

# CBS Reports: "But What

## About The Children"

Divorce is not just a serious social problem but an American way of life. Four out of ten marriages in 1978 will end in divorce, and nearly half of the children born this year will have to spend time with a single parent because of divorce.

**CBS REPORTS:** "...But What About the Children," to be broadcast Saturday, December 23 at 10 p.m. on WBTV, Channel 3, takes us behind the statistics into the experience of one family to reconstruct their life after a recent divorce.

Producer-director Grace Diekhaus (who introduces the broadcast) and a CBS News crew spend eight weeks with the Goodmans, an upper middle-class family from Phoenix, Arizona. There is no narration, no statistics, no interview with experts—just the Goodmans (Carol, Leon, their two sons, and a live-in babysitter)—telling and living their own story. This broadcast presents an intimate, day-to-day portrait of the effects of divorce.

After twelve years of marriage, Carol Goodman divorced her husband. She felt restricted by her role: "Feminism," she said, "opened my eyes." She bought a new house (it's my house"), and threw herself into her job as the financial coordinator for a political campaign. "I like what I am now," she says, adding, "I'm not afraid of the prospects at all."

Leon—clearly enjoying the singles scene again—argues that "Women's lib was the catalyst for our divorce," adding that Carol's activities didn't jibe with his image of wife and mother. "In some cases," he admits, "divorce can be a great thing."

What about the children? Nine-year-old Greg is introverted, bright and moody, while six-year-old Todd is outgoing, athletic and cheerful. Because of the absence of their Dad, their living arrangement and the strangeness of their new home, the boys are obviously unhappy. "It used to be a lot funner," says Todd. "I don't think they'll ever get together again," says Greg.

The demands of Carol's job ("She's kinda gone a lot," one of the boys says) and Leon's separate life away from his family ("Daddy doesn't live here anymore") have caused the boys to become more dependent on each other and on their live-in babysitter, Keith, a 21-year-old college student.

Underlying the story of how one family's life is being wrenched by change is the question: But what about the children? Greg's innocent answer is both funny and sad: "I still have big plans for the future."

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