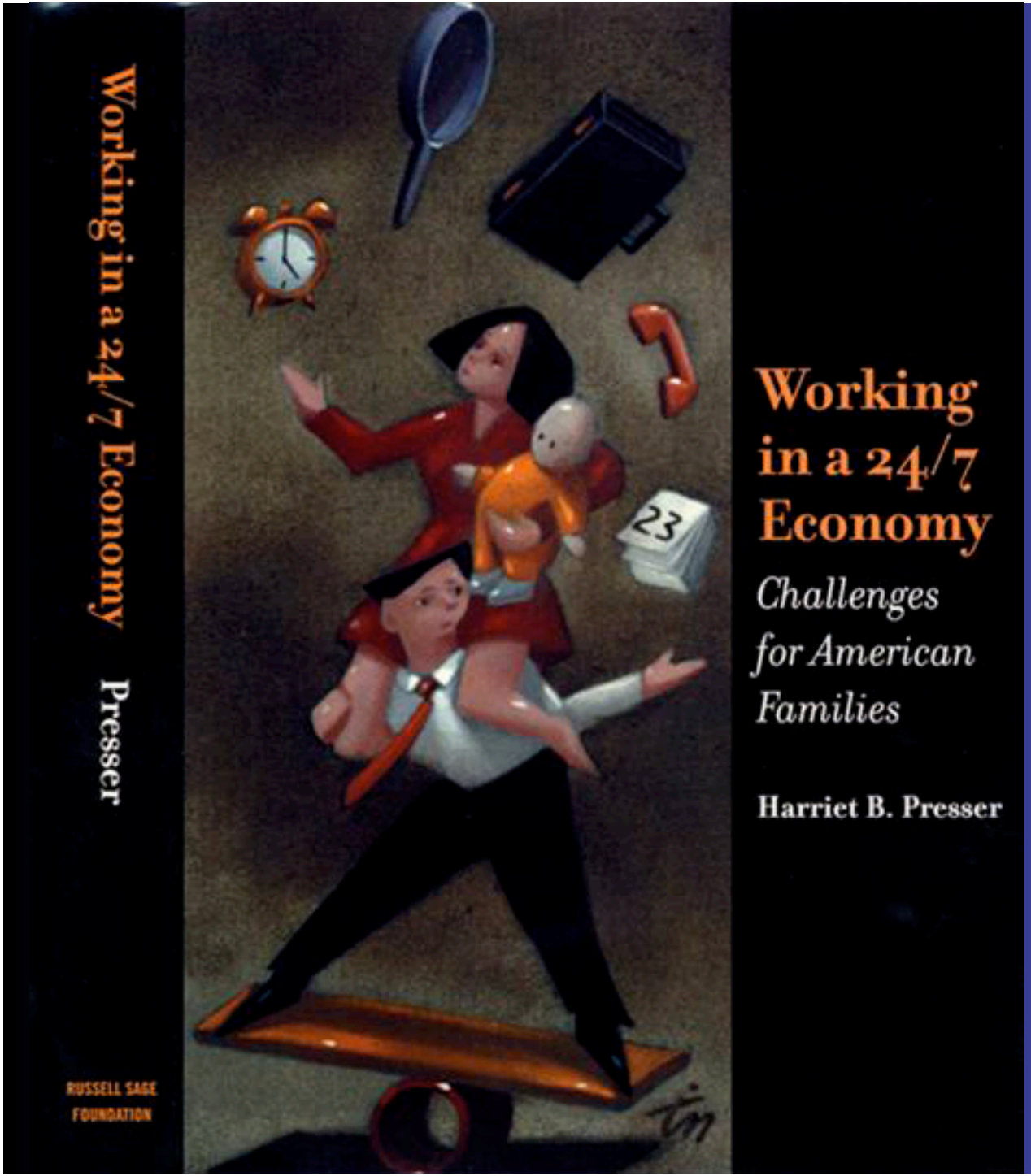

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Major Points

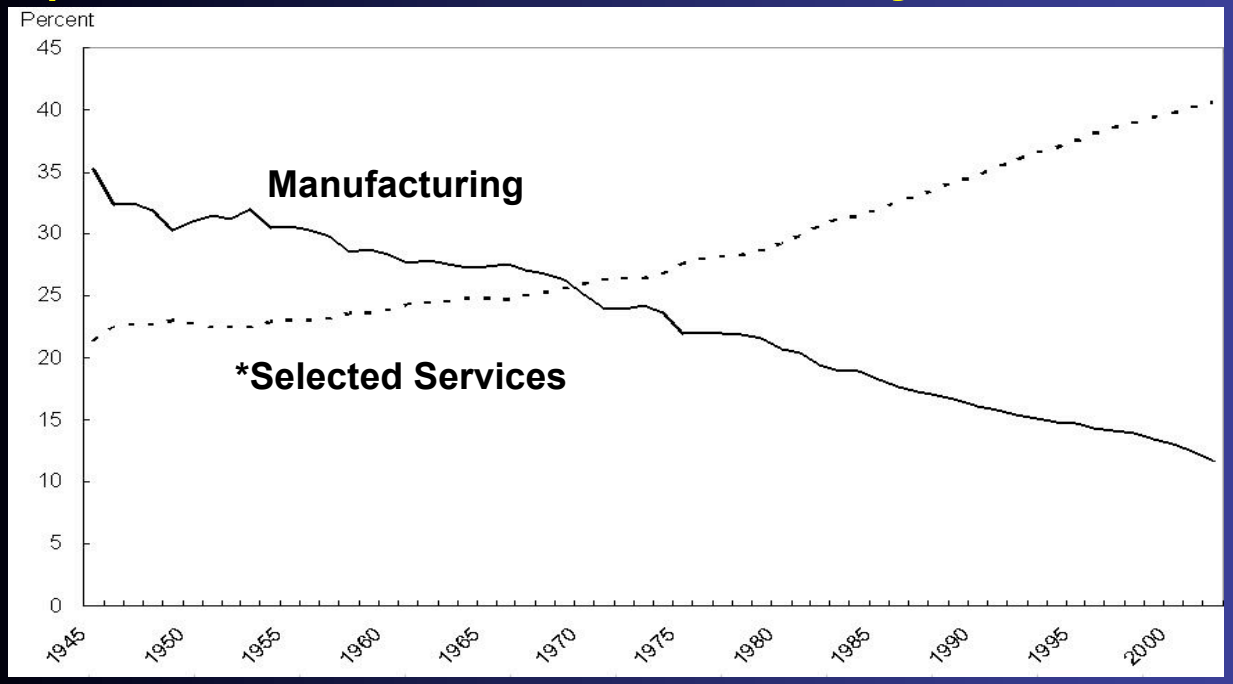
- The movement toward a 24/7 service economy has created a demand for millions of Americans, including parents with young children, to work evening, night, or rotating shifts, as well as weekends.

- The demand for late-hour employment has profound consequences for individual well-being, the nature and stability of family life, the way we care for children, and child well-being.

- Our failure to take into account the temporal complexity of work time and its consequences for family life compromises the effectiveness of work and family policies; we need more public discourse on this issue.

Reasons for the 24/7 economy

1) Growth of service economy



NOTE: 'SELECTED SERVICES' include 'Information,' 'Professional and business services,' 'Education and health services,' 'Leisure and hospitality.' and 'Other services.'

NOT SHOWN: 'Natural resources and mining,' 'Construction,' 'Trade, transportation, and utilities,' 'Financial activities,' and 'Government.'

- Increased employment of women

2) Changing demography

- Aging population
- Postponement of marriage
- More dual-earner households

3) Changing technology

- Able to be 'on call' at all hours
- Reduced costs

Prevalence of non-daytime and weekend employment

[May 1997 Current Population Survey]

- **All** employed Americans
  - **1 in 5** work **most** of their hours in the evenings or nights, or work a rotating schedule
  - **1 in 3** work Saturdays and/or Sundays
  - Considering both together, **2 in 5** work late shifts and/or weekends
- Dual earner couples with **children under age 5**
  - **1 in 3** have a spouse who works **most** hours in the evenings, nights, or has a rotating schedule
- All these ratios are **higher for low-income Americans**
- **Single mothers more** likely to work late shifts than married mothers

Consequences for family life

- Poorer quality of marriages (evenings and nights)
- Greater marital instability (nights only)
- Greater participation of men in household chores
- Less parent-child interaction (e.g., fewer dinners as a family with evening shifts)
- Greater participation of fathers and grandmothers in child care
- Greater complexity of child care arrangements (e.g., reliance on more providers)

Need for more public discourse

- Unmet need for evening and night care for children of low-income single mothers is substantial, yet difficult to find providers for late hour care. Many young children left unsupervised.
  - Need to expand the availability of evening and night care
  - Need to provide more child care subsidies to low-income mothers so they can afford to work during the daytime

- Desires of consumers (and business) versus health and social consequences for employees and their families.
  - We want 24/7 service
  - Growing demand creates new (low paying) jobs