



# **Sharing the Work: What My Family and Career Taught Me about Breaking Through (and Holding the Door Open for Others) (MIT Press)**

*Myra Strober*

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Myra Strober became a feminist on the Bay Bridge, heading toward San Francisco. It is 1970. She has just been told by the chairman of Berkeley's economics department that she can never get tenure. Driving home afterward, wondering if she got something out of the freezer for her family's dinner, she realizes the truth: she is being denied a regular faculty position because she is a mother. Flooded with anger, she also finds her life's work: to study and fight sexism, in the workplace, in academia, and at home.

Strober's generous memoir captures the spirit of a revolution lived fully, from her Brooklyn childhood (and her shock at age twelve when she's banished to the women's balcony at *shul*) to her groundbreaking Stanford seminar on women and work. Strober's interest in women and work began when she saw her mother's frustration at the limitations of her position as a secretary. Her consciousness of the unfairness of the usual distribution of household chores came when she unsuccessfully asked her husband for help with housework. Later, when a group of conservative white male professors sputtered at the idea of government-subsidized child care, Strober made the case for its economic benefits.

In the 1970s, the term "sexual harassment" had not yet been coined. Occupational segregation, quantifying the value of work in the home, and the cost of discrimination were new ideas. Strober was a pioneer, helping to create a new academic field and founding institutions to establish it. But she wasn't alone: she benefited from the women's movement, institutional change, and new federal regulations that banned sex discrimination. She continues the work today and invites us to join her.

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