

**Family models for earning and caring:
implications for child care**

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Discussion Paper no. 05-01

May 16, 2005

On the web in PDF format: <http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/sociology/popstudies/dp/dp05-01.pdf>

Acknowledgement: The authors are indebted to Don Kerr, Eric Tenkorang and Mustafa Zahid for their generous help with this paper.

Paper presented at Third Conference of the Canadian Research Data Centre Network, Montreal, May 19-20, 2005

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Discussion Paper
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Abstract: The bases for family change include an economy that provides more work opportunities for women, and a cultural orientation that values equal opportunity and legitimates family models other than the traditional breadwinner model. At the same time, both quantitative and qualitative evidence suggest a prevalent preference for making accommodations for children that include considerable time with children, especially in the infant and toddler years. Thus the average experience is for women to do less and for men to do more paid work in two-parent families that include young children in the home. Our reading of parental preferences suggests an interest in more services for young children in the form of early childhood education and child care, but also interest in policy directions that would allow parents to spend more time with children, in the form of leaves, part-time work with good benefits, and subsidies that supplement market income. These accommodations are often less feasible in lone-parents, and thus child care is a higher priority in these families.

We start with the view that earning a living and caring for each other are the core activities that define families as units of material and emotional interdependence. The demographics of child care needs to pay attention to the bases for family change and the alternate ways in which earning and caring occur in families.

Earning and caring in the human life course

The core activities of production and reproduction need to be placed in the context of the human life course. Kaplan (1997) proposes that there are three unique features of the human life course, and that these features are interrelated: a long period of juvenile dependency, long life expectancy, and menopause. The period of juvenile nutritional dependency is a function not only of the difficulties of earning a living, but also of the necessity to invest in skills for future earning. The long life expectancy allows for these investments to pay off over the life course, and as we have invested in a longer period of juvenile dependency, we have also invested in extending the average length of life. Menopause, with reproduction stopping before death, is also unique to the human species. This allows for greater certainty that parents will be present while the children are dependent. This period of post-reproductive productivity also allows for older generations to be involved in the care of grand-children, that is, children benefit from the survival and post-reproductive productivity not only of their parents but their grand-parents (Lahdenpera et al., 2004; Lee and Kramer, 2002).

This suggests that the core earning and caring activities of families, at least for families with young children, typically depend on assistance from a broader social group beyond the immediate parents. It is not just in modern times that parents need help from relatives or the broader society in caring for children. Such is the nature of the human life course.

Interpreting change in gender and families

Change in gender and family can usefully be related to economic and cultural questions; this theoretical argument is made in Hamilton's (1978) book entitled *The Liberation of Women: a study of Patriarchy and Capitalism*.

The main economic changes have included the growth of the service sector, the evolution of a 24 hour economy, greater needs for advanced skills, and more non-standard jobs. This has increased opportunities for women in the paid labour force, and increased women's labour force participation. Women have especially increased their education and have been well positioned to take advantage of these economic changes. For instance, Perna (2004) finds that, given the jobs that are available to women and men, a bachelor's degree presents more relative advantages for women than for men. In contrast, young men have been disadvantaged in the labour market, at least when compared to older men (Morissette, 1998; Picot, 1998).

In spite of greater participation of women in the labour force, there remain considerable differences in the occupational profiles of women and men. Women retain the advantage of less dangerous working conditions. For instance, among fatalities that were subject to workers' compensation benefits between 1988 and 1993, 4 percent were women and 96 percent were men (Marshall, 1996: 30). Women are more likely to be in jobs that offer more flexibility, which includes public sector jobs and non-standard work. Ranson (1998) has observed the differences, for instance between jobs in teaching or nursing compared to business or law, in terms of the potential for leave and working part-time that might surround childbearing.

Other economic changes have to do with the home, and productivity within the home. In *More than a Labour of Love*, Luxton (1980), shows that the "first generation" of women in Flin Flon Manitoba were completely occupied with labour in the home. Washing and ironing were a full-day's work, it took much time to heat the home, to obtain food from gardens, then store food and prepare meals. Becker (1991) has proposed that it is most efficient if only one person in a household divides their time between the market and in home production. While optimizing on efficiency is not necessarily the most important criteria, there is nonetheless an efficiency gain to the division of roles when work and home each involve a full-time job. As work within the home has become less than a full-time job, Becker's efficiency gain is reduced, and there are advantages to other forms of division of labour, including increased opportunities for women in the market, and greater interest in sharing paid and unpaid work in couples.

It is not just economic changes that have altered the context of gender and families. On the cultural side there has been an interest to set patriarchy aside. The second generation of feminism has sought to ensure that biology would not be destiny, and that women would have equal opportunities, in the public sector and in the home. In his study of values, Nevitte (1996) sees an ideological shift that favours tolerance and egalitarian relationships, between spouses, between parents and children. Writing on "The future of fatherhood", Coltrane (1995) sees a continued

increase in men's unpaid work in the home. The change in men's caring activities are partly a function of economic questions, such as women being out of the home and becoming more equal in their earning capacities, but it is also due to deliberate attempts to put aside the breadwinner model with its separate spheres for women and men. There are new ideals of less rigid gender models, of greater symmetry in the division of work, and even of mutuality by sharing in caring activities. Rather than the ideal of men being mostly involved in earning, and women in caring, many people now consider that most adults should be doing paid work, and that most would also want to be parents and to share in the unpaid family work.

The greater involvement of women in paid work is not only an economic question, sometimes seen as an economic necessity or at least a desire to achieve a desired standard of living; it is also a cultural push for equality and equal opportunity. This is seen in the shift in women's attitudes about work and family. For instance, Ravanera and Rajulton (2004) find that, in comparison to older women, younger women are more likely to want both work *and* family. The 2001 General Social Survey asked how important it was to have a lasting relationship as a couple, to have at least one child, and to be able to take a paying job. Tabulating this for women, Table 1 shows that "to have at least one child" has declined in importance, but it nonetheless represents 84 percent of the younger generation of adults. There has been an increase in the importance of having a lasting relationship as a couple, and especially in being able to take a paying job, representing 85% of the youngest women in the sample.

This cultural change also includes a push for men's greater involvement in caring activities. However, while there has been a general shift in favour of symmetry in the division of paid and unpaid work, and egalitarian relationships, diversity remains. Using preference theory, and looking at women in particular, Hakim (2003) proposes three alternate orientations: work-centred, family-centred, and adaptive. She proposes that some 60% of women are adaptive in the sense that they do not want to be completely work-centred nor family-centred, another 20% would be work-centred (often with no children) and 20% would be family-centred.

Furthermore, the preferences could be modified by individual circumstances, in particular, by presence of children. For instance, while most women would be placed in the "adaptive" category, Fox (2001) found from a select sample of couples who had taken part in pre-natal classes that being family-centred was quite common during the first few months of the child's life. While 60% of the new mothers returned to work within a year, Fox found a dominant pattern of intensive mothering in the first months of the child's life. These mothers not only needed the father's consent to devote themselves totally to the child, they also needed material and personal resources so that they could do intensive mothering without "getting anything else done". Some mothers became obligated to and dependent on their spouses, because "he was supportive of my being so involved with the baby." These new mothers felt that a partner was absolutely essential to the fulfilment of their responsibilities as mothers. It appeared that there was considerable agency in these mothers creating this intensive mothering role for themselves.

In effect, there are probably two co-existing models of marriage and the division of work. According to the Becker (1991) model, achieved characteristics are mostly important for men's

marriage prospects because they have the main responsibility for generating family income. In the Oppenheimer (1988) model of marriage, the achieved characteristics of both men and women are important to marriage, and there is divided responsibility for earning. In her career entry theory of marriage, Oppenheimer proposes that the couple needs to be able to afford a certain standard of living, and they need to be confident that they can achieve this with a given partner. This brings delays in marriage, as both acquire the necessary achieved characteristics, and due to the difficulty of anticipating those characteristics until each of the partners has some work experience. In an article on the economic foundations of marriage, using American longitudinal surveys, Sweeney (2002) finds evidence for both models, with somewhat more evidence for the Oppenheimer model in the younger cohort. In particular, men's income is a significant predictor of marriage, while women's income is significant only for the younger cohort (born in 1961-65). However, women's employment status is not a significant predictor of marriage for either cohort under comparison, while men's employment status is important for both cohorts. For both men and women of both cohorts, those who are currently enrolled in education are less likely to marry. Using data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Drolet (2002) also finds support for both models. For instance, in older cohorts marriage and motherhood had no association with wages, while in the youngest women, the married had higher wages, along with those who postponed childbearing.

Paid work by gender and parental status

As a consequence of these economic and cultural changes, the employment/population ratio has converged considerably between women and men at given age groups (Table 2). At each of the age groups, men's employment ratios have declined since 1981 and women's have increased since 1971. Thus at age group 15-24, the rates are basically identical for women and men in 2001. At ages 25-54, there is a ten to eleven percentage point difference between men's and women's employment ratios, while in 1971 the difference was over 40 percentage points. It is also noteworthy that, at these ages 25-54, the changes have lessened between 1991 and 2001, compared to the previous decade. Among the OECD countries, Canada is exceptional for the amount of change between 1960 and 1990 (Engelhardt and Prskawetz, 2004: 38). With 32 percent of women in the labour force in 1960, Canada was among those with the lowest participation, while the rate of 71 percent in 2000 puts Canada in the highest participation group.

While the trends for women and men are converging, parenthood still has the opposite average effects; that is, it leads to divergence of the employment patterns of women and men. Except at ages 15-24, women with children at home are less likely to work full-time and the younger the child the less likely they are to be working full-time (Table 3). The opposite occurs for men who are more likely to work full-time if they have children at home. For instance at ages 25-34 in 2001, 51.5 percent of women with children under six were working full-time, with another 22.8 percent working part-time and 25.7 percent not employed. For men with children under six at this age group, 91.2 percent are working full-time, 3.8 percent part-time and 5.0 percent are not employed. There is considerable variability in the proportion of women working full-time, across ages of children, with figures of 49.7 percent when there are children under six compared to 62.8

percent when the youngest child is 15-24. For men, there is much less variability, with close to 90 percent working full-time when there are children at home. There are similar findings with regard to work interruptions, which are more likely for women when they have children, but less likely for men who have children (Cook and Beaujot, 1996).

By marital status, women with children at home are more likely to work full-time in cohabiting unions or in post-union status, followed by married, and least likely when they are never married (Table 4). For men with children at home, it is the married who are most likely to be working full-time, but again the never married are least likely to work full-time, and most likely to not be employed. While 73.1 percent of women with children under six are working, and 49.7 percent are working full-time, the differences by marital status imply that more traditional divisions of work are more likely to occur for married women than for women in cohabiting unions or in post-union status. Nonetheless, the least amount of market work occurs for the never married, where 38.5 percent of women with children under six are not employed. The differences are stronger when the children are aged 0-3 years, where 46.7 percent of mothers in single parent families were working in 2002, compared to 64.1 percent in two-parent families (Neill, 2004: 6).

These relationships of work and parenting indicate the persistence of certain elements of the complementary roles model of family division of labour. But there are other models. In an American study, the average tendency was for childbirth to reduce women's work time and to increase men's average wage (Lundberg and Rose, 1998). Couples in which wives interrupted their careers for child-rearing showed increased task specialization associated with childbirth, including a reallocation of time by both husband and wife and declines in mothers' wage rates. The authors found the patterns to be significantly different for couples in which the wife participated continuously in the labour market. In those cases, after the birth of the first child the mothers' wage rates did not decline, and the hours worked by fathers declined by more than 7 percent. In addition, the wage differentiation on the birth of a first child was not as significant for younger cohorts. That is, the greater specialization associated with childbirth was less applicable to younger cohorts, and it did not apply to the sub-sample of continuously participating wives. The authors see, then, converging time-use patterns for husbands and wives and a declining wage differentiation associated with parenthood, as the model of continuous participation in the labour force becomes dominant.

Models of earning and caring

Time use data provide an opportunity for understanding these different family models. On the basis of the 1998 Time-use survey, we divided couples into categories relating to the division of paid and unpaid work. The advantage of time-use is that it adopts the same metric for measuring earning and caring activities, in terms of the amount of time that they take. Thus compared to my spouse, I would be doing more paid work, less paid work, or the same amount of paid work. Similarly, I could be doing more, less or the same amount of unpaid work. In measuring the same amount of time in a given activity, we have taken between 45% and 55% of the total of the two spouses. Thus if together we spend 100 hours of unpaid work, I am doing less than my

spouse if I do under 45 hours, more if I do over 55 hours, and the same if I do between 45 and 55 hours. This makes a three-by-three table. An interesting initial observation is that there are people in all the cells of this table (Beaujot and Liu, 2005; Beaujot and Ravanera, 2003).

A simplification of the categories (Table 5) shows that the *complementary-traditional* (he does more paid work, she does more unpaid work) is the predominant model with 48.5%, followed by *woman's double burden* (she is doing same amount of, or more, paid work, and more unpaid work) with 22.9%. But there are those who follow the reverse models as well; that is, the *complementary-gender-reversed* (she does more paid work, he does more unpaid work) comprises 5.3%, and the *men's double burden* (he is doing same amount of, or more, paid work, and more unpaid work), 10.0%. The *role-sharing* model, they do the same amount of unpaid work, comprises 13.1%.

We find that the complementary-traditional is more common when there are younger children and when there are more children in the home. However, women's double burden is most common when there are no children, or older children. Men's double burden is also more common when there are no children. The role sharing model is most common, amounting to 18.5% when both are working full-time, or when there are two children (15.1%).

Risman and Johson-Sumerford (1998) have called this role sharing model a "post-gender marriage." For the most part, their qualitative studies, along with those by Hochschild (1989) have seen the role sharing model as a function of a deliberate attempt by couples to achieve a more egalitarian relationship. These extensive qualitative studies have typically not indicated a lack of child care facilities as the reason why we do not have more post-gender marriages.

The child care situation

Economic and cultural changes have brought about not only greater diversity of family types and models of earning and caring, but also diversity in the manner of caring for children. Table 6 shows the proportions in various care situations for children under six in the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. As with other similar tabulations, this shows much diversity in the care situations, with many children are in more than one situation, and we also see that work status and family structure are important determinants of child care. For the total population of children aged 0-5 in 2002/03, some 52.3 percent are in some child care situation at least for part of the day. The most common form of child care is in someone else's home by a non-relative, which amounts to 18.4 percent of all children under six, with another 13.5 percent receiving care in someone else's home by a relative. The second most important category is care in a daycare centre, amounting to 15.7 percent of children under six in Canada as a whole.

There are significant differences between Quebec and the rest of Canada, with total care amounting to 65.1 percent of Quebec children under six, compared to 48.7 percent in the rest of Canada. Most significant is the care in daycare centres, which amounts to 32.8 percent of children in Quebec compared to 10.9 percent in the rest of Canada. Also higher in Quebec is care

in someone else's home by a non relative and before and after school programs. Both in two-parent and in one-parent families, and according to the work status of the responding parent, there are higher proportions in daycare in Quebec. The differences are largest in two-parent families, nonetheless, in one parent families where the responding parent is not employed, 29.5 percent are in daycare in Quebec compared to 14.8 percent in the rest of Canada. Especially outside of Quebec, there is more care in one-parent than in two-parent families, within categories of the work status of the responding parent. Where this parent is working full-time, 93.1 percent of children in Quebec are receiving care, and 50.6 percent are in daycare. The comparable figures for the rest of Canada are 84.9 percent and 32.2 percent, for one-parent families. Among children receiving care in Quebec, a higher proportion of those with low income are receiving care from the public supported child care program (Neill, 2004: 11).

By specific years of age, care usage is lowest at under one year, but it still amounts to 36.5 percent of children, including 6.8 percent in daycare (Table 7). In each of the other age groups, the largest category is that of care in someone else's home by a non-relative, followed by daycare. In the category where the responding parent is working full-year full-time, 27.6 percent are in daycare at ages 2-3, compared to 23.2 percent at 4-5 years of age, 21.7 percent at one year and 7.4 percent at under one year of age. The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth indicates considerable change in child care. For children aged six months to five years, 41.9 percent were in some child care situation in 1994/95 compared to 53.2 percent in 2000/01 (Statistics Canada, 2005). The results also show that a quarter of these children are in daycare centres in 2000/01, compared to a fifth in 1994/95, and that daycare is more common for children of lone parent families.

Clearly, children are in a diversity of care situations. For Canada as a whole, children are more likely to be in care when the parent most knowledgeable is working, especially working full-time, and when they are with one parent. In two parent families, care in someone else's home by a non-relative is the most common form of care, while daycare is the most common form of care in one parent families. In Quebec, daycare is the most common form of care for each of the categories of family type and employment status of the responding parent.

Parental preferences for work

In addition to factors such as work status of parents (particularly of mothers), family structure, and availability of child care facilities, parental preferences for work and child care are also determinants of the manner of caring for children. However, surveys do not often ask about parental preferences. In particular, the NLSCY has no questions on preferences for work and child care. In the 1988 Child Care Survey, the "designated adult," that is the respondent in the survey who is the person most responsible for child care in the family, was asked "when considering your own needs and those of your family, would you most prefer to work full-time, to work part-time, or not work at a job or business?" This question was only asked of employed respondents, and it found a significant interest to work less than they were currently working (Beaujot, 2000: 280). Thus for example, looking only at parents with children under six years of

age, among those employed part-time, 69.6% preferred to work part-time (their current situation) but, 11.8% would have preferred not to work at all (Table 8, Panel A). Among respondents working full-time, 43.6% would have preferred to work just part-time and 13.4% would have preferred not to work at all. There was more preference for full-time work among lone parents who were working full-time, but this was still under half of those working full-time.

Preferences on hours of work have also been asked in the 1995 Work Arrangements Survey. Persons who were employed were asked if they would prefer to work fewer hours for less pay, more hours for more pay, or stay with the same hours for the same pay. These responses have been classified by the age of the youngest child in the home. Most would prefer to stay with the same hours, but the proportion opting for fewer hours is strongest among women working full-time, with children under 3 years of age (Table 9). Among women working full-time, 16.6 would prefer to work fewer hours if they have a child under three, and 12.5 percent if they have a child under six (but none under 3). Among full-time workers, the highest proportion of women who want to work more hours are those with no children. For women working part-time, the proportions who would want to work more hours are close to half if they have no children or have children at older ages, but 37.0 percent if they have children under three years. For men, there is less variability across the presence of children, but among full-time workers, the highest proportion who would want to work more hours occurs when they have children under six years of age. For men aged 15-34 working full-time, the lowest proportion wanting to work more hours occurs when they have children under three years of age. This may imply an interest not to remove themselves from caring for young children. However, among men working part-time, over half want to work more hours, including over 75 percent if they have children under six years.

Work preferences also vary by the presence of a spouse (Table 10). Among women working full-time, it is those with a spouse who are more likely to want to work fewer hours for less pay, if they have children under six, and especially children under three years of age. Except for married women with children under six, other categories in the population have higher proportions who want to work more hours compared to those wanting to work fewer hours. Among persons who are not in relationships, there are high proportions who would want to work more hours, even among persons working full-time, especially for men.

Parental preferences for child care

Fewer surveys have asked about preferences for child care. The 1988 Child Care Survey asked employed respondents about their preferred form of child care. For those with children under six years of age, 22.4% would have preferred daycare, however only 12.2% of children were in the daycare as their main form of care (Table 8, Panel B). There is also considerable interest in care by non-relatives and relatives, either in child's home or in another home.

A qualitative survey taken in and around London, Ontario asked about the division of paid and unpaid work: what is best and what are common satisfactions and frustrations. While there were clearly cases where women were carrying the heavier burden and others where women felt that

their work in the home was not appreciated, the majority of respondents said that they had established patterns which they found satisfactory. Older women often observed that men, especially younger men, have come to do more of the household work, especially in child care. When asked about accommodations between family and work, respondents mostly explained how they had worked this out, through leaves, part-time work, shifts, daycare and help from their own parents, rather than calling for more accommodations in the workplace or more daycare services while they were working. Of course, people probably start with their own reality, rather than thinking of an ideal situation that would be removed from this reality. Also, women had made most of the accommodations, while men were more likely to see family and work as two separate things.

In introducing the section on programs and services, the respondents of this survey were asked what was described as a general question: “Some people take the attitude that having children is a personal choice and the people who choose to have children should take full responsibility for them; others say that society has some responsibility to ensure the well-being of children; overall, where would you stand on this question?” Many reacted rather strongly to the question, often saying that having children was a personal responsibility, people should not have children if they cannot care for them; people need to be aware of what it takes to be a parent, it was your responsibility to make it work. Some said that if you have children, you should deal with it, everyday care was to be with parents, it was a personal decision and thus the need to be primarily responsible.

But they also often said that the society has a basic responsibility to ensure that children have an adequate minimum in terms of care, safety, and especially education and health. If the parents are not able to provide care, certainly in the case of abuse or neglect, the society has responsibility to provide for a relatively high standard of basic care for children. When asked specifically about specific services, most took it for granted that the society should provide education and health care, they often asked for more support with education (or they were against the cuts to education and health), and ensuring that the children are safe. Others spoke of making daycare more affordable and accessible, more before and after school programs, or more extended leaves.

In the self-administered questionnaire that accompanied this study, we asked how people felt about various possible government initiatives, using categories “support, tend to support, tend not to support, do not support”. Putting together the categories “support” and “tend to support,” the highest proportion of respondents were in favour of “inexpensive daycare open to families with low income” (88%), and for direct financial support for low income families with children (75%). Inexpensive daycare open to all families is also supported by 66% of respondents. Only about 30% support direct financial support for every family with children, regardless of income (Table 11). When asked, “what one child-related benefit you would personally prefer, for families with young children”, the highest preference is for more subsidies for parents in the form of family benefits, family allowance or tax deductions (44%), followed by longer parental leave after the child’s birth (27%), and by more publicly supported child care facilities (18%).

Policy reflections

If we look at gender and family change in terms of both economic and cultural pushes, there seems to be interest in both more equal opportunities at work and considerable parental time with children. Most would seem to prefer an “adaptive” model, as described by Hakim, that is neither work-centred nor family-centred but that allows for both family and work.

In terms of **parental leave**, we have seen an expansion of average months of leave as the benefits of employment insurance have been extended to one year rather than the previous six months (Marshall, 2003). Comparing results from 1993-96 to those for 2001 shows considerable differences in leave times. In 1993-96, for example, 60% have returned within 6 months and 86% within a year, whereas in 2001 only 24% have returned within 6 months but 77% within a year (Marshall, 1999, 2003). We have evolved a two-tiered system, with some having only access to the EI benefit, and others having considerable top-up from employers. As we call for universal systems, why not call for 75% of regular pay.

Canada is unique in having no universal **benefit for children**, either as a family allowance or as a tax deduction. The earlier benefits along these lines were converted into the child tax benefit which is based on income. A case could be made to enrich and extend the child tax benefit so that middle-class persons with children have at least some benefit that starts to equalize their standard of living in comparison to people without children. The child tax benefits allow parents to spend less of their time in the market and thus to spend more time with young children.

For mothers with children under six years of age, there is also considerable interest in **reduced hours of work**, as long as these reduced hours could come with good benefits. Employers take advantage of part-time workers, in part because they are allowed to discriminate in terms of salary and work benefits. It would appear that the greater opportunity for part-time work in Northern as compared to Southern Europe is part of the reason for higher fertility in Northern Europe.

Clearly, **child care services** need to be part of this picture. The differences between Quebec and the rest of Canada indicate that services will be used if they are provided at a reasonable cost. Jenson (2004) proposes that a paradigm shift is occurring, from the view that children are the responsibility of the parents, to an “investing-in-children” perspective. In the earlier paradigm, families have primary responsibility and the state takes over when the parents are unable. In the social investment paradigm there are financial inducements to use high quality non-parental child care. Jenson proposes that the two paradigms are currently co-existing, and thus the differential views, with some opting for stronger state involvement in early childhood education and child care. Others who are more interested in alternatives that would enable parents to look after children themselves, through enriched parental leaves, part-time work with good benefits, and subsidies that supplement market incomes.

We also need to enhance our **special provisions for lone parents** (Beaujot and Liu, 2002).

There are currently two provisions that benefit lone parents. One is the equivalent-to-married tax deduction that is granted to the first child of a lone parent family. Another is the 75% replacement rate for employment insurance in the case of a main breadwinner who has low income and is receiving child tax benefits. These provisions are pale in comparison to that of some other countries. For instance, Denmark doubles the family allowance for the first child of a lone parent family. Other provisions involve capturing income from the absent parent. While this is clearly important, it does not help if the absent parent is unable to pay or manages to escape making the child support payments. Advance maintenance payments provide a stronger guarantee since they are provided directly by the state to the lone parent, regardless of the extent to which they can be recaptured from the absent parent.

Conclusion

The focus on earning and caring highlights both the alternative models of families, and the differential needs for services depending on family structure. In the Becker model of division of work, families can take responsibility for children as long as breadwinners are able to supply the needed income. There is evidence of the persistence of this model in the lower market work of women with young children, especially when they are married rather than cohabiting or post-married. Families who live by this traditional model of the division of work are most interested in benefits associated with work, and in subsidies from the larger society, such as child tax benefits. Women's high rates of education and labour force participation indicate that many opt for a more symmetric division of labour. Depending on the priority attributed to work, some families have preferences for leaves associated with childbirth, and options to work part-time with good benefits when children are young. This is evidenced by the greater preference for fewer hours of work for women with children under six years of age, especially if they are under three years. Among women in two-parent families working full-time, even with children under three years of age, there are 12.5 percent who would like to work more hours, besides the 70.1 percent who would like to stay with the same hours. In other categories of the population, there is greater interest in more hours with more pay than in fewer hours with less pay. The options for child care are clearly most important in these couples where both partners see themselves as continuous full-time participants in the labour force.

The situation is very different for those who are in lone-parent families where women are doing less market work but they are especially likely to prefer working more hours for more pay, even when they have young children. These families have fewer options for the division of paid and unpaid work, and they are the most likely to be using child care, especially care in daycare centres. Lone parents clearly need further support from the surrounding society, and the special provisions that we have now are inadequate, especially in the cases where absent parents are unwilling or unable to provide support. A case can be made for a guaranteed amount of support from the society, which could take the forms of higher replacement rates for parental leave, higher child tax benefits, greater subsidies for child care, but also advance maintenance payments that would give a guaranteed amount regardless of the contributions from absent parents.

The needs of families, in terms of support from the broader society, thus depend on family structure and on the model that they adopt for the division of paid and unpaid work. This help obviously needs to take the form of education and child care services, but also important are leaves and opportunities for part-time work with good benefits that would allow parents to fulfil their desires to look after young children themselves, and other subsidies that would reduce the need for market income during the early parenthood stage. As we move toward an “investing-in-children” paradigm, and a more symmetrical model for the sharing of paid and unpaid work, early childhood education and child care gain higher priority.

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**Table 1: Percent of Women Responding 'Very Important' and
'Important' to Happiness
by 20-Year Birth Cohort, 2001**

	1961-80	1941-60	1922-1940	Total
To have a lasting relationship as a couple				
Very important	72.8	67.4	65.2	69.3
Important	21.1	22.1	23.6	22.0
Total	93.9	89.5	88.8	91.2
To be married				
Very important	43.7	46.0	57.7	47.1
Important	27.0	23.0	24.1	24.9
Total	70.7	68.9	81.7	72.0
To have at least one child				
Very important	53.1	58.1	64.9	57.2
Important	30.7	25.4	25.2	27.6
Total	83.8	83.5	90.1	84.8
To be able to take paying job				
Very important	50.2	43.7	24.2	43.0
Important	35.0	35.1	31.7	34.4
Total	85.2	78.8	55.8	77.4

Source: General Social Survey, 2001

**Table 2: Employment/Population Ratio
by sex and age group, Canada, 1971-2001**

Age group	Male				Female			
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971	1981	1991	2001
15-24	55.3	59.5	56.4	55.6	41.8	52.1	54.4	55.0
25-34	87.7	88.9	82.4	83.6	41.5	59.9	69.1	73.2
35-44	88.8	90.8	86.0	85.9	41.4	59.7	72.2	75.8
45-54	86.3	87.9	84.0	83.7	42.1	52.2	65.6	72.8
55-64	75.8	73.1	60.0	59.7	32.6	33.4	35.5	41.4
Total	70.8	72.3	67.7	66.7	36.4	46.8	53.2	55.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Cat. no. 97F0012XBCO1003.

**Table 3: Proportion Working Full Time, Part Time and Not Employed by Sex, Presence of Children, and Ten-Year Group
Canada, 2001**

	MALE			15-24	FEMALE		
	Full Time	Part Time	Not employed		Full Time	Part Time	Not employed
No child under 25	36.7	34.1	29.2		28.3	41.6	30.0
Children under 6	75.5	10.4	14.1		35.4	24.8	39.8
Youngest child 6-14	70.5	16.8	12.6		44.8	20.1	35.1
Youngest child 15-24	50.0	25.0	25.0		57.9	21.1	21.1
Total	37.7	33.4	28.8		29.0	40.1	30.9
				25-34			
No child under 25	81.5	9.1	9.4		76.4	13.8	9.8
Children under 6	91.2	3.8	5.0		51.5	22.8	25.7
Youngest child 6-14	88.7	4.6	6.8		59.0	20.6	20.4
Youngest child 15-24	89.0	3.5	7.5		62.6	19.7	17.7
Total	84.7	7.3	8.0		64.2	18.3	17.5
				35-44			
No child under 25	81.2	6.5	12.2		73.1	12.4	14.6
Children under 6	91.9	3.4	4.7		51.6	24.0	24.4
Youngest child 6-14	92.0	3.3	4.7		59.7	23.4	16.8
Youngest child 15-24	91.2	3.4	5.4		68.1	16.4	15.5
Total	88.0	4.5	7.5		62.5	19.9	17.6
				45-54			
No child under 25	78.2	6.7	15.1		60.7	15.7	23.6
Children under 6	86.3	4.9	8.8		51.6	18.4	29.9
Youngest child 6-14	89.5	4.1	6.5		57.4	22.9	19.7
Youngest child 15-24	90.1	3.5	6.4		63.8	18.0	18.2
Total	84.6	5.1	10.3		61.2	17.6	21.2
				55-64			
No child under 25	55.3	9.5	35.2		30.9	15.9	53.2
Children under 6	73.3	6.2	20.5		23.8	23.8	52.4
Youngest child 6-14	72.6	7.8	19.6		38.2	16.6	45.2
Youngest child 15-24	74.0	7.8	18.2		44.7	18.5	36.8
Total	59.1	9.2	31.8		32.3	16.2	51.5
				Total			
No child under 25	62.0	16.4	21.6		48.0	23.0	28.9
Children under 6	90.5	4.0	5.5		49.7	23.4	26.9
Youngest child 6-14	90.2	3.8	6.0		58.9	22.8	18.2
Youngest child 15-24	86.9	4.4	8.7		62.8	17.6	19.5
Total	72.4	11.7	15.9		51.9	22.4	25.7

Source: Canada 2001 Census Public Use Sample

**Table 4: Proportion Working Full-Time, Part-Time and Not Employed
by Sex, Presence of Children, Marital Status, Canada, 2001**

	MALE			MARRIED	FEMALE		
	Full Time	Part Time	Not employed		Full Time	Part Time	Not employed
No child under 25	73.5	7.2	19.2		49.2	16.4	34.3
Children under 6	92.0	3.3	4.7		49.7	24.9	25.4
Youngest child 6-14	91.3	3.5	5.2		57.1	24.9	17.9
Youngest child 15-24	87.3	4.3	8.4		60.8	19.0	20.2
Total	84.4	4.9	10.7		53.3	20.6	26.1
				COMMON-LAW			
No child under 25	83.0	7.4	9.6		69.7	16.8	13.5
Children under 6	87.2	5.7	7.2		54.0	20.4	25.6
Youngest child 6-14	86.9	5.0	8.0		65.0	18.4	16.6
Youngest child 15-24	86.3	5.0	8.7		73.5	13.7	12.7
Total	84.8	6.5	8.7		65.5	17.7	16.8
				DIV/SEP/WID			
No child under 25	69.8	7.6	22.6		51.1	13.7	35.2
Children under 6	84.5	4.1	11.4		53.4	18.4	28.2
Youngest child 6-14	84.1	5.9	10.0		63.7	18.6	17.7
Youngest child 15-24	83.7	4.8	11.5		67.8	13.5	18.7
Total	72.6	7.1	20.3		56.5	14.9	28.6
				NEVER MARRIED			
No child under 25	54.5	24.0	21.5		44.4	33.1	22.6
Children under 6	64.9	13.5	21.6		40.8	20.8	38.5
Youngest child 6-14	73.9	7.8	18.3		58.6	16.2	25.2
Youngest child 15-24	72.6	5.2	22.2		65.1	12.9	21.9
Total	54.7	23.8	21.5		45.0	31.4	23.6
				TOTAL			
No child under 25	62.0	16.4	21.6		48.0	23.0	28.9
Children under 6	90.5	4.0	5.5		49.7	23.4	26.9
Youngest child 6-14	90.2	3.8	6.0		58.9	22.8	18.2
Youngest child 15-24	86.9	4.4	8.7		62.8	17.6	19.5
Total	72.4	11.7	15.9		51.9	22.4	25.7

Source: Canada 2001 Census Public Use Sample

Table 5: Models of Earning and Caring, 1998

Compared to husband,	Compared to husband, wife does		
More unpaid	More paid	Same paid	Less paid
More unpaid	5.7	17.2	48.5
Same unpaid	1.9	5.7	5.5
Less unpaid	5.3	4.5	5.5

Relative Participation Models

Complementary-traditional	48.5
Complementary-gender-reversed	5.3
Women's double burden	22.9
Men's double burden	10.0
Shared	13.1

Source: General Social Survey, 1998

Table 6: Percent using various care facilities for children aged 0-5, Canada, Quebec, and Rest of Canada, 2002/2003

CANADA	TWO PARENTS			ONE PARENT			TOTAL
	Full year full time	Other employed	Not employed	Full year full time	Other employed	Not employed	
Using child care	70.1	55.6	16.8	86.7	66.1	33.4	52.3
Type of care							
Care in Someone Else's home by Non-relative	27.9	20.0	3.4	26.7	16.7	5.5	18.4
Care in Someone Else's home by Relative	15.9	16.6	5.9	17.3	17.4	6.0	13.5
Care in Own Home by Non-sibling Relative	12.2	11.9	5.3	13.2	17.7	5.2	10.4
Care in Own home by Non-Relative	7.4	8.4	2.2	8.0	9.1	3.1	6.4
Care in Daycare Centre	21.2	13.9	4.8	36.1	22.8	17.6	15.7
Care in Nursery School/Preschool	3.6	2.8	1.0	7.1	1.5	3.5	2.8
Before and after school	3.0	1.4	0.5	7.7	2.7	1.9	2.1
Other child care arrangement	2.2	1.9	0.5	3.5	2.1	1.6	1.8
Care in Own Home by Child's sibling	1.1	1.4	1.4	2.7	**	**	1.3
QUEBEC							
Using child care	83.7	66.8	28.5	93.1	65.5	49.2	65.1
Type of care							
Care in Someone Else's home by Non-relative	28.4	20.9	4.0	21.9	**	**	19.3
Care in Someone Else's home by Relative	13.6	14.1	10.4	15.1	**	**	12.6
Care in Own Home by Non-sibling Relative	8.7	10.0	6.9	10.8	**	**	8.5
Care in Own home by Non-Relative	9.0	7.9	1.8	9.3	7.1	8.2	7.0
Care in Daycare Centre	42.2	33.1	13.7	50.6	32.3	29.5	32.8
Care in Nursery School/Preschool	3.9	5.1	1.0	2.7	**	**	3.3
Before and after school	6.3	3.5	1.8	16.9	6.7	7.9	5.0
Other child care arrangement	**	**	**	**	**	**	3.8
Care in Own Home by Child's sibling	0.9	1.4	1.5	**	**	**	1.1
OTHER							
Using child care	65.5	53.0	13.6	84.9	66.3	29.6	48.7
Type of care							
Care in Someone Else's home by Non-relative	27.7	19.9	3.3	28.0	16.7	5.7	18.2
Care in Someone Else's home by Relative	16.7	17.2	4.6	17.8	18.9	6.9	13.7
Care in Own Home by Non-sibling Relative	13.4	12.3	4.9	13.8	19.6	5.8	11.0
Care in Own home by Non-Relative	6.9	8.5	2.3	7.7	9.6	1.9	6.3
Care in Daycare Centre	14.1	9.5	2.4	32.2	20.7	14.8	10.9
Care in Nursery School/Preschool	3.5	2.3	1.0	8.3	1.3	4.2	2.7
Before and after school	1.9	1.0	0.1	5.3	**	**	1.3
Other child care arrangement	1.4	1.1	0.5	3.8	**	**	1.2
Care in Own Home by Child's sibling	1.2	1.4	1.3	3.1	**	**	1.4

Note: ** Fewer than five cases.

Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 2002/2003.

**Table 7: Percent using various child care facilities by age of children
Canada, 2002/2003**

Age 0-11 Months	Full year full time	Other employed	Not employed	Total
Using child care	46.3	44.4	20.4	36.5
Type of care				
Care in Someone Else's home by Non-relative	19.5	15.5	4.2	12.7
Care in Someone Else's home by Relative	16.1	16.9	9.8	14.1
Care in Own Home by Non-sibling Relative	9.5	10.7	7.2	9.1
Care in Own home by Non-Relative	8.1	6.3	3.5	5.8
Care in Daycare Centre	7.4	9.1	4.1	6.8
Care in Nursery School/Preschool	***	***	***	***
Aged 1 Year				
Using child care	74.8	65.8	17.3	53.7
Type of care				
Care in Someone Else's home by Non-relative	32.4	26.4	3.1	21.2
Care in Someone Else's home by Relative	16.7	17.5	5.2	13.4
Care in Own Home by Non-sibling Relative	14.4	16.6	6.7	12.8
Care in Own home by Non-Relative	8.3	7.3	1.8	5.9
Care in Daycare Centre	21.7	15.9	6.4	14.9
Care in Nursery School/Preschool	***	***	***	***
Aged 2-3 Years				
Using child care	74.6	62.5	22.7	57.7
Type of care				
Care in Someone Else's home by Non-relative	28.6	20	4.4	19.8
Care in Someone Else's home by Relative	16.7	19.3	6.1	14.8
Care in Own Home by Non-sibling Relative	12.5	14.7	5.2	11.3
Care in Own home by Non-Relative	7.9	11.9	2.8	7.8
Care in Daycare Centre	27.6	17.9	8.7	19.9
Care in Nursery School/Preschool	6.1	4.8	2.6	4.8
Aged 4-5 Years				
Using child care	76.3	53.5	15.8	53.5
Type of care				
Care in Someone Else's home by Non-relative	27.8	18.2	3.1	18.4
Care in Someone Else's home by Relative	15.1	14.3	3.6	12.0
Care in Own Home by Non-sibling Relative	12.2	9.8	3.3	9.2
Care in Own home by Non-Relative	6.6	7.3	1.5	5.6
Care in Daycare Centre	23.2	14.7	6.3	16.1
Care in Nursery School/Preschool	4.5	2.9	1.4	3.2

Note:*** Fewer than 5 cases

Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 2002/2003.

Table 8: Parental Preferences for Work, and Child Care

Panel A: Parental Preferences for Work, 1988

Among those working part-time, preferred to:	
work part-time	69.6%
not to work	11.8%
work full-time	7.4%
not stated	11.9%
Among those working full-time, preferred to:	
work part-time	43.6%
work full-time	32.0%
not to work	13.4%
not stated	11.0%

Panel B: Child Care Usage and Parental Preference for Child Care, 1988

	Actual	Preferred
Day care	12.2%	22.4%
Nursery	3.8%	5.0%
Non-relative		
child's home	9.5%	17.7%
other's home	26.7%	19.0%
Relative		
spouse	16.7%	15.0%
other	20.3%	17.3%
DA	10.8%	8.9%

Source: 1988 Child Care Survey

Table 9: Work Preference by Sex, Presence of Children, Age Group and Full-Time or Part-Time Work Status, Canada, 1995

	MALE			FEMALE		
	FEWER HOURS	MORE HOURS	SAME HOURS	FEWER HOURS	MORE HOURS	SAME HOURS
				Full-Time (15-34)		
No child	4.0	33.1	62.9	4.6	27.8	67.6
At least one child under 3	3.8	28.2	68.1	17.2	15.5	67.2
Children under 6	2.6	35.5	61.9	12.9	23.0	64.1
Children of older ages	1.2	37.4	61.4	4.6	31.2	64.2
Total	3.3	33.2	63.5	7.6	25.9	66.5
				Part-Time (15-34)		
No child	0.5	69.6	30.0	1.3	54.5	44.2
At least one child under 3	**	84.8	15.2	2.1	38.5	59.4
Children under 6	**	76.5	23.5	1.7	49.6	48.8
Children of older ages	0.7	52.0	47.3	1.0	49.2	49.7
Total	0.6	57.9	41.5	1.3	49.0	49.7
				Full-Time (35-69)		
No child	8.2	17.6	74.2	10.0	13.3	76.7
At least one child under 3	6.9	17.1	76.0	14.6	12.0	73.4
Children under 6	5.2	23.5	71.3	12.0	13.4	74.5
Children of older ages	5.8	17.6	76.7	9.7	15.1	75.2
Total	6.7	18.0	75.2	10.1	14.1	75.8
				Part-Time (35-69)		
No child	0.6	48.8	50.6	2.5	40.8	56.7
At least one child under 3	**	77.3	22.7	0.0	28.6	71.4
Children under 6	**	70.0	30.0	0.8	30.3	68.9
Children of older ages	**	72.2	27.8	0.9	45.6	53.5
Total	0.4	57.3	42.3	1.4	42.2	56.4
				Full-Time (Total)		
No child	6.2	25.0	68.8	7.6	19.6	72.8
At least one child under 3	4.9	24.3	70.9	16.6	14.7	68.7
Children under 6	4.3	27.8	67.9	12.5	18.5	69.0
Children of older ages	4.7	22.2	73.1	8.5	18.9	72.6
Total	5.4	24.1	70.5	9.1	18.8	72.1
				Part-Time (Total)		
No child	0.5	60.5	38.9	1.8	47.0	51.2
At least one child under 3	**	81.8	18.2	1.8	37.0	61.2
Children under 6	**	75.0	25.0	1.3	40.0	58.8
Children of older ages	0.6	53.7	45.7	1.0	47.4	51.6
Total	0.5	57.8	41.6	1.3	45.7	53.0

Notes:

Fewer hours: fewer hours for less pay

More hours: more hours for more pay

Same hours: same hours for same pay and missing data

Table 10: Work Preference by Sex, Presence of Children, Presence of Spouses and Full-Time or Part-Time Work Status, Employed Persons aged 15-64, Canada, 1995

	MALE			FEMALE		
	FEWER HOURS	MORE HOURS	SAME HOURS	FEWER HOURS	MORE HOURS	SAME HOURS
	Mar & Coh (Full-time)					
No child	8.1	21.5	70.4	9.1	17.0	73.9
At least one child under 3	5.0	24.1	70.9	17.4	12.5	70.1
Children under 6	4.2	27.3	68.5	13.8	16.7	69.5
Children of older ages	5.5	18.4	76.1	10.3	14.9	74.8
Total	6.1	21.3	72.6	11.1	15.6	73.4
	Mar & Coh (Part-time)					
No child	**	44.2	55.8	2.5	40.3	57.2
At least one child under 3	**	81.1	18.9	1.2	34.4	64.5
Children under 6	**	78.9	21.1	1.5	35.4	63.1
Children of older ages	**	72.5	27.5	1.1	43.2	55.8
Total	**	60.9	39.1	1.5	40.1	58.3
	Other (Full-Time)					
No child	4.5	28.3	67.3	5.9	22.8	71.3
At least one child under 3	**	31.6	68.4	4.8	47.6	47.6
Children under 6	0.0	57.1	42.9	5.4	28.4	66.2
Children of older ages	2.0	36.1	61.9	4.4	27.8	67.8
Total	3.8	30.3	65.8	5.3	25.1	69.5
	Other (Part-Time)					
No child	0.8	68.7	30.5	0.9	57.3	41.8
At least one child under 3	0.0	100.0	0.0	9.5	71.4	19.0
Children under 6	0.0	66.7	33.3	0.0	67.6	32.4
Children of older ages	0.6	52.1	47.2	0.9	51.4	47.7
Total	0.7	57.1	42.3	1.0	53.9	45.1
	Total (Full-Time)					
No child	6.2	25.0	68.8	7.6	19.6	72.8
At least one child under 3	4.9	24.3	70.9	16.6	14.7	68.7
Children under 6	4.3	27.8	67.9	12.5	18.5	69.0
Children of older ages	4.7	22.2	73.1	8.5	18.9	72.6
Total	5.4	24.1	70.5	9.1	18.8	72.1
	Total (Part-Time)					
No child	0.5	60.5	38.9	1.8	47.0	51.2
At least one child under 3	**	81.8	18.2	1.8	37.0	61.2
Children under 6	**	75.0	25.0	1.3	40.0	58.8
Children of older ages	0.6	53.7	45.7	1.0	47.4	51.6
Total	0.5	57.8	41.6	1.3	45.7	53.0

Notes:

Fewer hours: fewer hours for less pay

More hours: more hours for more pay

Same hours: same hours for same pay and missing data

Source: Work Arrangements Survey, 1995

Table 11: Views on Benefits and Services for Children

Panel A: Percent of support for various possible government initiatives

Inexpensive day care open to families with low income:	88%
Inexpensive day care open to all families:	66%
Direct financial support for low income families with child	75%
Direct financial support for every family with children, regardless of income:	30%
Extending paid parental leave to two years:	49%
Extending paid parental leave but requiring that:	
parents share the leave	39%
Introduce leaves for caring for ill relatives	82%
Pay parents who stay home to care for their children the same amount as it would cost the government to care for children in day care:	58%

Panel B: Personal preference for one child-related benefit for families with young children

More subsidies for parents in the form of family benefits, family allowance or tax deductions	44%
Longer parental leave after the child's birth	27%
More publically supported child care facilities	18%
none of the above.	12%

Sources: 2000-01 Survey of attitudes to marriage and child-bearing, London, Oxford, and Middlesex Counties, Ontario.