

Productivity Patterns at Mid-life: Family and Work

Roderic Beaujot

Department of Sociology
University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario

Tony Haddad

Applied Research Branch
Human Resources Development Canada
Ottawa, Ontario

Abstract:

The majority of Canadian adults at mid-life are married, have children, and are employed. Nonetheless, there are variations in their relative involvement in work and family. Both marriage and children reduce the likelihood of full-time paid work for women, they increase it for men. Data on time-use indicate that the average total productive work time of women and men does not differ, but its distribution into paid and unpaid components is different, especially when young children are present. Models of the relative importance of paid and unpaid work show that neo-traditional models remain predominant, a significant minority have divisions that might be described as a "double day" for women, but other arrangements include those where men do more total work, and where men and women are more equally involved in economic and domestic activities.

Résumé:

La majorité des adultes aux âges 30-54 sont mariés, ont des enfants et travaillent. Par ailleurs, il existe des variations par rapport à leurs implications dans les activités de travail et de famille. Le mariage ainsi que les enfants réduisent la probabilité de travail à plein temps pour les femmes, et ils augmentent ce travail pour les hommes. Les données sur l'utilisation du temps indiquent que les moyennes dans le total du travail productif ne sont pas très différentes pour hommes et femmes, mais sa distribution dans les catégories payé et non-payé est différente, surtout quand il y a des jeunes enfants. Les modèles selon l'importance relative du travail payé et non-payé indiquent que le type neo-traditionnel prédomine, une minorité importante ont des divisions de travail qui représentent des journées doubles pour les femmes, mais d'autres arrangements incluent ceux où c'est l'homme qui fait le plus de travail total, et où les époux sont plus également impliqués dans les activités économiques et domestiques.

Key words: work, unpaid work, family, time-use, Canada

Introduction

Earlier research finds that family contexts affect the paid work of men and women. In particular, the presence of a spouse and children have opposite effects for men and women, increasing the work status of men and reducing that of women (Beaujot, 1995: 61-70). Marriage and young children also tend to reduce the probability of work interruptions for men, while children increase women's interruptions, especially for those who are not married (Cook and Beaujot, 1996).

Research on unpaid work generally finds that the involvement of husbands in domestic work is limited, but it increases somewhat when wives are working full-time (Marshall, 1993; Le Bourdais and Sauriol, 1994). At the same time, the paid work statuses of men and women have become more alike, and the two-income family is clearly the dominant category for persons at mid-life. The demographic groups where men and women are most alike in paid work are the never married with no children, especially at younger ages (Beaujot, 1995: 61-70). Given that most persons at mid-life are married and living with children, men and women are most different in the predominant category.

More attention needs to be given to the meshing of paid and unpaid work in families, and in the lives of men and women. The domestic division of labour, or the link between gender and caring, can be seen as the sticking point in the evolution of family structures and gender equalization (Hartmann, 1981, Gannage, 1987; Kempeneers, 1992; Coltrane, 1998). Thus the relationship between paid and household work has effectively moved to the forefront of family research. While paid and unpaid work are qualitatively different, there is a consensus that they have similarities both in the key element of time and in the well-being of families. That is, earning and caring are the productive activities of daily life, essential to sustenance and nurturance.

A growing body of literature has documented the persistence of an unequal sexual division of labour in households. Many of these analyses focus on the determinants of wives' and husbands' contributions to housework and child care (e.g. Coverman, 1985; Berk, 1985; Baxter, 1992; Calasanti and Bailey, 1991; Brayfield, 1992; Haddad, 1994; 1996). While important for understanding the extent and nature of gender inequality, these studies pay less attention to the alternative strategies that husbands and wives adopt in response to the demands of their families and the time constraints of paid work. Researchers have also tended to examine the determinants of the sexual division of household labour without paying sufficient attention to the impact of the family life course (Presser, 1994). Furthermore, most of these studies are based on time estimates or proportional measures, which are less appropriate than time-diary techniques for analysing the productive time spent inside and outside the home (Pleck, 1983; 1985; Robinson, 1985). This paper examines alternative models of the division of work in accommodating the demands of employment and domestic labour. We adopt the common metric of time-use, and focus on adults at mid-life, where the majority are living in two-generation families, are parents and are employed.

Models for accommodating paid and unpaid work

The literature on the division of labour within families points to a variety of models for responding to the demands of the paid and domestic work spheres. For husband-wife families there are the breadwinner and dual-earner arrangements, but a range of other models have been used to describe family types.

Based on the instrumental and expressive aspects of marriage, Scanzoni and Scanzoni (1988) identified one historical and three contemporary types. In the historical **owner-property** marriage, the husband is legally the owner of his wife; "the two are one but the one is the husband". This structure is based more on the instrumental exchanges of earning a living and maintaining a household,

than on the expressive exchanges of empathy and companionship. The more contemporary models include the **head-complement** type, in which the wife is "the other half," expected to find meaning in life largely through her husband and family. This is the breadwinner arrangement at the instrumental level, but expressive exchanges are also important and spouses are expected to "be friends and lovers," enjoying each other's company and supporting each other. The wife has more independence in the **senior partner-junior partner** marriage, but the instrumental responsibilities remain the same; the husband contributes the larger share of family income and the wife has responsibility for the family and household. The **equal partner-equal partner** type involves spouses who are both committed to their jobs and who share equally in household and family tasks. While instrumental and expressive elements characterize all marriage types, there is less instrumental interdependence along the dimension portrayed above, and the marriages are based more on expressive exchanges. The first three types involve **complementary** roles for men and women while the fourth type is **symmetrical**.

While the **dual-earner** model has largely replaced the **breadwinner** model, there are variations. Hernandez (1993: 103) separates the two-parent farm family from the breadwinner model in his analysis of long term trends in the United States. The **farm family** represented 70 percent of families two centuries ago, but was surpassed by the breadwinner family before the turn of the century, and it now represents less than five percent of families. The father-breadwinner and mother-homemaker non-farm family represented more than 50 percent of all families during the period 1920 to 1970, and it never exceeded 57 percent of families. The rise in dual-earner non-farm families occurred after 1940, and the rise in one-parent families after 1960. While the modal category has shifted from one-earner to dual-earner, neither of these categories have ever represented more than 60 percent of families.

As Scanzoni and Scanzoni (1988) have already observed, it is useful to separate various categories of dual-earner families. Feree (1991) suggests four categories, based on the division of housework. In the **semi-housewife** category, the wife does most housework and contributes little time to earning. The **drudge wife** model involves the wife doing most of the housework, but also working full-time. In the **cash paying** case, the couple largely pay others to do the housework. Finally, there is the **two housekeeper** model, which Feree defines as the wife doing less than 60 percent, and the husband more than 40 percent of total housework.

From the point of view of earning, the most important division to make for dual-earner families is between those where both partners work **full-time** and those where one partner works **part-time**. Duffy et al. (1989) found important differences among married women with children under 16 years of age with regard to full-time workers, part-time workers, and housewives. Personal accounts of these groups of women from the Toronto area indicate that those

working **part-time** had the most "contentment with their present circumstances," and felt they could accommodate family and work with a sense of satisfaction. At the same time, many did not see part-time work as a continuing circumstance, and were making changes at home in order to be able to work full-time. The women working **full-time** felt that it was a tremendous effort, and expressed astonishment at having been able to perform both roles. While they clearly saw benefits to two incomes, and had a sense of efficacy, they also had primary responsibility for the domestic work. The marriages remained gender-segregated in the sense that men worked longer and earned higher incomes, and women experienced more interference between family and work. While **housewives** were not found to be different from working wives in terms of gender role ideologies, they tended to experience life as "something happening to them," and they had been vague about their career plans when they were aged eighteen. They experienced a low status and lack of economic independence, but also felt happy to "be there for the children." Duffy et al. (1989) concluded that women had "few choices," given the mixture of benefits and stresses associated with these three types.

When dual-earners are in professional or managerial occupations, we can speak of **dual-career couples**. Here again there are different models. Gilbert (1993) suggests three equally important categories of heterosexual dual-career couples, based on various research in the United States. In the **traditional/conventional** case, the husband is more professionally ambitious, with a more important career, and only "helps out" with housework and child care. In the **participant/modern** case, there is less extensive gender-based role specialization, parenting is shared, the father is "active," and the wife does most of the other housework. While the above two models correspond to the senior partner-junior partner model from Scanzoni and Scanzoni (1988), the third corresponds to their fourth model. In the **role-sharing/egalitarian** case, both are actively involved in career pursuits as well as in housework and family life. Gilbert suggests three requisites for egalitarian career families. First, there needs to be economic equality between the sexes, both in the society and in specific families. Second, there needs to be compatibility of occupational and family systems, contrary to a world where careers often involve the assumption that occupants are "family-free." And finally, the partners themselves need to seek role sharing and mutuality, based on an "interdependency free of the constraints of gender".

In *New Families, No Families?*, Goldscheider and Waite (1991) propose that **old families** based on complementary roles are not in the interest of women, who will opt for **no families** unless they can form **new families** which are more egalitarian in terms of marital relationships and sharing in family and work responsibilities. However, many models are likely to continue to co-exist. Furstenberg (1995), for instance, observes that the **symmetrical** family, where both contribute more or less equally to economic and domestic activities, is "more prevalent as an ideal type than as an actual arrangement." In spite of the

fact that the dual-earner model has become the norm, he suggests that most families could be described as **neo-traditional** because the paid and unpaid work remains divided along traditional lines.

Data and methods

Data are taken from the 1992 General Social Survey by Statistics Canada on time use. The entire sample consists of 9,815 persons aged 15 and over, or 77 percent of those targeted by this telephone survey. In this study the sample is reduced to the 4,163 persons aged 30-54.

Time diaries were obtained for one twenty-four hour day preceding the interview. The diary considered respondents' primary activities in 15 minute intervals. The interviews were conducted over all 12 months of 1992 and over all days of the week. The activities of respondents were coded into 167 categories. Here they are collapsed into two categories of productive work (paid and unpaid) and two categories of down time (leisure and personal care). Paid work includes the time spent going to and from work and on education. Unpaid work is the time spent on domestic work, child care, and on volunteer and civic activities.

It must be noted that these data present both advantages and limitations. The advantage is a careful accounting of the respondent's main activity, but this also means that secondary activities and multi-tasking cannot be measured. While there is a common denominator of time, no weighting is used to differentiate the intensity of a person's involvement. For instance, the time spent driving to work is counted equally with that spent at work.

One day is not necessarily representative of a given person's time-use (Robinson, 1985), therefore, aggregated results for given population groups are more useful than multivariate analyses based on the characteristics of individuals. Because of the random nature of the data collection over the days of the year, aggregated results are more representative of the activities in given populations.

Time-use in paid work, unpaid work and total productive activity

Table 1 presents the overall breakdown of time use by marital status and parental status. The smallest average gap between men and women in time spent on total work occurs for those who are unmarried with no children, while the largest is found among the unmarried with children. Marriage, which here includes cohabitation, increases unpaid work for both women and men and it

increases paid work for men. Consequently, marriage influences the distribution of time between paid and unpaid work as well as the time expended on total productive work by each sex.

Children further intensify this gender division and increase the number of hours men and women spend on total work. Among married parents aged 30 to 54, both men and women do more unpaid work while women do less paid work, compared to those married without children. While men spend nearly twice as many hours in paid work as women and women spend about twice as many hours in unpaid work as men, the average difference between the sexes for these married parents is only 0.2 hours per day in total work.

The largest gender difference in total productive time use occurs for those with children but no partner. Unmarried female parents do about one hour less paid work and about two hours more unpaid work relative to their male counterparts. Women in this category do 1.1 hours more total work than men. Compared to the unmarried with no children, both marriage and children then increase the total productive activity of men and women aged 30 to 54. It is for married parents that the gender gap is strongest between paid and unpaid productive activities.

Time use by marital, parental and employment status

Table 2 differentiates productive activities by various characteristics of households and individuals. Two categories of living arrangements are shown, those who are living in husband-wife families and those who are not in such families. Parental status is based on the presence and ages of children. Three categories of employment status are shown for husband-wife families: both employed full-time, both employed but at least one is not full-time, and only one employed. For those who are not in husband-wife families, full-time workers are distinguished from those who are either part-time workers or not employed.

It is interesting to start with the observation that the average total productive work time is essentially identical for this population of persons at mid-life. For both women and men the figures on total productive time are highest where either both spouses or a lone parent are working full-time. Total time is also higher when there are children under 19, especially if the children are under six years of age. Consequently, the most total work, an average of 10.6 hours per day, is done by women in families where both parents are working full-time and have children under six years of age. The total productive time is similarly high for men in this category, amounting to 10.2 hours per day.

Table 1. Time use of population aged 30-54 by sex, marital and parental status for Canada, 1992

Time Use	Unmarried, no children		Married, no children		Married Parents		Unmarried Parents		Total	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total productive activity	7.8	7.8	8.6	8.4	9.4	9.6	7.9	9	8.8	8.9
Paid work and education	5.8	4.5	6.2	4	6.1	3.3	4.6	3.5	6	3.7
Unpaid work	2	3.3	2.3	4.4	3.3	6.3	3.4	5.5	2.8	5.2
Personal care	9.8	10.7	10	10.4	9.8	10.3	10.1	10.2	9.9	10.4
Leisure/free time	6.4	5.6	5.4	5.3	4.7	4.1	6	4.8	5.3	4.7
Total	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24

Notes: Married includes cohabitating. Children refer to children under 19 living at home.

Source: Public use sample from the Statistics Canada 1992 General Social Survey.

Table 2. Time Use in Paid and Unpaid Work by Sex, Family Status, Employment Status and Presence of Children, Persons Aged 30-54, Canada, 1992

	Men			Women		
	Paid	Unpaid	Total	Paid	Unpaid	Total
hours per day						
H-W Families						
Both FT	6.5	2.9	9.4	6.0	4.1	10.1
Child 0-5	6.4	3.7	10.2	4.9	5.8	10.6
Child 6-18	6.4	2.9	9.3	5.5	4.4	9.9
No Child	6.8	2.3	9.2	7.3	2.9	10.2
Two Employed	6.6	2.8	9.4	3.0	6.1	9.1
Child 0-5	6.3	3.5	9.8	1.9	7.9	9.8
Child 6-18	6.5	2.8	9.3	3.5	5.9	9.4
No Child	7.1	2.1	9.2	3.0	5.1	8.1
One Employed	6.1	3.0	9.0	1.2	6.8	8.0
Child 0-5	6.3	3.7	9.9	0.5	8.9	9.4
Child 6-18	5.8	3.0	8.7	1.4	6.4	7.8
No Child	6.2	2.2	8.4	1.4	5.8	7.1
Not in H-W Families						
Employed FT	7.0	1.7	8.7	5.7	3.2	8.9
Child 0-5	--	--	--	5.2	4.7	9.9
Child 6-18	6.0	3.2	9.2	5.3	3.9	9.2
No Child	7.1	1.6	8.7	5.9	2.9	8.7
Employed PT or Not Employed	2.3	2.9	5.2	1.6	5.2	6.7
Child 0-5	--	--	--	0.5	7.6	8.2
Child 6-18	0.0	3.7	3.7	1.5	6.3	7.8
No Child	2.5	2.8	5.2	1.8	4.0	5.8
Total	6.1	2.8	8.9	3.7	5.2	8.9

Note: - fewer than 5 cases.

Total includes cases of husband-wife families where neither are employed, and cases of marital status not stated. The total sample is 4163 cases.

"Two employed": excludes cases where both are working full-time.

"Child 6-18": excludes cases where there is "at least one" child 0-5.

"No child": no children under 19.

Source: Public use sample from the Statistics Canada 1992 General Social Survey.

There is most similarity in total work between husbands and wives where at least one is working part-time. When both are working full-time, women have an average of 0.7 more hours per day; when only one is employed men have 1.0 more hour per day. In the intermediate category where both are employed but not both full-time, men have an average of 0.3 more hours total work time per day. The observation is even more pronounced when there are children aged 0-5, where the intermediate category (both employed but not both full-time) involves the same figure of 9.8 hours for men and women.

While work status has been controlled here, it is nonetheless useful to observe that when both are working full-time men's average paid work amounts to 6.5 hours, while women's amounts to 6.0 hours. Conversely, men's unpaid work amounts to 2.9 hours while the average is 4.1 hours for women. These differences are even larger when there are children aged 0-5 present.

The amount of total and unpaid work is also significantly affected by the presence and ages of children for persons who are not in husband-wife families. For persons working full-time, lone-mothers do slightly less total work than mothers in husband-wife families with both working full-time (Table 3). Total hours are also considerably different between male and female lone parents, with men doing less total work (Statistics Canada, 1992: 33). Although the data on male lone parents are based on small numbers, men and women are similar where they are working full time, while men do less work when they are either working part-time or not employed.

In the small category of persons working full-time, but who are neither in husband-wife families nor have children under 19, there is the same average of 8.7 hours per day for men and women. Even here there are differences, with men doing more paid work and women doing more unpaid work.

The comparison of categories with and without children suggests that children have two effects; they increase the unpaid work of both women and men, and they bring more gender differentiation to the distribution between paid and unpaid work. It is when there are young children that the average gendered division of work into its two components is most unequal (see also Ghalam, 1993). As children get older, women do more paid and less unpaid work, bringing less gender differences (Marshall, 1994). Consequently, both marital status and parental status affect work patterns, but the presence of young children has more impact in terms of the gender gap in unpaid work, producing more total work for women.

Models based on doing more, less or the same amount of work

Clearly, the elaboration of family models needs to go "beyond separate spheres" with their opposite and exclusive sex roles (Feree, 1990). Men and women make

a variety of accommodations that achieve earning and caring objectives while also linking individuals and families to other social institutions.

The data presented to this point have been averages for women and men, based on given life conditions associated with marital, parental and work statuses. Available Canadian data do not permit extensive elaboration of models at the family level. Nonetheless, we will illustrate certain alternatives based on the 1992 time-use survey. This is based on the simple idea that a given spouse could do "more," "less" or "about the same" paid or unpaid work as the other spouse. The category of "about the same" is measured as being within four hours difference in a week. Four hours is about 15 percent of either paid or unpaid work.

The time use measures adopted here are therefore different from those in the earlier tables. The earlier tables were based on the timing of the respondent's various activities over a 24 hour day. Table 3 is based on broad questions that asked the respondent to estimate the total weekly time spent in paid work, plus the time spent in domestic work, household maintenance and child care. While the daily time use involved only the main activity at any one time, this weekly measure may have included given tasks as secondary activities. For instance, child care and domestic work may overlap. Frederick (1995: 30) estimates that three-quarters of child care is done as a secondary activity. Comparing the average weekly and daily time in unpaid work shows that the weekly averages are more than seven times the daily averages. The advantage of the weekly data is that respondents made estimates for both themselves and their partner. The top and bottom panels of the table comprise male and female respondents respectively. These results also confirm other studies that indicate a tendency to underestimate the partner's time, especially in unpaid work.

The main observation from this table is that a variety of models co-exist. That is, there are some respondents in each of the categories of the table. While over half of respondents fall in the one category where the man does more paid work and the woman more unpaid work, there are three percent who are opposite to traditional with the woman doing more paid work and less domestic work (taking an average of the distributions for men and women). In both distributions, the second largest category, amounting to 19.7 percent of the women's responses and 12.4 percent of the men's responses, is where they do the same amount of paid work but the husband does less domestic work. The concept of a double day or second shift is most relevant to this category, since the amount of time in paid work is very similar but the women do an average of two to three times as much unpaid work.

Taking the average of the responses of men and women, there are 21 percent of couples where the wife does more domestic work but either the same amount or more paid work. Conversely, seven percent of husbands are doing double days where he does more domestic work but either the same amount or more paid

Table 3. Models of husband-wife families by relative participation in paid and unpaid work, for respondents aged 30-54 for Canada, 1992

	Compared to Respondent, Spouse does								
	More Paid			Same Paid			Less Paid		
	MD	SD	LD	MD	SD	LD	MD	SD	LD
Men Respondents									
Distribution	4.0	1.9	2.8	12.4	4.6	4.1	55.8	8.7	5.5
Household Income (\$1000's)	44.7	47.6	50.6	51.4	62.7	51.7	53.1	60.6	57.7
Children under 12	0.8	0.4	1.1	0.8	0.4	1.1	1.1	0.5	1.0
Two or more under 12	23.4	10.9	43.8	28.9	15.6	31.1	36.2	16.5	33.0
Three or more under 12	3.5	3.5	5.9	7.8	2.1	11.2	8.7	1.7	4.7
Child under 6	22.9	15.1	26.2	23.1	3.5	26.2	29.4	15.8	29.1
No child under 19	26.1	71.0	35.5	33.6	54.7	19.5	25.8	58.7	24.0
Hours per week									
Paid self	20.0	17.4	9.1	32.1	37.2	30.1	48.8	51.6	46.3
Paid spouse	40.4	40.8	41.0	31.7	37.0	29.8	14.1	27.1	27.5
Domestic self	23.7	18.5	57.3	22.4	18.3	49.1	20.7	21.8	41.9
Domestic spouse	50.5	18.2	32.8	49.7	18.6	31.9	63.2	21.6	26.6
Total household	134.6	94.9	140.2	135.9	111.1	130.9	146.8	121.1	142.3
Women Respondents									
Distribution	2.1	4.4	54.0	2.0	5.3	19.7	3.8	2.6	6.0
Household Income (\$1000)	52.2	63.3	50.2	54.9	57.6	45.6	46.6	55.2	52.3
Children under 12	1.0	0.2	1.1	0.7	0.3	0.8	0.6	0.2	0.9
Two or more under 12	29.4	8.3	38.8	21.3	7.8	23.1	16.2	0.9	29.3
Three or more under 12	6.6	3.8	11.0	0.0	1.8	4.5	0.5	0.0	9.8
Child under 6	14.7	5.2	25.8	12.2	4.4	16.8	4.5	0.0	20.5
No child under 19	37.8	69.2	24.3	39.1	67.7	35.4	49.6	62.7	28.1
Hours per week									
Paid self	22.7	30.0	14.3	31.1	31.2	27.1	42.4	43.3	40.7
Paid spouse	42.4	46.3	48.0	31.8	31.2	27.6	11.8	19.7	20.5
Domestic self	25.3	12.4	68.0	23.6	18.3	48.4	24.7	13.5	52.7
Domestic spouse	39.7	11.4	14.2	35.1	16.8	16.2	40.8	12.5	18.6
Total household	130.1	100.1	154.5	111.6	97.5	119.3	119.7	89.0	132.5

Note: MD - more domestic, SD - same domestic, LD - less domestic.

Cases where spouse is 65 or over are excluded.

Total sample is 2346.

Source: Public use sample from the Statistics Canada 1992 General Social Survey.

work. That leaves 14 percent where they do the same amount of domestic work, including the five percent who also do the same amount of paid work.

The table shows the average hours of paid and unpaid work in each of the nine categories. For instance, in the category of same paid and same domestic, where "same" was defined as within four hours, the average paid work is 31 hours for both self and spouse according to the women's responses and 37 hours according to the men's responses. Similarly, the unpaid work in this five percent of the sample is 18.3 for self and 18.6 for spouse (according to the men's responses) and 18.3 and 16.8 for self and spouse (according to the women's responses). In contrast, the traditional category involves women doing 14.2 hours of paid work and 65.6 hours of domestic work, while men are doing 48.4 hours of paid and 17.5 hours of domestic work (taking the average of men's and women's responses). This is also the category where the total work is highest, at 150 hours per week, or an average of 10.8 hours per person per day. In contrast, in the two percent of the sample where the wife is doing more paid and the same domestic work, the total work is least, an average of 92 hours per week or 6.6 hours per day. The next lowest total work is for "same paid, same domestic", involving some five percent of the sample. It is also noteworthy that in the category opposite to traditional, where the woman does more paid and the man more domestic, some three percent of the sample, the man does very little paid work, an average of 9.1 hours per week (men's responses).

The average household incomes are not extensively different for the different categories of couples. Average income is highest where women do less paid work and the spouses do the same amount of domestic work, or where they are the same in both categories. Incomes are lowest when women do more paid and more domestic work (men's responses) or men do less paid and more domestic (women's responses). The models are especially differentiated by the ages and numbers of children. Measured in terms of two or more children under 12 or no children under 19, the category of "same domestic" involves the fewest children. In contrast, the traditional category, where women also do the most total work, has the most children, at least for women's responses. This confirms that equal divisions of work are easier to achieve if there are few children and that children push families into more traditional divisions of work. Equal divisions of domestic work are also more common when there is less total work.

Discussion

For adults at mid-life, there are important elements of commonality of family experience in terms of being in relationships, parenting and working. Nonetheless, there are also important differences in terms of involvement in paid and unpaid work. Both marriage and children reduce the likelihood of women working full-time, while they increase this likelihood for men. The total work time of women and men is especially affected by the presence of young

children, and it is in those families that the gender gap in the division of work is strongest.

There are clearly several areas of **stress** between family and work, especially when there are young children. Conway (1997) observes these difficulties in *The Family in Crisis*. In particular, there are various contradictions between the move toward gender equality and the assumptions of the traditional patriarchal family based on complementary roles for husbands and wives. Consequently, children are subject to the insecurity of family breakdown and absent fathers, to say nothing of their vulnerability to abuse and poverty. Women in particular are also caught in various contradictions since they most often bear the brunt of the work-family interphase. Many women decide to move out of a marriage in order to resolve some of the conflict, but this brings the additional problems of single parenthood. Men are also suffering from the contradictions between the traditional and the egalitarian assumptions. In some ways, they are also subject to a double burden in terms of work and family life, expected to devote themselves to their jobs but also to do more at home. In addition, many men are separated from their children and miss these basic human interactions.

Besides these conflicts, family and work models also involve **interdependence**. Family members depend on each other's paid and unpaid work. Clearly, their economic well-being depends on paid work, while families also provide the nurturance that is essential to both children and adults.

Attention to the issues of paid and unpaid work also enhances the understanding of how families construct **gender** through the division of labour and the control of the products of labour. If gender is a hierarchical structure of opportunity and oppression, "families are one of the institutional settings in which these structures become lived experience" (Feree, 1990: 870). Although it is a shared experience of most women, housework in particular has lacked public and academic recognition (Wilson, 1991). Women have especially felt the strains associated with the meshing of family and work. Consequently, the extent to which men make or do not make adjustments for women's paid work is a crucial matter for gender equality and for family well-being. Spain and Bianchi (1996: 171) further observe that "as long as men have fewer family responsibilities and women have many more, the potential exists for women to choose or accept lower occupational status and earnings, which in turn affects their bargaining position within the marriage." It is precisely in jobs that offer more flexibility in terms of departure, re-entry and the potential to work part-time that workers have the least status and autonomy.

Berk (1985) suggests in the conclusion of *The Gender Factory* that the impetus for change in gender relations is not likely to come from within the "work-gender production process." In effect, she proposes that a reorganization of household tasks is more likely to find its origins in forces outside of the household. In looking at the ten percent of "outlier" husbands who do as much in

the home as the average woman, she notices especially the importance of small family size and wives working full-time. Consequently, the attempts to achieve equal opportunities in the broader society would be important to change within families.

Hochschild (1995) observes that there are contradictory trends for men. They are more involved with child care because mothers are working, but men have also become more likely to be living apart from their children. Nonetheless, she is optimistic based on factors that bring men to invest more in their children, and on the one-fifth of cases in *The Second Shift* where "new men" were fully sharing in the care of children and the home (Hochschild, 1989). Van Dongen (1995) finds that men want to be more involved with child care. She even suggests that the fathers who lose touch with their children after divorce may be those who were once particularly attached to their children and they find no other way of coping once they are separated.

Returning to questions of **family models**, Goldscheider and Waite (1991) suggest that "old families" pose problems of women's dependence on men's employment, an insecurity to women and a heavy burden for men. Nonetheless, we find that 55 percent of couples at mid-life follow traditional or neo-traditional patterns where the husband does more paid work and the wife more unpaid work. In addition, the average total work of men and women is most equal when both are working but only one is working full-time.

Models based on spouses doing more, less or the same amount of paid and unpaid work in effect suggest that a variety of situations co-exist. While about half of cases involve men doing more paid work and women more unpaid work, the second largest category (about 16 percent of couples at mid-life) involves the same amount of paid work but the wife doing two to three times as much unpaid work. At the same time, other patterns include those where men do more total work, as well as symmetrical arrangements of more equal involvement in economic and domestic activities.

Goldscheider and Waite (1991) propose that there will be either "new families" or "no families." New families involve symmetrical and companionate arrangements, and we have seen that some 14 percent of couples at mid-life share domestic work about equally, including some five percent who share each of paid and unpaid work about equally. While the alternative of "no families" has become more common, it mostly applies to older persons who are widowed and to younger persons who have not yet formed families (Gee, 1995; Ravanera, 1995). This alternative of "no families" presents problems, since adults would not be able to profit from the expressive and instrumental benefits of relationships, to say nothing of lack of population replacement.

For those who are not in relationships, women are much more likely than men to be living with children. Models in these cases should pay attention to the

involvement of separated parents in the earning and caring activities needed to support the children. Single parent families would vary by the employment status of the parent, but also by the economic and child care involvement of the absent parent.

It is also important to note that new families will not necessarily reduce the conflicts between family and work, nor will they make more stable relationships. While new families may involve new forms of cohesion, they also will lack the solidarity associated with instrumental interdependence. While work can be more family friendly, there will always be potential for conflict between family and work, if only because time does not permit people to be at two places at once. That is why, besides "new families" and "no families," other models of families will surely continue, particularly the single parent alternative, and neo-traditional forms where gender roles remain complementary. There are also other "alternatives" that include temporary partnerships and gay and lesbian unions.

The empirical observations suggest that there has been an equalization of the family-work day experienced by husbands and wives over the past three decades. Unlike the findings of earlier time use studies (Walker and Woods, 1976; Robinson, 1977; Geerken and Gove, 1983), married women who are employed are no longer spending more average hours per day than their male counterparts in the combined activities of domestic and job related work. On the other hand, the examination of the models that couples employ to accommodate work and family reveals that various models co-exist and there is a continuation of a sex-specific division of labour within the majority of Canadian households. In particular, the evidence shows that women generally remain responsible for unpaid work and that the meshing of family life and paid work affect women more than men. For example, Frederick's (1993) analysis of the 1992 General Social Survey found that 28 percent of employed wives felt "time crunched," in contrast to 16 percent of employed husbands.

The consequences of this imbalance between paid and unpaid work have serious implications for the quality of life and the health of women, for their productivity in the context of employment, and the stability and/or extent of tension in families (Haddad, 1996; Pupo, 1997). The unequal division of household labour, especially within dual-earner couples, has been a major source of stress and a factor underlying dissatisfaction with such an arrangement (Marshall, 1993). However, the various strategies that couples follow to accommodate earning and caring activities also have the potential to stimulate change in gender dynamics (Haddad, 1996).

While there is change within individual couples, structural changes in society are also needed. In particular, programmes and initiatives aimed at supporting families and making workplaces and communities more family and child friendly must be developed (Duffy and Pupo, 1996:1-21). The most important

area requiring intervention is that of employment, where there is an urgent need to study, develop, and expand "family-friendly" policies and programs, with the aim of reducing the intense time demands, the scheduling rigidity, and the gap between the spheres of paid and unpaid work. Positive, work-based responses to family and work conflict would include providing employees of both sexes greater access to flex-hours, compressed work weeks, job-sharing and work-at-home arrangements. These flexible work arrangements would facilitate parents' and caregivers' navigation between employment and family responsibilities. Programs such as extended and parental leave are also required to assist in the employment and family responsibilities of persons caring for infants as well as ill/disabled family members. The transformation of communities and workplaces into more family and child friendly environments, and families into more egalitarian and fulfilling sites for women as well as for men, would help erode both the structural and motivational barriers to sexual inequality, inside and outside of families.

Acknowledgements:

This project was funded by Social Science and Humanities Research Council Grant No. 410-92-0130. The authors wish to acknowledge the helpful comments received from one of the reviewers, on both substance and form. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors. While the data examined are from the 1992 General Social Survey (time-use) collected by Statistics Canada, any shortcomings in the analysis are the authors alone.

References:

- Baxter, J. 1992. "Power Attitudes and Time: The Domestic Division of Labour," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* XXIII: 165-182.
- Beaujot, R. 1995. "Family Patterns at Mid-life: Marriage, Parenting and Work," in R. Beaujot, E.M. Gee, F. Rajulton and Z. Ravanera, *Family over the Life Course*. Catalogue 91-543. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
- Berk, S.F. 1985. *The Gender Factory: The Apportionment of Work in American Households*. New York: Plenum.
- Brayfield, A.A. 1992. "Employment Resources and Housework in Canada," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 54: 19-30.
- Calasanti, T.M. and C.A. Bailey. 1991. Gender inequality and the division of household labor in the United States and Sweden: A socialist-feminist approach. *Social Problems* 38:34-53.

- Coltrane, S. 1998. *Gender and Families*. Thousand Oaks, Cal.: Pine Forge Press.
- Conway, J.F. 1997. *The Canadian Family in Crisis*. Toronto: Lorimer.
- Cook, C.D. and R. Beaujot 1996. "Labour Force Interruptions: The Influence of Marital Status and Presence of Young Children," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 21: 25-41.
- Coverman, S. 1985. "Explaining Husbands' Participation in Domestic Labor," *The Sociological Quarterly* 26: 81-97.
- Duffy, A., N. Mandell and N. Pupo. 1989. *Few Choices: Women, Work and Family*. Toronto: Garamond.
- Duffy, A. and N. Pupo. 1996. "Family Friendly Organizations and Beyond: Proposals for Policy Direction with Women in Mind," in *National Forum on Family Security*, ed., Family Security in Insecure Times. Ottawa: Canadian Council for Social Development.
- Feree, M.M. 1991. "The Gender Division in Two-earner Marriages," *Journal of Family Issues* 12: 158-180.
- Feree, M.M. 1990. "Beyond Separate Spheres: Feminism and Family Research," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 52: 866-884.
- Frederick, J. 1995. *As Time Goes By*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada cat. no. 89-544.
- Frederick, J. 1993. "Tempus Fugit: Are You Time Crunched?" *Canadian Social Trends* 31: 6-9.
- Furstenberg, F.F. 1995. "Family Change and the Welfare of Children: What do We Know and What can We Do about It," in K. Mason and Jensen, A.M., eds., *Gender and Family Change in Industrialized Countries*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Gannage, C. 1987. *Double Day Double Bind*. Toronto: The Women's Press.
- Gee, E. 1995. "Families in Later Life," in R. Beaujot, E. Gee, F. Rajulton and Z. Ravanera, eds., *Family over the Life Course*. Catalogue 91-543. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
- Geerken, M. and W.R. Gove. 1983. *At Home and at Work: The Family's Allocation of Labor*. Beverly Hills, Cal.: Sage.
- Ghalam, N.Z. 1993. *Women in the Workplace*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada cat. no. 71-534.

- Gilbert, L.A. 1993. *Two Careers/One Family*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Goldscheider, F. and L. Waite. 1991. *New Families, No Families?: The Transformation of the American Home*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Haddad, T. 1996. The Sexual Division of Household Labour: Pragmatic Strategies or Patriarchal Dynamics?: An Analysis of Two Case Studies. *Ph. D. Dissertation*. Toronto: York University.
- Haddad, T. 1994. "Men's Contribution to Family Work: A Re-examination of Time Availability," *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 24: 87-111.
- Hartmann, H. 1981. "The Family as the Locus of Gender, Class and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework," *Signs* 6: 366-394.
- Hernandez, D. 1993. *America's Children*. New York: Russell Sage.
- Hochschild, A.R. 1995. "Understanding the Future of Fatherhood," in M. van Dongen et al., eds., *Changing Fatherhood*. Amsterdam: Thesis Publishers.
- Hochschild, A.R. 1989. *The Second Shift*. New York: Viking.
- Kempeneers, M. 1992. *Le Travail au Féminin*. Montreal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal.
- Le Bourdais, C. and A. Sauriol 1994. "Transformations et Partage des Tâches Domestiques," in R. Descarries and C. Corbeil, eds., *Réconciliation famille-travail: les enjeux de recherche*. Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec.
- Marshall, K. 1994. "Balancing Work and Family Responsibilities," *Perspectives on Labour and Income* 6: 6-30.
- Marshall, K. 1993. "Dual Earners: Who's Responsible for Housework?" *Canadian Social Trends* 31: 11-14.
- Pleck, J.H. 1985. *Working Wives/Working Husbands*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Pleck, J.H. 1983. "Husbands' Paid Work and Family Roles," in H.Z. Lopata and J. Pleck, eds., *Research in the Interweave of Social Roles*. Greenwich: The JAI Press Inc.

- Presser, H. 1994. "Employment Schedules among Dual-earner Spouses and the Division of Household Labor by Gender," *American Sociological Review* 59: 348-64.
- Pupo, N. 1997. "Always Working, Never Done: The Expansion of the Double Day," in A. Duffy, D. Glenday, D. and N. Pupo, eds., *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs, No Jobs: The Transformation of Work in the 21st Century*. Toronto: Harcourt, Brace.
- Ravanera, Z. 1995. "A Portrait of the Family Life of Young Adults," in R. Beaujot, E. Gee, F. Rajulton and Z. Ravanera, eds., *Family over the Life Course*. Catalogue 91-543. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
- Robinson, J. P. 1985. "Testing the Validity and Reliability of Diaries versus Alternative Time Use Measures," in J. Juster and F. Stafford, eds., *Time, Goods and Well-being*. University of Michigan: Institute of Social Research.
- Robinson, J.P. 1977. *How Americans Use Time: A Socio-Psychological Analysis*. New York: Praeger.
- Scanzoni, L. and J. Scanzoni. 1988. *Men, Women and Change: A Sociology of Marriage and Family*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Spain, D. and S. Bianchi. 1996. *Balancing Act: Motherhood, Marriage and Employment among American Women*. New York: Sage Foundation.
- Statistics Canada, 1992. *Lone-Parent Families in Canada*. Catalogue 89-522. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
- van Dongen, Mirjam, 1995. "Men's Aspirations Concerning Child Care: The Extent to which They are Realized," in M. van Dongen et al., eds., *Changing Fatherhood*. Amsterdam: Thesis Publishers.
- Walker, L. and M. Woods. 1976. *Time Use: A Measure of Household Production of Family Goods and Services*. Washington: American Home Economics Association.
- Wilson, S.J., 1991. *Women, Families, and Work*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill.
- Received May, 1998; Revised May, 1999*