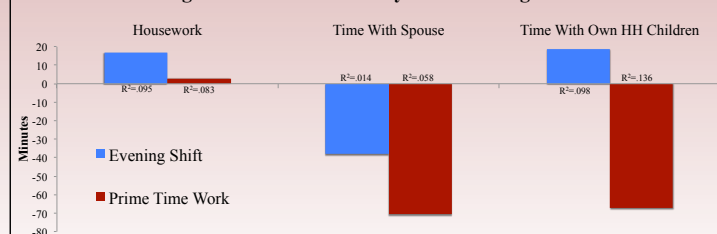


Figure 2. Care Activities by Work Arrangement



Note: The sample size for housework is further limited to married or cohabitating individuals (n = 12,839), for time with spouse is limited to married individuals (n = 12,107), and for time with children is limited to married or cohabitating individuals with resident household children (n = 5,563).

Methods

- ◆ American Time Use Survey (ATUS) 2003-2008
 - Allows for examination of activity timing.
 - Collects 1 diary day from 1 member of the household.
 - Detailed information about type and location of activity.
- ◆ Limit sample to people working 2+ hours on a weekday diary day.
- ◆ Measure shift using traditional definition.
 - ½ of hours in Day (8am-4pm) or evening (4pm-12am).
 - Allows for examination of activity timing and duration.
- ◆ Measure Primetime Work (PTW) as working 1 or more hour between 6pm and 10pm.
 - This treats people working late, doing a later shift, and starting work in the evenings in similar ways.
 - Puts focus on the evening conflicts.
- ◆ Present regression coefficients for shift and PTW measures.
 - Control for gender, age, education, race and marital status.
 - Separate tables for personal/social and care activities.

Results / Conclusions

- ◆ Many people work one or more hours of evening work.
 - These are not all necessarily picked up by the shift measure.
 - The models for evening and night work generally have better fit statistics than the shift measure.
- ◆ Primetime workers spend less time in social activities.
 - This is a larger effect than found for shift workers.
 - PTWs also spend less time in sleep, consistent with other research on the health of evening and night workers.
- ◆ Primetime workers spend much less time with children and spouses than those not doing primetime work.
 - These results are about double that for measuring shift.
 - This shows how important the evening is for childcare, especially with the rise of afterschool activities in recent decades.
- ◆ Directly measuring work during the evening is a better way to engage in the effects of when work happens.
- ◆ The shift seems to reflect long-standing arrangements in the household, PTW reflects incompatibilities between work and home life.

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