



Women Who Opt Out: The Debate over Working Mothers and Work-Family Balance



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In a much-publicized and much-maligned 2003 *New York Times* article, “The Opt-Out Revolution,” the journalist Lisa Belkin made the controversial argument that highly educated women who enter the workplace tend to leave upon marrying and having children. *Women Who Opt Out* is a collection of original essays by the leading scholars in the field of work and family research, which takes a multi-disciplinary approach in questioning the basic thesis of “the opt-out revolution.” The contributors illustrate that the desire to balance both work and family demands continues to be a point of unresolved concern for families and employers alike and women’s equity within the workforce still falls behind. Ultimately, they persuasively make the case that most women who leave the workplace are being pushed out by a work environment that is hostile to women, hostile to children, and hostile to the demands of family caregiving, and that small changes in outdated workplace policies regarding scheduling, flexibility, telecommuting and mandatory overtime can lead to important benefits for workers and employers alike.

Contributors: Kerstin Aumann, Jamie Dolkas, Ellen Galinsky, Lisa Ackerly Hernandez, Susan J. Lambert, Joya Misra, Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Peggie R. Smith, Pamela Stone, and Joan C. Williams.



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