

Carol Roylance

by

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a woman's work is never done."

Housewives are oftentimes overlooked for the daily remedial tasks which they perform. While the duties of housework may be overlooked, the lives of the individuals who render them should not. Carol Roylance is one of these individuals. As a homemaker for the last 28 years, Carol has accepted her duties as a normal part of being a woman. However, a closer look into her life reveals anything but a normal woman doing normal tasks. Carol is an amazing woman who has accomplished amazing feats throughout her life.

Carol Roylance, born Carol Jensen Criddle on December 4, 1939, was born into the same small farmhouse, five miles outside Downey, Idaho, where her father had been born 39 years earlier. At the age of four Carol and her family moved to Downey where she remained until she moved to college. Carol's mother, Bessie, had been an elementary teacher until she married James Criddle at the age of 27. James, a recently widowed father of three children, would have five more children with Bessie. It was in these early years of her life that the patterns for gender roles were established in Carol's mind.

Being raised on a farm meant there were many chores to be completed each day. Yet Carol remembers how her father was very opposed to his girls doing the farm work. Her brothers, on the otherhand, did have to participate in the farm work. James Criddle was so particular in his wishes that on those occasions when he

left town and the boys were away, he paid an aunt to milk the cows rather than have his daughters do it. In many ways this act illustrates Carol's own feelings about women working outside the home. While she acknowledges that some women have no choice in the matter and that it is beneficial that they do work outside the home, Carol would rather it be other women and not herself. She is very content to be where she is. For while she believes men and women are equal in their capacities, she prefers not to do the work herself.

Because her mother taught school for so many years, Carol felt it was only natural for her to want to be a teacher. However, a career in teaching or any other field was, as it had been for her mother, seen as temporary until her children were born. Carol's real dreams for the future included being a wife and a mother and, in her mind, this meant being a full-time housewife.

At the age of 18 Carol left Idaho to attend Brigham Young University. She attended BYU on an academic scholarship after being named Valedictorian of Marsh Valley High. Carol recalls how studying became her job while attending college, for it literally paid her educational costs. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Relations coupled with an elementary education composite. If studying had really been her job, Carol should have received the employee of the month award - she graduated salutatorian from the College of Family Life.

Carol's mother had graduated with a two year degree from Ricks college but her father only had a sixth grade education.

Nevertheless, Carol describes her father as a "self-made man" who constantly studied to improve himself. She remembers how he used to sit at the kitchen table and study for hours figuring out farm figures or merely reading. Consequently, Carol feels it was growing up in this environment which taught her to appreciate school. There was never a question about whether she would attend college, she simply always wanted to. While Carol may feel men and women "are made for different roles," she feels they are equal intellectually. This attitude is clear in the manner she encourages both her sons and daughters to excel in school, regardless of their gender.

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~~During~~ her sojourn at college, Carol's mother developed a brain tumor and passed away, leaving Carol motherless and her father a widow one more time. This was, most likely, the hardest time of Carol's life. Carol had, and still does, admired her mother above all other women. She describes her simply as "goodness." The impact which her mother's death had is best illustrated by Carol's statement, "Mom died when she was 52, I was glad when I turned 53." This indicates her fears of following in her mother's footsteps by leaving her own children motherless.

After graduation Carol accepted a teaching position and, for the next three years, found herself teaching second graders. This period marks the only time in her life when Carol worked outside the home in the paid labor force. The experience was, unfortunately, not a pleasant one. The time was one of extreme change for Carol; she married Glen Roylance, gave birth to their first child, and adjusted to her father marrying for the third

time.

At one point during Carol's teaching career, the teachers within her district went on strike for better pay. While Carol participated in the strike and refused to teach, she admits having not been too involved, simply because to her "it wasn't a big issue." The reasons behind her passiveness could be related to her view of the teaching position as merely a job and, not a lifetime career. For Carol, her career goal was to be a mother. Although, at the outset of her marriage, Carol most likely had no idea how large her role as a mother would become.

Over the next 19 years Carol would give birth to ten children; four boys and six girls. Although she admits she expected her husband to be "around more," she credits him as a wonderful father and husband. The fact that he did not change as many diapers as she would have hoped for seemed rather trivial to Carol, who had been prepared to accept it from the outset of their marriage. While Carol acknowledges having raised her children with traditional values, she adds it was a subconscious decision resulting from her own upbringing. Therefore, the girls did the dishes and the boys did the yardwork. Incidentally, this practice has become somewhat less apparent as the number at home has decreased, eliminating the possibility of distribution of chores by gender.

As a housewife, Carol did every type of job imaginable. When asked what work meant to her, Carol responded, "a man works from sun to sun, a woman's work is never done." Clearly this has been true in her experiences. Besides the daily cooking and cleaning -

cooking and cleaning for 12 individual - Carol describes an average week to include 10-12 loads of laundry, a trip to the store every other day, and 4-5 hours of ironing. Furthermore, she cuts her family's hair, occasionally gives permanents, makes bread, cans fruit, makes jam, sews clothes, serves as the family taxi, and even shampoos the carpet periodically. Indeed Carol works, and yet, while she feels women should receive equal pay for equal work, she considers her own dollar value as a housewife to only be between \$12,000, and \$30,000.

Despite the fact that housework is not seen as a prestigious job in the eyes of others, Carol feels it is as equally valuable as her husband's job. Ironically, contrary to the general societal pressures to remain in the home with the children, Carol has felt the reverse pressure from society. She stated, "the world wants women out working, they do not like it when we stay home." Nevertheless, Carol has enjoyed her time in the home, and credits her contentness to her husband who makes her feel loved and important.

Carol recognizes her attitudes toward women and work as being very similar to her mother's. However, she notes a change in her daughters' beliefs. While she realizes many of them are going to have to work outside the home for financial reasons, she notices some of them are even looking forward to the opportunity. Carol is not opposed to her daughters having careers outside the home, yet she hopes they will enjoy their time in the home and be as happily married as she has been. Conversely, Carol hopes her sons will

become "good leaders in their homes and provide well for their families." Obviously Carol's aspirations for her children reiterate her feelings about the man being the provider and the woman the nurturer.

Now, as Carol's children are getting older and having children of their own, she is finding more free time of her own. The experience of having free time is so foreign to her that Carol is not quite sure how to fill it. She has considered going back to the university and taking some classes, or taking up some hobbies she previously set aside due to the lack of time. Whatever she decides to do, it will, undoubtedly, be as extraordinary as everything else in her life has been. Carol may be just a housewife, doing remedial tasks, but she is not just another ordinary woman - if there even is such a thing. She is a unique individual who has chosen the path of life that has made her most happy and then fulfilled it to the best of her abilities.