Lone Mothers
An International Bibliography

Compiled by
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August 2004
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INTRODUCTION

This bibliography aims to demonstrate the scope of research that has been conducted internationally about lone mothers. It was produced primarily to serve as a reference document for the national research team working on the CIHR-funded project entitled “Rethinking Health Inequities: Social and Economic Inclusion and the Case of ‘Lone Mothers’”. Citations are organized geographically and by subject. Abstracts and web addresses (URLs) for citations, when available, have been included.

The Atlantic Centre of Excellence (ACEWH) is playing a leading role in the “Rethinking Health Inequities” project. In the bibliography, citations from Atlantic Canada have been organized as a separate section. The others sections include: Canada (generally); The United States of America; and International. Sub-sections emerged from both the content of the lone mothers literature, such as “children and youth” and “welfare and social policies”, and in consideration of the factors, such as “income” and “health”, that are understood to contribute to the social and economic inclusion (or exclusion) of this group.

Lone mothers face multiple barriers to full social and economic inclusion. They often experience social stigmatization; isolation; and high rates of poverty, social assistance and unemployment. In the Atlantic, “have-not” provinces, there are fewer resources and services available to help lone mothers manage. The “Rethinking Health Inequities” research team is interested in investigating who the mothers in this region are; what are the gaps in research and in our consequent understanding of lone mothers’ lives; what public and private services are available to lone mothers; how lone mothers have developed their own coping strategies; and how policy change could address and improve the health of lone mothers.

The content of the bibliography addresses these queries. There is literature that speaks to the changing terminology (the use of “lone” in lieu of “single” or “unwed”, for instance); that exposes the glaring, statistical differences in male and female single parents’ economic, social, and medical circumstances; and that investigates the role and formation of social networks or the effects of support programs.

It is my hope that this bibliography will be helpful to the Rethinking Health Inequities research team and anyone conducting research or formulating policy affecting lone mothers. Please direct any comments or corrections to mpaynter@dal.ca.

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August 2004
In 1997 the AHPRC co-hosted (with McMaster Research Centre for the Promotion of Women's Health) the *Fifth National Health Promotion Research Conference on "Gender and Health: From Research to Policy"* in Halifax prior to the CPHA annual conference. Delegates (approximately 200) came from every Canadian province as well as from the United States. Guest speakers at the conference included Abby Hoffman (Women's Bureau, Health Canada) and Anne Rochon-Ford (National Network on Environments and Women's Health, York University).


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


Assessment of the value of unpaid household work, including trends over time, gender comparisons, inter-provincial comparisons, and alternative measurement methodologies. Includes summary data for Canada and all provinces.


Statistical and demographic analysis of women's health in the Atlantic provinces of Canada, using population health and determinants of health framework.

No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.

Statistical and socio-economic analysis of income distribution trends regionally and over time, including inter-provincial and gender comparisons


No abstract available.

Thesis is based on participatory action research with lone parent mother clients of the author's agency Support to Single Parents in Moncton.


Single mothers are discussed on page 39.

Lavishly illustrated and written for a broad audience, *Framing Our Past* offers insights into the lives of individual Canadian women, the obscure as well as the better-known, who pioneered new activities or expanded the boundaries of women's traditional roles. On topics ranging from everyday life to education, politics, health, and economics, we see how women in Canada have contributed to and been influenced by the transformation of societies around the world.

With introductory essays by historians, *Framing Our Past* emphasizes the lived experiences of women: their participation in many areas of social life, such as social rituals with other women; organized sporting clubs; philanthropic, spiritual and aesthetic activities; study and reading groups. The authors then focus on women's roles as nurturers and keepers of the hearth, their experiences with family management, child care, and health concerns. They consider women's varied contributions within formal and informal educational systems as well as their instrumental political role in consumer activism, social work, peace movements, and royal commissions.

Canadian women's shaping of health care and science through nursing, physiotherapy and research are discussed, as is women's work, from domestic labour to dressmaking to broadcasting to banking.

Using diary accounts, oral history, letters, organizational records, paintings, quilts, dressmaking patterns, milliners' records, posters, *Framing our Past* offers a unique opportunity to share what is rarely if ever seen, offering insights into the preservation and interpretation of historical sources.


The social assistance programs in Canada established under the Canada Assistance Plan of 1966 were aimed at providing financial assistance via provincial transfers to all individuals in need. Recently, two factors have led some provincial policy makers to advocate changes to their programs. First, significant restraints were placed on federal welfare transfers to non-equalization-receiving provinces in 1990. Second, in most provinces caseloads increased dramatically over the 1980s and 1990s.

An understanding of the dynamics of welfare participation and the effects of the programs are essential elements of any discussion on reforming the system. The current study focuses on welfare dynamics in Newfoundland, using data from the 100% Social Assistance Recipients file between January 1986 and June 1998.

The findings indicate that the majority of starting spells last less than one year, though a certain proportion last beyond six years. Exit rates tend to decrease rapidly at the start of the spells and
remain relatively constant thereafter. Overall, single men leave welfare more rapidly than single women. The more educated exit a little sooner than the less educated, and re-entry occurs faster for the less-educated. Business cycles significantly influence exit: during strong economic growth, the exit rate was high, and during recession the rate was almost halved. Individuals living in Labrador have high exit rates. There is also a drastic increase in the exit rates at approximately six years. Returns to welfare generally occur shortly after exit, and at a rate that diminishes with time. Comparisons with welfare studies on British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec conclude that benefits and business cycle conditions have as important an effect on exit rates as in Newfoundland.


To determine the association of socio-economic (SES) factors with risk behaviours such as substance use, having early intercourse and suicide attempts in the past year. 2198 students (48% males; 54% females) ranging in age from 14 to 20 years were surveyed. Smoking was the behaviour most often associated with lower SES in both genders. Mother’s not being employed was protective against all substance use variables except driving after drinking. Living both with lone mother and in any family arrangement other than with both parents was associated with smoking, using marijuana, and early sex. Higher risk score was associated with living with a lone mother or other family arrangement. Lower risk score was associated with father having more than high school education and mother not working. Conclusion: Lower socio-economic status is associated with adolescent risk behaviours. These findings point to the importance of these factors to risk-taking youth, their relevance to social policy, and also their importance as factors to consider in targeted interventions.


No abstract available.


Participants included 2,198 students (48% males; 52% females) ranging in age from 14 to 20 years. Almost 25% of youth smoked regularly, 19% of males smoked marijuana > or = 10 times monthly, more than 40% of males regularly drank excessively, and 10% of students > 14 years old had had intercourse before age 15. Smoking was the behaviour most often associated with lower SES in both genders. Mother’s not being employed was protective against all substance use variables except driving after drinking. Living both with lone mother and in any family
arrangement other than with both parents was associated with smoking, using marijuana, and early sex. Higher risk score was associated with living with a lone mother or other family arrangement. Lower risk score was associated with father having more than high school education and mother not working. Lower socio-economic status is associated with adolescent risk behaviours. These findings point to the importance of these factors to risk-taking in youth, their relevance to social policy, and also their importance as factors to consider in targeted interventions.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


Women who live in disadvantaged circumstances in Canada exhibit dietary intakes below recommended levels, but their children often do not. One reason for this difference may be that mothers modify their own food intake to spare their children nutritional deprivation. The objective of our study was to document whether or not low-income lone mothers compromise their own diets to feed their children. We studied 141 low-income lone mothers with at least 2 children under the age of 14 years who lived in Atlantic Canada. Household food insecurity was reported by 78% of mothers during the study month.

Food insecurity over the past year occurred in 96.5% of households. Child hunger was similar to maternal hunger over the one-month study period (23%), however, it was lower than maternal hunger over the past year. On multiple logistic regression analysis, maternal hunger over the past year was predicted by maternal age over 35 years (p < 0.0005), and Nova Scotia residence (p = 0.03). Child hunger over the past year was also predicted by maternal age over 35 years (p = 0.009). Families from New Brunswick experienced less food insecurity over the past month at both the household (p = 0.01) and maternal levels (p < 0.0005). Provincial policies that might contribute to the regular occurrence of food insecurity in these families should be investigated.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


A statistical profile of women and health, violence, education, family responsibilities, poverty and labour force published annually by the Advisory Council.


Summary of the current situation and proposals for action.

Explains the rights and responsibilities of common-law partners.


A series of statistical portraits of women's situations and an overview of policies and programs.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


Peter Christie, Minister of Community Services.

No abstract available.


Fact sheet.


Fact sheet.

Fact sheet.


Fact sheet.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


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No abstract available.

No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


A guide to help lone mothers return to school. Lists services available to women entering post-secondary education in general, and services available at individual institutions as well.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.

A guide to income assistance.
Children and Youth


No abstract available.


The child-support payment guidelines that became law in 1997 are found to be inadequate and unfair. They neither meet the needs of children nor reduce disparities between the custodial and non-custodial households’ standards of living. The authors recommend considering both wealth and income when determining child-support.


No abstract available.


This paper, originally presented to the Eighth Conference on Canadian Social Welfare Policy held in Regina, assesses social groups’ criticisms of the National Child Benefit announced in the 1997 federal Budget. The child benefit reforms involve joint action on the part of the federal and provincial governments: The federal government will enrich and restructure the Child Tax Benefit/Working Income Supplement to create a Canada Child Tax Benefit in 1998. The provinces will be allowed to reduce their welfare expenditures on behalf of children by the amount of the increase in federal child benefits, although they have agreed to reinvest these savings in other programs for low-income families with children – such as income-tested child benefits (e.g., BC’s Family Bonus), wage supplements, social services (e.g., child care), extension of in-kind benefits available to welfare families (e.g., supplementary health care) to working poor families with children. The paper discusses seven criticisms of the child benefit proposals – that they are unfair to the working poor; they are unfair to welfare families; the additional federal money is too little too late and so will have little impact on child poverty;
Ottawa’s $850 million infusion is an inadequate down payment on a National Child Benefit; the new system will continue to be infected with the partial deindexation virus; it will result in an even more polyglot child benefits system with no national standards; and what we really need is a comprehensive approach to combat child poverty. The paper concludes that, while social groups have every right to beware of governments bearing social policy gifts in the 1990s, they should not throw out the baby bonus with the bath water: The National Child Benefit does hold out the promise of major reform of child benefits, welfare and federal-provincial relations in social policy.


This report offers governments advice on how to build and evaluate the National Child Benefit System announced in the 1997 federal Budget. The study traces the development of the concept of an ‘integrated child benefit’ which inspires the current reform and analyzes the evolution of child benefits since their beginning in World War One. Based on the authors’ vision of a mature integrated child benefit system, the report proposes an evaluative framework for the emerging National Child Benefit System. After providing a critical assessment of the three objectives announced by governments - preventing and reducing the depth of child poverty, promoting attachment to the workforce, and reducing overlap and duplication of child benefits - the report argues that the National Child Benefit must pursue additional objectives: adequacy, fairness, promoting dignity and independence, and economic stabilization. The report raises several key issues - differential treatment of the welfare and working poor, indexation, net versus gross definition of income, family definition, and benefit targets - that must be addressed if the National Child Benefit System is to grow into an effective social policy.


This study evaluated the influence of neighborhoods and socioeconomic disadvantage on behavioral problems rated by parents and teachers in a nationally representative sample of children ages 4 to 11 years living in Canada. Between-neighborhood variation accounted for 7.6% and 6.6% of parent and teacher ratings, respectively. About 25.0% of this neighborhood variation could be explained by socioeconomic variables evenly divided between neighborhood and family-level measures. Family socioeconomic status, lone-parent family status, and percentage of lone parents in neighborhoods were strong, reliable predictors of behavioral problems. Ratings were contextualized: Fewer behavioral problems were assessed in children from well-off families living in disadvantaged neighborhoods, whereas more problems were assessed in children from poor families living in advantaged neighborhoods.
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Two quasi-experiments are used to estimate the impact of parental divorce on the adult labor market and marital/fertility outcomes of adolescents. These involve individuals experiencing the death of a parent and legislative changes to the Canadian divorce law. Parental loss by death is assumed to be exogenous, the experiences of children with a bereaved background offering a benchmark to assess the endogeneity of parental loss through divorce. Adolescents whose parents divorced put off marriage and, once married, suffer a greater likelihood of marital instability, but their earnings and incomes are not on average much different from others. Abstract Copyright 2001 by University of Chicago Press.

No abstract available.

No abstract available.


No abstract available.


Unlike some previous research, we find the quantitative impact of low-income on child health to be modest to large. Lone-mother status is negatively associated with most outcomes, but the lone-mother coefficients did not change significantly when we switched from low-current income to low-average income. This implies that the lone-mother coefficient in single cross-sections is not just a proxy for low-permanent income.


A statistical association between poor child health and low family income has been well established by Lipman, Offord and Boyle (1994, 1995) and Dooley and Lipman (1995) in a series of papers using data from the Ontario Child Health Study (OCHS). The incidence of psychiatric disorders and poor school performance is higher among children of poor families than among children of non-poor families. The OCHS data generally show that children in one parent families have more problems than do children in two parent families, but this finding is less robust than that for low income. Most previous, however, has been done with the initial 1983 wave of the OCHS and little been done with the data from both the 1983 and 1987 surveys. Our objective in the proposed paper is to investigate these relationships using both waves of the OCHS data. We are particularly interested in the relationship between child health and “permanent low income” as measured by the income data from both waves. We will investigate the possibility that there is a lagged relationship between family status and child health. Cross tabular and multivariate methods will be used to analyse the relationship between socioeconomic status and child health status. We will use ordinal and cardinal measures of child health derived from the Health Utilities Index Mark 2 (Feeny et al., 1992 and Torrence et al., 1992). This HUI system affords one means of assessing the overall impact of socioeconomic status on child health status and health-related quality of life. The longitudinal results indicate that lone
motherhood (both current and long-term status) was negatively associated with all outcome measures except cognition. Most notable was the fact that current low income exhibited a much weaker relationship with our health outcome measures than did longer term low income. In most cases the marginal effect on child health of long term poverty was equal to or greater than the marginal effect of ever having lived in a lone-mother family. We believe this demonstrates the necessity of obtaining measures of permanent income rather than current income levels when investigating child health status.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


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No abstract available.


The National Child Benefit announced in the 1997 federal Budget promised 850 million dollars to move children out of the welfare rolls and the trap of poverty. This book attempts to outline the key concepts of this new program and set the stage for discussion of its potential impact. The writers do not agree. This book does not present a unified argument either supporting or
critiquing the program but raises a series of important issues and concerns regarding the program's effectiveness in addressing child poverty. The question remains: Is this new federal social program a phoenix rising from the ashes of past social welfare programs or just a federal fizzle? Includes: Douglas Durst -- The National Child Benefit: Best Thing Since Medicare or New Poor Law?; Ken Battle -- Income Security and the Labour Market: Saskatchewan Perspective on the National Child Benefit Rick August -- Caring in a Globalizing Economy: Single Mothers on Assistance Karen Swift and Michael Birmingham -- Child Poverty and the cctb/nbc: Why Most Poor Children Gain Nothing Jane Pulkinson and Gordon Ternowetsky -- So There You Go! Pete Hudson -- Bibliography


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


One of two American children will spend part of childhood in a family headed by a single mother. In the absence of government assistance, most mother-only families would be poor and economically insecure. Poverty and insecurity, in turn, are known to be harmful to children's future well-being. Government can reduce economic insecurity, but doing so will increase dependence on government. It also will increase the prevalence of mother-only families by lowering the costs of family dissolution. This creates a major dilemma for policy makers: whether to give priority to reducing economic insecurity or whether to give priority to reducing dependence and prevalence. In this paper we address key questions relevant to the dilemma: the extent of insecurity, dependence, and prevalence; the role of government in producing and maintaining all three; and the experience of single mothers and their children in the United States as compared to those in other advanced industrial nations. We next examine recent American trends in income transfer policies and document their achievements and shortcomings. Evidence from both international comparisons and American experience during the past 20 years indicates that a further reduction in welfare benefits will increase poverty and insecurity. Furthermore, the beneficial effects on dependence and prevalence are not likely to be great. Resolving the current dilemma will require a much greater investment of public funds and a redirection of funds toward all children, not just poor children in single-parent families.

This REFLEXION provides some answers to the project, What Is the Best Policy Mix for Canada’s Children? It is based on research that examined policy practices, policy thinking, public values, and the outcomes achieved by children in Canada and a number of comparable countries. Highlights include examining the enabling conditions that underpin good child outcomes, income, parental leave, and the support of education, health, social, and recreational services through communities.


No abstract available.


Findings from Canada’s National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.

In this paper, we revisit trends in low-income among Canadian children by taking advantage of recent developments in the measurement of low-income intensity. We focus in particular on the Sen-Shorrocks-Thon (SST) index and its elaboration by Osberg and Xu. Low-income intensity declined in the 1980s but rose in the 1990s. Declining earnings put upward pressure on low-income levels over much of the period. Higher transfers more than offset this pressure in the 1980s and continued to absorb a substantial share of the increase through 1993. In contrast, the rise in low-income intensity after 1993 reflected reductions in UI and social assistance benefits that were not offset by increased employment earnings, at least to 1996 the latest year used in this paper.

A major aim of the paper is methodological. We contrast results using the SST index with results produced by the more familiar low-income rate, the usual measure for indexing low-income trends. The low-income rate is embedded in the SST index, but unlike the index, the rate incorporates only partial information on the distribution of low-income. Consequently, the low-income rate is generally unable to detect the changes we describe and this is true irrespective of the choice of low-income cut-off. Compared to the low-income intensity measure, the rate is also relatively insensitive to changes in transfer payments and employment earnings.


Child Poverty Profile 1998 is a special report in the National Council of Welfare's annual series Poverty Profile. The report uses Statistics Canada's Survey of Consumer Finances and Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics to track the changes in poverty rates in Canada. Child poverty in Canada is not limited to one specific group of children, but the report points out several groups of particular concern, including Aboriginal children.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


The goal of this paper is to compare the well-being of young children in Canada, Norway and the United States using Sen's (1992) "functionings" perspective. We compare children cross-
nationally in terms of ten "functionings" (low birth-weight; asthma; accidents; activity limitation; trouble concentrating; disobedience at school; bullying; anxiety; lying; hyperactivity). If we compare young children in Canada and the U.S. in terms of their functionings, there is not a clear ranking overall. Canadian children are better off for four of nine comparable outcomes; U.S. children are better off for two outcomes; Canadian and U.S. children are statistically indistinguishable for three outcomes. If we compare child functionings in Canada or the U.S. with those experienced in Norway, it is clear that Norwegian children fare better. There is not a single case in which children in either Canada or the U.S. have better outcomes than Norwegian children. Copyright 2002 by The International Association for Research in Income and Wealth.


This note asks: "How much income does it take to preserve the pre-child standard of living for all members of the post-child household?" Equivalence scales for Canadian two-parent families are estimated using a complete demand system approach and imposing the condition of equivalence scale exactness/independent of a base (Blackorby and Donaldson (1993), Lewbel (1989)). This approach has several advantages: (1) It is formally grounded in economic theory. (2) The income required for children can be estimated without ignoring the well-being of the children themselves. (3) The estimates obtained appear reasonable relative to others currently available in the literature. © 2000 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.


This paper assesses two dimensions of the new Canadian child benefit system. First, evidence is presented to show that the earned-income supplement (EIS) will not increase the labour supply of parents with low earnings. Second, the paper demonstrates that the level of child benefits is low by international standards, both in terms of offsetting child costs for all families with children and in terms of alleviating child poverty.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.
Our aim in this paper is to resolve a paradox. Since the 1970s, there has been a downward secular trend in the average real and relative earnings of young adults under the age of 35. Despite the fact that most young children live in households headed by adults under 35, there has been no corresponding secular rise in the incidence of low income among children. Rather child poverty has followed the usual fluctuations of the business cycle.

We show that the relative stability in child poverty rates in the face of declining labor market earnings is a result of two factors. First, the decline in market income in young households with children has been offset by rising transfers. Since the 1970s, social transfers have replaced earnings as the main source of income among low income families with children.

Second, changes in the fertility behavior and labor market characteristics of young adults have sharply reduced the risk of young children growing up in low income households. Today's young parents are better educated, working more hours, having fewer children, and postponing childbirth until later ages when earnings are higher. Although more children do find themselves in single parent families, this change has been swamped by other changes in family patterns and labor market behavior that have reduced the risk of child poverty.

Thus, the upward pressure on low income among children stemming from the labor market has been offset by social transfers, on the one hand, and by changes in family formation and the labor market behavior of young adults, on the other. Except for cyclical variations, the result has been relative stability in the incidence of low income among children over the 1980s and early 1990s. Whether these offsetting patterns will continue in the last half of the 1990s remains to be seen.


Swift presents the perspective of both an academician and a protective services social worker as she discusses the idea that there are "hidden realities" related to child neglect that are related to socio-economic status, race, and gender.


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Feminism underwent perhaps its most difficult challenges in the 1980s, when conservatism reached the height of its influence in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. *Women on the Defensive: Living through Conservative Times* explodes some widely-held beliefs about women and women's movements under Conservative and Republican leaders.

Prevailing accounts of the fate of women's movements in that decade ascribe their hardships to a postfeminist ideology or the result of a "backlash" against women, particularly in America. Sylvia Bashevkin's study excavates, however, a much more complex situation. By identifying the policies and goals held in common by feminists in all three countries and tracing their
collision course with the conservative policies of the three administrations, she is able to document setbacks but also some progress, despite the right-of-center leaders. She also challenges the assumption that organized interests in the United States are less vulnerable in hard times than those in parliamentary systems, finding that the elections of Ronald Reagan, Brian Mulroney, and Margaret Thatcher had similar effects on both sides of the Atlantic. Her comparative analysis reveals that the policies of current leaders, while marginally better than their predecessors, will not allow women and women’s movements to regain lost ground.

Organized thematically, rather than by country, Women on the Defensive describes the difficult relationship between feminists and conservatives during a time of bitter ideological and policy battles when the vibrant social movements of the 1960s and 1970s were seriously threatened.


The demographic changes observed in the last 25 years have led to a sharp rise in the number of single-parent families headed by women. The duration of single parenthood is, however, highly variable, depending upon the propensity of single mothers to engage in a union. Using data on 1,257 women from the 1984 Family History Survey, our study attempts to identify the factors that are associated with union formation among single mothers in Canada. Particular attention is given to disentangling the impact that three factors - the event at the origin of the episode of single parenthood, its time of occurrence, and the parental responsibilities borne by single mothers - exert on their propensity to start living with a partner. The analysis is carried out using proportional hazards models. Data is from 1984.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.

No abstract available.


Female and male youth parents were asked to talk about: q· pregnancy history; q· experiences as youth parents; q· reasons for pregnancy among Aboriginal youth; q· sexual practices of Aboriginal youth; q· teachings and ethics that influence sexual practices and approaches to parenting; q· ideal age to begin family; q· ideal family size; q· programs and services that would encourage healthy sexuality in youth and deter adolescent pregnancy.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


Presents an overview of the progress achieved in various departments.

To measure the balance of the experiences of Canadian women and men in terms of income, work and learning.


In 1995, the federal government adopted a policy requiring federal departments and agencies to conduct gender-based analysis of future policies and legislation, where appropriate. This guide is a "hands-on" working document developed by Status of Women Canada to assist in the implementation of this government-wide policy.


The purpose of this document is to provide Government of Canada departments with a template to measure the application of Gender-Based Analysis and plan for future evaluation of its effectiveness/impact relative to outcomes of policies, programs, legislation and/or pilot projects.


This *Guide* contains brief descriptions of a variety of initiatives that are currently available to help improve the status of women and children in Canada. Key contacts and Internet addresses for additional information are included. The *Guide* also references other federal government guides to help women access additional non gender-specific programs and services. This *Guide* is a larger and more detailed version of the *Directory of Federal Government Programs and Services for Women*.


These original essays, arising from a conference at Ryerson Polytechnic university, explore the many factors affecting how Canadian society responds to, and creates, the phenomenon of teen parenting...the interdisciplinary approach and the Canadian focus make this (a) unique gathering of facts and ideas.
Families and how they manage jobs and money are the common focus of the papers in this volume. Researchers and policymakers still know relatively little about how families cope with changing pressures, yet that understanding is needed in a world of labour market polarization and high economic insecurity. The three papers in this study each frame new research questions, first by examining the existing literature and then by identifying gaps in knowledge.

These papers ask about how families exchange resources, both in terms of patterns of mutual support and exchange inside household and, with a more inclusive lens, across households. These papers go beyond the conventional focus on the division of such tasks as household work and child care, and explore issues about how money is or is not pooled, sources of advice and assistance, and who relies on who for emotional support.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


Lone mother families represent one of Canada’s most challenged groups in terms of low income, welfare dependence, weak labour force attachment, and poor child outcomes. Yet there is little research concerning the socioeconomic factors associated with the length of time which Canadian lone mothers and their children spend in what is for many a vulnerable state. How does the length of the spell vary with the age and numbers of children, characteristics which may well be associated with how vulnerable the children are? How important are policy variables, such as welfare benefits, or labour market conditions? What is the role of the level of different sources of
income such earned income, private non-earned income and government transfers? Does the likelihood of exiting lone motherhood increase or decrease with the length of time spent in this status? A major reason for the absence of such studies has been the absence of a longitudinal source of data with large numbers of lone mothers who are followed for a sufficiently long period of time to observe a substantial number of exits to some other family status. In this paper, we use a data set that is unique in its ability to provide answers to the above questions. The Canadian Longitudinal Administrative Databank (LAD) is an extraordinarily large sample of linked income tax records that provides longitudinal individual and family information on incomes, taxes, and basic demographic characteristics. It been used successfully to study the economic consequences of marital dissolution and low-income dynamics.


This volume examines both the historical and current concepts and definitions of the family in Canada, and focuses on the public policy consequences of the changing patterns of familial interaction and function.


This collection of essays examines how economic restructuring and changing social conditions are reshaping both the paid and unpaid work that women do. It provides an analytic framework to document in particular current trends in the responsibilities that women have in caring for others, including children, spouses, parents, and extended families. Containing original arguments and new research, the book emphasizes a feminist perspective and investigates race and class as well as gender.


Calling for nothing less than a radical reform of family law and a reconception of intimacy, The Neutered Mother, The Sexual Family, and Other Twentieth Century Tragedies argues strongly against current legal and social policy discussions about the family because they do not have at their core the crucial concepts of caregiving and dependency, as well as the best interests of women and children.

The Neutered Mother scrutinizes the definitions of family and mother throughout the volume while paying close attention to issues of race, class and sexuality. In addition, Fineman convincingly contests society's refusal to dignify, support and respond to the needs of caregivers and illustrates the burden they must bear due to this treatment. This book is a crucial step toward defining America's most pressing social policy problems having to do with women, motherhood
and the family.


A recurring theme in Western history is the notion of a "crisis" in the family. Each round of hand-wringing brought its package of nostrums. In the mid-twentieth century, Canadian psychologists shared with counterparts elsewhere the belief that the World War II had "had a disrupting effect on a number of things, ranging from the state of the family to the relationship between men and women to the nature of growing up" (p. 80). To remedy this state of affairs, psychologists offered "new ways of thinking about the meaning of family life, new ways of measuring success within the family circle, and new ways of conceiving of the importance of mothers and fathers" (p. 96). In this fine study, Mona Gleason identifies the major figures in the movement, describes the nature and source of the ideas they promoted, and suggests some of the short and long-term effects of their work.


No abstract available.


The Centre For Social Justice and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women announce new report on women's continued economic inequality. After decades of working toward income equality, women still lag far behind men in earning power. New research on previously unpublished Statistics Canada data shows women still face severe economic discrimination.


No abstract available.


An examination of the impact on women - in the family, the community, or the labour market - of the misfit between social policy prescriptions and current social realities. She goes on to
outline some of the implications for public policy.


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Analyses of social change and challenge in sociologies for women often start with some attention to generation. Yet, generation has been an underconceptualized sociological construct as a structural dimension of stratification, particularly gender stratification, or as a lens through which we see social change. The concept of gendered generation, the ways in which women are positioned and position themselves in political and social struggles and everyday lives in family and work by age and gender together, has been largely untheorized and underexplored.

The focus in this paper is on gendered intergenerational relations which lie at the heart of extensions in life expectancy and rapid social, economic, political and technological changes and permits a new perspective on life course changes, on women's movements, on generational interrelations among women, and on the construction of socially situated entities over time. What is known about gendered intergenerational relations, from data and research, is surprisingly little. Generation and gender have each emerged as social categories and identity signifiers, which shape public debate as well as social cohesion and public policy. This paper, part of a larger project on intergenerational interconnections, brings together existing data and research on gendered intergenerational relations, develops a conceptual framework for analyzing gendered generations, and suggests questions, including new avenues of research, that remain to be asked.

Demographers and sociologists have paid considerable attention to the situation of lone-parent families. However, until recently, almost all of this work has focused on families headed by a lone mother. This paper seeks to fill an important gap in our knowledge of family change by examining the growth and characteristics of lone-father families in Canada. Using data from the public-use microfiles (PUMFs) of the census, the paper shows that the number of lone-father families has increased significantly in recent years, and that lone fathers are now younger and more likely to have become lone fathers through marital breakdown. The results also suggest that while lone-father families are not as economically disadvantaged as lone-mother families, income levels lag well behind those of two-parent families and have, in relative terms, declined in recent years.


The "deadbeat dad" is a common figure in today's news media. As an experienced social worker, family therapist and mediator, Deena Mandell is intimate with legal and institutional discourses on the topic, but also with the lived reality of those involved in support conflict. In Deadbeat Dads, she addresses the question: "Why hasn't child support enforcement solved the problem of non-payment?"

Non-payment of child support is all-too-easily categorized as an individual act of deviance or moral failing, or as having purely economic ill effects. One consequence of this is to actually reinforce resistance and disengagement on the part of fathers, by causing them to see themselves as victims, whose personal rights are under threat. Thus, in the author's words, "In the discursive struggle between the state's protection of its financial interests...and the fathers' focus on their personal rights, the needs of children literally disappear."

Dr Mandell constructs a complex, nuanced argument around findings from interviews with a small sample of separated fathers, augmented with the perspectives of enforcement personnel such as judges, mediators and lawyers, and with firsthand observation of courtroom discussion. This is a qualitative study that lets informants speak for themselves, but subjects the resulting insights to critical analysis.


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This paper considers the possibility that migration provides individuals with a fresh start. In other words, I consider a model where the temporary component of earnings is correlated over time and migration causes this correlation to change. Results for single mothers suggest that migration causes the correlation of the temporary components to decline significantly. Furthermore, if one does not control this effect of migration one finds that single mothers decrease their earnings and income by migrating. However, if one considers migration as a fresh start then, on average, single mother migrants increase their expected earnings and income ten percent by moving.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


*Contemporary Family Trends* is a series of occasional papers authored by leading Canadian experts in the field of family studies. These papers have been commissioned by The Vanier Institute of the Family.
Institute of the Family as a contribution to discussion and as a source for the development of the Institute's perspective on family issues.

Health


In this issue (page 639) Dr. Ellen L. Lipman and colleagues show that single motherhood is associated with an increased risk of affective disorder and poverty and with increased rates of mental health services utilization. These findings have important implications for primary prevention interventions that focus on the social determinants of family health. Studies have shown that higher levels of psychological distress among single mothers are more closely related to their exposure to stressors than to their personal vulnerability to stress. Research has also shown that the stresses that affect single-parent families are greater in degree but not in kind than those that affect other families. Therefore, intervention programs that address the needs of all families are preferable to those that target specific types of families. Community-based primary prevention programs can promote the well-being of all families by improving the social and economic conditions in which they live.


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No abstract available.


This investigation is the first in Canada to provide an in-depth analysis of illicit drug use among women, and, in particular, the way in which illicit drug use impacts upon their roles as mothers. Susan C. Boyd, Assistant Professor in the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University, draws upon her experience as a teacher, community support worker and counsellor in providing a sympathetic, powerful, examination of the complex issues surrounding mothers and illicit drug use.

Writing from a critical feminist perspective, Boyd redirects the inquiry of women and illicit drug use away from current social science research, which focuses upon the developing fetuses of women who use illicit drugs, and examines instead the experiences of the women themselves. The voices of the 28 women who were interviewed are quoted at length throughout this study. Their opinions and experiences are central to understanding the myriad ways in which the medical, legal and social service systems exert control over what has come to be defined as a problem population: low-income, minority, drug-addicted women. However, women who enjoy the economic resources which allow them to hide their drug use from social authorities, particularly social workers, are invisible. While 53% of those interviewed for this study were on social assistance, the remaining 47% were in professional occupations, self-employed, or full-time students or volunteers. Contrary to the myth that illicit drug use is restricted to native and minority racial populations, 68% of the women surveyed are of European heritage, 25% are Native and 7% are of African ancestry. In terms of education, 35% lacked a high school diploma, 25% had finished high school, while 40% had attended college or university, with 22% completing either a BA or MA degree.


While a number of studies have documented higher period prevalence rates of depression among single as compared to married mothers, all of the data have been based upon community surveys of mental illness. In Canada, all of the published work comes from Ontario. As a result, we do not know whether these results hold true for other regions of the country. Using a nationally representative sample, we find, consistent with previous work, that single mothers have almost double the 12-month prevalence rates of married mothers (15.4% versus 6.8%). As well, there are no significant differences in rates of depression between single and married mothers by region/province of the country. Our findings are compared with other epidemiologic data on the mental health of single mothers from Ontario.
The goal of the Strategy is to improve the health of women in Canada by: recognizing the need for sensitivity in the health care system to women's health needs; funding research into women's health and its socio-economic determinants; providing effective health services to women; reducing risks to women's health through prevention and action. Pillars of the Strategy include the Canadian Women's health Network and the five Centres of Excellence for Women's Health, and a mandate for gender-based analysis.


No abstract available.

Colman, Ronald. *Gender-Based Analysis and Indicators of Women’s Health in Canada.* Presented at the Health Canada Policy Forum in Ottawa, October 9, 2003.

No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


In 1998/99, 10% of Canadians, or about 3 million people, were living in food-insecure households. Low-income households, households depending on social assistance, lone-parent families headed by women, tenants, children, and Aboriginal people had significantly high odds of experiencing food insecurity. Food insecurity was significantly associated with poor/fair health, multiple chronic conditions, obesity, distress and depression.
This study focuses on the health status of women with children, particularly lone mothers, the beneficiaries of many policies. Data from the 1994 Statistics Canada's National Population Health Survey indicate that lone mothers have, on average, consistently lower unconditional health status than married mothers. However, lone mothers also have, on average, lower levels of health inputs. Once age, income, education, lifestyle factors, family size, and other recognized determinants of health are controlled for, lone mothers are at least no worse off than married mothers when it comes to health status. This evidence points toward promoting policies directed at increasing the education, income and lifestyle factors of lone mothers if we wish to improve their health status.


Single mothers report higher lifetime and 1-year prevalence rates of depression than married mothers. This is found to be due in part to greater likelihood of early childhood adversities.


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Since the mid-1970s, a widely shared view that the determinants of health go well beyond medical care has emerged in the western democracies. What mattered in this newly-formed public health agenda were the more basic determinants of health: the work and physical environment; the genes one inherits; and the style of life one adopts. Yet despite nearly two decades of repeated intellectual efforts to redirect health policy away from curative medicine to more fundamental interventions, the task remains, largely undone. The purpose of this volume is to ask why, and to suggest answers and evidence about the determinants of population health that may help redirect national health policies.

It is an unusual volume, in every sense a collaborative effort, growing out of the quarterly seminars and long-term research interests of the population Health Program of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (C.I.A.R.). Under the auspices of the C.I.A.R., participants distinguished in the social and the health sciences set out between 1988 and 1993 to probe the links between social hierarchy, the influence of "macroenvironmental" factors on illness patterns, the quality of the "microenvironment," and other such determinants of health. Their findings, reported as occasional papers and subsequently further revised and integrated, constitute separate chapters of this book.

In addition to the specific viewpoints adopted and health fields explored here, the editors have provided both an extended introduction and a conceptual framework for the book that elaborates the scholarly group’s philosophical and methodological premises. Though the picture presented of the future is not wholly optimistic, this volume will prove essential to an understanding of the underlying public health issues for the next several decades.

This policy research paper was proposed and developed under a call for proposals in September 1999: Where have all the women gone? Changing shifts in policy discourses. Researchers were asked to examine shifts in public policy discourse to anticipate effects on gender issues and develop strategies to ensure the discourses recognize and serve women's interests.


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OBJECTIVE: To examine the sociodemographic, physical and mental health characteristics of single mothers in Ontario. DESIGN: Cross-sectional. SETTING: Ontario. PARTICIPANTS: Ontario residents aged 15 years or older who participated in the Ontario Health Supplement survey conducted between December 1990 and April 1991; of 9953 eligible participants, 1540 were mothers with at least 1 dependent child (less than 16 years of age). OUTCOME MEASURES: Prevalence rates of sociodemographic, physical and mental health characteristics. RESULTS: Single mothers were significantly more likely than the mothers in 2-parent families to be poor, to be 25 years of age or less, to have mental health problems (dissatisfaction with multiple aspects of life, affective disorder ever and 1 or more psychiatric disorders in the past year or ever) and to use mental health services. When compared by income level, poor single mothers had a higher prevalence of all mental health outcomes measured; the difference was significant for anxiety disorder in the past year or ever and for 1 or more psychiatric disorders in the past year or ever. In a logistic regression analysis, single-mother status was found to have the strongest independent effect on predicting mental health morbidity and utilization of mental health services; the next strongest was low income. CONCLUSIONS: Single mothers are more likely to be poor, to have an affective disorder and to use mental health services than mothers in 2-parent families. The risk of mental health problems is especially pronounced among poor single mothers. Further studies are needed to determine which aspects of single motherhood, apart from economic status, affect mental health outcomes.

OBJECTIVE: This study examined the prevalence of, and association between, childhood abuse and psychiatric disorders in single and married mothers. METHOD: Single and married mothers who participated in the Ontario Health Survey, a province-wide study derived from a probability sample of the general population of Ontario aged 15 years and older (N=1,471), were included. Sociodemographic and mental health characteristics were collected by means of interviewer-administered questionnaires. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect information on childhood physical and sexual abuse. RESULTS: Compared with married mothers, single mothers reported substantially lower incomes as well as higher rates of childhood abuse and all psychiatric morbidities examined (current and lifetime affective or anxiety disorders and substance use disorders). Childhood abuse had a consistent and significant association with adult mental health, even when other risk variables were controlled. No interaction among childhood abuse and marital status and outcome was found. CONCLUSIONS: Single mothers reported more childhood abuse and experienced higher levels of poverty and psychiatric disorders than married mothers. Childhood abuse was associated with more psychiatric problems in both single and married mothers. Research, clinical, and policy implications of these findings are discussed.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


In our study the women described the stress of being dependent on a system that shames and scrutinizes them, withholds significant information from them, is inaccessible at critical times in their lives, and blatantly expresses no interest in understanding the day-to-day factors in their lives.

Lone mothers generally had poorer health status than mothers in two-parent families, as measured by self-reported health, happiness, and distress scores. Between the first two cycles of the NPHS, the health status of longer-term lone mothers did not improve significantly. No differences were found on measures of health care utilization.


No abstract available.


Study Objectives:

To develop and examine a set of indicators of equity in access to health services that can be used in the evaluation of the core health services of Canada’s health care system. More specifically, the goals are:

To assess equity in access to health services by SES (ie. SES differences in utilization net of health status) for: (a) provinces, (b) urban and rural areas, and (c) age and sex.

To explore financial and non-financial barriers that may account for any observed inequities in access to health services. Factors to be examined include (a) living arrangements, (b) stress, (c) labour force participation, (d) psychosocial factors (eg. sense of coherence, mastery and self-esteem), and (e) social support.

To develop and examine a set of indicators of SES differences in the use of preventative health services. This will include the following goals:

To evaluate socioeconomic differences in the use of preventative health services. The following preventative health services will be examined: cervical cancer screening, mammography, clinical breast exam, rectal exam, flu shot, and diagnosis and treatment of high blood pressure.

To assess socio-economic differences in the use of physician services, by (a) age and sex of patient, (b) general versus specialist services, (c) urgent (emergency, evening and weekend) versus routine office visits, and (d) primary reason for physician visits (based on primary diagnosis).
To explore the degree to which socioeconomic differences in the use of preventative health practices are associated with: differences in the frequency and type of physician services received; differences in the demographic and practice characteristics of physicians; and patient factors which may impose non-financial barriers to access.


No abstract available.


Although Canadian policymakers appear committed to the health of Canadians and sustaining the health care system, they have been unwilling to support the social determinants of health and to act on broader policy issues.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.

Stoddart, GL. “The challenge of producing health in modern economies”. Program in

No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


This analysis employs a national panel study to examine the relationship between marital transition and depression among mothers within the framework of selection and causation processes. The data come from the two-wave, longitudinal National Population Health Survey (NPHS) by Statistics Canada collected in 1994 and again in 1996 focusing on women between 20 and 65 years of age with children living at home (N = 2169). Compared with mothers who remain married, mothers making the transition into single-parenthood had a significantly higher rate of major depression at Time 1, which increased, but not significantly, at Time 2. This suggests that a selection effect may explain the elevated levels of depression among mothers experiencing a marital disruption. Rates of depression among single-parent mothers making the transition into a marital relationship did not decrease significantly between waves nor did the rate differ significantly from stable single-parent mothers at Time 1 or Time 2, suggesting that movement into marriage is not a protective factor.


There was weak evidence for effects of gendered exposure to conditions such as unpaid work to
explain gender differences in health. Better measures of unpaid work conditions needed. Family structure did affect differential vulnerability: formerly married women reported more arthritis and distress and formerly married men.


BACKGROUND: Previous studies suggest that single mothers are at a higher risk of major depression and more likely to use mental health services than are married mothers. The objectives of this analysis were to provide estimates of the prevalence of major depressive syndrome among single and married mothers, to investigate the factors which may affect the difference in the prevalence of major depressive syndrome among single and married mothers and to estimate the health care service utilization by single and married mothers.

METHODS: This was a cross-sectional study using the data from the 1996-97 Canadian National Population Health Survey (NPHS). Major depressive syndrome was evaluated using the Composite International Diagnostic Interview-Short Form for major depression. The prevalence of major depressive syndrome was calculated among 3030 single and 10195 married mothers. The effects of demographic, socioeconomic and biological variables on the association between single-mother status and major depressive syndrome were evaluated by stratified analyses.

RESULTS: In the NPHS, the difference between single and married mothers in the prevalence of major depressive syndrome was found among women who were between the ages of 25 and 50. The association in this age group depended on race and on whether they had one or more jobs. Education, problem drinking, daily smoking, having one or more long-term medical illnesses, financial hardship and social support did not affect the association between single-mother status and major depressive syndrome. Single mothers were more likely to visit health professionals for mental problems than were married mothers.

CONCLUSION: The difference between single and married mothers in the prevalence of major depression is age-specific. Single mothers who reported having had one or more jobs and who are non-white had an increased risk of having major depressive syndrome, compared to married mothers. Future studies need to replicate the findings of this analysis and investigate why single mothers with ethnic minority backgrounds and those who are working are at high risk of having depressive disorders.


Like other single-parent families, those consisting of mothers and their children who leave abusive partners/fathers are broadly viewed as deficient, high-risk structures in which children are susceptible to multiple problems. The mechanisms of strength and vulnerability in these families are poorly understood, and, consequently, their health promotion processes remain
virtually unexplored. In a feminist grounded theory study of health promotion processes of single-parent families after leaving abusive partners/fathers, the authors discovered intrusion to be the basic social problem as families strive to promote health in the aftermath of abuse. The authors discuss the complex nature of intrusion, demonstrating how health is socially determined, and the challenges of health promotion in terms of the issues and dilemmas faced by study families and consider implications for health promotion knowledge and practice.


No abstract available.


OBJECTIVES: To investigate the importance of both individual and neighbourhood socioeconomic characteristics for health care utilization. METHODS: Various linkage procedures generated a longitudinal dataset with information on 2,116 Nova Scotians, their residential neighbourhoods, 8 years of health care utilization and vital status. Unilevel and multilevel regression analyses were employed to examine the effects of both individual and neighbourhood characteristics on health care use. RESULTS: Individual income and education determined physician and hospital use. Also, neighbourhood characteristics, specifically average income and percentage of single mother families, were found to determine health care use. When considering individual and neighbourhood characteristics simultaneously, individual income and education determined physician and hospital use independently, while neighbourhood income determined physician use independently. CONCLUSIONS: Both individual and neighbourhood socioeconomic characteristics determine health care use. Acknowledging this allows better targeting of health policy and planning, and enables more accurate needs-based resource allocation.

Poverty and Low-Income


No abstract available.

This paper illustrates that neither paying mothers to care for their children at home nor pushing them into the labour market has reduced high poverty rates among sole mothers. Governments need to deal with earning disparities between mothers and fathers, the shortage of child care, and the lack of full-time permanent jobs.

Beach, Charles and George Slottsve. Are We Becoming Two Societies? Toronto: CD Howe Institute, 1996.

No abstract available.


No abstract available.


No abstract available.


Several researchers have recently pointed out that poverty in Canada is by nature dynamic. The poor move in and out of poverty according to changes in family structure and labour market conditions. Some members of the press have seized on these findings to call for abandonment of the notion that the poor tend to get stuck in poverty and dependence. But the Applied Research Branch (ARB) in ongoing research and Ross Finnie of Queen's University in a forthcoming ARB working paper find two distinct groups among the poor in Canada. One group does experience poverty as a short-term condition. However, a second group experiences poverty as a much longer-term situation and they constitute a growing proportion of the poor. Three high-risk groups—lone parents, immigrants landed in Canada less than 10 years ago and persons with disabilities—are those most likely to head poor families in any given year. Families headed by members of these groups had an average poverty rate of 43.3 percent in 1997 compared to 8.7 percent for all other families. Etc.
A measure of the capacity of each adult within a given family to generate annual earnings based on full-time, year-long employment (at least 50 weeks) was developed using data from the Survey of Consumer Finances. This measure, which attempts to take into account characteristics related to the human capital of the working-age population, was converted into potential full-time income and then compared with Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs (base-year 1992). The calculations of potential family income were adjusted for certain limiting factors (e.g., disability, full-time study) affecting some of the working-age population.


No abstract available.


This position paper briefly presents the Canadian Council on Social Development's perspective on poverty lines, with recommendations to Statistics Canada and the federal, provincial and territorial governments. The CCSD is a leading social research and advocacy organization with particular expertise in the study of poverty.


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This study was motivated by the changes to the administration and funding of social programs across Canada since 1995—changes that were brought about by the introduction of the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST). Taking into consideration the current social policy climate and the resulting modifications to economic security programs, we examine the predictors of low income among women and the life circumstances that led them into and out of poverty. We argue that choices about work and family are best understood within a life-course perspective that recognizes systemic gender inequality. Thus, we examine whether assumptions of gender neutrality within social policies inadvertently increase women's economic insecurity by not taking their unique family and work experiences into account.


No abstract available


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Most caring work in our society is done by women. This work is often hidden in the roles of mothers, daughters, and wives and is undervalued outside the home as women work in the community as volunteers, in the 'caring' professions, and in low-wage jobs in hospitals, childcare centers, and homemaking services.

In the second edition of Women's Caring, a groundbreaking feminist perspective on social welfare in Canada, the editors and their contributors have added three new chapters - on women of color, women abused in intimate relationships, and Canada's live-in caregiver policy. As well,
the entire book has been widely updated and revised to reflect the changed legal, political, and policy context and the growing literature on the formal paid and informal unpaid caring work that women perform.


No abstract available


No abstract available


Understanding poverty has suffered in the past from a lack of information about the dynamics of low income; how many people enter and leave low income each year, how long people stay poor, what circumstances accompany entry into and exit out of low income; the characteristics of the long-term poor. As a result, policy has suffered, most essentially because people for whom low income is a temporary setback need different support from those for whom poverty is a long-term condition.

This study, the first general analysis of its type, explores the dynamics of poverty in Canada over the 1992/96 period using the recently developed Longitudinal Administrative Databank (LAD). Among the observations this database makes possible are the relationships between changes in family status and income: becoming a single parent and leaving home as a young adult are, for example, strongly associated with entry into low income, while becoming attached is strongly associated with leaving low income for both unattached individuals and single parents (especially women). Other interesting observations are the increasingly greater likelihood of remaining poor as time in poverty increases, and the greater success in staying out of low income as time since a previous low-income spell increases.

Among the most striking findings is that the population in low income consists of two quite different groups. For half of those in low income at any time during the period studied, this was a temporary experience. By contrast, the other half were in poverty on a long-term basis (more than half the time) and some 40 percent were in poverty throughout the entire period. This latter group, which represents 6 percent of the total population studied, presents special policy
challenges, but if measures such as training and other forms of assistance in entering the labor market could be made to work, it also offers the greatest opportunity to reduce poverty rates on a permanent basis.

The findings also reveal that personal characteristics and past low-income experience could help policymakers identify the population at risk of chronic low-income status and thereby effectively target policy measures. To this end, a mixture of interventions, both "carrots" and "sticks" (but in a "kinder, gentler" form than found in recent US reforms) and a strong labour market, are needed to reduce poverty in Canada, thus serving both equity and efficiency goals to which individuals across the political spectrum might agree.


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This paper examines two related but distinct phenomena in Canada: 1) The tendency for certain neighbourhoods to be disproportionately income poor and to account for a substantial share of total poverty within the urban areas containing them. 2) The extent to which certain neighbourhoods, whether or not they have high rates of income poverty, suffer from multiple indicators of social distress including high proportions of children growing up in lone parent families, low levels of full-time school attendance among young people, high levels of dependence on government transfer payments as a source of income and low rates of year-round full-time adult male employment.


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Fact sheet


Fact sheet


Fact sheet


An Exploration of the Stress Experience of Mi’kmaq On-reserve Female Youth in Nova Scotia (2001) examines physical stressors (e.g., being overweight), mental stressors (e.g., depression, self-esteem, and emotional health) and stressors related to social relationships. The overall goal of this study was to identify policy and programs that might be effective in reducing the negative stress of young Mi’kmaq women. A second goal was to develop research expertise in First Nations organizations and communities. To capture gender differences and similarities, Mi’kmaq females’ stress experiences were compared to those of male youth on reserve. The
perspectives of professionals working in youth services were also sought and compared to those of the male and female youth groups. An all-female, on-reserve Youth Advisory Group reviewed the research process, advised us on the content of interviews, and contributed to a description of stressors for their peers.


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In this paper, we investigate the extent to which Canadians were exposed to low income during the 1993-1996 period. Our main findings are the following. First, while 1 in 10 Canadians live in families with low income in a given year, as many as 1 in 5 are exposed to at least one year of low income during a 4-year interval. Second, 1 in 20 Canadians are exposed to low income for 4 consecutive years. Third, 40% to 60% of individuals who fall into low income in a given year will no longer have low income the following year. Fourth, some spells of low income last a long time: of all spells started in 1994, 30% lasted 3 years or more. Fifth, Canadians who are the most susceptible to low income tend to be young; to have little education; to be students and to live as unattached individuals or in lone-parent families. As well, Canadians facing disabilities that entail work limitations, those who are members of visible minorities (when considering the exposure to 4 years of low income) or who have immigrated in or after 1977 tend to experience low income. Sixth, high probabilities of being exposed to low income do not necessarily imply high income gaps, that is, the average income of those in low income may be quite close to the low income cut-off. As a result, a complete understanding of the extent to which Canadians are exposed to low income requires an analysis of both the probabilities of being exposed and the income gaps while being exposed.

No abstract available


No abstract available


Poverty Profile is a regular publication that uses Statistics Canada’s Survey of Consumer Finances and Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics to track the changes in poverty rates in Canada.

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No abstract available


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Despite substantial economic growth in the OECD area during recent decades, a significant portion of the population consists of individuals whose household income does not support living conditions considered adequate in their country of residence. Individuals living under such conditions are typically labelled as being in poverty, even if their physical subsistence needs can be met. Although the exact standards for assessing poverty vary from country to country, reducing the incidence and persistence of poverty is a goal shared by all. Attainment of this goal is complicated by the diversity of poverty experiences across individuals and countries. Many analyses of poverty focus on its level at one or a few points in time. This approach provides useful information about the extent of poverty and how it differs over time and across countries, but it typically says little about individual poverty experiences and therefore the best approach to poverty reduction. Some individuals experience only a single, short spell of poverty, while others are caught in a poverty trap. The shares of transitory versus persistent poverty may vary substantially across countries, as may the relationship of poverty persistence to personal, family,
and social characteristics. The design of effective policies for ameliorating poverty depends on a
detailed understanding of these patterns and relationships.

http://www.statcan.ca/english/research/75F0002MIE/75F0002MIE2001007.pdf

No abstract available

Phipps, Shelley. “Lessons from Europe: Policy Options to enhance the economic security of
Canadian families”. *Family Security in Insecure Times,* David Ross, Ed. Ottawa:
Canadian Council on Social Development.

VOLUME I- This collection of papers highlights the growing economic and social insecurity
among Canadian families. Papers by Judith Maxwell, Diane Bellemare, Daniel Keating and
Fraser Mustard, Craig McKie, Maurice Champagne, Susan McDaniel, and Michael Valpy
examine family security, but each from a different perspective. How will global restructuring
and competition affect family security? How will family economic and social security be
affected by changing labour markets? demographic and cultural changes? new family structures
and roles? How are gender differences affecting families today? And how have changing
political values and structures affected the family?

VOLUME II- Distinguished contributors include: Claude Béland, Camil Bouchard, Rod Dobell,
Ann Duffy, Daniel P. Keating, Lorna R. Marsden, Michael Mendelson, Shelley A. Phipps,
Norene Pupo, Frank Reid, and Jean-Bernard Robichaud. Using a framework of four broad
strategies for change, the authors offer examples of what governments, communities, employers
and others can do to improve family security in light of the new socioeconomic realities.

VOLUME III- Volume III is a final statement from the Directors Group of the National Forum
on Family Security, calling for a complete refocusing of public policies in Canada.

Picot, Garbet. “What is happening to earnings and employment in the 1990's?” Ottawa:

No abstract available

Picot, Garnett, Myles Zyblock, and Wendy Pyper. *Why Do Children Move In and Out of Low
Income?: Changing Labour Market Conditions or Marriage and Divorce?* Statistics
No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available


This research report documents the housing concerns of women living on low incomes in Victoria, Regina and Saint John, and proposes housing policy options for urban policy makers to consider in addressing these concerns. While the goals sound simple, this policy-oriented action research project has turned out to be a complex and challenging one.


If your job requires any knowledge about income statistics or poverty data, this is the book you must have close at hand - for almost 20 years, the most complete and authoritative work available on poverty in Canada. Comprehensive, clear and understandable, the CCSD's Fact Book on Poverty has been recognized as THE indispensable resource and reference work for professionals and students in the human services. This is the fifth in a series of fact books on poverty published by the CCSD.


As governments continue to cut back on social programs, families are being pressured to increase their financial self-reliance through their own earnings from the marketplace. But is the marketplace up to the task of providing adequate security for all families? In *Left Poor by the*
Market: A look at family poverty and earnings, we examine how families – especially those with low incomes – have fared in the job market in recent years. Our report examines the market earnings of low-income families at two points in time – 1984 and 1994. It also reviews the proportion of poor families' incomes that comes from government income support programs.


A media story early this year caught our eye. According to the story, a researcher at Statistics Canada had determined that the wage gap between men and women had narrowed dramatically in recent years, and he predicted that the end of gender discrimination in the labour market was rapidly approaching. A few months later, the Canadian Labour Congress issued a report on women's work: it concluded that the wage gap between men and women was continuing and indeed for some, it was growing.

In an effort to shed more light on the real story behind women's earnings, we have conducted our own analysis using data from Statistics Canada's 1984 and 1994 Survey of Consumer Finances. In our research, we wanted to explore whether or not women's and men's earnings are converging to a point of gender parity within the labour market. This is an important question because equitable earnings afford a greater degree of autonomy for women, providing them with the means to challenge gender inequality in the home, in the workplace, in communities and in governments.


No abstract available


15 page report.


No abstract available.

No abstract available


This study examines the impact on women of funding social programs through the tax system.


No abstract available.

**Social Networks and Independence**


No abstract available


Cet article entreprend de répondre à la question suivante : comment assurer une meilleure représentation, plus substantielle, pour les femmes et leurs diverses voix, besoins et désirs? Pour répondre à cette question, l'article commence par problématiser la représentation des femmes en tant que groupe. Il évalue ensuite, de façon critique, diverses propositions de réforme, y compris les suggestions relatives aux défenseurs de la représentation de groupe. On argumente que de telles recommandations tombent souvent à plat puisqu'elles sont construites sur des prémisses démocratiques libérales erronées. Par contraste, l'article établit le bien-fondé de plus de démocratie de différentes sortes. Ce qui est requis, c'est une synthèse du politique conventionnel et non conventionnel, où la démocratie libérale est transformée par l'infusion d'un potentiel démocratique radical. On contemple une vie politique axée sur l'inclusion, les identités croisées et des institutions intéressantes, concrétisée ensuite par des illustrations tirées du Canada et de l'étranger.

No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available


Presents an overview of social support research from both traditional and feminist perspectives, the impact of gender research and an introduction to social support research on specific women’s issues.


Cet article propose que les politiques sociales engendrent la cohésion sociale par leur contribution directe au régime de citoyenneté, voulant dire un ensemble de droits civils, politiques et sociaux stable qui sert à constituer une société de citoyens égaux et de citoyennes égales devant l'État. Pourtant, des transformations économiques et politiques depuis les années 80 ont miné les aspects sociaux du régime de citoyenneté canadien. Actuellement, le Projet de recherche sur les politiques (PRP) du gouvernement fédéral propose de nouveaux fondements pour la cohésion sociale, mettant à l'écart les droits sociaux et misant plus sur les pratiques et les institutions de la société civile. Cet article fait ressortir l'affinité entre ce modèle de la cohésion sociale et les nouvelles orientations des politiques et dépenses sociales du gouvernement fédéral. Tandis que la cohésion sociale comme la citoyenneté sont dorénavant envisagées comme étant des processus provenant de la base plutôt que de l'État, les politiques sociales se penchent de plus en plus vers la régulation sociale.

Welfare and Social Policies


No abstract available


Why do some welfare states provide income support for mothers to care for their school-aged children at home while others expect them to find employment when their youngest child is six months old? This study, a fundamental contribution to social policy and social welfare theory, compares recent efforts to restructure social programs for low-income mothers in four countries: Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. While these countries are sometimes classified as liberal welfare states, this book demonstrates that they vary considerably in terms of benefit development, expectations concerning maternal employment, and restructuring processes.

The authors examine changes to income security programs, discuss the social, political and economic conditions affecting these programs, and analyse the discourse promoting reform. Using a feminist and political economy perspective, they conclude that recent, often expensive, efforts to make beneficiaries more employable have not always enabled them to escape welfare or poverty.

While full-time employment opportunities are becoming scarcer, governments are requiring beneficiaries to enter the workforce, often with little social support or improvement in income. Regardless of the impact of employability initiatives on poverty levels, the study concludes that these policies are important ideological instruments in tempering demands on contemporary welfare systems. The result is a more residual welfare state, in which social provision is increasingly presented as a meagre last resort.


No abstract available


Examination of the first-term social policy records of the Clinton administration and the Chrétien
government suggests that the effects of welfare state retrenchment are far from uniform. They tend to vary according to the gender, class and minority status of programme constituencies such that retrenchment carries with it a highly selective and inconsistent impact across both policy sectors and social subunits. Programmes with poor, female, minority and hence relatively weak political constituencies suffered most from both Clinton- and Chrétien-era reforms. Under the guise of rewarding work, balancing budgets and enhancing the authority of subnational governments, both leaders effected major overhauls of welfare regimes that had historically supported low-income single-parent families.


No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available


The two studies prove that providing single mothers on social assistance with a complete array of proactive, comprehensive health and social services pays for itself in two years.


A principal motivation for Unemployment Insurance (UI) schemes is to support consumption smoothing. The magnitude of the consumption smoothing benefits of UI depend on the extent to which households are liquidity constrained. We use a survey of unemployed people to examine how a job loss impacts on household expenditures. The principal focus is on the effect of the level of income replacement provided by UI. We restrict attention to a sub-sample of
respondents who are still in their first spell of unemployment after six months. For this group we find large consumption falls, averaging about 14% of total expenditure. The actual fall depends on a variety of factors of which the most important is the pre-job loss ratio of the respondent's income to household income. These consumption falls confound the 'permanent income' or wealth shock of job loss, costs of working and, potentially, a liquidity constraint or 'transitory income' effect. The effects of varying the replacement ratio - which isolates the transitory effect - are relatively small. We only find effects for those who did not have assets at the job loss. Even for them, the elasticity of total expenditure with respect to benefit is small. We conclude that for most of our sample, small changes in the benefit level will have almost no effect on living standards within the household and hence little impact on other facets of behavior such as job search, unemployment duration and the quality of any new job taken. The data are consistent, however, with some households being liquidity constrained.


No abstract available


No abstract available


Background: Although it is generally recognized that poverty and depression can coexist among single parents receiving social assistance, there is insufficient research on this topic. The goals of this study therefore were to investigate the prevalence, correlates and health care expenditures associated with depression among sole-support parents receiving social assistance.

Methods: Sole-support parents who had applied for social assistance in 2 regions of southwestern Ontario were included in the study. Depression was diagnosed with the 1994 University of Michigan Composite International Diagnostic Interview short forms.

Results: The 12-month prevalence rate of depressive disorder among the parents interviewed was 45.4% (345/760). A total of 247 (32.5%) had major depressive disorder alone, 19 (2.5%) had dysthymia, and 79 (10.4%) had both major depressive disorder and dysthymia ("double
Those with major depressive disorder, particularly double depression, had significantly higher rates of coexisting psychiatric disorder than those without depressive disorders. Parents with depression reported higher rates of developmental delay and behaviour problems in their children than parents without depression. Expenditures for health care services were higher for parents with depression and for their children than for parents without depressive disorder and their children.

Interpretation: Single parents receiving social assistance have high rates of depression. Such parents with depression also have higher rates of other psychiatric disorders and higher expenditures for health care services, and their children have higher rates of developmental delay and behaviour problems.


This is a collection of research papers presented at the Child Welfare League of Canada's Symposium 2000, which was held in Cornwall, ON. Contributors include Claire Chamberland, Cindy Blackstock, Nico Trocmé, Jim Anglin, Sally Palmer, Darlene Sykes, Fay Martin and Richard Budgell and the research covers the incidence and characteristics of child maltreatment; the continuum of care; policy and practice; and future directions.


No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available

No abstract available

Canada, HDRC. *A review of programs for integrating social assistance recipients into the Workforce*. Prepared by BMCI Consulting, Ltd., for Evaluation and Data Development, Strategic Policy, HRDC. 1996.

No abstract available


No abstract available


This paper reports on a randomized evaluation of an earnings subsidy offered to long-term welfare recipients in Canada. The program -- known as the Self-Sufficiency Project (SSP) -- provides a supplement equal to one-half of the difference between a target earnings level and a participant's actual earnings. The SSP supplement is similar to a negative income tax with two important differences: (1) eligibility is limited to long-term welfare recipients who find a full-time job; and (2) the payment depends on individual earnings rather than family income. Our evaluation is based on a classical randomized design: one half of a group of single parents who had been on welfare for over a year were eligible to receive the SSP supplement, while the other half were assigned to a control group. Results for an early cohort of SSP participants and controls suggest that the financial incentives of the Self-Sufficiency Program increase labor market attachment and reduce welfare participation.


No abstract available


The authors investigate the joint welfare participation-labour supply decisions made by single
males and females and lone mothers and fathers using data from the 1988-1989 Canadian LMAS. They find welfare and labour force participation decisions are not independent.


No abstract available


No abstract available


This project was designed to assess the provision of non-cash benefits to women with disabilities and single mothers. The intent was to show the advantages - in both financial and human terms - of extending support while women are employed temporarily, part time or in home-based employment.


The objective of this paper is to analyse changes in the welfare participation of Canadian lone mothers between 1973 and 1991. Lone mothers under age 35 do show an increasing reliance on SA income accompanied by stagnant wages and declining levels of market work and earnings. In contrast, lone mothers age 35 and over exhibit a declining reliance on SA income accompanied by rising levels of market work, wages and earnings income. Estimates of a simple economic demographic probit model of welfare participation are both consistent with theoretical expectations and capable of accounting for a large portion of the very different observed trends for older and younger lone mothers. Much of the declining welfare use among older lone mothers can be explained by decreasing family size, increasing education and market wages which grew at the same rate as welfare benefits. Much of the rising welfare use among younger lone mothers can be explained by a decline in wages relative to welfare benefits accompanied by a mixed pattern of demographic change for this age group. Among younger lone mothers, modest declines in family size and increases in schooling were offset by a large increase in the proportion never married.

No abstract available


We use administrative data to provide a first look at the dynamics of social assistance use among lone mothers in Ontario between 1990 and 1994. The evidence is mixed concerning a "welfare trap." Welfare exit rates do decline during the first year of a spell but the support is weakest in our preferred specification. The data more consistently indicate the decline in exit rates from an off-welfare spell (the likelihood of recidivism) during the 12 months following an exit from social assistance. More months of welfare use during past spells are associated with both longer future spells on welfare and shorter future spells off-welfare, but the magnitude of both effects is quite small. The length of both welfare and off-welfare spells is very sensitive to the levels of welfare benefits. Welfare spells are longer for lone mothers who are younger, poorly educated, never married, not employable, and for those who have more and younger children. Spell lengths also increase with the unemployment rate and decrease with the minimum wage. Off-welfare spells are shorter for those lone mothers who are older, never married, not employable, and who have very young children. Off-welfare spells are longer when the minimum wage is higher.


The principal qualifying condition for welfare in Canada, unlike the US, is financial need - there are no demographic criteria. We use a time-series of annual, national cross-sections for the period 1981 through 1993 to estimate a model of lone-female headship. Our findings do not support the hypothesis that welfare benefit levels for one-parent and two-parent families are important determinants of the likelihood that a Canadian woman is a lone mother. In all models with provincial fixed effects, the coefficients for welfare benefits are small, statistically insignificant and often of the unexpected sign. We do find that the probability that a woman is a lone mother is generally associated in the expected fashion with her earnings capacity and the earnings capacity of her potential male partner, and with her age and schooling.


This book explores the choices Canadians and their governments must make to balance fiscal restraint with the bonds that keep a civic society vital. It is a joint publication of the Caledon
Institute of Social Policy and the Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies.

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No abstract available


The principal qualifying condition for welfare in Canada, unlike the US, is financial need - there are no demographic criteria. We use a time-series of annual, national cross-sections for the period 1981 through 1993 to estimate a model of lone-female headship. Our findings do not support the hypothesis that welfare benefit levels for one-parent and two-parent families are important determinants of the likelihood that a Canadian woman is a lone mother. In all models with provincial fixed effects, the coefficients for welfare benefits are small, statistically insignificant and often of the unexpected sign. We do find that the probability that a woman is a lone mother...
lone mother is generally associated in the expected fashion with her earnings capacity and the earnings capacity of her potential male partner, and with her age and schooling.

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Terrance Hunsley provides an informative and insightful analysis of the key issues related to lone parent incomes and the associated social policy outcomes. He starts with the recognition that policies and schemes put in place in Canada over the past two decades have failed to prevent or alleviate the problems associated with poverty and lone parenthood. While one might question the assertion with respect to alleviation there is little argument about the failure to prevent poverty.

The objectives of Hunsley’s research were to compare the outcomes of policies to reduce child and family poverty in Canada with the policies in nine other OECD countries and evaluate the effectiveness of Canadian policies in helping low-income lone parent families. (Review by Julia O’Connor).

No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available


This study assesses two potential problems with respect to the reporting of Employment Insurance (EI) and Social Assistance (SA) benefits in the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID): (a) under-reporting of the monthly number of beneficiaries; and (b) a tendency to incorrectly report receiving benefits throughout the year, while in fact benefits may have been received only in certain months, leading to artificial spikes in the January starts and December terminations of benefit spells (seam effect). The results of the analysis show the following:

(1) The rate of under-reporting of EI in SLID is about 15%. Although it varies by month (from 0% to 30%), it is fairly stable from year to year.

(2) There are significant spikes in the number of January starts and December terminations of EI benefit spells. However, the spikes in January starts appear to represent a real phenomenon, rather than a seam problem. They mirror closely the pattern of establishment of new EI claims (the latter increase significantly in January as a result of the decline in employment following the Christmas peak demand). There are no corresponding statistics for EI claim terminations to
assess the nature of December spikes.

(3) The rate of under-reporting of SA in SLID is about 50%, significantly greater than for EI. The rate of under-reporting goes down to about 20% to 30%, if we assume that those who received SA, but did not report in which months they received benefits, received benefits throughout the year.

(4) There are large spikes in the number of January starts and December terminations. As in the case of EI, the SA could reflect a real phenomenon. After all, SA starts and terminations are affected by labour market conditions, in the same way EI starts and terminations are affected. However, the SA spikes are much larger than the EI spikes, which increases the probability that, at least in part, are due to a seam effect.


No abstract available


This paper focuses on the determinants of the likelihood of a remarriage (marriage) for female heads with children. Using retrospective data from Statistics Canada’s 1990 Family History Survey, the study attempts to identify, which socioeconomic characteristics of single mothers are conducive to conjugal union formation (formal or informal). Particular attention is given to external time-varying economic covariates, so as to disentangle the impact they exert on single mothers’ propensity to start living with a (new) partner. The empirical analysis is carried out using a proportional hazards model which permits the estimation of the effects of various covariates on the hazard of exiting single parenthood. The most striking result is the strong effect of provincial welfare benefits on conjugal union formation. However, the analysis reveals that single motherhood, far from representing a final state, remains a transitory situation for a majority of women.


The principal qualifying condition for welfare in Canada, unlike the US, is financial need - there are no demographic criteria. We use a time-series of annual, national cross-sections for the period 1981 through 1993 to estimate a model of lone-female headship. Our findings do not support the hypothesis that welfare benefit levels for one-parent and two-parent families are important determinants of the likelihood that a Canadian woman is a lone mother. In all models
with provincial fixed effects, the coefficients for welfare benefits are small, statistically insignificant and often of the unexpected sign. We do find that the probability that a woman is a lone mother is generally associated in the expected fashion with her earnings capacity and the earnings capacity of her potential male partner, and with her age and schooling.


No abstract available.


No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available

Lynn, Marion and Milana Todoroff. "Sole support mothers on social assistance in Ontario: barriers to employment and suggested solutions". _Canadian Women's Studies/ Les cahiers de la femme_. 18/1:72-75, 1996.

No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available

This paper investigates the relationship between income security policies and mothers' poverty. We evaluate qualitatively how changes to Ontario's social welfare system brought about by the 1997 Social Assistance Reform Act have affected mothers' financial security. We find that cuts to social assistance benefits and eligibility restrictions can undermine their ability to care adequately for their children and argue that these cuts can also make it more difficult for them to find employment. Moreover, social welfare programs do not take the specific needs and circumstances of mothers, particularly single mothers, into account. We conclude by suggesting social policy changes that would promote the economic security of women.


No abstract available


A substantive contribution to the literature on unpaid work and takes the issue to the 2001 Census of Population. It provides accessible information to grassroots women and women's organizations on unpaid work issues and combines workshop and individual exercises with background material and analysis, interviews and features on specific issues within unpaid work: a companion bibliography on unpaid work is also available.


The findings from our research project make clear that women who flee abusive relationships and turn to welfare seeking refuge and support frequently find neither. Women's experiences of welfare are often profoundly negative. Women struggle to survive with their children on little income, often going without adequate food, shelter and clothing. They encounter a system that is less than forthcoming about their entitlements, and about the multiple rules with which they must comply. Their hopes of training and employment through workfare participation are almost invariably dashed. They are often subjected to demeaning and humiliating treatment
from workers within a system in which suspicion and the devaluation of recipients are structured into its very core. For many the experience of welfare is like another abusive relationship. And virtually every woman with whom we spoke was caught in one or more double binds as she struggled to be a good mother, good worker and good citizen. Disturbingly, the decision to return to an abusive relationship is often the 'best' decision for a woman, in a social context of horrendously constrained options.

Simultaneously and very importantly, the welfare system is also misused by abusive men to enhance their power and control over women. Their power and control is enhanced when women return to, or can't leave, the relationship because they are unable to adequately provide for themselves and their children on welfare. Abusive men's power and control is also shored up when they are able to call anonymously to welfare snitch lines, and when they can readily set women up for fraud prosecutions. And their power and control is further strengthened when they can manipulate systems because of better English language skills.

This picture of abused women's experiences on welfare stands in sharp contrast to the state's promise of zero tolerance of domestic violence so frequently trumpeted in the criminal justice context. The 'deserving' recipients of criminal justice protection (and we hasten to add that this protection does not always materialize in practice) are, as our report details, recast within the welfare regime as undeserving and untrustworthy. In the welfare context abused women are subjected to another zero tolerance policy -- zero tolerance of welfare fraud regime -- a regime abusive men readily exploit.


No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available

Peter Christie, Minister of Community Services.

No abstract available


Fact sheet.


No abstract available


No abstract available


A new report from the Workfare Watch project responds to a key tenet of the welfare reform – that increases in welfare benefits caused the caseload to increase in the 1980s and 1990s. This is what is meant by the so-called ‘problem of dependency’. This argument was reiterated recently by the provincial government in its report to taxpayers “Making welfare work”. In it the Province presented a chart that tracked nominal social assistance benefits for a single person against the entire social assistance caseload. Because both rose in the late 1980s and early 1990s the government presented this as support for their claims, and justification for the cut to welfare benefits in October 1995.

The report reviews the methodological problems with the argument and demonstrates statistically that changes in unemployment were a far more powerful explanation for changes in the caseload than benefits. Once unemployment was accounted for, benefits had almost no impact on the caseload. Other factors were changes in the structure of the economy, restrictions in the Unemployment Insurance/Employment Insurance program and more recently, administrative changes that restricted access to the social assistance program.


No abstract available


No abstract available


This book critically examines the changing landscape of Canadian social policy that is taking place as a result of the Liberal government's Social Security Review (SSR) and recent budgets. The objective is to provide an alternative venue to the "official" consultation process of the SSR, while at the same time providing input into the rebuilding of Canadian social programs. Major factors that led to the SSR are examined: the role of the Minister of Finance, the fiscal power and moral authority of the federal state in a decentralized nation, globalization and labour market restructuring, the concept of workfare, the impact on women, the role of "popular sector" groups and the future of the welfare state.


No abstract available


Takes a comprehensive, pragmatic look at the Canadian welfare state, detailing its failure and successes and offering "immodest advice" on how it could be better. "A believer in good social programs deals out cuffs and blows for left and right...Answers some of the mindless attacks on Canada's welfare state and some of the equally mindless defenses." -The Hon. Allan E.
Blakeney, Former Premier of Saskatchewan.


No abstract available


*A liberal approach to welfare benefits and eligibility has disastrous effects both on the treasury, and more importantly, on the individual and the family, according to a book released today by The Fraser Institute.*


*This report assesses the financial impact of the introduction of the CHST on women receiving social assistance. It presents a detailed profile of women receiving social assistance before and after the CHST and will serve as source of important, and timely, baseline information.*


No abstract available

“Single mothers do not leave for jobs when welfare payments are high, HDRC study concludes”.

No abstract available


*A five-year follow-up study of single parents involved in a voluntary employment program in*
Ontario provides new insights into what client factors and program components are associated with clients' success in obtaining employment and leaving social assistance. The study employed multivariate analysis of data from 139 women who completed up to five years of involvement in a municipal employment program prior to the implementation of workfare in Ontario. Involvement in the employment program (which assisted all participants with child care and employment-related expenses) and particularly in the program's career planning and job search components, as well as the clients' previous employment experience, were found to be more significant in predicting the desired outcome than personal or child factors (other than child care). These outcomes were achieved without the sanctions imposed in mandatory workfare programs.


This paper provides a first look at the dynamics of social assistance use among lone mothers in Ontario. We use an administrative caseload data set to analyse the relationship between the duration of spells, both on welfare and off welfare, and a series of factors including the clients' personal characteristics, their history of welfare use, the duration of current spells, labour market conditions and social assistance benefit levels.

We find mixed evidence concerning the key policy question of the scarring or stigmatizing effects of welfare, that is, a "welfare trap". There is evidence that the likelihood of exiting welfare declines during the first year of a spell. The support is weakest, however, in our preferred specification. There is more consistent evidence that the likelihood of returning to welfare declines during the first year after an exit, that is, staying off the rolls has the beneficial effect of making recidivism less likely. Clients who have spent more months on welfare in the past (controlling for age) do appear to have somewhat longer future spells on welfare and to return more quickly to the rolls once they leave, but the magnitude of this effect is very small. The length of both welfare and off-welfare spells is very sensitive to the levels of welfare benefits. Most of the other coefficients have significant effects of the expected sign. Welfare spells tend to be longer for those lone mothers who are younger, poorly educated, never married, not employable and for those who have more and younger children. Spell lengths also increase with the level of the unemployment rate and decrease with the level of the minimum wage. Off-welfare spells tend to be shorter (the return to welfare more rapid) for those lone mothers who are older, never married, not employable and who have very young children. Off-welfare spells are longer when the minimum wage is higher.


No abstract available

This collection of essays examines how economic restructuring and changing social conditions are reshaping both the paid and unpaid work that women do. It provides an analytic framework to document in particular current trends in the responsibilities that women have in caring for others, including children, spouses, parents, and extended families. Containing original arguments and new research, the book emphasizes a feminist perspective and investigates race and class as well as gender.


No abstract available


This study examines the impact on women of funding social programs through the tax system. It does so using the framework of tax expenditure analysis, which allows one to view any departure from the normative tax system (i.e., those basic rules, such as the tax rate and the tax unit, that comprise the revenue-raising part of the system) as a spending measure.

The analysis also takes into account the socio-economic realities of women's lives and concludes that many tax measures that are subsidies in respect of social programs do not benefit women to the same extent that they benefit men. Tax measures explored include the child care expense deduction, the Canada Child Tax Benefit, tax subsidies for retirement saving, the disability tax credit and tax relief for caregivers. The conclusion is that in many instances women have less access to these tax subsidies and, often, the amount they receive is less than the amount that men receive.

The study concludes with a list of issues that should be considered by those involved in the tax policy process in order to ensure that women are not disadvantaged in comparison to men when tax subsidies are used to fund social programs.

Work


Comparison of the effects of transitions into and out of employment between single mothers and married or cohabitating mothers. Transitions out of employment negatively affect single
mothers more, possibly because married mothers have consistently higher incomes.


Using evidence on variation in the gender gap in labor force participation rates (LFPR) across home country groups in the United States, this paper attempts to assess the role of two factors, human capital and culture, in explaining why cross-country differences exist in these gaps. While human capital factors play a limited role, as controlling for these factors does not eliminate variation in the gender gap in LFPR across home country groups, cultural factors, such as tastes regarding family structure and women's role in market versus home work, appear to be important. In particular, for first generation immigrants, I find that over half of the overall variation in the gender gap in LFPR across home country groups within the United States can be attributed to home country LFPR. This finding suggests that there must be a permanent, portable factor, i.e. culture, that is not captured by observed human capital measures and not related to labor market institutions, that affects outcomes. As the overall variation in the unadjusted gender gap in LFPR and the role of home country LFPR are smaller for second-and-higher generation immigrants, there exists evidence of cultural assimilation as well.


Using a new survey of Canadian job searchers, this paper attempts to measure the effect of employment equity laws on job search outcomes, and on perceptions of discrimination by both men and women. We find some evidence that employment equity coverage in a pre-separation job reduces the relative amount of time it takes women, versus men, to become re-employed. This effect operates largely through highly significant differences in the rate at which women and men are recalled to the pre-separation employer. We also find that employment equity coverage reduces the gender gap in the extent to which workers feel harmed by gender discrimination. Perhaps unfortunately, this primarily occurs via an increase in men's perceptions of being harmed, rather than a reduction in women's.


Compared to older women, young female job seekers are more than three times as likely to report that their ability to find a good new job is compromised by the simple fact that they are female. Why is this? In this paper we show, first, that young women's more frequent reports of gender-induced harm cannot be statistically attributed to any observed personal or job characteristics, or to any "objective" measure of discrimination computable in our data. Second, using new questions asked in a Canadian survey, we note that women's reports of gender-induced advantage, as well as men's reports of gender-induced harm, are also more prevalent among the young. Using a formal model of the reporting decision, we conclude that the most
likely cause of all these phenomena is a particular kind of age difference in reporting behavior: young people of both sexes are more likely than older people to interpret departures in either direction from gender-neutral treatment as causally affected by their gender. This may have important implications for future public support of antidiscrimination policies, and for the design of those policies.


No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available


Examines the legal situation of homeworkers. Homework is any form of remunerated work carried out in a private residence with the exception of caregivers, self-employed workers and workers in the agricultural sector.


Recent developments in the job market reveal a disturbing pattern characterized by job-poor growth. The kinds of jobs being created are undermining the foundation for middle class life in Canadian society. The middle is being hollowed out and an hour glass labour market created. This hour glass labour market is featured by a segment of the workforce enjoying an important measure of employment security and sufficiency of market-based incomes versus a larger and growing element of the labour force facing insufficiencies in employment security and/or labour market earnings.
The source of the growing gap in the Canadian labour market is the deteriorating quality of employment. The Canadian labour market has undergone profound restructuring over the last three decades. Influenced by the forces of globalization, rapid technological change and a radically altered public policy environment, contemporary employment patterns have been restructured away from full-time tenured forms of work in an economy featured by rising living standards and increased expectations, towards flexible forms of employment in a just-in-time economy marked by growing levels of employment contingency, economic polarization and social exclusion. Labour market polarization is jeopardizing the prospects for a secure foundation for family life in Canada.


No abstract available


No abstract available


The fourth edition of *Women in Canada* provides a comprehensive statistical profile of the evolving status of women in Canadian society, with details on their demographic characteristics, family arrangements, health, education, employment and unpaid work activity, income, housing, and criminal victimization. This 300 page report also includes separate sections describing the situations of immigrant women, women in the visible minority community, Aboriginal women and senior women. Supported by more than 65 key colour charts and 190 tables, this report presents a wealth of information in a clear and concise form.


No abstract available


Data.

No abstract available


A study by the Conference Board of Canada of nearly 400 organizations employing over one million Canadians found that nearly 60% of the organizations had not conducted a survey of their employees' benefit preferences.


No abstract available


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This report examines the impact of the CHST on the availability and affordability of child care services. Recommendations for policies and practices within the CHST context are presented.


The author documents how lone mothers' labour force participation shifted from being greater than married mothers in the 1970's to the opposite in the 1980's.


No abstract available


No abstract available

No abstract available


No abstract available


This report updates many of the findings of the 18-month report by describing the impacts of the supplement offer using information for 4,961 single parents who completed a survey about three years after they entered the study. The report also examines whether the supplement offer resulted in wage growth and stable employment.


The latest in a series, this 54-month report analyzes the effects of the Self-Sufficiency Project on the lives of the original group of long-term welfare recipients who participated in the program. The study is based on data collected four and a half years after participants first entered the program


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An empirical study of the impacts of the trends in the labour force (the increased use of non-standard, contingent working patterns) have on single/lone parents.


This book critically examines the changing landscape of Canadian social policy that is taking place as a result of the Liberal government's Social Security Review (SSR) and recent budgets. The objective is to provide an alternative venue to the "official" consultation process of the SSR, while at the same time providing input into the rebuilding of Canadian social programs. Major factors that led to the SSR are examined: the role of the Minister of Finance, the fiscal power and moral authority of the federal state in a decentralized nation, globalization and labour market restructuring, the concept of workfare, the impact on women, the role of "popular sector" groups and the future of the welfare state.


The effect of employment on women's psychological well being has become an important issue in the sociology of mental health. Although work-for-pay is thought to have an overall positive impact on women's psychological well being, not all women equally experience this positive effect. The objective of this study is to assess the effect of transitions in employment status on changes in psychological distress among women in two types of family setting: lone parent families and married couple families (including common-law unions). Using a framework which combines a longitudinal design with a structural equation modelling multigroup analysis, the current study indicates clearly that the employment transitions and employment stability have no uniform effect on the mental health of all mothers. Specifically, transition into employment offers a significant reduction in feelings of distress only among married mothers. Single mothers, in contrast are found to experience a significant increase in the level of distress when they move
out of employment. The results of this study point to some advantages of longitudinal research designs over cross-section designs.
I use a divorce-stress-adjustment perspective to summarize and organize the empirical literature on the consequences of divorce for adults and children. My review draws on research in the 1990s to answer five questions: How do individuals from married and divorced families differ in well-being? Are these differences due to divorce or to selection? Do these differences reflect a temporary crisis to which most people gradually adapt or stable life strains that persist more or less indefinitely? What factors mediate the effects of divorce on individual adjustment? And finally, what are the moderators (protective factors) that account for individual variability in adjustment to divorce? In general, the accumulated research suggests that marital dissolution has the potential to create considerable turmoil in people's lives. But people vary greatly in their reactions. Divorce benefits some individuals, leads others to experience temporary decrements in well-being, and forces others on a downward trajectory from which they might never recover fully. Understanding the contingencies under which divorce leads to these diverse outcomes is a priority for future research.


On the whole book: Twenty-six entries that explore the development, the functions, and the often devastating repercussions of mother-blaming in twentieth-century America. Many are by historians; pieces by literary scholars, psychologists, journalists, sociologists and legal scholars are also included.

The editors' beautifully-written introduction summarizes recent scholarship on motherhood, 1600–present; situates twentieth-century mother-blaming as the product of specific historic forces; and explains how the cultural misogyny undergirding mother-blame works to elide broader social analysis. The remainder of the volume demonstrates how mother-blame has functioned throughout the century.


Impact of childhood living arrangements on young adult life course factors such as high school completion, enrolment in post secondary education, residential independence, and entry into the
labour force. Compared with their peers reared by never-married mothers, illegitimate children reared by grandparents, or other kin, or in a stepfamily did not appear to lead more successful lives. Only when their mothers married their biological fathers or put them up for adoption did children born out of wedlock move significantly ahead of peers reared by never-married mothers.


Examines qualitative aspects of mother-child relationships, such as mothers being viewed as friends.


Children’s attainment is determined mostly by parental investment, and the effect of family structure on children’s socio-economic success is not expected to change over time.


No abstract available


We estimate the impact of family structure on investments made in children’s health, using data from the 1988 National Health Interview Survey Child Health Supplement. Controlling for household size, income and characteristics, we find that children living with step mothers are significantly less likely to have routine doctor and dentist visits, or to have a place for usual medical care, or for sick care. If children living with step mothers have regular contact with their birth mothers, however, their health care does not suffer relative to that reported for children who reside with their birth mothers. In addition to health investments, we find a significant effect of step mothers on health-related behaviors: children living with step mothers are significantly less likely to wear seatbelts, and are significantly more likely to be living with a cigarette smoker. We cannot reject that investments for children living with birth fathers and step mothers are the same as those made by birth fathers living alone with their children. Who invests in children’s health? It appears these investments are made, largely, by a child’s mother, and that step mothers are not substitutes for birth mothers in this domain.

Family conflict and structure as predictors of unemployment.


Children who live with both biological parents experience fewer behavioural problems than those who live only with their mother or with a stepfather. Maternal resources found to influence children’s well-being by affecting the shape of family and work conditions.


The relationship between children’s chronic illness and social class was found to be non-significant. Housing and family work status was, however, explanatory variables.


The authors find identity development to be negatively correlated with economic hardship; and positively correlated with psychological adjustment.


Do women and men play unique roles in shaping children’s well-being? If so, we should note important differences between offspring living with single mothers and those living with single fathers. To date, researchers have been unable to assess this claim satisfactorily because they have lacked generalizable data with detailed information about adolescents in both single-mother and single-father households. We compare well-being among youths living in single-mother and single-father households using the 1990 wave of the National Education Longitudinal Study and among adults raised by single parents using data from the General Social Surveys, 1972-1994. Our results highlight how single mothers and single fathers differ from each other in ways that often predate their family structure but suggest that there is little evidence that offspring are better off or develop particular characteristics in one household versus the other. We suggest that theorists have overemphasized the role of parent’s sex in youths’ development at the expense of
understanding more structural explanations for the association between family structure and well-being.


Timing of childhood poverty found to be important for educational outcomes.


Who Pays for the Kids? looks at how women bear a disproportionate amount of the costs of caring for children. Nancy Folbre demonstrates the inadequacies of traditional explanations for this inequality and offers an alternative analysis of individual choices within interlocking structures of constraint based on gender, sex, age, nation, race and class. Folbre maps out the complex relationship between the family, the market and the state. She compares political movements, state policies and social welfare in three regions of the world with very different race and class relations: the United States, Northwestern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. A brilliant synthesis of feminist theory and political economy, Who Pays for the Kids? explains why modern capitalist economies undervalue children and reinforce inequalities based on gender and age.


Looks at how families with children are treated at different income levels.


In comparison with mothers who had never received welfare, mothers who had been on Aid to Families with Dependent Children were more likely to be caring for at least 1 child with a chronic condition (37% vs 21%, respectively). Yet, they were more likely to lack sick leave for the entire time they worked (36% vs 20%) and less likely to receive other paid leave or flexibility. If current welfare recipients face similar conditions when they return to work, many will face working conditions that make it difficult or impossible to succeed in the labor force at the same time as meeting their children's health and developmental needs.


Children from divorced or separated families have higher levels of distress; this distress
diminishes over time. Children with higher levels of family income, and those whose mother had a high school education only, experienced lower levels of depression.


In this paper, we use newly available data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to investigate the effects of early motherhood on academic and behavioral outcomes for children born to early child bearers. We find that early motherhood's strong negative correlation with children's test scores and positive correlation with children's grade repetition is almost entirely explained by pre-birth individual and family background factors of teen mothers themselves. However, early childbearing is associated indirectly with reduced children's test scores through its linkage to family size (and thus to child birth order). We find a different pattern in predicting fighting, truancy, early sexual activity, and other problem behaviors among adolescent and young adult offspring. For these behaviors, maternal age-at-first-birth remains an important risk-factor even after controlling for a wide range of background factors and maternal characteristics. These results highlight the diverse pathways through which teen parenting might influence subsequent child well-being and social performance.


The purpose of this review is to place the changing economic circumstances of American children in proper perspective - a comparative one. The objective is to define and evaluate current absolute and relative definitions of children's changing economic deprivation and poverty. A comparative stance is necessary for accurately gauging the economic well-being of children across societies and for different subgroups of the population (e.g. racial and ethnic minority children). It is also required if we are to effectively monitor the changing well-being of children and measure the economic impact of public policy initiatives, including nascent state welfare reform legislation. This paper sets current policy debates within a broader historical or international perspective and identifies those factors or circumstances - such as the rise in female-headed families and declining real wages among less skilled young adults - that have contributed to the currently high levels of relative economic deprivation among children. Finally, this review stresses the increasingly important but often neglected topic of growing inequality in the economic circumstances of America's children.


No abstract available
Lundberg, Olle. “Childhood conditions, sense of coherence, social class and adult ill health: exploring their theoretical and empirical relations”. *Social Science and Medicine*. 44/6: 821-831.

Article demonstrates that class inequalities and adult health are influenced by childhood conditions and sense of coherence, not simply poverty.


No abstract available


More than half of all children in the current generation will live in a single-parent family—and these children will not fare as well as their peers who live with both parents. This is the clear and urgent message of this powerful book. Based on four national surveys and drawing on more than a decade of research, *Growing Up with a Single Parent* elucidates the connection between family structure and a child’s prospects for success.


No abstract available


We investigate the gap in math and science achievement of third- and fourth-graders who live with a single parent versus those who live with two parents in 11 countries. The United States and New Zealand rank last among the countries we compare in terms of the equality of achievement between children from single-parent families and those from two-parent homes. Following a multilevel analysis, we find single parenthood to be less detrimental when family policies equalize resources between single- and two-parent families. In addition, the single- and two-parent achievement gap is greater in countries where single-parent families are more prevalent. We conclude that national family policies can offset the negative academic outcomes of single parenthood.

No abstract available


Examines whether children who live with their same-sex parent are in a better situation than those who live with their oppositely-sexed parent and finds there is no benefit to living with the same-sex parent.


No abstract available


Children in step-families and lone-parent families found to have the same effects on children's emotional-behavioural outcomes. Family resources found to be a strong predictor of outcomes.


Both family law and social law have an impact on the situation of families. This has held true since the times of the "poor law" (when family law was certainly more relevant for the wealthy and mighty strata of the population). Nowadays, other rules (such as those of labor law and tax law) and welfare state institutions come into play. In analyzing legal change, this interaction between family law and welfare law has to be taken into account. From this perspective, this article endeavors to answer the following question: how do institutions distribute the costs of children in terms of money and work between various actors, and what is the relevance of the rules for gender inequalities? The changes in the similarities and differences of the institutional configurations in four countries (Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, Sweden, and United Kingdom) are reviewed for the past decades.

Mother's parenting skills and maternal depression had a great impact on externalizing and internalizing problems for boy children, and only affected externalizing problems for girls. Divorce increases girls' risk of depression.


Young people from single parent families experience more unemployment; poorer health; more relationship problems. Being a member of a two-parent family is more important to well-being that the number of structural transitions with which one has been confronted.


No abstract available


Children in high conflict families had greater internalising problems than children in low conflict families; family structure had little influence on internalising problems.

Education


No abstract available


A growing consensus is emerging that under PRWORA, more disadvantaged welfare recipients are failing to retain jobs and are not earning enough to rise above the poverty level, even when working full-time. In this study, I draw primarily on the experiences of welfare recipients who participated in JTPA programs to address the central research question: What are the most cost-
effective education and training services to aid individuals making the transition from welfare to economic self-sufficiency? The study findings suggest that if afforded access, formal on-the-job training and vocational training in technical/professional fields might substantially and cost-effectively increase the labor market success of more disadvantaged TANF recipients. Before or while they are engaged in these training activities, however, they need to acquire the basic educational skills that will enable their success in training and unsubsidized employment. Younger participants with little or no work experience or labor attachment, (and lower opportunity costs of participating), should be targeted for these services.


As concern about workers' skills has risen, so has interest in the role that government training programs might play in addressing 'America's workforce crisis.' One way to gauge whether increased reliance on these programs will substantially improve the skills of the workforce is to examine the impact of past programs. The evidence from these programs indicates that, although the gains were small, for the most part we got what we paid for. This outcome should not be surprising because investments in training were exceedingly modest compared to the skill deficiencies that policymakers have been trying to address. Copyright 1995 by American Economic Association.


The central goal of this project was to study poor single mother college students' views of the effect of some primary sociological factors (that is, support of other students, family, faculty, and university services) and psychological belief factors (that is, personal ambition, effort and discipline, prior knowledge and experience, and self-confidence) on their academic success. Another goal of this study was to assess whether or not some of the demographic characteristics (for example, number and age of children) of these students moderated their evaluations of the relative importance of these factors to their educational success.


No abstract available
General

No abstract available


Mothering and motherhood are the subjects of a rapidly expanding body of literature. Considered in this decade review are two predominant streams in this work. One is the theorizing of mothering and motherhood and the other is the empirical study of the mothering experience. Conceptual developments have been propelled particularly by feminist scholarship, including the increasing attention to race and ethnic diversity and practices. The conceptualizations of the ideology of intensive mothering and of maternal practice are among the significant contributions. Study of mothering has focused attention on a wide array of specific topics and relationships among variables, including issues of maternal well-being, maternal satisfaction and distress, and employment.

No abstract available

No abstract available


Due to changes in nonmarital fertility and unmarried cohabitation, the definitions of single-parent families should be based on living arrangements rather than on parents' marital status.

No abstract available

This paper uses data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study to examine the frequency of parent-child interaction in several areas across a range of family types. Overall, we find that few individual characteristics of mothers or fathers are consistently associated with how often parents engage in activities with their one-year-old children. The nature of parents' relationship, however, does appear to be important for parenting. Non-resident fathers exhibit significantly lower levels of interaction with their children in activities such as care giving, playing and cognitive stimulation, than resident fathers. In addition, the father's supportiveness toward the mother affects several mother-child and father-child activities. Future research with a larger sample and a greater number of comparable parenting items will be useful for improving our understanding of how mother-father relationships, mothers' parenting, and fathers' parenting are linked to each other and, ultimately, to children's wellbeing.


A vast number of studies have examined the predictors of marriage and marital dissolution, and more recent studies have explored entry into and exit from cohabiting unions. At the same time, much attention has been paid to the rise in nonmarital childbearing and single motherhood. Yet, far less is known about a topic at the intersection of these two research literatures, namely the predictors of union formation, stability and change among couples that have children outside of marriage. Much of the research on union formation does not include unwed parents or explore the link between the timing of childbearing and relationship transitions. Most of the research on single mothers has focused exclusively on the mother-child dyad, with little recognition of the potential or actual role of the father in the lives of mothers or children. New research shows that more than four-fifths of unmarried couples are in a romantic relationship at the time they have a child, and just under half are living together (McLanahan et al., forthcoming). These findings suggest that many unmarried parents and their children are in "family- like" relationships, at least initially. Thus, researcher need to consider the factors associated with both stability and change in parents? relationships over time.

Beyond its importance for family demography and sociology, the topic of family stability and change among unwed parents is particularly timely from a policy perspective because the 1996 welfare reform placed limits on the receipt of public assistance for mothers on welfare, the vast majority of whom are unmarried. Some policy analysts have suggested that marriage may obviate the economic disadvantage among low- income women. In order to understand the possible role for marriage, it is critical to understand the characteristics associated with entry into marital versus nonmarital unions, as well as factors that influence the relationship trajectories of couples that have a child outside of marriage. In this paper, we use new data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study to examine patterns of union formation among new unwed parents - first by looking at differences in parents? relationship status at birth, and
then by looking at what happens to relationships one year following the birth. This paper provides an initial investigation into family formation among unmarried parents; as additional data from the Fragile Families Study become available, we will be able to explore this topic using longitudinal data on the full sample.


Currently available data and concerns over the validity of mother reports significantly truncate the ability of researchers to address a myriad of research questions concerning father involvement. This study aims to inform this concern by examining predictors of father involvement and father-mother discrepancies in reports of involvement within a low-income, predominantly minority sample of families with both residential and nonresidential fathers (N = 228). Paired HLM models are used to control for the interrelation between pairs of reporters. Results indicate that although father and mother reports are similar, mothers consistently report lower levels of involvement than do fathers. Parental conflict, fathers' nonresidence, father age, as well as mother education and employment predicted greater discrepancy across father and mother reports. Implications for future research and policy are addressed.


Using data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS), we find that teenagers living in non-married families are less likely to graduate from high school or attend college, more likely to smoke or drink, and more likely to initiate sexual activity. However, not all non-married families are alike. In particular, teenagers living with their single mother and with at least one grandparent in a multigenerational household have developmental outcomes that are at least as good and often better than outcomes of teenagers in married families. These findings obtain controlling for a wide array of economic resources, parenting behavior, and home and school characteristics.


No abstract available

We look at fertility and economic outcomes of women with three types of nonmarital births and women who have marital births. The sample is from the National Survey of Families and Households. Net of controls, married and unmarried women with a recent birth are equally likely to have another birth. Never-married and previously married mothers are more likely to have another nonmarital birth than are other women. Additional nonmarital births to never-married women are associated with being on welfare, not being employed, and having low household income.


This study examines potential racial and ethnic differences in early adolescent girls’ desired and perceived normative role timing and the extent to which various socioeconomic and family factors and school and job aspirations might be linked with girls’ role-timing expectations. Using a racially and ethnically diverse sample, (n = 574; 183 Hispanics, 177 Blacks, 93 Whites, and 70 Southeast Asians; M age = 12.9), results indicated that young women of different races and ethnicities saw their life course unfold in different sequences based on different timetables and independent of their socioeconomic circumstances. Hispanics desired rapid transitions at a young age, and Southeast Asians desired more gradual transitions at an older age. Blacks perceived the greatest likelihood of nonmarital childbearing for themselves, the longest normative interval between first sex and first birth, but they desired the shortest interval between first marriage and first birth. Within-race regressions revealed that girls' future aspirations were important for their expected role timing, even within the context of socioeconomic disadvantage (welfare receipt, low family income). Findings suggest the importance of culture-specific age norms for motivating role timing and role sequencing in young women's lives. Young women of different races and ethnicities saw their life course unfold in different ways.


Calling for nothing less than a radical reform of family law and a reconception of intimacy, The Neutered Mother, the Sexual Family, and Other Twentieth Century Tragedies undertakes an ambitious and even revolutionary rethinking of the law's approach to the family.

This new book by one of America's foremost feminist legal theorists argues strongly against current legal and social policy discussions about the family because they do not have at their core the crucial concepts of caregiving and dependency, as well as the best interests of women and children.

Unlike other work focusing on similar themes, The Neutered Mother argues that is the nurturing tie between mother and child, and not the sexual bond between husband and wife, that should be protected and subsidized as the center of society's concern for the "family." Martha Fineman is
especially interested in pointing out the importance of nurturing work to the larger society as well as making a connection between mothering and other kinds of caregiving. She explains that the symbol of the child may stand for the elderly, the ill or the disabled just as the symbol of the mother is not strictly tied to gender--women can choose not to be mothers (or caretakers) and men can become mothers when they do the caregiving work associated with motherhood.

*The Neutered Mother* scrutinizes the definitions of family and mother throughout the volume while paying close attention to issues of race, class and sexuality. In addition, Fienman convincingly contests society's refusal to dignify, support and respond to the needs of caregivers and illustrates the burden they must bear due to this treatment.


Articulates a radical reconception of family: Rather than focusing on the bond between husband and wife, she proposed, society's first priority should be the tie between parent and child.


No abstract available


Through heartfelt and vivid accounts, *Mothering Against the Odds* illustrates the societal and personal barriers that challenge mothers from diverse, “untraditional” perspectives, as well as highlighting the unique strengths women use to overcome those barriers.


Since the mid-1970s, the number of single-parent families has increased greatly in the U.S., contributing to the nation's child poverty problem. In response, the federal government and various states have tried to increase child support payments from non-custodial parents. Using data from administrative records and from the child support modules in the Survey of Income Program and Participation (SIPP) and the April and March Current Population Surveys (CPS), we find that the proportion of never married mothers receiving child support rose sharply in the 1980s and 1990s, with the largest increases in states where child support payment were particularly modest. Using within-state variation over time to determine the effect of policy on
child support payments, we estimate that increased government expenditures on child support policies are responsible for about one fifth of the upward trend. Our results show that child support expenditures and tougher child support legislation policies work best in tandem. States that both increased expenditures and adopted tougher laws experienced the largest increase in the proportion of never married mothers receiving support.


No abstract available


Investigates impact of employment status and a nonspousal partner on the over-all well being of single mothers of children with developmental disabilities.


Young single mothers' human capital development and labor market participation are important issues of public policy concern in the United States. This article uses a dynamic approach to model the determinants of single mothers' entry into and exit from productive activities. Using 14 waves of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, the article shows that kin coresidence facilitates young single mothers' entry into productive activities but does not play a significant role in sustaining participation. Women's individual trainability, the local labor market conditions, child support, and some family background factors all play a role. The results also demonstrate the insignificance of race and never-married versus ever-married status. (Copyright by the University of Chicago. All rights reserved.)


In this paper, we examine the empirical implications of reputation formation using a game-theoretic model of intra-familial interactions. We consider parental reputation in repeated two-stage games in which daughters' decision to have a child as a teenager and the willingness of parents to continue to house and support their daughters give their decisions. Drawing on the work of Milgrom and Roberts (1982) and Kreps and Wilson (1982) on reputation in repeated games, we show that parents have, under certain conditions, the incentive to penalize teenage (and typically out-of-wedlock) childbearing of older daughters, in order to get the younger daughters to avoid teenage childbearing.
The two key empirical implications of this model is that the likelihood of teenage childbearing and parental transfers to a daughter who had a teen birth will decrease with the number of the daughter's sisters at risk. We test these two implications, using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979 Cohort (NLSY79), exploiting the availability of repeated observations on young women (daughters) and of observations on multiple daughters (sisters) available on this data. Controlling for daughter- and family-specific fixed effects, we find evidence of differential parental financial transfer responses to teenage childbearing by the number of the daughter's sisters and brothers at risk.


No abstract available


No abstract available


In this paper, we exploit a "natural experiment" associated with human reproduction to identify the effect of teenage childbearing on subsequent educational attainment, family structure, labor market outcomes, and financial self-sufficiency. In particular, we exploit the fact that a substantial fraction of women who become pregnant experience a miscarriage (spontaneous abortion) and thus do not have a birth. If miscarriages were purely random and if miscarriages were the only way, other than by live births, that a pregnancy ended, then women who had a miscarriage as a teen would constitute an ideal control group with which to contrast teenage mothers. Exploiting this natural experiment, we devise an Instrumental Variables (IV) estimators for the consequences of teenage mothers not delaying their childbearing, using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979 (NLSY79). Our major finding is that many of the negative consequences of not delaying childbearing until adulthood are much smaller than has been estimated in previous studies. While we do find adverse consequences of teenage childbearing immediately following a teen mother's first birth, these negative consequences appear short-lived. By the time a teen mother reaches her late twenties, she appears to have only slightly more children, is only slightly more likely to be a single mother, and has no lower levels of educational attainment than if she had delayed her childbearing to adulthood. In fact, by this age teen mothers appear to be better off in some aspects of their lives. Teenage childbearing appears to raise levels of labor supply, accumulated work experience, and labor market earnings, and appears to reduce the chances of living in poverty and participating in the associated social welfare programs. These estimated effects imply that the cost of teenage childbearing to U.S.
taxpayers is negligible. In particular, our estimates imply that the widely held view that teenage childbearing imposes a substantial cost on government is an artifact of the failure to appropriately account for preexisting socioeconomic differences between teen mothers and other women when estimating the causal effects of early childbearing. While teen mothers are very likely to live in poverty and experience other forms of adversity, our results imply that little of this would be changed just by getting teen mothers to delay their childbearing into adulthood.


Using the 1979 through 1998 waves of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women (NLSY), this paper provides evidence that women who lived in states with effective child support enforcement, measured by both strict child support legislation and high child support expenditure, were more likely to have marital births and less likely to have nonmarital births. The findings suggest that the deterrence effect of child support enforcement on men dominates the opposite effect on women. In addition, the impact of child support enforcement differed by racial and age groups. For black women, effective child support enforcement had a strong effect of decreasing nonmarital births, but not of increasing marital births. The impact, however, went the opposite way for white and/or post-teenage women.


In response to increases in cohabitation in the United States, researchers have recently focused on differences between cohabiting and marital unions. One of the more consistent findings in this emerging literature has been a higher rate of domestic violence among cohabiting couples. A prominent explanation for this finding is that cohabitors are not subject to the institutionalized social control mechanisms that may limit violent behavior within marriage. This article uses data from the National Survey of Families and Households (1987-88 and 1992-93) to explore an alternative explanation: differences in selection out of cohabitation and marriage, including the selection of cohabiters with the "best" relationships into marriage, lead cross-sectional samples to over-represent long-term cohabiters, who tend to have more troubled relationships. We find support for this explanation in evidence that there is no difference in the level of domestic violence found in married and cohabiting couples in the first year of the relationship but that violence increases at higher relationship durations in cohabitation.


No abstract available

No abstract available


A demonstration of how mother-blame has functioned throughout the century. See above.


No abstract available


Examines the path of emotional transmission in one-parent, mother-headed families. The transmission of anxiety to adolescent was most evident in families in which mothers had more stress and employed psychological control in their parenting; least evident when mothers spent more time alone.


Teenage pregnancy is widely viewed as a significant social problem. This book argues that much of the problem stems from inaccurate perceptions of what the problem is. The problem, according to the text, is not teenagers who want sex too soon but a society that offers too little, too late.


This paper evaluates the evidence regarding teens' sexual activity and birth-control use with an emphasis on the contribution of economic analysis. Researchers in other disciplines often view teen sexual activity as spontaneous and irrational, so that teen pregnancies are often considered "mistakes." Economists' focus on the costs and benefits of alternative actions leads them to view sexual activity and contraceptive use as "decisions." After documenting recent trends, I review the research on these activities from both economists and other social scientists. I then present the results of two empirical exercises. The first estimates the relationship between a multitude of
individual and family characteristics and the likelihood that a teen engages in sexual activity and uses contraception. The second examines whether changes in the costs of sexual activity and contraceptive use are related to changes in these behaviors. The results support the view that costs matter, implying that there is some underlying decision process. The analysis then proceeds to examine the cost of teen childbearing by reviewing evidence regarding the subsequent well-being of women who became mothers in their teens. The final section utilizes the results of this analysis to help evaluate possible policies designed to reduce the level of unprotected sexual activity by teens.


Using data from the American 1970-1995 Current Population Surveys, the author examines trends in single mothers’ living arrangements. The author corrects for the problem of undercounting subfamily heads living with their parents. The data show a large increase in the rate of cohabitation and a decline in living independently.


This anthology (Hutter) is designed to broaden student awareness of the increasing diversity of American families, and to promote discussion of related social policies, legal issues, and trends. The 32 readings avoid unnecessary jargon as they reflect on the dynamics of gender, race, class, and ethnicity as they pertain to marriage and family. Hutter (Rowan U.) edits the fourth edition which contains a new preface and 18 new readings covering topics including Internet dating, the Internet and family relations, wives and families of professional baseball players, single parenthood by choice, divorce, and fatherhood.


Investigation of the extent and implications of cohabitation and marriage among welfare recipients.


This study extends feminist analysis to economics. As well as evaluating the core models of neoclassical economics, this text includes case studies in topics such as the theory of the family, income tax policy and macroeconomics. It presents the outlines of a less gender-biased discipline and rejects alternatives like discarding all current economic practice, or setting up an economics solely for women or for "women's issues".

110
Although one of the most marked demographic trends observed over the twentieth century is the increased rate of divorce, relatively little research has explored the effects of these changing marital patterns in the context of an aging society. Our findings suggest that divorce has deleterious effects on intergenerational transfers, particularly for elderly fathers. Remarriage further reduces exchange. Our results reveal that parents engage in lower levels of transfers with stepchildren relative to biological children. Moreover, intergenerational transfers are sensitive to characteristics of biological children but not to those of stepchildren. Taken together, these results suggest that exchange at the end of the life course continues to be adversely affected by marital disruption.


No abstract available


This article examines the production of new narratives of ‘selfish motherhood’ in family law, in the context of disputes about parent-child contact after separation. In the first section, I draw on my empirical research of contact enforcement litigation to tease out the contradictions and gaps between the dominant, or ‘stock’, stories of contact disputes, and some ‘counter’ stories that have emerged from the study. The second part of the article looks at the ways in which recent shared parenting reforms have combined with particular features of the Australian family law system to create a new classification of ‘bad’ parent - the ‘no-contact mother’. The analysis focuses on the constraining effects of this reconstruction upon women who raise concerns about a father’s capacity to care for the children.


No abstract available


No abstract available

No abstract available


We use data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study to describe the living arrangements of new, unwed mothers and to examine the determinants of those living arrangements. Our analysis goes beyond previous studies in several ways. First, we examine a wide diversity of living arrangements for a homogenous sample of recent, unwed mothers. Second, our analysis of the determinants of single mothers’ living arrangements includes information on fathers as well as mothers’ characteristics. We also have data on the quality of the parents’ relationship. Previous studies have lacked information on the characteristics of non-resident fathers and couple relationships, both of which are likely to affect decisions about living arrangements. We find that the characteristics of both partners have significant and, sometimes different, effects on the living arrangements of single mothers. In addition, women who reported being in a high quality, supportive relationship were much more likely to cohabit. These findings highlight the importance of looking beyond strictly human capital explanations of marriage, cohabitation, and living arrangements. Emotional capital may be equally, if not more important, than human capital to the development of successful relationships.


No abstract available


Of *Families in the US: Kinship and Domestic Politics*: This engaging collection of essays attempts to do justice to the complexity of contemporary families and to situate them in their economic, political, and cultural contexts. The editors introduce this wide-ranging collection with a provocative analytical introduction, setting the stage with a recognition that families may look very different even to those inside the same family. These cutting-edge scholars explore the ways in which family life is gendered and reflect on the work of maintaining family and kin relationships, especially as social and family power structures change over time.

Struening, Karen. “Feminist challenges to the new familialism: lifestyle experimentation and

Although one of the most marked demographic trends observed over the twentieth century is the increased rate of divorce, relatively little research has explored the effects of these changing marital patterns in the context of an aging society. Our findings suggest that divorce has deleterious effects on intergenerational transfers, particularly for elderly fathers. Remarriage further reduces exchange. Our results reveal that parents engage in lower levels of transfers with stepchildren relative to biological children. Moreover, intergenerational transfers are sensitive to characteristics of biological children but not to those of stepchildren. Taken together, these results suggest that exchange at the end of the life course continues to be adversely affected by marital disruption.


No abstract available


This article examines the production of new narratives of 'selfish motherhood' in family law, in the context of disputes about parent-child contact after separation. In the first section, I draw on my empirical research of contact enforcement litigation to tease out the contradictions and gaps between the dominant, or 'stock', stories of contact disputes, and some 'counter' stories that have emerged from the study. The second part of the article looks at the ways in which recent shared parenting reforms have combined with particular features of the Australian family law system to create a new classification of 'bad' parent - the 'no-contact mother'. The analysis focuses on the constraining effects of this reconstruction upon women who raise concerns about a father's capacity to care for the children.

Sawhill, I. V. "Is lack of marriage the real problem?" *The American Prospect,* 13, April 8. 2002.

No abstract available


No abstract available

No abstract available


We use data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study to describe the living arrangements of new, unwed mothers and to examine the determinants of those living arrangements. Our analysis goes beyond previous studies in several ways. First, we examine a wide diversity of living arrangements for a homogenous sample of recent, unwed mothers. Second, our analysis of the determinants of single mothers' living arrangements includes information on fathers as well as mothers' characteristics. We also have data on the quality of the parents' relationship. Previous studies have lacked information on the characteristics of nonresident fathers and couple relationships, both of which are likely to affect decisions about living arrangements. We find that the characteristics of both partners have significant and, sometimes different, effects on the living arrangements of single mothers. In addition, women who reported being in a high quality, supportive relationship were much more likely to cohabit. These findings highlight the importance of looking beyond strictly human capital explanations of marriage, cohabitation, and living arrangements. Emotional capital may be equally, if not more important, than human capital to the development of successful relationships.


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Struening, Karen. "Feminist challenges to the new familialism: lifestyle experimentation and
The new familialists argue that the decline of the intact two-parent family is responsible for our most pressing social problems and advocate public policies designed to promote family stability and discourage divorce and non-marital births. This essay defends the freedom of intimate association and argue that family stability, while an important good, must be balanced with other goods such as equality and justice within the family, happiness, and individual self-development.


Examines single mothers’ patterns and determinants of residential mobility between poor and non-poor neighbourhoods. Findings include: moving from a poor to a nonpoor neighbourhood is facilitated by marrying and obtaining employment; ins impeded by age and home ownership. African American single mothers are less likely to escape poor neighbourhoods.


No abstract available


No abstract available


This article is concerned with evaluating the usefulness of *Foucault’s discourse theory* in relation to the study of how *lone mothers* might make sense of and negotiate their lives within and through the network of *power relations* as disseminated through discourse. I argue that despite its strident critics, Foucauldian analysis is politically relevant and has utility for feminism in that it allows for small scale, in depth consideration of discourse, power relations and the subject. I consider some of the contemporary discourses surrounding one case in particular, that of Heidi Colwell, who had left her two year old daughter "home alone" whilst she went to work each day. I reveal the complexity and diversity of the relations between the lone mother and the discourses that constitute her. The latter part of the article examines the contemporary political significance of *needs discourse* and argues that the quantitative framework of needs interpretation is inadequate to address the needs of lone mothers. The article concludes by advocating for reform of *social policy* and *family law* so that the needs of lone mothers and their children are taken into

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consideration and responded to in a way that is more beneficial to women and their families.


This paper uses newly available information from the Fragile Families and Child Well-Being Survey to investigate how unmarried mothers' and fathers' expectations about marriage, in addition to their socio-economic and demographic characteristics, are related to transitions to marriage in the year following their child's birth. It also investigates factors that are associated with unmarried parents' expectations about marriage. The results show that mothers and fathers with higher expectations about marriage at the time of their child's birth were significantly more likely to marry between the time of the baseline and follow-up interview. After taking expectations into account, African-American mothers and fathers are less likely to marry, and parents at higher educational levels were more likely to marry, than other parents. We also find that relationship, gender, and socio-economic variables are important predictors of parents' expectations about marriage. However, these variables have somewhat different effects among mothers and fathers.


No abstract available


No abstract available


An economic modelling of fertility and marriage to help understand the growth of 'out-of-wedlock' childbearing. Fathers shift the costs of child rearing to single mothers. Uses language like “if females are in excess supply”.


No abstract available

Argues against views that regard the "intact two-parent heterosexual family" as the preferred family form.


No abstract available

**Health**


Embedded in the family narrative is a lucid analysis of the gaps, inconsistencies, and inequalities the poor face when they seek health care. This book reveals what health care policies crafted in Washington, D. C. or state capitals look like when they hit the street. It shows how Medicaid and Medicare work and don't work, the Catch-22s of hospital financing in the inner city, the racial politics of organ transplants, the failure of childhood immunization programs, the vexed issues of individual responsibility and institutional paternalism.


Many states in the midst of budget problems cut state funding to health care programs that aid women.


The increased risk of infant mortality associated with single motherhood is neither consistent among social and demographic subgroups nor inevitable, according to data from national linked birth and infant death files for 1983-1985. Maternal age is the only variable found to have a significant interaction with marital status among black mothers, and the risk associated with unmarried status increases with age. Among white mothers, age, educational level and receipt of prenatal care all show significant interactions with marital status; the increased risks of infant mortality attributed to unmarried motherhood are concentrated among subgroups usually thought to be at lower risk. For example, the risks of infant mortality among unmarried white women relative to married white women are highest among 25-29-year-olds. However, being unmarried did not affect the risk of infant mortality among babies born to college-educated white women.
Linked birth and death certificates were used in the analysis of data for 1983 to 1985 on singleton live births to Black and White women. The sample included 1,656,044 Blacks and 8,691,059 Whites. Marital status data was available directly for 41 states and inferred for the remainder from certificate information. Risk factors were age, parity, education, initiation of prenatal care, and urban residence. Differences by race converged when marital status was considered separately. Educational status of unmarieds was similar for White and Black women. High infant mortality of over 20/1000 live births was found among unmarried Black women: women with over 3 children, women under 18 and over 34 years old, women with under 12 years of education, and women with later or no prenatal care. Increased risk of death was related to increasing age of the mother regardless of race. Risk of infant mortality was 24% higher for Black women over 35 years old than those less than 18-19 years old. The risk for unmarrieds began with adolescents, rose, and plateaued at 30 years old. Black unmarrieds had increased risk at 20-24 years, a peak at 25-29 years, and high levels for older women. White unmarrieds had the highest risk at ages 25-29, and risk associated with being single was greater for women with some college education. The caveat for the analysis was that the information was dated by 10 years; however other linked data in 1987 has been determined to be quite similar in trends. A strong finding was that unmarried status alone is not a good predictor and when combined with risk among disadvantaged women may not be a critical factor, since most unmarried women have high poverty rates. Race was considered a stronger marker of risk for infant mortality than marital status. Recommendations were for universal access to health care regardless of marital status and elimination of punitive measures restricting benefits to unmarried mothers. Programs need to build on the strengths of single mothers and promote social support systems.


This finding looks at the relationship between union type (cohabitation versus marriage) and depression. Cohabitors’ depression levels are about 2.8 points higher than their married counterparts’ levels. Depression in cohabiting unions is due to poor relationship quality, especially relationship instability.


This study examined the effect of stress and social support on the relationship between single-parent status and depression. METHOD: A secondary data analysis of the 1994-95 National Population Health Survey was conducted. Single and married mothers who participated in the survey were derived from the general sample (N = 2,921). Logistic regression techniques were used to assess the mediating and moderating effects of stress and social support on the relationship between family structure and depression. RESULTS: Bivariate analyses showed that, compared to married mothers, single mothers were more likely to have suffered an episode
of depression (12-month prevalence), to report higher levels of chronic stress, more recent life events and a greater number of childhood adversities. Single mothers also reported lower levels of perceived social support, social involvement and frequency of contact with friends and family than married mothers. The results of the multivariate analyses showed that, together, stress and social support account for almost 40% of the relationship between single-parent status and depression. We also found a conditional effect of stress on depression by family structure. Life events were more strongly related to depression in married than in single mothers.

CONCLUSIONS: A substantial part of the association between single-parent status and depression can be accounted for by differences in exposure to stress and social support. Our results suggest that it is important to examine multiple sources of stress, as exposure to both distal and proximal stressors were higher among single mothers. Limitations and directions for future research are discussed.


This paper examines the use of mental health care services by single mothers and married mothers in Canada. Method We employ a secondary data analysis of the 1994-95 National Population Health Survey. Results Single mothers are significantly more likely to have seen a professional regarding their mental health in the previous 12 months and to use such services more frequently than married mothers. Multivariate analyses show that higher use among single mothers is independent of depression and sociodemographic factors. Further analysis revealed that single mothers have a higher rate of contact with professionals than married mothers and that the relationship between single parent status and frequency of contact is moderated by depression. Conclusion Single mothers are more likely to seek professional help for mental health issues. While qualifying for a diagnosis has some important conditional effects on the frequency of use among single mothers, neither major depression nor controlling for sociodemographic factors accounts for their higher use of services.


With data from the American National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, this study quantifies the effect of single mothers’ health problems on job loss and finds health problems to be the strongest predictor, next to the birth of a child, of job loss. The study calls for increases in the availability of paid leave and schedule flexibility.


No abstract available

Although fewer Black women have heart disease, their greater economic isolation, residential segregation and female-headship rates affect mortality. Black women are concentrated in neighbourhoods with the highest rates of female-headship, poverty and unemployment.


No abstract available


Investigates trends and susceptibilities for suicide. Finds family household factors contribute.


When a woman in the United States becomes pregnant or tries to become pregnant, she enters a world of information, technology, and expertise. Suddenly her body becomes public in a new way: medicine, law, and popular culture all offer her sometimes contradictory “expert” advice. *Confinements* explores the advice offered to pregnant and infertile women by examining assumptions about femininity, class, and the reproductive body that structure the language of expertise. Even advice books written from a specifically countercultural or feminist point of view often attempt to police the way women think about their bodies.

*Confinements* argues that our perceptions about both pregnancy and infertility are limited by our culture’s battles over the meaning of choice and control, arguments over what is natural or unnatural, and the troubled relationship between reproduction and the domestic sphere. The book breaks new ground in its analysis of gender, health, and reproduction. -- The first book to analyze the rhetoric of contemporary advice books on reproduction, with special attention to race and class. -- The first book to show how the contemporary rhetoric about pregnancy and infertility are linked. -- The authors’ personal experiences, included in the text, make the book accessible to all readers.

Two studies were conducted to investigate the lessons about relationship commitment that people gain from their families of origin. In the first study, participants identified a story from their families of origin that characterized a number of themes about commitment. In the second study, these themes were further refined to reveal eight factors underlying these themes: dedication to partner, constraints on relationships, relationships are impermanent, disillusionment, family and gender influences, approaching relationships with caution, relationships take work, and divorce has negative consequences. Ratings of the themes varied by the occurrence of parental divorce, perceived parental marital happiness, and gender. Commitment lessons remembered from families of origin also were associated with the participants' reported level of commitment in their current relationships. Implications for current theory on commitment are discussed.


Survey respondents from disorderly neighbourhoods reported higher levels of depression. The breakdown of social order, due to increase in lone-parent family types, is a major link between neighbourhood disadvantage and depression.


BACKGROUND: Previous studies suggest that single mothers are at a higher risk of major depression and more likely to use mental health services than are married mothers. The objectives of this analysis were to provide estimates of the prevalence of major depressive syndrome among single and married mothers, to investigate the factors which may affect the difference in the prevalence of major depressive syndrome among single and married mothers and to estimate the health care service utilization by single and married mothers. METHODS: This was a cross-sectional study using the data from the 1996-97 Canadian National Population Health Survey (NPHS). Major depressive syndrome was evaluated using the Composite International Diagnostic Interview-Short Form for major depression. The prevalence of major depressive syndrome was calculated among 3030 single and 10195 married mothers. The effects of demographic, socioeconomic and biological variables on the association between single-mother status and major depressive syndrome were evaluated by stratified analyses. RESULTS: In the NPHS, the difference between single and married mothers in the prevalence of major depressive syndrome was found among women who were between the ages of 25 and 50. The association in this age group depended on race and on whether they had one or more jobs. Education, problem drinking, daily smoking, having one or more long-term medical illnesses, financial hardship and social support did not affect the association between single-mother status and major depressive syndrome. Single mothers were more likely to visit health professionals for mental problems than were married mothers. CONCLUSION: The difference between single and married mothers in the prevalence of major depression is age-specific. Single mothers who
reported having had one or more jobs and who are non-white had an increased risk of having major depressive syndrome, compared to married mothers. Future studies need to replicate the findings of this analysis and investigate why single mothers with ethnic minority backgrounds and those who are working are at high risk of having depressive disorders.


Data from the American Survey of Income and Program Participation are used to investigate ways in which health status influences a single mother's decision to work; the effect of health on work effort and wage; impact of a single mother's children's health on her availability to work; and impact of health on the values of insurance and Medicaid associated with work and AFDC participation.

**Poverty and Low-Income**


Explains the American Psychological Association's call for more research on poverty and provides a literature review of research, particularly feminist research, on poverty and psychology.


In this article we examine gender gaps in poverty in the United States and seven other Western nations, asking how single motherhood, market earnings, and welfare states affect gender inequality in poverty. Our analyses speak to the theoretical literature emphasizing the gendered logic and effects of welfare states and labor markets. We find that single-mother families have higher poverty rates than other families in all nations except Sweden, though the degree of their poverty varies. Regarding welfare states, we find that the tax and transfer systems in Sweden and the Netherlands most effectively reduce gender inequality in poverty. Gender inequality in market earnings is worst in the Netherlands and Australia, though among full-time workers, Australia has the lowest gender gap. We conclude by discussing the policy issues raised by our findings.
Connolly, Deborah. *Homeless Mothers: Face to Face with Women and Poverty*. University of Minnesota Press 2002

Homeless Mothers follows the lives of mothers on the margins and asks where they fit into the increasingly black-and-white model of motherhood set up by society. Their voices, so rarely heard and so often ignored, resonate throughout this book. Both an anthropologist in the field and a social worker on the job, Deborah R. Connolly is ideally placed to draw out these women's life stories. Using their own words, by turns eloquent and awkward, poignant and harsh, she maps the perilous territory between the promise of childhood and the hard reality of motherhood on the street. What emerges is a glimpse of the cultural, class, gender, and economic challenges these women experience, a glimpse as real for us as the headlines and stereotypes that so often displace homeless mothers and consign them to silence.


No abstract available


A primary goal of the landmark 1996 welfare reform legislation is to increase marriage rates among unskilled women with children. Current theories of marriage under-predict the extent of non-marriage, have not been adequately tested, or do not apply well to women with low-socioeconomic status. Furthermore, scholarly work on marriage attitudes among low-SES women suffers from a lack of up-to-date qualitative work. This study draws on qualitative interviews with 292 low-income single mothers in three U.S. cities. Inductive analysis reveals five primary motivations for non-marriage among low-income single mothers. Most mothers agree that potential marriage partners must earn significantly more than the minimum wage, but also emphasize the importance of stability of employment, source of earnings, and the effort men expend to find and keep their jobs. Mothers place equal or greater emphasis on non-monetary factors such as how marriage may diminish or enhance status, how it may limit their control over household decisions, their distrust of men, and their fear of domestic violence. The author discusses these findings in relation to existing theories of marriage and in light of welfare reform.


No abstract available

To find out how humans live and survive in minimum-wage America--particularly women who were at the time about to be pushed into the labor market because of "welfare reform"--writer Barbara Ehrenreich moved three times, from Florida to Maine to Minnesota, and worked as a waitress, a hotel maid, a house cleaner, a nursing home aide, and a Wal-Mart employee. The "rules" of her project (1) prohibited her from falling back on skills available to her because of her education (a PhD in biology) or previous work (an essayist with 11 books); (2) required that she take the highest-paying job offered to her and do her best to keep it; and (3) dictated that she take the cheapest accommodations she could find. The idea was to spend a month in each setting and to see if she could find a job and make enough money to pay a second month's rent. The book, then, tells her story of trying to make ends meet, what "millions of Americans do ... every day, and with a lot less fanfare and dithering."


The report shows that children (persons under 18) were more likely than non-elderly adults (persons 18 to 64) to remain poor over a two-year period. According to author T. J. Eller, The differences in chronic poverty are striking. Eight percent of children versus 3 percent of non-elderly adults were poor in all 14 months of 1992 and 1993. About 5 percent of the elderly population (persons 65 and over) were chronically poor during the same period.


No abstract available


During recent decades, the rate of nonmarital childbearing among women aged 20 and older has increased steadily. Despite this increase, little is known about the economic status of the women involved and how it compares with that of their married counterparts or of teen mothers. This study examines the experiences of a sample of women drawn from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics; it assesses the economic situation of these women before and after giving birth. In general, the economic situation of older, single mothers is closer to that of teen mothers than that of married childbearers the same age. The results presented here also reveal substantial variation among older, single mothers. In particular, we find that these women fare better when they are
White, 25 years old and older, did not begin having children as teenagers, or are cohabiting.


This paper uses data from the experimental evaluation of SSP to examine the effect on marriage of an alternative to the mainstream cash welfare system, an alternative that is contingent on work and removes the usual welfare marriage disincentive on marital behaviour among single-parent welfare recipients.


A firsthand look at how single mothers with the slimmest of resources manage from day to day. We witness their struggles to balance work and motherhood and watch as they negotiate a bewildering maze of child-care and social agencies.

For three years the authors followed the lives of fourteen women from poor Boston neighborhoods, all of whom had young children and had been receiving welfare intermittently. We learn how these women keep their families on firm footing and try--frequently in vain--to gain ground. We hear how they find child-care and what they expect from it, as well as what the childcare providers have to say about serving low-income families. Holloway and Fuller view these lives in the context of family policy issues touching on the disintegration of inner cities, welfare reform, early childhood and "pro-choice" poverty programs.


In this paper, we examine household savings using data from the National Longitudinal Survey, Cohort 1997. This data set provides detailed information about assets and liabilities of parents with teen-age children. In our empirical work, we have first to deal with several problems in measuring wealth. While many responding parents report owning assets and liabilities, they often do not report their values. To get around the non-response problem, we impute the missing values for assets and liabilities. To study the patterns of accumulation of young parents, we examine wealth holdings and asset ownership across several demographic groups.


Based on interviews with 30 women. The eleven chapters are organized around the themes that emerged from these interviews.


The author examines the consequences of poverty for adults, including morbidity, mortality rates, life expectancy, marriage likelihood, and marital instability; and for children, including physical health and behavioural problems. She considers structural factors that influence resiliency and suggests policy interventions.


With welfare reauthorization imminent, many conservative politicians are suggesting that although states have been successful at moving welfare mothers into paid employment, they have paid too little attention to the second goal of welfare reform - encouraging the formation of two-parent families. Using data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, we compare the characteristics and earnings capacities of married and unmarried parents and explore the extent to which marriage to their babies' fathers would lift unwed mothers out of poverty. We find that unmarried parents are vastly different from married parents when it comes to age, education, health status and behavior, employment, and wage rates. These differences translate into important differences in earnings capacities, which, in turn, translate into differences in poverty. Proponents of marriage are overstating its benefits when they compare the median earnings or poverty rates of single mother families to those of married, two-parent families. Assuming the same family structure, labor supply, and wage schedule, our estimates, suggest that much of that difference can be attributed to factors other than marital status.


This paper investigates the persistence of poverty over individuals' lifetimes using a hazard rate, or spells approach. Previous research on poverty dynamics using the spells approach has been limited by its failure to take into account multiple episodes of poverty. I estimate hazard models for exiting from and for returning to poverty and use the estimated parameters to calculate distributions of total time spent in poverty over multiple spells, using longitudinal data from the...
Panel Study of Income Dynamics. These models incorporate observable personal and household characteristics, as well as unobserved heterogeneity. My findings emphasize the importance of considering multiple spells in an analysis of poverty persistence. For black and white individuals falling into poverty in some year, approximately 50 and 30 percent, respectively, will have family income below the poverty line in at least five of the next ten years. A single spells approach predicts comparable figures of only 26 and 13 percent. To check the robustness of these predictions I also utilize two alternative approaches -- direct tabulations from panel data and estimation of a components-of-variance model -- and compare predictions of poverty persistence based on the three methods.


No abstract available


As the gender gap in pay between women and men has been narrowing, the 'family gap' in pay between mothers and nonmothers has been widening. One reason may be the institutional structure in the United States, which has emphasized equal pay and opportunity policies but not family policies, in contrast to other countries that have implemented both. The authors now have evidence on the links between one such family policy and women's pay. Recent research suggests that maternity leave coverage, by raising women's retention after childbirth, also raises women's levels of work experience, job tenure, and pay. Copyright 1998 by American Economic Association.


Prospective income histories and retrospective parental histories from the American National Longitudinal Survey of Youth are used to determine if the effect of family instability on premarital births is an artefact of low, unstable or declining family income.

Social Networks and Independence


No abstract available

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The effect of alternative family structures on children's educational and occupational success in the U.S. has been constant over the past 30 years. Higher rates of unemployment and lower-status occupational positions could account for the negative effect of single-mother families on children's attainment throughout the period. Children from single-father families and stepfamilies have consistently had lower attainments than children from both two-biological-parent and single-mother families. The influence of many other dimensions of children's family background declined from the 1960s to the 1980s, but has declined no further since. Among six candidate theoretical frameworks, the findings are most consistent with an evolutionary view of parental investment.


This article specifies the effects of different types of family backgrounds on the two outcomes of interest: occupational attainment and intergenerational occupational resemblance. We use the same data as Biblarz and Raftery (1993). We survey four perspectives, or hypotheses, on the effect of alternative family structures on children. These hypotheses are not necessarily competing or mutually exclusive, but each emphasizes the importance of a different dimension of family structure in affecting children - such as parental gender composition and biological/nonbiological relation to the child.


No abstract available


This article discusses findings from an on-going study of 50 single mothers by choice: women aged 21 to 50 when they become mothers, who are self-supporting economically, and who have chosen to become mothers as unmarried women. The interviews include women (both heterosexual and lesbian) who vary widely by race and social class. We argue that this group of women demonstrate ways of maintaining economic self-sufficiency—relying neither on the state nor on a male "provider"—through creative efforts at networking, resource sharing, and non-economic exchanges. We find that the route the women take to motherhood (adoption, known donor pregnancies, anonymous donor insemination, or "accidental" pregnancy) has a strong impact on the makeup of specific kin relationships between the mothers, their children, and
others; yet all the mothers strategically forge or foster close ties which enable them to raise their children independently.


Data are used from a random sample of African-American families living in poor urban communities to address three questions: 1) How well do socialization, supervision, and marital transition hypotheses explain the relationship between family structure and the probability of sexual debut and pregnancy for black adolescents in disadvantaged neighborhoods? 2) How does the quality of the parent-child relationship relate to the probability of initiating sex and experiencing a pregnancy for girls in these neighborhoods? And 3) given a context of structural disadvantage, to what extent is an individual’s ability to participate in the more socially organized aspects of her community correlated with delayed sexual activity? There is limited support for socialization, supervision, and marital transition hypotheses as explanations for the probability of sexual debut and pregnancy. Stronger parent-child relationships are associated with delayed sexual onset, but are not related to pregnancy experience. Adolescents’ perceptions of social support and cohesion among neighborhood adults are correlated with a decreased probability of pregnancy, while the odds of pregnancy are higher for teenagers with no working adults in their social networks.


No abstract available


No abstract available


Examines the influence of mate availability on the timing of a young woman’s first marriage and premarital childbearing. For example, an abundance of males increases the rate of exit from single motherhood.

No abstract available

Welfare and Social Policies


No abstract available


Discussion of women’s poverty and the welfare policies that the United States has adopted. A brief history of anti-poverty is included as well as suggestions for alternative policies that could keep women out of poverty and closer to gender equality.


Since the passage of federal welfare reform in late 1996, 15 states have passed welfare residency requirements that restrict cash assistance to new migrants, an indication that welfare-induced migration concerns state policy-makers. Models of state welfare policy-making assume that states compete in a ‘race-to-the-bottom’ over the generosity of their welfare policies, where neighboring states continuously reduce benefit levels in reaction to one another. This paper analyzes longitudinal data on individual-level migration among single-parent families and estimates the extent to which these families make interstate moves to states with higher benefit levels. We find that relatively few single-parent households make interstate moves and that welfare benefits are not a significant determinant of them. We discuss the implications of these findings for models of state welfare policy-making.


One page of recommendations.

Focused on bureaucratic oppression of poor women and children due to welfare reform measures. Blends the views of the poor, agency personnel, and feminists to further her argument that conformity to the system is vital to protect against involuntary removal of children.


Recent changes to programs of income support for the poor have focused attention on how work requirements and incentives affect earnings and employment of welfare recipients. The predominant way of thinking of these issues, at least in broader political discourse, assumes that obtaining work or improving wages are desirable goals for welfare recipients and their families. However, recent research has begun to indicate that single parents and their families are not always better off in the labor force. This paper uses the 1991 and 1992 panels of the Survey of Income and Program Participation to examine welfare, work and well-being in a broader context. The paper finds an apparent advantage of work over welfare for most households, but not for single parent households. In addition, material hardship is found to have strong effects on subsequent labor market participation and welfare use.


Concludes how incentives can be a triple-winner by increasing work and earnings boosting income and reducing poverty. * Have hard copy


Faces of Poverty describes the circumstances of living poor for America's women and children. The pages show the interplay between policy and human lives and make a complex problem comprehensible through the stories of five American families. At a time when our nation's leaders are calling for reform of the welfare system, this book provides valuable information about the families affected by these changes while offering solutions to a perplexing American dilemma.


The economic theory of marriage suggests that more generous welfare benefits should serve to
reduce the probability of marriage among m others who have given birth out of wedlock. This relationship is explored using data on never-married mothers in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. Only very limited evidence indicates that higher welfare payments lower the probability of marriage for non-Black never-married mothers. For Black never-married mothers, the results suggest that higher benefits are associated with higher marriage rates.


This paper uses state panel data to investigate changes in public assistance caseloads. Compared to other research, it uses more extensive data, both across states and over time; it utilizes a particularly rich set of control variables; it investigates the different subcomponents of the AFDC program separately; and it investigates the extent to which changes in caseloads are driven by changes in take-up rates versus in eligibility. The results indicate that an unexplained increase in AFDC-Basic caseloads started in the mid-1980s. This trend appears to be driven by three underlying components: a rise in child-only cases, an increase in take-up rates over the early 1990s during the economic slowdown, and a long-term increase in eligibility which is not well explained by a large set of control variables. In contrast, AFDC-UP caseload changes are relatively well-explained by the model in this paper and are far more responsive to economic factors. Recent state policy changes are correlated with caseload declines, but more than half of their affect appears to precede their implementation, suggesting that other changes in client and caseworker behavior was occurring in states that adopted major policy changes.


Passage of the landmark federal welfare reform legislation in 1996 presented states and localities with a set of dramatic and far-reaching choices about how to restructure the public assistance programs that serve some of the nation’s most vulnerable families. Published as part of MDRC’s ReWORKing Welfare series, this how-to guide draws on the results of dozens of rigorous MDRC studies of state and local innovations that preceded this major shift in national social policy. After AFDC offers policymakers valuable lessons about program approaches that aim to promote work and self-sufficiency, reduce dependency, and improve the well-being of welfare recipients and their children. It reviews current information about four key approaches to welfare reform - welfare-to-work programs, mandatory work programs, policies to change financial incentives, and time limits - and discusses the interactions among these approaches. While the guide does not aim to address the full range of issues that may be involved in a state’s welfare reform plans, it identifies broad lessons and trade-offs for states and localities to consider in designing reforms.

This guide was written as part of the JOBS Evaluation.


By examining some of the lessons learned from research and identifying promising state practices, state policymakers and program administrators will be better equipped to help low-income individuals get a job and turn every job into a learning experience that helps them advance to a higher paying job. Strategies that prepare individuals for employment must be linked to strategies that focus on the needs of employers and the workplace. This requires much closer working relationships between the public sector and employers than have been developed in the past. It also requires integrating employability development efforts across welfare, workforce, education, and economic development systems to strengthen state capacity to help low-income workers chart a pathway out of poverty and toward economic self-sufficiency.


No abstract available


Concerns pre-1994.


The welfare reform goal of moving mothers who rely on welfare into private-sector employment cannot be achieved only by changes in public policy. Employment rates reflect the job qualifications of individuals, obstacles to work outside the home, the attractiveness of available jobs, and the capacity of the labor market to absorb new workers at particular skill levels. This article examines how each of these factors is likely to influence current welfare recipients' success in finding employment and the wages they are likely to earn. The author concludes that the skill deficiencies of recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children do not represent an insurmountable barrier to employment, although these deficiencies do restrict the wages recipients can earn. Without continued public assistance in the form of wage subsidies, child care payments, or help securing health insurance, most families that move from welfare to work will remain below the poverty level.

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This article discusses the Welfare Act, specifically that its success relies on how well the welfare-to-work program works. As argued in the article, these programs are unlikely to provide poor women adequate support because of low paying jobs and lack of affordable childcare.


Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein interviewed nearly four hundred welfare and low-income single mothers from cities in Massachusetts, Texas, Illinois, and South Carolina over a six year period. They learned the reality of these mothers' struggles to provide for their families: where their money comes from, what they spend it on, how they cope with their children's needs, and what hardships they suffer. Edin and Lein's careful budgetary analyses reveal that even a full range of welfare benefits -- AFDC payments, food stamps, Medicaid, and housing subsidies -- typically meet only three-fifths of a family's needs, and that funds for adequate food, clothing and other necessities are often lacking. Leaving welfare for work offers little hope for improvement, and in many cases threatens even greater hardship. Jobs for unskilled and semi-skilled women provide meager salaries, irregular or uncertain hours, frequent layoffs, and no promise of advancement. Mothers who work not only assume extra child care, medical, and transportation expenses but are also deprived of many of the housing and educational subsidies available to those on welfare. Regardless of whether they are on welfare or employed, virtually all these single mothers need to supplement their income with menial, off-the-books work and intermittent contributions from family, live-in boyfriends, their children's fathers, and local charities. In doing so, they pay a heavy price. Welfare mothers must work covertly to avoid losing benefits, while working mothers are forced to sacrifice even more time with their children.


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Authors argue that the strategies a mother uses may affect her ability to move from welfare to work. Using evidence from in-depth interviews (conducted from 1988-1992) with 379 low-income single mothers in the Boston area, Chicago, Charleston, and San Antonio, they show that welfare recipients and low-wage workers employ a set of survival strategies to make ends meet. According to the authors, the range of strategies available to mothers are "shaped by the social-structural characteristics of the cities in which they live and by the quality of their private social safety nets." Edin, Kathryn, Laura Lein, and Nancy Higgit, "Review of Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-Wage Work" Canadian Journal of Urban Research. 7/1: 108-110, 1998.


No abstract available


While much of the focus of recent welfare reforms has been on moving recipients from welfare to work, many reforms were also directed at affecting decisions about living arrangements, pregnancy, marriage and cohabitation. This paper focuses on women's decisions to become or remain unmarried mothers, that is, female heads of families. We assess the impact of welfare reform waivers on those decisions while controlling for confounding local economic and social contextual conditions. We pool the 1990, 1992, and 1993 panels of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) which span the calendar time when many states began adopting welfare waivers. For its descriptors of local labor market conditions, the project uses skill specific measures of wages and employment opportunities for counties. We estimate models for levels of female headship and proportional hazard models for entry and exit from female headship. In the hazards, we employ stratified Cox partial likelihood methods and investigate the use of state fixed effects or state stratified hazard models to control for unmeasured state influences. Based on data through 1995, we find limited evidence that work-encouraging waivers had a beneficial effect by reducing female headship of families. We find little evidence that family caps, teenage co-residence requirements or termination limits will reduce the number of single-parent families.


This article examines past evaluations of government training programs for the economically disadvantaged and offers an agenda for future research. It is found that government training programs are producing modest increases in earnings for adult men and women, but are probably
not producing positive effects for youth. Future research must better document links between program-provided training and acquisition of valuable skills and must explore potential returns from increased scale. The recent adoption of random assignment has improved the accuracy of field evaluations but would benefit from an economic theory of evaluation to guide research into increasing training effectiveness.


Five Years After tells the story of what happened to the welfare recipients who participated in the influential welfare-to-work experiments conducted by several states in the mid-1980s. The authors review the distinctive goals and procedures of evaluations performed in Arkansas, Baltimore, San Diego, and Virginia, and then examine five years of follow-up data to determine whether the initial positive impact on employment, earnings, and welfare costs held up over time. The results were surprisingly consistent. Low-cost programs that saved money by getting individuals into jobs quickly did little to reduce poverty in the long run. Only higher-cost educational programs enabled welfare recipients to hold down jobs successfully and stay off welfare.


Most of the public discussion and academic analyses of nonmarital birthrates focus on women's fertility intentions and welfare. In contrast, we argue that stricter child support enforcement may lower nonmarital birthrates by raising the costs of fatherhood for men. The analysis is based on aggregate state level data for the years 1980 through 1996 and utilizes (primarily) fixed effects regression models. We find that strict child support enforcement deters and generous welfare promotes non-marital births. Compared to welfare, the estimated effects of child support enforcement are more robust. Moreover, the largest estimates for each imply that in the 1980-1996 period, decreases in welfare led to a 6% decrease in non-marital births while increases in child support enforcement led to a decline of 12%.


No abstract available

With three-fourths of all poor families headed by women and about 54 percent of single-mother families living below the poverty line, a rethinking of the fundamental assumptions of our much-reviled welfare program is clearly necessary. Here, Linda Gordon unearths the tangled roots of AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children). Competing visions of how and to whom public aid should be distributed were advanced by male bureaucrats, black women's organizations, and white progressive feminists. From their policy debates emerged a two-track system of public aid, in which single mothers got highly stigmatized "welfare" while other groups, such as the aged and the unemployed, received "entitlements."

Gordon strips today's welfare debates of decades of irrelevant and irrational accretion, revealing that what appeared progressive in the 1930s is antiquated in the 1990s. She shows that only by shedding false assumptions, and rethinking the nature of poverty, can we advance a truly effective welfare reform.


In 1960 only 1.7 percent of the population was on AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) while in 1995 about 5.2 percent were. Most mothers who received AFDC were single; 71 percent were in 1993. Also, AFDC mothers tended to have more children (2.6 on average versus 2.1 for the population as a whole in 1993). Last, it is interesting to note that real AFDC benefits rose by about 70 percent between 1945 and 1977. They were about 25 percent higher in 1995 than in 1945. Could this have contributed to the rise in single motherhood?


This report is one of a series on an evaluation of JOBS called for in the FSA that is being conducted under contract to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), with support from the U.S. Department of Education, by MDRC. The evaluation, which is currently known as the National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies, employs a random assignment design, specifically called for in the FSA as well, to determine the effectiveness of the program in seven sites across the country. In three of these sites—Atlanta, Georgia (Fulton County), Grand Rapids, Michigan (Kent County), and Riverside, California (Riverside County)—the study includes an unusual three-way comparison, involving, in each site, random assignment to either of two different types of welfare-to-work programs operated side by side or to a control group receiving no program services.

Hailed as a great success, welfare reform resulted in a dramatic decline in the welfare rolls—from 4.4 million families in 1996 to 2.1 million in 2001. But what does this "success" look like to the welfare mothers and welfare caseworkers who experienced it? In *Flat Broke, With Children*, Sharon Hays tells us the story of welfare reform from inside the welfare office and inside the lives of welfare mothers, describing the challenges that welfare recipients face in managing their work, their families, and the rules and regulations of welfare reform. Welfare reform, experienced on the ground, is not a rosy picture. The majority of adult welfare clients are mothers—over 90 percent—and the time limits imposed by welfare reform throw millions of these mostly unmarried, desperate women into the labor market, where they must accept low wages, the most menial work, the poorest hours, with no benefits, and little flexibility. Hays provides a vivid portrait of their lives—debunking many of the stereotypes we have of welfare recipients—but she also steps back to explore what welfare reform reveals about the meaning of work and family life in our society. In particular, she argues that an inherent contradiction lies at the heart of welfare policy, which emphasizes traditional family values even as its ethic of "personal responsibility" requires women to work and leave their children in childcare or at home alone all day long. Hays devoted three years to visiting welfare clients and two welfare offices, one in a medium-sized town in the Southeast, another in a large, metropolitan area in the West. Drawing on this hands-on research, *Flat Broke, With Children* is the first book to explore the impact of recent welfare reform on motherhood, marriage, and work in women's lives, and the first book to offer us a portrait of how welfare reform plays out in thousands of local welfare offices and in millions of homes across the nation.


Encompasses results of interviews conducted over a three-year period of 14 poor, single-parent women in Boston of Anglo, Latina, and African American backgrounds. The intent of this study was to learn about the attitudes and beliefs of these women toward parenting, employment, and welfare; and it reveals similarities and variations among these women's approaches to attaining self-reliance, education, and respect for themselves and their children.


No abstract available


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An ethnographic study of a welfare office and two welfare rights groups. Based on women’s conversations with each other, Kingfisher addresses various important issues such as: policy formation and implementation, low-income women's beliefs and aspirations, and the possibilities for women working cooperatively to change the welfare system. Despite the preconceived notion that women on welfare are victims without control, the women in this book actively work to exert their autonomy within the confines of the system.


The difficulties experienced by young women who give birth as teenagers have been well-documented and impose a significant cost to these women and to society (Maynard, 1997). For instance, teen mothers are far less likely to work compared to other women who delay childbearing, leading to lower earnings for the family and reduced national output for society. Their lower earnings places the family at far greater risk of falling into poverty and increases expenditures on public assistance made to provide the family with a minimal living standard.

These and other costs of teen childbearing have led to the proposal of several policy alternatives designed to alleviate them. In the late 1980s, three policies were implemented in experimental forms designed to allow researchers to evaluate their effectiveness along a multitude of dimensions. The three demonstrations were Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) program, the New Chance Demonstration (NCD), and the Teenage Parent Demonstration (TPD). LEAP provided financial incentives to teen mothers in the treatment group designed to increase school enrollment/attendance that, it was hoped, would subsequently increase labor market participation and reduce welfare receipt. The NCD offered voluntary employment and training services to teenage mothers. The treatment in TPD was mandatory and included child-care and transportation assistance along with sanctions for failure to participate.

This paper will synthesize the evidence from the existing academic literature regarding the effects of teen childbearing and the results of these three experiments, paying particular attention to labor market involvement and public assistance receipt in the years following birth for those women who had children as teens. The academic literature has attempted to determine whether teen motherhood itself “causes” the outcomes that follow, or whether the characteristics of those women who give birth as teens are such that they would have experienced subsequent difficulties even in the absence of the birth. Recent research suggests that perhaps little, if any, of the inferior outcomes that are associated with teen motherhood may be directly attributable to giving birth as a teen. The experimental findings, which show policies directed at improving outcomes for teen mothers are only modestly effective at best, seem to coincide with this view. The paper will first present a review of the academic literature, proceed to describe and highlight the findings of the three demonstration projects, then discuss the relationship between the two sets of results. We conclude with the implications for policy and future research.

No abstract available


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Recognizing that most poor families are single-parent families, the federal welfare reform law of 1996 emphasized the responsibility of both parents to support their children. In addition to strengthening the child support enforcement system, the law included several provisions to decrease nonmarital childbearing and to promote two-parent families. This article focuses on the important role fathers play in children’s lives and how public policies have affected childbearing and father involvement. Key observations are:

1. Children in father-absent families often have fewer economic and socio-emotional resources from their parents, and do not fare as well on many outcome measures, as children living with both biological parents.

2. Efforts to reduce the rising number of father-absent families by focusing on preventing unwanted pregnancy among unmarried women, especially teen girls, have met with some success, particularly those programs seeking to alter adolescents’ life opportunities in addition to providing education or family planning services.

3. Efforts to encourage greater father involvement by focusing almost exclusively on increasing absent parents’ child support payments reap only minimal benefits for poor children, because their absent parents often have few resources and little incentive to make support payments.

4. To date, efforts to increase the emotional involvement of unmarried fathers with their children have produced disappointing results, but new research suggests that such programs can make a difference when they target fathers and begin at the time of a new child’s birth.

Many children will spend some time living away from their fathers, deprived of the financial and
emotional resources fathers can provide. Because of the importance of fathers to child well-being, the authors conclude that new directions in research and public policies are needed to encourage greater father involvement across the wide diversity of family arrangements that exist in society today.


In recent years, we have dramatically changed the character of programs that provide income and in-kind benefits to single mothers. These changes have had large effects on rates of employment and welfare receipt. Despite these changes, there has been little systematic evaluation of the conditions of single mothers and their children since we have "ended welfare as we knew it" following the Personal Responsibility and Work Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). Studies of those leaving welfare have found that a substantial percentage of leavers have problems providing enough food, paying utility bills, and paying rent. Other studies have found a decline in income among the worst off single mothers. The goal of this paper is to examine the living conditions of single mothers and their families before and soon after welfare reform. Using data from two nationally representative household surveys, we examine the consumption patterns of single mothers and their families. Our results indicate that the material conditions of single mothers have changed little after welfare reform, either in absolute terms or relative to single childless women or married mothers. These results hold for relatively disadvantaged single mothers.


The essential point of this work is that welfare is really a guarantee of women's equality. In the context of this work, Mink, a Professor of Political Science at University of California, Santa Cruz, asserts that welfare is an income owed to those who work inside the home raising children. The campaign to make fathers support their children may have the unwanted effect of women being dependent on men they want nothing to do with. Mink effectively argues against the myths of welfare dependency and stresses that without a fundamental right to economic security provided by some kind of income guarantee, women cannot achieve equality in the family, the labor market, or the state.


Teen Mothers and the Revolving Welfare Door details many misconceptions about the best options for Black pregnant teenagers. For instance, marrying the father is not a beneficial option—this typically cuts off the mother from further education and early job experience and doesn't protect her from early divorce. The author concludes that education offers some opportunity for teenage mothers to escape welfare dependency, but housing assistance, child-care, and good
health insurance would provide opportunity for more drastic long-term improvement. This comprehensive study provides insight into the welfare system, a system that remains a symbol of race, class, and gender divisions, and offers progressive solutions for change in welfare as we know it.


Through the voices of the women themselves, Mulroy describes their struggles to meet three basic needs: personal safety and security from abuse, shelter in the form of affordable and decent housing for their families, and employment that provides a living wage.


No abstract available


An entire issue devoted to the topic of welfare. A special section on feminism and welfare. Topics discussed include the interpretation of U.S. social policy from a 19th-century perspective; scholarship and activism; dependency, childcare and welfare; childcare and welfare; welfare justice and poor single mothers; the national welfare rights movement; and economic restructuring and gender issues. Includes "The Lady and the Tramp (II): Feminist welfare politics, poor single mothers, and the challenge of welfare justice," by Gwendolyn Mink (55-64), in which she partly blames the absence of a feminist opposition for the passing of the Personal Responsibility Act and reasons that single mothers should be given an allowance in recognition of their work at home. Mink argues that welfare is a condition of women's equality (which she defines as full and independent citizenship), and that without welfare mothers who work inside the home are denied equality.


In Lessons for Welfare Reform, Dave M. O'Neill and June Ellenoff O'Neill have compiled and analyzed data that identifies historical trends in the AFDC caseload, the personal characteristics of recipients, and broad patterns of welfare participation. They also offer an evaluative survey on the effectiveness of past education, training and workfare programs in reducing the AFDC caseload. The result is a book that offers thoughtful new analyses on several crucial questions facing state policy makers as a result of welfare reform including: 1) How many recipients can be expected to reach the five-year limit imposed by the new legislation? 2) What are the personal
characteristics and labor-market options of those who reach this limit? 3) How helpful are work/training programs in reducing welfare dependency? 4) How will current and potential recipients react to a reduction in the financial benefits available from welfare? and 5) Will teenage out-of-wedlock childbearing fall in unison with the incidence of welfare participation among young women?


No abstract available


This paper answers these questions about the challenges welfare-to-work programs face as more of their Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) caseload becomes subject to work requirements: (1) What challenges will hinder a welfare recipient's move into employment? (2) What is known about the prevalence of barriers to employment? (3) When the presence of multiple barriers is considered, what fraction of the AFDC caseload is likely to experience at least one barrier to employment? (4) What is known about the relationship between work barriers and work experience? (5) What are the implications for designing and delivering welfare-to-work programs?


No abstract available


A how-to guide for state and local agencies trying to keep welfare recipients employed.


Discusses how transitional benefits access to child care flexible scheduling and emergency services are necessary for job retention.

Rangarajan, Anu, Peter Schochet, and Dexter Chu. Employment Experiences of Welfare

Uses national data to examine the employment experiences of welfare recipients who find jobs; describes their characteristics, types of jobs they find and their long-run experiences.


This paper argues that states should consider including a community service employment component in their TANF programs. Community service employment can serve important state goals in TANF, including providing workforce experience and training for individuals, income from employment for families, and needed services for communities.


As government officials, community groups, religious organizations, social service agencies, and advocates grapple with the dire situation of America’s poor children, they are gaining insight into the ramifications of the absence of fathers from their children’s lives. Now men, at least those who are fathers, are receiving attention as part of the mix that not only may help move their children out of poverty but also may, through guidance, affection, and care, considerably improve their children’s lives. And not only are think tanks, government studies, and those who offer assistance to fathers taking note, the mainstream press is regularly covering the attention.


This paper reviews the research and summarizes what is known about the effectiveness of these two most commonly tried welfare-to-work strategies. The discussion of quick employment programs covers both job search-only programs and mixed strategy programs providing a broader range of services. The discussion of research on skill building programs is separated into two parts to allow a closer examination of different types of services. The first part examines the research on programs where basic education was the most common activity and most recipients lacked a high school diploma or GED (high school equivalency), referred to in this paper as basic education programs. Research on other skill building services, such as classroom or on-the-job training and postsecondary education, is included in a later discussion of program examples for moving beyond the more common approaches of quick employment or basic education.

Interviews with 30 poor single mothers in cities, small towns, and rural areas that address issues such as work, parenting, and welfare. Interviewees include a large number of white mothers, rather than the stereotypical black, urban mother, which aids in providing a more inclusive picture of the state of poverty. Schein's study supports the theory that full-time employment is not enough to lift single mothers out of poverty.


Sequel to her 1986 work, Women and Children Last: The Plight of Poor Women in Affluent Women. Offers a corrective to misperceptions of the poor, such as that they do not hold full-time jobs.


This paper describes "tailor-made training," an approach to welfare reform that focuses upon individual skills. Under this model, a nonprofit organization identifies job opportunities in the local economy. The organization then provides very short-term, intensive training that equips individuals to carry out the targeted jobs. Training lasts from three days to a maximum six weeks. The organization helps match the trained individuals with the job opportunities. The work of the Winnipeg-based Opportunities for Employment, one of the most advanced models of tailor-made training, is profiled. To date, the program has had very positive long-term results. The paper acknowledges that there are problems with this model; it is not the single "magic bullet" that governments appear to be seeking. But at least it is based on a constructive rather than a punitive approach to welfare reform. Tailor-made training is also a good model for lifelong learning.


Number of years on welfare in childhood not found to affect the likelihood of welfare use in adulthood except for African American women. Neighbourhood conditions were a strong predictor of welfare use rates for White women. For African American women, the more children in the family, the greater the likelihood of welfare use. For White children, a young head of household increased their likelihood of adult welfare use. Family situations more important for African American women than White women in predicting welfare use.


A qualitative study that investigates the views of 42 poor single mothers regarding their goals in relation to work and evaluates how helpful the social support networks are in enabling them to
make transitions to work. Respondents are subgrouped by work category, e.g. employed full-time, employed part-time, women students, and full-time mothers in an attempt to "help avoid the dangers inherent in lumping all single mothers into a large and potentially inaccurate category."


This note examines the plight of single-mother households dependent on child support in light of the recent nationwide trend toward federal criminal prosecution of child support evaders. Part I examines the development of the law of parental child support, with a focus on the changing normative goals underlying the duty of parental support in different historical contexts. Part II details the origins of the CSRA, including a discussion of the sociological data that Congress relied upon to connect the incidence of nonpayment of child support with the number of single-parent households on welfare. It positions the enactment of the CSRA, and the Fathers Count Act (FCA), an analogous piece of proposed legislation, in the contemporaneous movement to reform the country's welfare system. Part III uses sociological data and input from different players in the criminal justice system to uncover the disconnect between the number and kinds of men and women who could be convicted under the CSRA and the narrow band of men who have been convicted under the CSRA.

Part IV discusses some of the analytical difficulties presented by the federal criminal enforcement of state-ordered child support obligations. It analyzes the Equal Protection interests of noncustodial fathers, and the privacy rights and practical needs of custodial mothers and their children. Part V then attempts to reconcile some of the paradoxes inherent in the CSRA and reflect them against the broader context of family values talk. In particular, it examines the conflicting goals of draconian punishment and the repayment of child support obligations. It also discusses the reasons for the disconnect between the law in theory and the law as applied, and why stricter enforcement of the CSRA is unlikely to effectuate Congress' goal of reducing the number of single-mother households on welfare. These findings lead to the normative conclusion that instead of assisting financially strapped single-mother households, the CSRA punishes men and women, and low-income women in particular, for making procreative choices outside the confines of the nuclear family.

Work


No abstract available

Teng and Pittman’s model of “work-family fit” served as a theoretical base for exploring the experiences of families moving from welfare to work. Responding to open-ended telephone interview questions, 30 recently hired welfare recipients described factors that were needed for them to make a smooth transition into work, be successful at their jobs, and balance work and family. The individuals appeared to experience greater success when their own needs and the needs of their families were being met and when they were able to meet the demands of work, leading to greater work-family fit. Support from the workplace and other community sources, as well as participants' personal attributes contributed to this work-family fit. Specific strategies based on these findings are offered for employers, social workers, and community organizations.


No abstract available


This paper reveals that recent changes in social policy have included both sharp cutbacks in welfare for non-working families and dramatic increases in supports for low income working families. It explores the reasons for these changes, and documents how they have radically changed work incentives for some persons, notable single mothers. The result has been a large increase in work by low wage single parents. The paper concludes by examining several potential dangers of this new direction and explores the challenges that remain for the next century.


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Because women typically serve as primary care providers for their children, female labor force participation behavior is likely to be affected significantly by the costs associated with replacing maternal care with nonmaternal care. While some evidence of this phenomenon exists in the economics literature, discrepancies across studies make it difficult to provide conclusive evidence of the employment effects of these child care costs. This paper uses an improved SIPP survey design to present new evidence regarding the degree to which child care prices impede mothers' employment behavior, with additional evidence of the difference in these elasticities across marital status, empirical technique, and equation specification. This permits linking this paper to the existing evidence, drawing the conclusion that child care prices impede mothers' employment behavior significantly, with single mothers exhibiting less responsiveness in their labor force participation behavior to child care price changes than married mothers. Generally, these results support the basic finding of Ribar (1992), reject the smaller price of care elasticities found by Averett et al. (1997), Blau and Robins (1988), Connelly (1992), and Tolin (1992), but replicate the lower elasticities found in these papers by changing equation specifications. Also, significant sensitivity in the price elasticity is revealed, particularly with respect to changes in...

With single mothers as the primary beneficiaries of welfare and roughly 20% of working-age welfare recipients living in rural areas, an important research question is whether the employment responsiveness of single mothers differs in rural and urban areas. Using nationally representative CPS data, we analyze the relationship between rural-urban locations, changing welfare policies, and the employment of single mothers. Contrary to earlier evidence, we find that welfare reform is playing a major role in raising the employment rates of single mothers, and the gains are approximately as high in rural as in urban areas.


We describe the enormous changes in social and tax policy in recent years that have encouraged work by single mothers. We document the changes in federal and state income taxes, AFDC and Food Stamp benefits, Medicaid, training, and child care programs. We describe the quantitative importance of these changes and their timing. We also describe how these changes differed across states and show how they affected families with different numbers and ages of children and with different family incomes. We then examine whether the changes in employment rates over time for different demographic groups and states are consistent with a causal effect of these policies on employment. We use multiple comparison groups and two datasets over a long time period. The results support the more structural findings in Meyer and Rosenbaum (1999a) of substantial EITC effects on employment as well as the findings in Eissa and Liebman (1996) and Ellwood (1999).


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Books reviewed in this article: Elizabeth Bortalaia Silva (eds), Good Enough Mothering? Feminist Perspectives on Lone Motherhood; Simon Duncan and Rosalind Edwards (eds), Single Mothers in an International Context: Mothers or Workers?; Kim England, Who Will Mind the Baby? Geographies of Child Care and Working Mothers.


No abstract available


No abstract available
Objective: To identify and consider differences in morbidity in children in households with one adult presenting to general practitioners compared with children in households with more than one adult.

Design: Observational study; data analysed with logistic regression controlling for age, sex, and practice.

Subjects: 93,356 children aged 0-15 years included in the fourth national study of morbidity in general practice and for whom data about household structure were available. Among them 10,983 (11.8%) were living in households with a sole adult.

Methods: Morbidity data were recorded from each consultation as the assessment diagnosis made by the general practitioner.

Main outcome measures: Number of consultations and consultations per person for any illness, infections, acute respiratory infections, asthma, and accidents; number presenting and mean consultations per person for immunisation; number receiving home visits and home visits per person visited; average annual frequency of consultation among those consulting.

Results: Compared with children in other households, a higher proportion of children in households with one adult consulted for infections and accidents. The proportion consulting for immunisation was lower and the proportion receiving home visits greater. Mean numbers of consultations per person consulting were also generally higher for all conditions. For infections, accidents, and home visits, the differences were evident in all age groups.

Conclusions: The study confirms the importance of single parent families as an indicator of deprivation. Children in such families should be targeted for immunisation and accident prevention.

Key messages:

Children in households with one adult consult general practitioners more frequently than those in households with two or more adults and receive increased numbers of home visits. They are more likely to consult for accidents, and they attend less frequently for immunisation. Single parent households are an appropriate indicator of deprivation.

Children from households with one adult require specific targeting by general practitioners, health visitors, and primary healthcare workers for accident prevention and immunisation uptake.

The Cambridge study in delinquent development is a prospective longitudinal survey of 411 south London males from age 8 to age 46. Delinquency rates were higher among 75 boys who were living in permanently disrupted families on their fifteenth birthday, compared to boys living in intact families. Results were very similar whether juvenile convictions, juvenile self-reported delinquency or adult convictions were studied. Delinquency rates were similar in disrupted families and in intact high conflict families. Boys who lost their mothers were more likely to be delinquent than disruptions cause by parent death. Boys from disrupted families who continued living with their mothers had similar delinquency rates to boys from intact harmonious families. These results are more concordant with life course theories rather than with trauma theories or selection theories of the effects of family disruption.


The effect of family structure, socio-economic indicators, parental working status and parental psychological status on children's psychological health was explored using multi-variate logistic regression models. Findings indicated that the high prevalence of psychological morbidity among children of lone-mothers was a consequence of socio-economic effects, disappearing when benefits receipt, housing tenure and maternal education were taken into account. Socio-economic factors did not, however, explain the higher proportion of psychological morbidity among children with stepparents, or the strong relationship between parents' and children's psychological morbidity.


One in three children in Britain lives in poverty (households whose income was less than 50% average earnings). Low income is associated with poor nutrition at all stages of life, from lower rates of breast-feeding to higher intakes of saturated fatty acids and lower intakes of antioxidant nutrients. Moreover, there is increasing evidence that poor nutrition in childhood is associated with both short-term and long-term adverse consequences such as poorer immune status, higher caries rates and poorer cognitive function and learning ability. These problems arise primarily because parents do not have enough money to spend on food, not because money is being spent unwisely. Policy options to improve the dietary health of poor children include: giving more money to the parents by increasing Income Support (social security) payments, providing food stamps or vouchers, and using food budget standards to inform the levels of income needed to purchase an adequate diet; feeding children directly at school (not only at lunchtime but also at breakfast or homework clubs), by providing free fruit at school, and by increasing entitlement to free food amongst children living in households with low incomes; improving access to a healthy and affordable diet by first identifying 'food deserts' and then considering with retailers...
and local planners how best to provide food in an economical and sustainable way. The value of using food budget standards is illustrated with data relating expenditure on food to growth in children from 'at-risk' families (on low income, overcrowded, headed by a lone parent or with four or more children under 16 years of age) living in a poor area in London. Lower levels of expenditure are strongly associated with poorer growth and health, independent of factors such as birth weight, mother's height, or risk score. The present paper provides evidence that supports the need to review Government legislation in light of nutrition-related inequalities in the health of children.


Up to 30% of low birth weight can be seen as being associated with levels of socioeconomic deprivation below that of the most affluent group, as measured in this study. Caution is needed when targeting interventions to high risk groups when using single indicators. There is a high degree of inequality in low birth weight according to social class, area deprivation and lone mother status. When using routinely recorded birth and census data, all three factors are important to show the true extent of inequalities.


Large differences in demands on health visitors' time exist between affluent and disadvantaged caseloads which are barely reflected in the provision of extra time to poorer caseloads. There is no consistent pattern to the delivery of preventive programmes designed to ameliorate the effects of disadvantage on children's health and development.


Almost one in five British mothers is a lone mother. Their children have injury rates that are twice those of children in two parent families. In this article the link between lone parenthood and childhood injury is examined. The increased injury rates for the children of lone mothers can be explained by the poverty, poor housing conditions, and social isolation of lone mothers in Britain. The problem of reconciling the demands of paid work with the demands of the unpaid work of childrearing is particularly difficult for lone mothers, who find themselves in a benefit dependent poverty trap. Many such mothers would seek paid work if affordable day care were available. Day care would also provide a safe environment for their children, who are otherwise exposed to the environmental hazards of poor housing. Provision of day care is a social policy that would have important effects on the health and welfare of lone mothers and their children. These effects deserve to be properly evaluated.

No abstract available


The aim of this study was to determine associations between indicators of social deprivation and the uptake of primary immunisation in London. A significant correlation with measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) at 24 months existed only for lone parent families. Multiple linear regression weighted by population size was used to identify independent predictors of variation in immunisation cover. The proportion of lone parent families in each district health authority was the only significant independent risk factor consistently associated with variation in immunisation coverage for D3, P3, and MMR. The proportion of lone parent families explained 42% of the variation in coverage for D3 in November 1991. This study has identified lone parenthood as an important independent risk factor in London for failure to complete immunisation.


BACKGROUND: Growing up with one parent has become increasingly common, and seems to entail disadvantages in terms of socioeconomic circumstances and health. We aimed to investigate differences in mortality, severe morbidity, and injury between children living in households with one adult and those living in households with two adults. METHODS: In this population-based study, we assessed overall and cause-specific mortality between 1991 and 1998 and risk of admission between 1991 and 1999 for 65085 children with single parents and 921257 children with two parents. We estimated relative risks by Poisson regression, adjusted for factors that might be presumed to select people into single parenthood, and for other factors, mainly resulting from single parenthood, that might have affected the relation between type of parenting and risk. FINDINGS: Children with single parents showed increased risks of psychiatric disease, suicide or suicide attempt, injury, and addiction. After adjustment for confounding factors, such as socioeconomic status and parents' addiction or mental disease, children in single-parent households had increased risks compared with those in two-parent households for psychiatric disease in childhood (relative risk for girls 2.1 [95% CI 1.9-2.3] and boys 2.5 [2.3-2.8]), suicide attempt (girls 2.0 [1.9-2.2], boys 2.3 [2.1-2.6]), alcohol-related disease (girls 2.4 [2.2-2.7], boys 2.2 [2.0-2.4]), and narcotics-related disease (girls 3.2 [2.7-3.7], boys 4.0 [3.5-4.5]). Boys in single-parent families were more likely to develop psychiatric disease and narcotics-related disease than were girls, and they also had a raised risk of all-cause mortality. CONCLUSIONS: Growing up in a single-parent family has disadvantages to the health of the child. Lack of household resources plays a major part in increased risks. However, even when a wide range of demographic and socioeconomic circumstances are included in multivariate models, children of
single parents still have increased risks of mortality, severe morbidity, and injury.

Education


General

Albelda, Randy, Susan Himmelweit, and Jane Humphries, Guest Eds. Feminist Economics: A Special Issue on Lone Mothers. Forthcoming in 2004.

The special issue of Feminist Economics, “Lone Mothers”, provides a sampler of feminist economics perspectives on the livelihood strategies of lone mothers. It includes eight full-length articles covering a range of methodologies, countries, and types of lone mothers. The issue also includes an exploration on being a lone lesbian mother as well as a special section with short pieces on policy prescriptions for reducing poverty among lone mother families.


This paper uses the recently published updated estimates of the numbers of one-parent families and dependent children living in them to construct two sets of birth cohort analyses. In the first set, the proportion of children who were living in one-parent families is analysed by the child’s age and birth year, whilst in the second set, the proportions of all mothers with dependent children who were lone mothers are analysed by the mother’s age and birth year. Finally, the paper presents trends in the proportions of lone mothers and married mothers who were working, and compares them with the corresponding trends for similar mothers whose youngest child was aged under 5.


No abstract available

Kiernan, Kathleen, Hilary Land, and Jane Lewis. “Constructions of unmarried motherhood in the post-war period.” Lone Motherhood in Twentieth Century Britain: From Footnote to Front Page. Kathleen Kiernan, Hilary Land, and Jane Lewis, Eds. 98-123. Oxford:
During the 1990s lone motherhood has become a major political issue - but what is the problem actually about and to what extent is it new? This timely study, by three leading experts in the field, examines the changes that have taken place in the pathways into lone motherhood, in ideas about marriage, divorce and never-married motherhood, and in policies towards lone mothers in housing, social security, and employment. The findings illustrate both the complexity of the issues and the extent to which policies have reflected the changing way in which the problem has been defined.

Land, Hilary, and Jane Lewis. "The Emergence of Lone Motherhood as a Problem in Late Twentieth Century Britain." LSE. Paper No' WSP 134. 1997


The presentation will review existing research and data related to cross-cultural one-parent
families. The topics covered include routes to lone parenthood, characteristics common among female-headed families, positive and negative aspects of this type of family, up-to-date statistics, and a discussion of children living in one-parent families. Implications for immigration and ethnicity issues will be included...as well as research implications and intervention strategies for the one-parent family.


No abstract available


No abstract available


No abstract available

Health


Logistic regression analyses showed that, after adjustment for age, sex, smoking, and housing tenure, only lone motherhood and ethnic minority group status were consistently and independently associated with poorer health outcomes. Social vulnerability can be a risk factor for poorer health, but this is dependent on the source of vulnerability and is condition-specific. No association was found between inequity in the utilisation of primary care and social vulnerability. The propensity for members of ethnic minority groups to consult more than white people, particularly for acute conditions, requires further exploration.


This research assessed the extent to which the movement from 'welfare to work' is likely to benefit the mental and physical health of lone mothers with preschool children. Lone mothers
who were not employed were the poorest group in the sample; 94% of this group (402) had a family income of less than pound sterling 200 per week, compared with 72% (188) of lone mothers who were employed, 25% (905) of partnered women who were not employed and 12% (466) of partnered women who were employed. Lone mothers were significantly more likely than women with partners to report poorer well being (chi2 = 11.7, df = 3, P = 0.01), to have a major depressive disorder (chi2 = 92.6, df = 1, P = 0.0001) and to report wheeze (chi2 = 31.1, df = 1, P = 0.0001), but significantly less likely to report cough/cold (chi2 = 9.9, df = 1, P = 0.0001) or haemorrhoids (chi2 = 16.6, df = 1, P = 0.0001). Lone mothers who were unemployed and living on less than pound sterling 100 per week were significantly more likely to be depressed (chi2 = 3.9, df = 1, P = 0.05) than those who were employed and living on pound sterling 200 or more per week, and significantly less likely to report cough/cold (chi2 = 3.8, df = 1, P = 0.05).

Logistic regression analyses showed no significant independent association between employment and better health for lone mothers. Rather, when compared with lone mothers who were not working, those who were employed were more likely to report minor respiratory symptoms such as cough/cold (OR = 1.51, 95% CI = 1.00, 2.31). Overall, the results suggested that the movement from 'welfare to work' is unlikely to improve the health of lone mothers.


This article begins with a discussion of the relations among family poverty, poor health and employment. It argues that some lone mothers are unable to keep their children out of poverty because poor health interferes with finding or maintaining employment. These issues are discussed with reference to the international literature, and also in the light of the results of a New Zealand research project that examines the self-reported health status of lone mothers on social benefits, their experiences as beneficiaries, and their views about the government requirement to seek paid work. These lone mothers were not exempted from the work test for health or disability reasons, but the questionnaire results indicate that their self-reported health status is well below that of New Zealand women of comparable age. About one-third report health problems, either their children's or their own. Excerpts from 120 qualitative interviews illustrate the challenges that many one-parent families face when they attempt to exit from welfare.


A number of studies have shown that lone parents have poorer health status than the general population. However, what is missing from the existing literature is any systematic assessment of the contribution that lone parents' relatively poor socioeconomic circumstances make to their relative health disadvantage. This paper aims to fill this gap. It employs a large national dataset based on three consecutive years of the British General Household Survey (1992/1993 to 1994/1995) to assess the relative health status of lone parents in comparison to couple parents, and to evaluate the importance of different explanations for their health differences. The results
confirm that lone parents, particularly lone mothers, have poor health status relative to parents living as couples. The observed health differences mirror variations in socioeconomic circumstances. However, even when a wide range of demographic and socioeconomic circumstances are included in multivariate models, lone mothers still have significantly poorer health than couple mothers for four out of five health variables. The paper concludes by discussing alternative explanations for the health differences between lone and couple parents—such as the absence of an intimate/confiding relationship, the stress and stigma associated with becoming a lone parent and health selection—and by highlighting future options for policy and research in this area.

Bratberg, Espen, Svenn-Age Dahl, and Alf Erling Risa. "'The double burden': do combinations of career and family obligations increase sickness and absence among women?" European Sociological Review. 18/2: 233, 2002.

Women working full time in the labour market often face a second shift at home. We investigate whether this double burden increases sickness absence among Norwegian women. When selection is not accounted for in the analyses, increasing the number of children decreases sickness absence for a given labour-market career. However, women combining careers with children constitute a selected group less prone to absence. When sample selection is accounted for, increasing the number of children has an adverse impact on sickness absence. This finding provides some support for the double-burden hypothesis.


The present study set out to examine the relationship between marital status, poverty and depression in a sample of inner-city women. Single and married mothers were followed up over a 2-year period during which time rates of psychosocial risk factors, onset of depression and experience of chronic episodes were measured. Risk of onset was double among single mothers. Single mothers were twice as likely as their married counterparts to be in financial hardship, despite being twice as likely to be in full-time employment. Both of these factors were independently associated with onset in single mothers. The link between them and onset was via their association with humiliating or entrapping severe life events. Single parents were at a much raised risk of experiencing these events. Onset was also more likely to follow such an event when women had poor self-esteem and lack of support, both of which were more common among single mothers. These risk factors were more frequently found among those in financial hardship. Financial hardship was also related to risk of having a chronic episode (lasting at least a year), of which single parents were also at greater risk. The majority of chronic episodes among single mothers had their origins in prior marital difficulties or widowhood and rates of chronicity reduced with length of time spent in single parenthood. Results are discussed in terms of an aetiological model of onset in which financial hardship probably influences outcome at a wide variety of points.
The socioeconomic conditions of lone mothers deteriorated during the period 1979-1995, with increasing unemployment and poverty rates. Lone mothers had worse health status than couple mothers throughout the period. In comparison with the first two periods, the prevalence of less than good health increased among both lone and couple mothers from the late 1980s onwards. For lone and couple mothers who were poor, their rates of less than good health were similar in the early 1980s, but in 1992-95 poor lone mothers were significantly more likely to report less than good health than poor couple mothers. Unemployed lone mothers had particularly high rates of ill health throughout the study period. As in other European countries, lone mothers are emerging as a vulnerable group in society in Sweden, especially in the economic climate of the 1990's. While they had very low rates of poverty and high employment rates in the 1980s, their situation has deteriorated with the economic recession of the 1990's. The health status of lone mothers, particularly those who are unemployed or poor, appears worse than that of couple mothers and in some circumstances may be deteriorating. Further study is needed to elucidate the mechanisms mediating their health disadvantage compared with couple mothers.

Experience of physical and sexual violence accounted for much of the greater prevalence of psychiatric disorders among lone compared with partnered mothers.


No abstract available


This paper uses panel data to examine the determinants of smoking among lone mothers over the period 1991-1996. Consideration is given to the initial conditions problem encountered when modelling dynamic panel probit models, and a recently suggested approach is applied to address this problem.


Minor psychiatric morbidity is known to be associated with social disadvantage, but few studies have explored this association at the population level. This study reports data from a postal survey across 19 health districts in one region, with a total sample of 38,000 respondents. The percentage scoring above the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) threshold for each health district was correlated with measures of deprivation derived from the 1991 census and standardised mortality ratios. Highly significant correlations were seen between the percentage above the GHQ threshold and the Underprivileged Area (UPA) score ($r = 0.84$), under 65 Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR; $r = 0.80$), lack of amenities ($r = 0.56$), overcrowding ($r = 0.54$), lone-parent families ($r = 0.84$), unemployment ($r = 0.87$), unskilled workers ($r = 0.77$), ethnic minority composition ($r = 0.58$) and social mobility ($r = 0.85$). However, the three most deprived districts had the lowest response rates and when these were excluded from the analysis, only the correlations with under 65 SMR ($r = 0.57, P < 0.05$), UPA score ($r = 0.52, P < 0.05$) and unskilled workers ($r = 0.60, P < 0.05$) remained significant. There may be a threshold effect for the impact of social disadvantage on mental health, with much higher rates of psychological morbidity among markedly disadvantaged populations.


Lone mothers have been shown to have higher levels of psychological distress than married mothers, but it is not clear how this difference arises. Using data from the 1958 British birth cohort followed to age 33, we investigated alternative explanations for the excess distress of lone mothers. Psychological distress was greater among divorced mothers than never married mothers, though not significantly. Elevated psychological distress of lone mothers appears to be related to financial hardship, while other explanations, including social support and selection, have a more modest impact. Not all of the elevated psychological distress among lone mothers was accounted for, particularly among divorced lone mothers.


The responses of countries to the OECD Caring World questionnaire, together with other available information, provides a good basis for summarising the main social policy trends with respect to the broad coverage of social protection arrangements, assistance for families, assistance for unemployed people of working age, retirement incomes, health care, long-term care and housing assistance.

In terms of the broad coverage of social security measures, the main developments have been some tightening of eligibility, particularly for new migrants, and increased importance of social
assistance measures. Countries have responded to concerns about the incidence of social exclusion, often through comprehensive, integrated measures which include income support as well as measures to assist people back into mainstream activities of society.

With general family assistance measures, some countries have pursued greater means-testing of benefits, at the same time as some payments have been increased, especially for low-income families. In instances, payments for low-earning families also act as workforce incentives for those who take up low-paid jobs. Many countries have sought to improve the administration of maintenance arrangements expected from absent parents for their children, with limited success, at the same time as some countries have increased the scale of financial contribution expected from absent parents. Other countries have strengthened their fall-back government payments provided when absent parents either default on their payment responsibilities or do not have the financial capacity to provide a minimum level of payment for their children.

Lone parents in receipt of social security have received considerable attention by governments over the last decade, with policies such as some restrictions of payment eligibility and duration. These restrictions have sought to limit the time lone parents are dependent on social security assistance. One example of such a restriction is decreasing lone parents' eligibility for payment by lowering the qualifying age of their children. Many countries have also introduced active measures to help lone parents get back into work, such as: increased child care opportunities (which have also been expanded for other working families), places in employment and training programmes, and financial incentives built into the social security system to encourage workforce participation.


This paper is concerned with the social patterning of ill-health amongst women in Britain. It uses the various health measures available in the Health and Lifestyle Survey (self-assessed health, disease/disability, illness, psycho-social well-being and fitness) to explore whether there are particular aspects of health systematically associated with social advantage and disadvantage, as measured by current or last occupation, employment status, household composition and household income. Among women aged 18-59, after controlling for age, number of psychological symptoms experienced in the past month showed the greatest social variation. Number of physical illness symptoms in the last month showed the least. Lone mothers with dependent children were found to have particularly poor psycho-social health, although this was confined to those in full-time employment. The presence of a long-standing disease/disability proved useful as a control for the influence of health selection in to and out of both employment and motherhood.


The rate of severe depression among women in single-parent and biological families and in a variety of stepfamilies was examined in a large community sample of 13,088 pregnant women in the United Kingdom. Compared with women in biological families and published population rates, women in single-parent and step-families reported significantly elevated rates of depression. Family-type differences in several risk factors were examined, including cohabiting (vs. married) status, relationship history, and socio-economic and psychosocial risks, such as crowding, social support, and stressful life events. Family-type differences in depression were mediated partly by differences in social support, stressful life events, and crowding, but a main effect of family type in predicting depression remained after statistically controlling for these risks.


This paper explores data from the 1999 Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey, focusing on the relationship between experiences of poverty and social exclusion and mental health status. The paper focuses on the experiences of particular groups of the poor--such as lone parents.


Lone mothers showed an almost 70% higher premature risk of death than mothers with partners. The excess risk remained significantly increased (relative risk 1.2 [95% CI 1.1-1.4]) after adjustments for socioeconomic status and previous severe somatic and psychiatric inpatient history. Increased mortality was especially pronounced for suicides (2.2 [1.5-3.1]), violence (3.0 [0.9-10.6]), and alcohol-related mortality (2.4 [1.4-4.1]) among mothers who were without a partner in 1985 and in 1990. The increase of lone mothers in society shows financial, social, and health disadvantages. Nevertheless, the increased mortality risk of lone mothers seems to be partly independent of socioeconomic status and health selection into lone motherhood. For long-term lone mothers the risks may be underestimated when adjusting for selection bias by taking hospital discharge history into account, since these events may be part of the consequences of the stress of lone motherhood.

Lone mothers (n=721) were more likely to be Maori, to have lower family incomes, lower educational qualifications and to live in more deprived areas. There were no significant differences between lone and couple mothers in their prevalence of probable asthma and diagnosed diabetes mellitus, or in their self-reported physical health status after adjustment for socioeconomic variables. However, lone mothers had higher rates of ever having been on medication for hypertension (OR=2.3; 1.2-4.1), and significantly worse self-reported mental health which persisted after adjustment for differences in socioeconomic and other factors. These findings suggest that lone mothers are a vulnerable group and special consideration should be given to them if inequalities in health are to be addressed.


This article examines the trends in the socio-economic circumstances and health of lone mothers compared to couple mothers from 1979 to 1995 in Great Britain using secondary analysis of data from General Household Survey and covering 9,159 lone mothers and 51,922 couple mothers living in private households. The main measures are self perceived general health, limiting long-standing illness, poverty and working status.


As the prevalence for this-population group is considerably higher than the prevalence for other women within each age category, programs to assist lone mothers to quit smoking are a priority for the long-term health of these women and their children. Furthermore, we discuss how policies and interventions that enhance the material conditions and social circumstances of lone mothers can bring about a decline in their smoking prevalence.


BACKGROUND: The study examined whether the combination of single parenthood and occupational drift in the context of immigration puts single mothers at higher risk for psychological distress compared to married mothers, and investigated the potential mediating and moderating psychosocial factors (social support, sense of coherence-SOC, fluency in Hebrew).
METHODS: Participants were selected from random samples of married and unmarried mothers, recent immigrants to Israel from the Former Soviet Union, aged 25-50 years. A total of 221 single mothers and 241 married mothers were interviewed.

RESULTS: No differences were found in occupational drift or in fluency in Hebrew between the groups. The levels of SOC and social support were significantly lower among the single mothers and mean scores of distress were significantly higher among single (1.48 +/- 0.75) compared to married mothers (1.21 +/- 0.65, p < 0.001). In multiple linear regressions on distress, no interaction of marital status and occupational drift was found. After inclusion of psychosocial variables, the association of marital status with distress was significantly mediated by SOC and more modestly by social support, and was moderated by social support: the beneficial effect of social support on distress was significantly greater for married mothers than for single mothers.

CONCLUSIONS: The difference in psychological distress between single and married mothers during the first years after immigration is not due to occupational stressors but to psychosocial resources. Single parenthood should be viewed as a marker of psychosocial risk among immigrant women.


Background: In this paper, data from the British National Survey of Psychiatric Morbidity are used to assess depressive disorders and markers of social disadvantage in women bringing up children on their own.

Method: The household component of the British National Surveys of Psychiatric Morbidity was based on a stratified random sample of > 10000 subjects. This paper reports on 5281 women interviewed in person. Psychiatric symptoms and ICD-10 diagnoses were established by lay interviewers using the CIS-R. Results are presented in terms of depressive episode and mixed anxiety/depressive disorder.

Housing tenure and access to a car were used as proxy measures of material status. The life event rate in the 6 months before interview was used to indicate overall exposure to stress, and subjects were asked in detail about perceived social support. Information was collected about various other sociodemographic attributes. Lone mothers were compared with supported mothers and with women not involved in care of children under 16.

Results: Lone mothers had prevalence rates of depressive episode of 7%, about three times higher than any other group. The milder condition, mixed anxiety/depression, was also increased in frequency. These increased rates of depressive conditions were no longer apparent after controlling for measures of social disadvantage, stress and isolation.

Conclusions: Lone mothers are increasing in numbers as marital stability declines. Their high rates of material disadvantage and of depressive disorder may have considerable implications for psychiatric and social policy.
Lone mothers showed increased risks of total mortality, lung cancer, suicide/suicide attempt, inflicted violence, traffic injury and other accident, psychiatric disease, and addiction. The main explanation for increased risks seems for most outcomes to lie in deficient household resources, as indicated here by receipt of social-welfare benefit and housing situation. For all the initially elevated outcomes, except for total mortality, significant risk increases remained unaccounted for even in the full model. Relationships varied according to subgroup. Lone motherhood was not related to accident, suicide and addiction among medium- and high-grade non-manual workers. Although lone mothers in general showed no increased risk of ischaemic heart disease, those receiving social benefit were exposed to a significantly increased risk. CONCLUSIONS: Our findings suggest that lone motherhood entails health disadvantages. Lack of household resources seems to play a major role in accounting for increased risks, but the risks are partly independent of socioeconomic circumstances, selection factors, and distress following divorce.


The results show that the health of lone mothers is poor in Sweden as well as in Britain and, most notably, that the magnitude of the differential between lone and couple mothers is of a similar order in Sweden as in Britain. This is despite the more favourable social policies in Sweden, which our results indicate have protected lone mothers from poverty and insecurity in the labour market to a much greater degree than the equivalent British policies over the 1980s and 1990s. Second, the pathways leading to the observed health disadvantage of lone mothers appear to be very different in the two countries in relation to the identified policy entry points. Overall, in Britain, around 50% of the health disadvantage of lone mothers is accounted for by the mediating factors of poverty and joblessness, whereas in Sweden these factors only account for between 3% and 13% of the health gap. The final section discusses the implications of the findings for future policy intervention and research in the two countries.


For the babies of lone mothers, infant mortality has fallen to less than a third of the 1975 level, with a clear reduction in the gap between the mortality in these babies compared with all couple...
registrations: the excess mortality in solely registered births was 79% in 1975 reducing to 33% in 1996. Most of the narrowing of the sole-couple differential was associated with the neonatal period, for which there is now no appreciable gap. For couple registrations analysed by social class of father, infant death rates have more than halved in each social class from 1975 to 1996. The reductions in mortality were greater in the late 1970s and early 1990s. Infant death rates in classes IV-V remained between 50% and 65% higher than in classes I-II. Differentials between social classes were largest in the postneonatal period and smallest in the perinatal and neonatal periods. The gap in perinatal and neonatal mortality between the babies of lone mothers and couple parents in social classes IV-V has disappeared. Conclusions: The differential in infant mortality between social classes still exists, whereas the differential between sole and couple registrations has decreased, showing positive progress in the reduction of inequalities. As the reduction in the differential was confined to the neonatal period these improvements may be more a reflection of healthcare factors than of factors associated with lone mothers' social and economic circumstances.
Poverty and Low-Income


A topical critical examination of the idea of social exclusion and the new political language of social cohesion, community, stakeholding and inclusion. The author examines the actions and rhetoric of the Labour Party and Labour Government under Tony Blair’s leadership, and identifies three different discourses of social exclusion. Using this model, she explores views of inclusion put forward by Will Hutton and other stakeholders, by communitarians including Etzioni and Gray, and by the Labour Party from the Borrie and the Commission on Social Justice, to Blair and the Social Exclusion Unit. This work is intended for departments of politics (courses in British politics, social policy, comparative politics and political theory), sociology (courses in inequality and poverty), a more general political readership on social policy and politics of social exclusion and poverty, and politics of the Left among policymakers, think-tanks, pressure groups, and so on.


No abstract available.


Provides a definitive analysis of the conditions that are fraying the social fabric and the reasons why some countries have been more successful than others in addressing these trends. In the United States, where the poverty rate in the 1980s was twice that of any advanced nation in Europe, the social protection system—and public support for it—has eroded alarmingly. In Europe, the welfare system more effectively buffered the disadvantaged, but social expenditures have been indicted by many as the principal cause of high unemployment. Concluding chapters review the progress and goals of social welfare programs, assess their viability in the face of creeping economic, racial, and social fragmentation, and define the challenges that face those concerned with social cohesion and economic prosperity in the new global economy. This volume illuminates the disparate effects of government intervention on the incidence and duration of poverty in Western countries.


Four-country comparison.

Institutions whose goal is to help those at the margins have been a feature of social life for centuries. Today, social assistance institutions have integration and encouragement as their goal. They seek to avoid exclusion and stigmatisation. Poverty can tear at the fabric of society. However, preventing hardship among those with no resources while reducing exclusion and marginalisation is no easy task. How can social assistance best balance these goals, minimising disincentives to paid employment? What can be done to promote independence and individual responsibility? This book examines the performance of social assistance policies in four countries with similar per capita incomes: Australia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom. It confronts their -- very different -- social protection systems and sheds light on issues such as social insurance and social assistance, central and local social security systems, active and passive policies. The often complex interactions involved are analysed and lessons are drawn from the countries' varied experiences. Particular attention is paid to young people, the long-term unemployed, lone-parent families, immigrants and asylum seekers. Conclusions -- both country-based and thematic -- are presented with a particular emphasis on how barriers and disincentives to employment can be overcome: these are indispensable weapons in the battle against exclusion.


This comment looks at some sections of the Housing Act 1996 which give increasing legal powers for local authorities to make value-judgements about people, and considers what this means for use of public law by those people. The piece examines ‘introductory’ tenancies (Chapter I of Part V), allocations (Part VI), ‘special control provisions’ on houses in multiple occupation (Part II), and the effects on advice (s 179) and procedure (including the final Woolf Report on Access to Justice). It offers an analysis of the common background to these changes in the influences of ‘back to basics’ on one side and communitarianism on the other. It then goes on to identify three continuing strands from the Victorian origins of these debates. These are considered from the point of view of Law Centre housing lawyers attempting in a rights culture to use public law to win more than bricks and mortar for excluded communities.


No abstract available

Over the last 20 years, Australian social policy has increasingly focused on raising the labour market participation level of sole parents. The extension of mutual obligation to sole parents under welfare reform further concentrates this policy direction. Yet while increased workforce activity may reduce 'welfare dependency', the efficacy of employment to raise the level of material well-being in sole parent families is less clear. Recent research casts doubt on the assumed link between material well-being and paid work for sole mother households. This article uses data from the 1996/97 Negotiating the Lifecourse Project and three measures of material well-being to examine the relative importance of employment and partnered status to material well-being among sole and married mother households. The results indicate that increased market work may not lead to significantly higher rates of material well-being for sole mother families.

Welfare and Social Policies


A similar trend is apparent in both Australian and Canadian social programs to enhance work incentives and program effectiveness, but the Canadian provinces are increasingly insisting that low-income mothers with school-age children should enter the labour force rather than accept social benefits. In Canada, there is no counterpart to the Sole Parent Pension, and little public support for the idea that low-income mothers should care for their children at home at the taxpayer’s expense. This paper discusses the differences in rhetoric and social policy relating to low-income mothers, and seeks reasons for the stronger social support for mothering in Australia.

Although the current discourse of economic rationalism suggests that enhancing work incentives and 'employability' will bring prosperity, this paper illustrates that neither paying mothers to care for their children at home nor pushing them into the labour market has reduced high poverty rates among sole mothers. In order to make employability programs more effective, governments need to deal with the earning disparities between mothers and fathers, the shortage and high cost of child care, and the lack of full-time permanent jobs.


The length of time families spent on the Sole Parent Pension (SPP) is analysed using time FaCS Longitudinal Data Set covering the period from June 1995 to June 1999. It is found that lone mothers, relatively younger and older lone parents, and those with younger children had lower exit rates from SPP. There is significant regional variation in the SPP exit rate, and there is evidence this is related to the implicit subsidy of public housing. Lone parents with greater job attachment had substantially shorter stays on SPP. Program payment levels had a relatively small effect on the length of time on SPP.


*Welfare Hot Buttons* provides one of the first comprehensive assessments of contemporary social policy change in three Western countries: Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. Sylvia Bashevkin probes the fate of single mothers on social assistance during the period when three "third way" political executives were in office -- Bill Clinton (U.S.), Jean Chretian (Canada), and Tony Blair (Great Britain). She argues that, despite seemingly progressive campaign rhetoric, the social assistance policy realities under each of these three leaders were in crucial respects more punitive and restrictive than those of their neo-conservative predecessors in the 1980s.

Butterwick, Shauna, Anita Bonson and Pamela Rogers. *Identifying Keys to Successful Transition from Social Assistance to Paid Work: Lessons learned From Canada, the United States, Australia and Europe*. 1998.

No abstract available.


This two volume report presents the findings of a major study of social assistance in 24 OECD countries. Data was collected from academics and government officials in each of the participating countries and national and comparative literature was reviewed.


In a number of industrialized countries, on the assumption that fertility remains at or close to present levels, populations will start to decline, in some cases quite rapidly in the near future. Many governments are alarmed by this prospect, especially since it goes hand in hand with a
further and acute ageing of the population. From the fears in the 1930s about population and family decline, to the fears in the 1970s about over-population, and contemporary talk of "family-friendly" policies, governments' attitudes towards and interventions in family policy have changed considerably. What is today referred to as family policy differs widely from the first forms of government support before the Second World War.

This book argues that demographic changes have been a major force in bringing population and family issues on to the political agenda. The decline in fertility, the increase in divorce rates and lone-parenthood, and the entry of women into the labour force have all reduced the relevance of systems of state support aimed at traditional families. From this perspective, the author examines the changes that have affected families over the past 100 years, and the policies that have been adopted by different governments in response to these changes. Data from twenty-two industrialized countries is used to provide an original analysis of legislation, initiatives, and measures aimed at better supporting families. The book assembles arguments from demography, sociology, and economics to explain population policies, their origins and aims. It shows that despite major similarities across countries in the ways family policy has evolved, and in the ways governments have viewed and supported families, there are major dissimilarities shaped by country-specific events, ideologjes, and circumstances. It concludes by drawing a typology of models of family policy bases on these inter-country differences.


No abstract available


This article reviews the feminist critique of Gosta Esping-Andersen's typology of welfare regimes and revisits my earlier (1992) analysis of gender and welfare regimes together with criticisms of that work. I briefly discuss some methodological issues and attempt to justify my own choice of variables and of an explanatory model derived from empirical historical work. I pay particular attention to critiques that insist on the use of caring regimes as a basis for gender-centered typologies, not least because the two main questions for feminists concerning the provision of unpaid work remain (i) how to value it, and (ii) how to share it more equally between men and women. I argue that women's relationship to paid work, unpaid work and to welfare makes the search for gender-centered measures complicated.


No abstract available

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Patterson, Lesley. "From welfare to work: women lone parents and neo-liberalism". Presented at the Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, June 11, 2002.

An exploration of how New Zealand women who parent alone make sense of their experience as an 'acceptable everyday reality'. Provides historical and policy context for lone parenting in NZ.


Explains the welfare policies of both governments. For both, the political price of retrenchment was reduced by obscuring, diffusing, and deferring the negative effects; by tightening eligibility rules and thereby reducing benefits for some recipients but not for others; by separating beneficiaries from providers; and by maintaining compensation to the beneficiaries who currently enjoyed the largest public support. Pierson devotes most of the book to a detailed documentation of the use of these tactics to shape pension, housing, income maintenance, and health-care policies.

Work

Duncan, Simon and Ros Edwards, Eds. Single Mothers in an International Context: Mothers or

This book starts with a critique of traditional comparative studies which concentrate on national welfare regimes and policies. The editors argue that the causal model of policy is oversimplistic, and that it is a 'mechanistic understanding' of the behaviour of single mothers. For example, they argue that a change in the national policy such as providing universal affordable child care facilities does not necessarily lead to higher labour market participation of single mothers. They emphasize that social processes, informal structure, subjectivity and action by single mothers themselves are more important in determining whether they become mothers or workers. In this collection, Duncan and Edwards develop a 'multi-layered context action model' to understand the various dynamics and processes in which lone parents are positioned as mothers and workers, and the constraints they face in combining the two.


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This paper follows up on the report "Enhancing the Effectiveness of Active Labour Market Policies" which was submitted to the May 1996 meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level. It is mainly based on a series of reviews of labour market policies, comprising both "active" policies which aim at re-integrating the unemployed and "passive" measures which merely provide income support, and the Public Employment Service (PES) which have been carried out under the auspices of the Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee as well as on written material submitted by Member countries.


Our approach, which is empirical and inductive and examines what has happened in terms of changing demography, discursive context, and policy, cannot reveal the 'true' explanations for the growth in the number of lone mother families, nor can it produce a definitive statement as to
what form policies should take. However, we can show how perceptions of the problem of lone motherhood have often differed significantly from the realities, particularly the demographic reality. We also hope to show how policies developed towards lone mothers have arisen from the way in which the problem has been perceived at a particular historical moment.


This paper examines the potential contribution that active labour market policies can make as part of a strategy to combat high and persistent unemployment and the problems of low pay and poverty among the working-age populations in OECD countries.


This report examines the evidence on the impact of the New Deal for Lone Parents and placed UK policy for lone parents in wider international context. Countries examined include the United States, Norway, the Netherlands and New Zealand. London: Department for Work and Pensions.


No abstract available