

# 2

## Doing Family: Exploring Everyday Lived Culture

### Overview

This chapter is about mixed families' everyday lives, "from the 'inside', in the contexts of their ... lived experiences" (Cook 1997, p. 128). Families' everyday experiences are important to examine because as Morgan (1996) finds, the reproduction of structural relations (e.g. class, gender and ethnicity) often happens here, while *doing family*. Further, it has been found that within everyday family experiences, parents can play a major role in children's early socialisation (Bisin and Verdier 2000; Grusec 2011; Rinaldi and Howe 2012), shaping and influencing their future values and beliefs (Min et al. 2012), teaching them how to live in and contribute to society (Burt 1995, p. 15), as well as how to represent and position themselves within the social constructs of race, social class, gender and culture (Luke and Luke 1999, p. 1). The family home thus becomes an important site, not only for kinship to be made (Carsten 2004, p. 37) and for children to find a sense of security and belonging; but also for families to learn to negotiate different aspects of their cultural heritages, and particularly for mixed families, a place to deal with society's reactions to difference (Caballero et al. 2008,

p. 53). Exploring such ordinary, everyday lived experiences in the family home may seem insignificant, but as Morgan (1996) emphasises, it is in the everyday that we can best observe how individuals *do family*, and in this case, specifically how the Japanese/British families *do mixed family*. In this chapter, we will explore, not only how the mixed families do family, but also how they negotiate mixedness and the transmission of culture in their everyday lives, with specific sections in the chapter devoted to home life, religion, leisure and rituals.

## The Home

Family homes are typically considered the “structural properties of dwellings [that] provide the affordance for the complex set of activities related to ‘homemaking’” (Giorgi and Fasulo 2013, p. 129). Yet as Ali (2003, p. 126) suggests, the concept of home is also closely intertwined with the concept of family since families are created by and create their homes, which are social, spatial and spiritual, “constructed through family practices, stories and imaginings”. For mixed individuals, the concept of home can also become an important part of identity formation. In this section, we explore whether or not the Japanese/British families purposefully create Japanese-centred home interiors as a form of “racial literacy” (Twine 2010) or whether personal preferences are more influential when deciding how to decorate their homes. Further, because the domestic sphere has traditionally been the “woman’s space”, we will examine whether “reproductive labour”<sup>1</sup> extends to culture work, responsibilities associated with the transmission of culture. Finally, we will explore the spaces of different members of the family and see how they are creating a sense of home and belonging amidst mixedness.

## Home Décor

While research surrounding migration and homemaking (e.g. Datta 2009; Giorgi and Fasulo 2013) have tended to emphasise migrants’

need or desire to make their new homes a haven of sorts or to serve as a reminder of “home”, it seems that, in the present study, the Japanese women do not always share this sentiment. Instead, interviews with the couples regarding the domestic sphere, instead of focusing on “culture clashes”, tend to hint more at traditional gender stereotypes which emphasise an unequal division of labour, with women generally assuming sole responsibility for the home décor, accepting it as part of being the “housewife”.

When I first visited the McGregor home, which houses the couple and their young son, I was immediately impressed with the display of beautiful Japanese antiques, from the furniture all the way to the dishes. Not only was it aesthetically pleasing, it was also orderly and clean. As I interviewed David McGregor in their sitting room and asked him about the interior of his home, he looked around with a sense of pride and credited his wife of nearly 20 years:

I think, you know — it’s very much Risa’s! I mean, I’m a very tidy person, very orderly, but ... I think she just makes the house look so nice ... Aesthetics. Wherever we’ve lived, she’s always made the home look really nice, and there is probably a bit of a conscious blend of — well, I’m not sure if it’s conscious or not, but obviously she likes Japanese things ... We’ve got some nice antique Japanese chests and things in the other rooms as well. So yeah, I think it just reflects her, her personality really. Very little input from me, I’m afraid! ... I don’t really — I don’t really do too much there!

Risa thus assumes the role of making her family’s home “look so nice” while incorporating her personal preferences into the home décor, preferences which coincide with her Japanese heritage. In her interview, Risa put it this way: *“I love Japanese antiques, Oriental antiques, I was collecting and then, um, so I love everything handmade ...am searching for some old Japanese furniture or, you know, pictures or something like that.”* In this case, perhaps it is indeed Risa’s migrant background that influences her decorating the house with remnants from Japan and creating a space to remind her of Japan; at the same time, in both a material and a metaphorical sense, perhaps she is also attempting to make belonging,

negotiating and adapting to her new home bearable (Datta 2009, p. 4). By Risa choosing to decorate her home in a stereotypical Japanese fashion, we observe a straightforward representation of “national culture”: Risa is Japanese, she likes Japanese antiques, and thus she transmits Japanese “culture” to her family via their home décor. Nonetheless, “national culture” is not always as simplistic as it appears; for instance, although Risa’s antiques may be considered “Japanese”, each piece more than likely has had other cultural influences as well. Further, in this case, we see the role of class in the mixed family homes, as Japanese antiques tend to be costly, which suggests that perhaps creating a stereotypical “Japanese” home is not something all of the families can afford.

### Contributions from Men

While there is a tendency for the Japanese women to be more involved in the everyday homemaking responsibilities, several of the British men were found actively participating in creating visual “landscape representations” (cf. Tolia-Kelly 2004) of Japan inside their homes. The reasons for this were often not so much to transmit the Japanese culture to their children, but to make their migrants wives feel at home and/or because Japanese home décor was a personal preference.

Junko and Adam McLeod, whose relationship first began as a long-distance relationship, have now been married for 2 years and have owned and resided in their flat for a little over a year, together with their baby son. Here, Junko McLeod describes her home:

I think yeah, people can feel a bit of Japanese taste here as well. I’m not that bothered about bringing in Japanese things, but Adam likes it so. Like this chair in kind of Japanese-ish pattern [points to flower pattern on couch] ... it’s a bit more like Adam, who insists having them. Yeah, but I don’t — I — yeah, I mean, after we decided to put that, I feel quite home. Yeah, so it’s really working well.

Junko’s comment that she is “not that bothered about bringing in Japanese things” is noteworthy because it emphasises a different

experience from that of Black/White families for whom home interior is seen as an opportunity to teach the mixed children “racial literacy” (Twine 2010) and build up their self-esteem, particularly amidst negative representation of Black people in society. Instead, in the McLeod family, we see Adam pushing for Japanese culture in their home interior, however, stereotypical his choices may be. In earlier studies of intermarriage between Japanese women and White men, the men tended to show “less enthusiasm for things Japanese” (Spickard 1989, p. 137), as such, perhaps we are seeing progress in both cultural tolerance and the division of labour, with men like Adam being more receptive to Japanese culture and more actively involved in homemaking.

Because Adam has never lived in Japan, he may have simply chosen stereotypically Japanese-looking furniture for his family’s home, thus further emphasising the complexity involved with “national culture” and equating cultures to countries. Yet when British men actually spend time in Japan, like Cameron Walker who lived in Japan for a decade, they often become better able to contribute “material cultures” (Datta 2009) to their mixed family home. Cameron and Hiroko Walker have been together for about 5 years, and their detached home in the suburb neighbourhood of Abingdon, where they have lived for the last 2 years, is their first home together. Hiroko, who moved to Edinburgh to be with Cameron, shares her thoughts regarding their home:

Um, yeah, I think it just happened ... The house was supposed to be the house of people living in it, it’s quite normal that people coming from Japan, they bring more Japanese stuff, so yeah. But I’m quite surprised that — [well], we’ve got *kakejiku* — that’s not belong to me, but my husband. My husband collected those things, so we’ve got those things and yeah, lots of things from Japan. In a way, that’s good for our son as well — he can see and touch Japanese things.

In this case, as Hiroko shares, it was her British husband who brought aspects of Japanese culture into their home. This again challenges our notion of cultures being tied to countries, of each parent contributing to the family home items from their own “cultures”. Instead, we see the

complexity of “national culture”, with parents transmitting and sharing their own preferences which, in the case of Cameron, a British man, happen to be traditionally Japanese. Additionally, Cameron bringing his collection of Japanese items into the family home was not done primarily to transmit culture to their son; instead, Cameron seems to have brought Japanese “stuff” into their home because he appreciates Japanese culture personally and collected many Japanese items while living in Japan. While this may seem ideal in regard to sharing the responsibility of homemaking and transmitting culture, it can also mean that Hiroko will not have the opportunity to live in a home with more of her preferences, which may not coincide with her Japanese heritage. As such, why the Walker home has a Japanese feel to it may not be based on Hiroko’s desire as a migrant to recreate a Japanese home or even the couple’s desire to create a Japanese atmosphere for their son; instead, it may be because of Cameron’s personal preference for “Japanese stuff”. We thus see that mixed families do not tend to view their homes as primarily a place to transmit culture; instead, they view their homes as normal living spaces, backdrops for doing family, as one participant put it: *“I suppose there are some symbols of Japanese culture, and Japan itself, but most of it is just kind of pictures and bits and pieces that you could find in any home...”*

## Exploring Children’s Spaces

The children’s space at home is important to discuss because children tend to identify “home” as more than where they currently live; “home” is linked to identity, nationality and ethnicity (Ali 2003, p. 124). Further, childhood homes are important to explore because they are one of the first places where mixed children begin to feel a “pull of both cultures” (Tizard and Phoenix 1993, p. 28) . As such, the family home, among other things, may serve to prepare mixed children for future negotiations between their cultural heritages.

In this section, we examine two bedrooms of children in two families: the Potters and the Patersons. These two bedrooms were selected because the two bedrooms provide us spaces that belong to three

children of different ages and genders, as well as a single occupant and a shared bedroom. We begin with the Potter children's bedroom. The Potter family live in a small two-bedroom flat, and the master bedroom, which used to be the parents' bedroom, has now been converted into the children's bedroom, where their daughter and son, aged 13 and 7, respectively, play, study and sleep. Following are field notes from one of my visits to their home:

The Potter Family is made up of Dad, Mum, Daughter, and Son. They live in the Botley neighbourhood, in a second-story flat. I arrive for a home observation, climb one flight of stairs, and knock on their door. Dad greets me and welcomes me inside. Mum and children are behind Dad. I notice everyone is shoe-less and see several shoes lined up neatly, so I ask if I should take my shoes off, and Mum says, "Yes, if you don't mind." The flat has wooden floors, somewhat reminiscent of Japanese homes, yet that seems to be the extent of the home's Japanese-ness. The family lead me to the living room/dining room, and offer me a seat on the sofa... On the wall are several pictures of the family, particularly school photos – not at all stereotypical of Japanese homes, where private family photos are not usually displayed for guests to see. As Mum and Dad finish preparing lunch, the children show me their room... It is very spacious, with two single beds on either corner, a star light in their ceiling, and a bookcase and wardrobe on the side. It has a very comfortable, relaxing feel to it. There are also lots of toys in a corner, including a whole drawer full of cars. There are also some posters on the wall, including one of the GB Olympic Team. There are also some Japanese picture books on the bookshelf, along with several English books for older children...

While the Potter children have visited Japan three times, this has been the only home for both children, a home that most would probably consider a "normal" Western-style home. When the children were younger, their mother Setsuko and her father in Japan made an effort to supply the children with toys and books from Japan. Years later though, the Potter children's room mirrors the dominant, popular society, with English books, posters and videos games, and no sign of a desk or corner dedicated to studying, as is fairly common in Japanese children's rooms. This British "feel" to their bedroom is somewhat expected, as the

dominant society and peers can heavily influence children, particularly adolescents, when their desire to “belong” and “fit in” is high. However, the fact that the Potter children have held on to several Japanese toys and books from their pre-school years is noteworthy, possibly signalling an attempt to maintain some sort of connection or identity to Japan, or perhaps even to their Japanese mother. In other words, perhaps holding on to their pre-school Japanese toys and books may be their way of rejecting a sole British identity which is often seen by mixed children as a “form of betrayal, or at least rejection ... [preferring] to think of themselves as ‘half and half’” (Tizard and Phoenix 1993, p. 164), and in this way, choosing both of their identities by leaving their Japanese pre-school books on the bookshelf, alongside their British books.

While the Potters have lived and owned their flat for nearly two decades, the Paterson has only been at their rented flat for about 3 years. Further, while the Potter children are much older, the Paterson’s little daughter is only a year old, as such, her parents seem to manage her living space at the moment, with the bedroom looking much like a stereotypical baby girl’s space:

The Paterson family live in a large building with about 100 flats in Cowley, a more diverse neighbourhood in Edinburgh. Their building reminds me of an old motel from American films. It’s quite a lonely building, and they are on the second floor. Right outside of their building is a park and some shops. Their home is a two-bedroom furnished, rented flat, and it is quite spacious, with a hall that easily fits three buggies. Their living room is made up of the typical couch/TV set-up and is connected to their dining room, where a table that seats up to six people is placed. Their kitchen is directly behind the dining table, and is separated by doors that they keep open, to hang the baby’s bouncer on. Their daughter’s bedroom has her cot, a double-bed for Mum to lie on during the night feedings, and a large humidifier. The room is decorated in a stereotypically baby girl fashion: with lots of pink and princesses and toys and picture books, all in English, with the exception of one interactive baby book in Japanese. This book, as Dad proudly showed me, is meant to teach the little girl Japanese words.

Because of the Paterson's flat being a fully furnished rental, their choice of furniture and home décor is somewhat limited; however, they have attempted to make their flat a "home". In particular, while most Japanese co-sleep with their young children and share a bedroom with them, the Patersons have chosen not only to sleep apart from their daughter, but also to give her a bedroom of her own, which they have decorated in a stereotypically Western manner, with princesses and English language décor. Further, while several of the families with older children, including the Potters, made an effort to give their younger children (almost exclusively) Japanese toys and books, the Patersons do not seem as concerned with providing their daughter with such items, perhaps because they see this home as temporary or because their idea of culture is not tied to the décor of their daughter's room, nor to her toys and books. In Twine's (2010, p. 127) study of mixed Black and White families, parents viewed black art, material objects, music, toys and symbols as important for their mixed children's self-esteem and identity formation. In the Japanese/British family homes, however, there does not seem to be an emphasis on the minority Japanese culture. This may be due to the fact that Japanese, when compared to the Black population, are not depicted as negatively in mainstream society. Nonetheless, it is important to note that, although Japanese people are considered a minority group in Britain, the Japanese/British parents are not choosing to consciously use their home space for their children's self-esteem and identity formation. Finally, with the rise of globalisation and the consequent increase in international travel and trade, as well as the complexity associated with "national culture", it is difficult to define a "Japanese" or "British" home. Instead, it seems that personal preferences (often influenced by parents' cultural heritage) and practicalities are influencing the décor in mixed family homes.

## Religion

The second aspect of everyday family life that will be discussed is religion. Religion is important to discuss, as difference in religion has been found to be the dominant factor for rejection in mixed couples by

their extended family (Rodríguez-García et al. 2016, p. 531). Further, when mixed-race, mixed-faith couples have children, they must learn to negotiate which aspects of their religions, if any, they want to pass on to their children. Literature surrounding religion has found that the transmission of religion in monofaith families tends to be determined by the intensity of the parents' religious practises, their investment in their children's "religious capital", and their desire to transmit religion to their children (cf. Patacchini and Zenou 2011). In interfaith families, the situation is somewhat different, with school being the most significant source of religious influence on children's faith (Arweck and Nesbitt 2010), encouraging them to carry a more pluralistic and tolerant view of religious beliefs and practises. In early literature surrounding mixed families, religion was seldom found to be problematic since most couples rarely held strong religious affiliations (Spickard 1989, p. 141). More recently, while schools are encouraging a pluralistic approach to religion, Caballero and colleagues (2008) have found that ironically, parents in mixed families are encouraging a single approach to religion, although they encourage pluralism in other aspects of life.

### **Christianity, Buddhism or "No Religion"**

According to the 2011 UK Census (Office for National Statistics 2012), Britain's largest religion is Christianity (59.3%), with the second largest religious group being Muslims (4.8%). Further, about a quarter of the British population claim "no religion". In Japan, Buddhism and Shintoism co-exist and continue to be the two largest religions, with 48% of the population being Shintoist and 46% Buddhist (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2017). While the majority of the Japanese women in the present study were brought up Buddhist and Shintoist, most are not presently practicing either, while some have dabbled in Christianity, and most describe themselves as not strongly religious, with none having *kamidana* or *butsudan* in their homes, a widely spread custom in Japan. For the majority of the women, this does not seem to be a major concern, but because Japanese culture tends to hold religion and family close together, the passing on of ancestral worship,

for example, may be a lost opportunity for sharing an important aspect of Japanese culture.

Andrew and Taeko Clark have been married for nearly a decade, and while Andrew recognises the importance of his mother's Christian faith, he himself is not religious. Taeko, on the other hand, grew up in a traditional Japanese home and believes that ancestral worship is particularly important, not only to the Buddhist faith, but also to the Japanese culture. Yet because her children are being raised in Britain, she has accepted that she will probably not be able to pass this aspect of her culture on to her children:

For my family, religion is — all Japanese are like this, but we treasure our deceased relatives. So for us, our grandparents' graveyards are close to our home in Japan, so throughout the year, we visit them and bring them flowers and water quite often... I would like to sometimes remember our deceased ancestors and, if possible, visit their graveyards, at least that's my opinion. But my husband's family doesn't have a graveyard, they say, so I honestly — if there was a graveyard, I would like to visit his grandparents, his aunt, from whom our daughter received her name, and other relatives, but they are people who don't have graveyards. At first, I was very shocked and disappointed. When they die, that's it. Our children also — that's why while we're here in the UK, I realise I won't be able to pass this on to them, and I think that's a shame.

Traditions that surround ancestors and graveyards are indeed an important aspect of religion in Japan; yet for various reasons, including not being able to find temples or shrines or graveyards nearby, religion is an aspect of Japanese culture that is proving to be difficult to transmit to the mixed children. However, this may be seen as an opportunity for mixed families to receive support from extended family, particularly during visits back to Japan, as Jim Miller, whose family has only lived in the UK, shares:

Well, Fumi's parents... I'm quite pleased with the way that they do it, so when we go out to Japan, they teach my sons Japanese stuff, and they go out of their way to do it, but it's not over the top. What's the shrine, Fumi, in the house? <Fumi replies: *butsudan*>. So zuzudan [sic] in the house, which they briefly pray at every morning, Fumi's parents, and so

the boys have started to do the same thing, Fumi's dad has been showing them what to do and how to ring the bell and clapping and what-have-you, and so yeah, they're learning that and it's fun and I don't understand what it means, but they're learning it, and Fumi's parents are teaching them that stuff, and that's cool. So we can't do that here, so easily, um, so I think certainly Fumi's parents have a quite large role to play in the boys' understanding of being raised Japanese.

While Jim appreciates his Japanese in-laws teaching his sons about Buddhism, it is interesting to note that he discourages his own mother from sharing her Christian faith with his sons. Further, while Jim equates Buddhism with Japanese culture, he does not, in any way, equate Britishness with Christianity, even though more of the British population identify as Christian when compared to Japanese identifying as Buddhist. Similarly, it is interesting to note that several of the British men who identified as non-religious refused to marry in a church and are also adamantly against their parents sharing their Christian religion with their children, yet they did not oppose to being married in a Shinto shrine, appreciate their wives teaching their children the Buddhist and Shinto approach to life, and encourage their Japanese in-laws to share their religion with their children. As such, perhaps Buddhism is seen as more complimentary to the mixed families' emerging culture because it has traditionally been practised as a familial and cultural tradition (cf. Reader 1991), as opposed to Christianity in Britain, which resembles individualistic organised religion, separate from family and the British culture.

## Negotiating Religions

While Buddhism and Shintoism are able to coexist in Japan, an addition of a third religion (Christianity) in the mixed families seems rather challenging. In the Potter family, Lewis, who remembers saying his bedtime prayers as a young child, admits he's come "full circle", going from atheist to agnostic, back to Christian: "*I would say, in the last 8 years - it's now a stage where, for me personally, my Christian faith is building, it's becoming more important.*" His wife Setsuko, on the other hand,

although raised Buddhist, has also begun attending a Christian church with him, yet as she explains, the possibility of mixing Buddhism and Christianity remains unclear:

In Japan, because my, both parents died, and we more like care for after-life, you know, to do, so it's quite different way. And when it comes to gods things, we have — for me, it's just, all the religions is the same, for me — whatever you're believing and all the things you're taught is actually the same way in the Buddhist house, all the morals and things, so that's fine, but how can I say? I find it difficult to see like, when, because I pray sometimes, for my father or my mum, you know, that's in Japan we do, after they die. So that case, that's a Buddhism things, I believe, so I always wondered, if I become to the Christian, how, what's going to happen to this?

Setsuko's dilemma is not unique; many other women shared similar thoughts. This is perhaps because, as Caballero and colleagues (2008) found, mothers tend to be more responsible for the transmission of religion(s). Interestingly, in this study, several of the British men admitted to being fascinated with Buddhism both as an indirect result of living in Japan, as well as being attracted to Japanese culture as a result of their interest in Buddhism. Religion thus provides us with examples of the horizontal transmission of culture, as the British men learn more about Buddhism through their wives who attempt to share this aspect of their culture with their partners. For such couples, perhaps there is not so much a “religious clash” so to speak, but rather a convenient acceptance and interest from the British partner. Interestingly, this was not found to be the case once the couple had children. Instead, while some men, like Ryan Ramsey, were once fascinated with Buddhism, this fascination abruptly ended once the children were born, and a single approach to religion (Caballero et al. 2008) was chosen. Ryan shares his families' experience with religion:

I don't hear — Miyuki doesn't mention anything about Japanese religion, oddly enough. It's me that answers the questions about religion, it's from a Christian point of view ... there was no uh, no resistance to

raise the children Christian! <laughs> It wasn't a question that we sort of asked each other, "What are we going to do about this?" It was not a question we asked. I'm still not sure — because it's not a subject she talks about, there's no way I can engage...

Several couples in the study also admitted that they did not know where their partners stand regarding religion. This suggests that perhaps having different religious backgrounds is not a major obstacle for the Japanese/British families, as religion in general does not seem to be a significant part of their family lives. This in turn suggests that religion may no longer be an aspect of culture that is passed on at home; instead, as Arweck and Nesbitt (2011) find, children may learn more about religion at school, among their peers. Setsuko Potter, whose daughter is 13 years old, agrees:

I think for the children, probably more Christian is the more, the knowledge-wise, from schools and nativities and everything, yes. Yeah, so I find it difficult, hard to explain, but can't pick one. Yeah, I did definitely teach my daughter to pray [for ancestors], but I don't know if she's taking that as Buddhism or just, pray for at the graveyard, those, you know, something like that. So, I don't know — I can't explain. I don't know if that's religion or not, difficult. But my daughter, one of the best friends, not from school, but from local, best friend — their family is very Christian, and so she's been to church quite often with the friend, and involved lots of things, so she knows lots of Bible things, so probably in her knowledge is definitely Christian is more...

While Setsuko, like other parents in the study, attempts to pass on her religious heritage to her children, it seems the children are influenced more by their peers and religious education at school. In this way, perhaps the negotiation that takes place in the mixed families' homes regarding religion is not so much Buddhism/Shintoism versus Christianity, but how the family deal with religion in general, with most parents eventually concluding that the children should choose for themselves. This relaxed manner in which most parents address religion is perhaps because religion is more easily separated from culture and is not an aspect of doing mixed family where children feel a strong "pull

of both cultures” (Tizard and Phoenix 1993, p. 28). Instead, while children are indeed influenced by their parents’ religions (or lack thereof), as well as religious education at school and their peers; in the end, they must make up their own mind surrounding religion, perhaps not so much based on cultural transmission, but more on personal choice.

## Leisure

In this section, we discuss leisure by exploring *television*, which Castells (1996, pp. 333–334) describes as an almost constant background presence in our lives, and the children’s *enrichment activities*, considered an important aspect of everyday family life. The way the mixed families, particularly the children, choose to spend their leisure time is revealing because these activities occupy much of a child’s time outside school and are not mandated, but chosen.

## Television

The first aspect of leisure that we consider is television viewing in the home. While other forms of media, including music and films, were mentioned by some participants, they were somewhat brief and general. An exception to this was Hayao Miyazaki’s films (e.g. *My Neighbor Totoro*) which tend to focus on traditional Japan in the 1940s and 1950s (Mayumi et al. 2005). Watching these films seems to hold significance in mixed families, signalling to outsiders that although mixed, the children are indeed Japanese. In this section, however, the focus is on television because, not only was it most frequently mentioned, but it was also often in the background during interviews and home observations.

To begin, we explore the parents’ television preferences. Most of the couples admit that they mostly watch British television programmes, although whether or not the Japanese women enjoy this remains doubtful. Miyuki Ramsey describes watching British programmes, quietly chuckling to herself and lowering her head, “*I just watch together and [shout out] ‘Ooh...!’*” Chiyoki Hamilton also admits “... *for me—it’s*

*quite difficult to understand English jokes, jokes in English, and... yeah, so we can't share the fun, the delight.*" While the Japanese women are attempting to watch British television with their partners, even when they may not fully understand the programmes, most of the British men have no interest in watching Japanese television (accessed through the Internet), describing it as "nonsense" and "weird". Here, Ewan Ross explains why he does not watch Japanese television with his wife:

My wife watches some Japanese TV online. I think it's nonsense, so I don't watch any of it. These like — panel shows where there's like ten comedians or celebrities and they show little snippets of stories, and then they sit and comment on them, and it just seems to go on forever. I try to avoid all that.

Ewan is not alone in his opinion of Japanese language television, with the majority of the other British men either turned off or disinterested in Japanese television. These findings differ from Sharaievska and colleagues' (2013, p. 355) study, which found husbands in intercultural marriages watching television programmes in their wives' native languages (which they did not understand) simply to share leisure time with them and learn about their culture and language. However, in the present study, this was not the case, with couples admitting that they (1) do not spend much time watching television, and (2) when they do, they tend to watch television separately. One exception to this seems to be when television is used as white noise in the background, while the family is relaxing at home and/or sharing a meal. However, while there were several mentions of Japanese television programming, during interviews and home observations, the only television heard in the background was English (e.g. the news, *In the Night Garden*, and *EastEnders*).

### **Programming Choices for Older Children**

Lull (1990, p. 93) found that fathers controlled the majority of the family's selection of television programming, and that mothers least influenced television programming. In the Japanese/British families,

while the fathers do seem to have more control of the selection of programming when watching television as a family, the mothers seem to influence the programming choices of the children. Miyuki and Ryan Ramsey, together with their two sons (aged 16 and 8) have two televisions in their home: one in the living room/dining room and one in the boys' bedroom, which seems to be dedicated to video games. While the family enjoy watching television together while sharing meals, in the evenings after dinner, Miyuki, as she shares here, often finds herself watching Japanese *dramas* with her two sons:

... And then I was watching sometimes the Japanese drama by the Internet [plugged into the television], and then one of my children came around and then, "What you're watching?" And "That one and that one." "Oh, that's very interesting," especially for the older one, some of the programmes was, "Mum! Do not watch that by yourself," and "Is that coming up yet?" And we just watching together and then he just sometimes asking, "Why they do like that?" and "Because in Japan like that." And he quite understands the Japanese culture and the eh, and the systems and things, you know. And the younger one was also eh, he quite likes to watch the Japanese dramas as well, and I was showing some of the old dramas and also like uh, more comedy things, and when he was eh, start to learn swimming ... he wasn't good at all, and he scared of water and he didn't like to put the face under the water, but and then I showed some of the boys are doing synchronised swimming, that's called Water Boys, in the Japanese dramas, like high school boys are doing synchronised swimming, and it's quite fun to watch it, and then I just showed him, and then he was so amazed and then, "I want to do that!" ... "Well then you must work very hard!" And you know ... I was just using like Japanese drama to encourage them!

While Miyuki uses Japanese dramas to encourage her children, she is also subtly transmitting the Japanese language and culture as she explains to them aspects of the Japanese culture that they are unfamiliar with. Further, because of the lack of Japanese or Asian representation in British media, the Japanese dramas that Miyuki's children are watching may indirectly be building their self-esteem (Twine 2010) while also teaching them the non-verbal side of Japanese culture (e.g.

facial expressions and hand gestures) (cf. Choi 2012). Nonetheless, while mixed children may watch Japanese dramas with their mothers, ultimately, their main television consumption is British programmes, as they are better able to understand and relate to such programmes, particularly with their peers.

## Programming Choices for Younger Viewers

Regarding families with younger children, their choice of television seems to be CBBC.<sup>2</sup> This is interesting because, as previously stated, the families with older children constantly emphasise the effort they made to introduce their young children to Japanese children's programmes by purchasing DVDs when they were in Japan and then relying on extended family to record and send additional, newer television programmes. Nevertheless, now the families with younger children, even with the convenience of being able to watch Japanese television programmes online, do not seem eager to have their children watch Japanese television programmes. While this may suggest that the younger Japanese mothers are more integrated into British society and thus encourage their children to watch more English television programmes, it may also suggest that the importance of teaching their children language and culture through Japanese television programmes has diminished and has perhaps been replaced by other things, including participation in the Japanese playgroups.

Regardless, television, whether in English or in Japanese, continues to hold a dominant presence in the homes of the mixed families, whether the children are throwing a tantrum because they want to continue watching CBBC, or casually glancing over at *EastEnders* as the television plays in the background of a family meal, or watching Japanese dramas with their mothers before bedtime. The transmission of culture through television thus exists, although it tends to be unintentional, as parents are not choosing television programmes specifically to transmit their respective cultures to the mixed children. Instead, they are simply watching television programmes that they enjoy, which often happen to

coincide with their cultural background and native language, and sharing this with their children.

## Enrichment Activities

When referring to enrichment activities, we use Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson's (2014) description:

diverse sports opportunities (from archery, to football, martial arts, swimming, etc.), uniformed organisations (e.g., Brownies/Cubs), and cultural activities (including chess, dance, drama, languages, and music classes) [offering] children the opportunity to learn new skills beyond the standard education curriculum. (pp. 614–615)

Enrichment activities have been found to positively affect children by providing a space for their development, improving their educational outcomes and encouraging new friendships (Schaefer et al. 2011, p. 1151). An important factor affecting participation in enrichment activities is the socioeconomic status of the family, with Vincent and Ball (2007) suggesting that enrichment activities may be part of the middle-class parents' strategy for class reproduction. In a similar way, we explore whether parents of mixed children strategically choose enrichment activities that encourage their respective national culture's reproduction. Finally, while there seems to be a growing urgency, particularly in middle-class families, to enrol children under 5 in enrichment activities (Vincent and Ball 2007), in the present study, none of the parents mentioned such activities for their younger children. We therefore focus on families with older children.

To begin with, we explore the enrichment activities of the Potter and Ramsey children (four in total), all of whom are avid Scottish harp players, a traditional Celtic instrument. The Potters and the Ramseys are family friends, and as a result, it was Miyuki Ramsey who recommended that Setsuko Potter enrol her daughter in the local Gaelic school where, as Miyuki recalls, not only did they teach her son Gaelic, but they also offered her much-needed encouragement in continuing

to teach her son Japanese. Now, more than 10 years later, all four of the Potter and Ramsey children are enrolled in Gaelic school. Further, while both of the younger children (7 and 8 years of age) are just beginning to play the harp, the two older children (16 and 13 years of age) have experienced much success with their harp playing, both locally and nationally. The reasons why the four children began their journey with the Celtic harp are because (1) their mothers are fans and students of Scottish music (fiddle and harp) and (2) the children were exposed to the instrument at Gaelic school. In a somewhat similar way to our discussion on British men being more interested in Buddhism than the Japanese women, we again encounter this complexity of “national culture”, with the Japanese women being more interested in Scottish music than their Scottish husbands. We therefore find the Japanese mother, instead of transmitting her national culture, sharing her personal interests with her children, as Setsuko Potter explains:

I love Scottish culture, like music and things! I love Scottish music. Myself and — before, or when I had my daughter, or just before I had my daughter, after I lost my job, I went to start learning fiddle lessons. So that’s all the Scottish music, and actually, my daughter was with me at that time, and maybe that’s why she start learning — she wanted to learn the violin lessons, so that she took as well...

While Setsuko beams when she speaks of her daughter’s success in playing the Celtic harp, she takes little credit for this, explaining that before her first competition, Setsuko did not even know how well her daughter played the harp, as she practised only at school. In this way, the Potter daughter has quite independently chosen to pursue harp playing. On the other hand, for the Ramsey boys, it seems that their mother Miyuki played a stronger role in pushing the Scottish harp on her sons or perhaps as she herself describes, she simply has a more “Japanese” parenting style, with “*a lot of scolding*”. Here, Miyuki shares both her own as well as her older son’s journey with the harp:

I was [initially] interested to do some Scottish step-dance, and I did for around 10 years, but there is some break because of I had two

boys <laughs> ... I'm learning harp, classic harp, with my elder son because he had uh, a class offered at primary school, and then he was uh, at first he didn't do so much because we didn't have a [harp] in the house, and we just borrowed the [harp] from the school, and then in uh, we decide to buy a [harp] for him and then after that, I'm from Japan, and especially my hometown, and quite mean! And then, "We bought the instrument, you must use it!" <laughs> And then so, I sent him to the Classical Harp Society, and every month they have some practise to do and like big ensemble, orchestra things and then while I was sitting watching he was playing and I thought, it's very fun to do it ... eventually, the next springtime, there is another Harp Festival, every time in the spring time, and then lots of suppliers coming, and then I thought I should buy a smaller harp, to carry for myself! <laughs> And also I can join to the [Harp] Society myself, with my son, and then I got the little one for myself, and now I'm now in the Society, like every month, my son and me go to play the [harp] together at Society.

This is indeed a very interesting situation because, not only is the Japanese mother encouraging her son to play the Scottish harp, but she herself has joined the Harp Society, thus suggesting that perhaps the vertical transmission of culture can also occur from child to parent.

David and Risa McGregor have one child, a boy with a very energetic personality. When it comes to enrichment activities, unlike the Potters or Ramseys, neither Risa nor David has pushed stereotypical "Scottish" activities on their son. On the contrary, the McGregors, who have lived in Japan for half of their son's life, are now encouraging him to explore more traditionally Japanese activities, in particular, martial arts. However, because such activities are now routinely offered in cities across Britain, whether or not martial arts can be considered "Japanese" culture is questionable. Nonetheless, during one of my home observations in the McGregor home, it was interesting to observe the family negotiating the son's enrichment activities; yet far from emphasising transmitting culture, it seems that the McGregors, particularly Risa, is stereotypically being what Miyuki Ramsey's defines as the Japanese

mothering style: “*very strict*” and making sure their children practice whatever activity they choose:

After dinner, Mum says that son’s got to practise his guitar more. He’s been playing for about six months now, and likes it. Dad says young McGregor wants to be a rock guitar player. Son looks at him and says, there’s no way I’m going to be a professional musician. But he plays for fun. Mum says he doesn’t practise enough... they then begin talking about his *kendo* classes. His *kendo* teacher was at his school today, doing a judo demonstration. Mum says there are two *kendo* teachers, one is very traditional and does *seiza* and *mokusou*. The other one doesn’t, so Mum prefers the traditional one. Dad says he practises every Friday evening, and Mum says that in Japan, they practise a lot more, some kids practise every day. Son says there are about ten kids, and everyone meets together at first, very egalitarian, adds Dad. Son’s friends also used to practise *kendo*, but they now do *aikido*. Son wonders what will happen if he continues *kendo*... Dad says he’s probably ready to be tested, but son seems a bit hesitant. The family wonders how that will work, they believe someone will come and examine him fighting, and that they’ll then have to go to Glasgow...

As such, while neither Risa nor David seems to be transmitting their respective cultures via the choice of enrichment activity for their son, they do seem to be attempting to pass on to him a strong work ethic. A strong work ethic is a universal ideal, but because Risa is more persistent, in his memory, the son may categorise it as a “Japanese” trait. Further, yet again, this idea of a “national culture” is complicated: instead of Risa pushing *kendo*, I observed David taking an interest in and encouraging and pushing his son to continue *kendo*, perhaps, in some ways, due to a personal interest in traditional Japanese martial arts. Finally, while the Potter and Ramsey children seem to be in agreement with their parent(s) regarding choice of enrichment activity, in the McGregor home, it seems that there is more negotiation between the parents and the son, with the son agreeing to practise *kendo*, but also wanting to play the guitar “for fun”. In this way, although we see a strong influence of parents in the choice of enrichment activities, ultimately, the children seem to decide what activities to continue. Further, while parents can use enrichment activities as a vehicle

for the transmission of culture, most of the time, they are simply attempting to share their interests with their children, and sometimes even joining them, emphasising that the transmission of culture need not be tied to a country, but is instead about sharing personal interests.

## Rituals

In this final section, the focus shifts somewhat to more infrequent activities or *rituals*. Rosenthal and Marshall (1988, p. 671) define a *ritual* as “a pattern of prescribed formal behaviour, pertaining to some specific event, occasion or situation, which tends to be repeated over again”. Rituals are an important aspect of family life because, particularly when children are born, couples must negotiate (and often re-negotiate) with one another “what family practise or set of practises to adopt, which traditions [are] better or nicer” (Mason and Muir 2013, p. 616). This is especially true for mixed families, where they are not only negotiating between their family practices, but also between different cultures.

Traditional celebrations within families can play an important role in how families stay connected and do family, yet it may also be the other way around, with family actually being the “refuge of stability and continuity in a world where change seems otherwise inevitable” (Mason and Muir 2013, p. 617). Moreover, the celebration of holidays as a family can influence the lives of children and their familial identity:

Families are the most critical site in this process of inclusion and exclusion where loyalties are shaped through habits and rituals. Ceremonies attached to rites of passage such as christenings, weddings or funerals join people together and heighten their awareness of themselves as a group. (Davidoff et al. 1999, p. 91)

Finally, the observance of public holidays and the celebrations of more intimate moments can not only positively influence familial identities, but can also allow for the “development of unique family cultures and traditions” (Ali 2003, p. 110). However, it seems that the burden surrounding rituals remains largely on the woman, the traditional *kinkeeper*

(Rosenthal 1985) who takes it upon herself to maintain contact with, and then organise and host family gatherings. More recently, researchers have found that, although women are still more likely to take primary responsibility for kinkeeping, both men and women report similar levels of appreciation for such rituals and realise that such responsibilities should not be placed on a single person. This is important to note because, particularly in mixed families, for the children to become familiar with both cultures, having both parents remain actively involved in *kinkeeping* can be helpful.

## Holidays

While literature on *kinkeeping* stresses the woman's dominance in this area, in the present study, most of the women claim they are "too lazy" to celebrate holidays from either country. On the other hand, the men seem more enthusiastic about holidays, as we see with Tim Paterson, who very much looks forward to returning to his hometown every Christmas, along with his parents, wife and daughter, and celebrating this special holiday with his extended family. Here, Tim shares his thoughts on negotiating holidays:

I think, from the Japanese culture, kind of some of the celebrations and things like that are really interesting and they are in a bit of a contrast to British traditions, where, for example like Easter and things like that, it doesn't really mean anything anymore. And people just have a holiday, whereas in Japan, they kind of still respect the traditions and celebrate it with the right spirit, so I think that's something that we want to maintain in our daughter's upbringing, and celebrate as well. And um, British celebrations and things like that, obviously Christmas is one of the most important ones, and I think I was very — more important than birthdays in my childhood, and I think it probably will be in my daughter's as well. We make quite a big deal out of Christmas as a family time, everybody's together and food and drinks and lots of presents and things like that, and I think maybe in Japan it's not such a big deal, I know I used to work at Christmas, so it wasn't a big deal <smirks>, but no, I think combining both of those things — so you celebrate the extra

holidays from Japan, but you also celebrate the British holidays in combination. It's fine, I think, it's good for my daughter.

Tim, along with other fathers in the study, seems quite optimistic about the idea of celebrating both Japanese and British holidays. This may be because men tend to place the responsibility of preparing for such celebrations in the hands of women, including their wives, mothers and sisters. Nonetheless, the British men, both those who are familiar with Japanese holidays, as well as those who know nothing of the Japanese culture, seem eager to learn about Japanese holidays, as well as become more informed and involved with celebrations from their own culture. While Waters (1990) and Katz (1996) found that parents often begin to identify more closely with their cultural background when they become parents, this present study shows that, in addition to identifying more closely with their own cultural backgrounds, parents, particularly fathers, also want to better know and celebrate the holidays from their partners' homelands. When I first visited Adam and Junko McLeod's home, which happened to be around Children's Day, I was struck by how festive it looked—they had all the traditional decorations up, as well as little Japanese flags pinned to the walls in the living room. Here, Adam shares his thoughts on holidays and on wanting to become more engaged in celebrations, both Japanese and British:

Probably the Children's Day [Japanese holiday]. We'd celebrate an event like that, to some extent, just by displaying flags and we talked to my wife's parents in the webcam, but uh, nothing big, but we keep an eye out for any events that are coming up in the area, you know, like the supermarket in the neighbourhood and there's a gala coming up in a couple of weeks time, just at a local school there, and there are a lot of activities going on, and we can take our son there and see what's going on and try to engage with the community and go to local events. But national events, like Burns Day or St Andrews Night, I mean, practicality, it's difficult for us to go to an event like that because we'd need a babysitter. But yeah, sometimes we go to things like — but we take our son with us... Oh right, and obviously we celebrate Christmas — I didn't think of that, but yeah, we do celebrate Christmas. Uh, we had our first Christmas sort of a few months ago, and yeah, that was good. We had the

Christmas tree up and got some presents for our son ... Christmas dinner, enjoyed our time, watch a movie, put some music on, but it was just a small Christmas gathering. We didn't have a big family Christmas sort of thing.

Although Adam had never considered Christmas a part of his "culture", by marrying his Japanese wife, he has come to accept and embrace Christmas as a part of his British or "White" identity (Ali 2003, p. 113). Furthermore, it is encouraging to see that Adam is interested in embracing his wife's Japanese cultural celebrations as well as trying to find new celebrations and rituals within their local community. This suggests that fathers find ritual meaningful (cf. Friedman and Weissbrod 2004), and that they are becoming more involved in kinkeeping activities. However, such men may also simply be idealistic, not realising how much work is involved in celebrating holidays. Here, Taeko Clark, who migrated to Britain two years ago, together with her husband and two daughters (ages 8 and 2), shares how difficult it has become for her family to continue celebrating Japanese holidays in Britain:

Well, when we were in Japan, on New Years Day, we always made traditional Japanese, New Years Day food, and in February, we celebrated a special holiday to mark the end of winter — on the day that the Devil comes, we throw beans at him. In March, we celebrated Girls' Day and brought out the dolls, and then there's Grandmother and Grandfather's Day or the Day for Respecting the Aged, when we would go visit the grandparents. We were celebrating everything, but since coming to Scotland, on Girls' Day, to celebrate, we — we weren't able to bring out big dolls, but we brought little substitute dolls, so we took those out of the boxes and set them out, with flowers surrounding them. And also had *chirashi-zushi*, a special dish that we have in March... Since coming to the UK, we haven't been able to eat this as well, so the kids haven't even been able to enjoy eating this, neither have they been able to celebrate New Years properly. It's become very difficult...

Taeko's husband Andrew, who lived in Japan for nearly a decade feels that, in addition to the challenge of celebrating Japanese holidays in Britain, there also seems to be a larger cultural difference in the general

celebration of holidays. He feels that the Japanese celebrate holidays differently than the more laid-back British, which in turn has demanded negotiation between himself and Taeko, particularly after the family relocated to Britain:

... whereas [holidays such as Girls Day] would be an annual thing and quite important in Japan, um, I tend to sort of pick up on British traditions and festivals just — not every year, so maybe we have things like Pancake Day, so this year, I did nothing for Pancake Day, but last year, I made some pancakes... much more sort of laid-back ... I think Taeko gets a bit upset that I'm not sort of paying attention to the fact that it's Girl's Day or —but I mean, some of the festivals don't sort of translate. You know, if you have something like Marine Day, I remember we used to always try to get to the beach in Japan on Marine Day. Marine Day here ... we probably won't end up at the beach! ... between a Scottish person and a Japanese person, there's a big inconsistency about New Year because New Year's Day for a Scottish person is a day to be hungover and sick on; whereas for Japanese people, it's a day for family to have a meal. So I haven't been hungover and sick for a long time... But it ... caused a bit of friction in Japan, occasionally, because I'd want to go out and get very drunk on Hogmanay, the last day of the year, and then be invited to struggle with eating mochi the next day, so. Yeah, it's a bit difficult...

The Clarks, like other mixed couples, must therefore negotiate both their personal preferences as well as cultural differences surrounding holidays. Yet even when couples are united in their commitment to introduce their children to holidays from both Japan and Britain, challenges remain, as David McGregor, who lived in Japan, first by himself, then as a couple, and then as a family, explains:

[Regarding Scottish holidays] No, not really. I've never attended a Burns Supper or anything like that ... no... when my son was going to the Japanese school on Saturdays, I think they — if he'd continued going there we would have done it more, there was a setsubun festival, so he did that at the school, but apart from that, not really Japanese um, festivals, you know, it's difficult, like how do you do obon or something like that when you're here, you know? <laughs> We did it in Japan all the time, of

course, but here —it’s really just not on the radar screen, you know? Um, Christmas is a big — we had Christmas — this Christmas, last Christmas was our first one back in Scotland, so we had a big Christmas dinner here, um, so my mum, Mum, my sister, my brother, and his partner all came along for that, so we had a big Christmas, a big Christmas dinner here. When my dad was alive, um, we’d go to their house for Christmas, Christmas is a big, you know, big, central um, festival, I suppose, that we would participate in...

It is interesting to note here that, because of his long residence in Japan, David seems quite familiar with Japanese holidays. On the other hand, even though he is Scottish, David has never attended a Burns Supper, a traditional annual dinner celebrated throughout Scotland. The McGregor son, however, was introduced to this holiday at school soon after moving to Edinburgh, and when he asked his mother how their family would be celebrating Burns Night, his mother was somewhat at a loss. Risa recalls: “*I remember Burns Night day, but that was, you know, I’ve been here about 12 months, we didn’t have Burns’ Night in London, so I had no idea what was it, what is it? But my Japanese friend told me about haggis, and [stab] haggis and read poem or something...*” Risa managed to prepare a traditional Burns Supper for her family, with the aid of her Japanese friend who instructed her in this traditional Scottish ritual. This is another example of the horizontal transmission of culture, migrant to migrant, with a Japanese woman teaching another Japanese woman about a Scottish tradition. Further, it also shows that yet again, “national culture” is problematic because often individuals are not familiar with their own “culture” and are instead more familiar with a foreign culture, as we see David McGregor seeming more familiar with *Obon* than Burns’ Night.

## Public Celebrations

During my fieldwork, I attended special events in the Japanese community, such as the annual *Tanabata* Celebration, an astronomically based holiday in Japan, celebrated on the 7th of July (cf. Renshaw 2011). What follows are notes from my journal:

Today, at the Tanabata Celebration at the Museum, they had an Arts & Crafts corner, so the children could experience the custom of writing their wishes down on colourful pieces of paper and hanging them on trees... Many of the children were dressed up in traditional Japanese dress... I recognised some people from the playgroups and the study and said hello to them. But I also noticed that there were hardly any fathers. Since it was on a Saturday, I had expected to see more dads... but maybe only the Japanese mums and children attend this type of event? Many of the parents, both mothers and fathers that I've talked to so far have emphasised the importance of raising bicultural children, of sharing and introducing both cultures and celebration to their children, but how can they do that if they're not here with their children?

This observation is somewhat in line with Beagan and colleagues' (2008, p. 659) finding that, even on weekends, when men are home, women continue to do the majority of *foodwork*.<sup>3</sup> In a similar way, even on weekends, when the British men could be attending public celebrations of Japanese holidays and supporting the transmission of the minority culture to their children, they are absent from culture work. Raising bicultural children was a self-identified goal for all the parents in the present study; yet, as my field notes show, sometimes the everyday, hands-on "invisible work" (Okita 2002) of transmitting culture is felt more by one parent, usually the migrant parent. Nonetheless, while the children may become familiar with Japanese rituals and traditions through their migrant mother's effort, along with the assistance of the greater Japanese community, because the children reside in Britain, the holidays they see on television and celebrate with their British kin and their peers at school, may soon overshadow the Japanese celebrations.

## Conclusions

In this chapter, four areas of the mixed family's everyday culture were explored: home, religion, leisure and rituals. On one hand, the findings indicate that the mixed family are just "normal" families, and "mixed-ness is just one part of these family's everyday lives" (Caballero 2007,

p. 23); on the other hand, mixedness is a dominant part of the everyday lives of the mixed families, particularly as families decide to hang a picture of a cathedral or a *kakejiku* in their hallway, to christen their newborn or take them to the Shinto shrine for *shichi go san*, or both; to encourage the children to choose activities that are part of their “national cultures” or simply something they enjoy, and to put up the Christmas tree, but not forget Pancake Day.

While differences in “Japanese” and “British” cultures may be apparent in everyday family life, there is actually much more happening than a “culture clash” because culture is not equated to nationality. In other words, it is often the British man, instead of the Japanese woman, who prefers Japanese furniture and décor in their home, and as was discussed regarding enrichment activities, we find the Japanese women sharing with their children activities in line with their personal interests, not always their cultural heritages. Thus, we find the transmission of culture to be fluid, with both parents contributing to the transmission of both cultures. However, we must bear in mind that there is a limit to how much a non-native parent can “transmit”. For example, while the British man can push his children towards Buddhism, ultimately, the Japanese woman, along with her kin, will bear more of the responsibility since they are more familiar with the religion. Nonetheless, we do see the British men becoming more involved in several aspects of family life, including contributing their opinions to home décor, organising Christmas dinner with the extended family, and looking for different local holiday celebrations to join in. Yet mothers still continue to carry a heavier burden and be more responsible for everyday matters such as actually decorating the homes, cooking a traditional British Christmas dinner and taking the children to the public celebrations. Nonetheless, we do see the gendered divisions of labour gently being challenged, and homemaking, kinkeeping and parenting becoming, not the sole responsibility of the woman, but a joint effort.

## Notes

1. Defined as the sexual division of labour which gives women primary responsibility “not only for domestic work involving childcare, family health and food provision, but also, for the community managing of housing and basic services, along with the capacity to earn an income through productive work” (Moser 1989, p. 1803).
2. Children’s British Broadcasting Corporation.
3. Term used by Beagan et al. (2008) to refer to responsibilities associated with feeding a family, which goes beyond simply preparing meals, and includes food shopping, menu planning, serving meals and cleaning-up afterwards.

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