

David Hartley/Ross Parry

Paul Moss,
Leila Wilcox
and Troy



Deidre and
Bryan
Bounds with
Frankie

Feeling the strain: three couples tell their stories to Jessica Jonzen

Leila Wilcox, 26, and Paul Moss, 36, are casualties of role reversal. They split up last December. Their son Troy, 3, lives with Leila in Oxford. Paul lives nearby and shares childcare

Leila: When we got together I had absolutely no money and was a full time mum for a year when I had Troy. Paul knew that I was hugely ambitious and wanted to set up my own [children's skincare products] business and he invested the money. I moved to London to work while Paul stayed in Oxford with Troy. I was away four or five nights a week for nearly a year. It was unbearable but I felt really happy when I was able to start paying for the lion's share of the bills. I have set myself and my family up for life and I couldn't have done that if Paul hadn't been so easy-going about the role change.

Paul: I never felt any resentment when Leila started to earn more than me; I was just incredibly proud of her. It was very difficult when she started working away from home so much and that's ultimately why we split up. I had to juggle my career with childcare, but I feel honoured I was able to spend so much time with Troy and it really shows with our relationship now. Leila's success never emasculated me, it gave me the opportunity to be a better father.

Deidre Bounds, 41, is the CEO of a gap-year company. Her husband Bryan, 43, an American actor, also works for the company. They have two children, Frankie, 5, and Ava, 11 months

Deidre: I earn nearly £50,000 more than he does and there are times when I feel resentful if he spends money on frivolous things

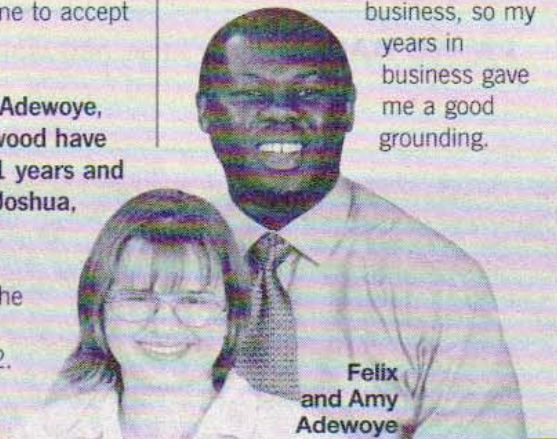
and I'll tell him so. But he'll remind me of all the money I spent on clothes the week before. It would be nice if our salaries were more equal but we're in this together and it all goes in to the melting pot.

Bryan: I had to swallow my pride when Deidre started supporting me. I had been quite a successful actor in America and had appeared in *Sex and the City* and various films, and here I was in Leeds living off my wife. I love her, though, so I came to accept the situation.

Felix, 41, and Amy Adewoye, 36, from Borehamwood have been married for 11 years and have two children, Joshua, 6, and Rebecca, 4

Felix: I was always the breadwinner in our household until 2002. My sister died and

due to the stress of losing her I accepted voluntary redundancy. We decided it would make sense for me to put going back to work on hold so I could look after the children. My ex-colleagues make jibes about me being a "house husband" but I like to look at my role as that of a "house manager". I am the non-salaried chief executive of our household. The buck stops with me and we have to keep to a tight schedule or we end up with a backlog, just as you do in business, so my years in business gave me a good grounding.



Felix
and Amy
Adewoye