Jody Heymann and Alison Earle discuss “The Work, Family, and Equity Index: Where Does the United States Stand Globally?”

A graph provides information about international maternity and paternity leaves.

A book by Nicholas W. Townsend is featured in the Sloan Foundation Corner.

Sloan Network Updates and Reminders

Have you submitted the Sloan Work and Family Research Network’s Affiliation Form that was emailed at the beginning of November?

If not, please complete and submit the form at your earliest convenience. The information requested on this short form is critical for the Sloan Network as we expand our project. For instance, in the coming months, we will be creating three different versions of the monthly Network News. Therefore, it will be necessary for the Sloan Network Project Team to know which stakeholder group you identify with, in order to continue to provide the most relevant information.

The Affiliation Form (http://monticello.bc.edu/scottdb/sloan2/index.php) will only take a few minutes to complete.

To those who have already submitted the form, thank you.

We would like to remind all of our affiliates to notify us about work-family publications (your own or others’) so that we can include them in our monthly Literature Updates and put them into our Literature Database.

Conversations with the Experts

A Global Picture of Working Families

Bio: Jody Heymann, MD., Ph.D is Associate Professor of Society, Human Development, and Health at the Harvard School of Public Health and Associate Professor of Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Heymann is the founding director of the Project on Global Working Families, the Director of Policy at the Harvard Center for Society and Health, as well as the founding chair of the Initiative on Work, Family, and Democracy. She has more than 90 publications; her recent books include Global Inequalities at Work: Work’s Impact on the Health of Individuals, Families, and Societies (Oxford University Press, 2003), The Widening Gap: Why America’s Working Families Are in Jeopardy and What Can Be Done About It (Basic Books, 2000) and Can Working Families Ever Win? (Beacon Press, 2002). For more than a decade, Dr. Heymann has been involved in research on working families in the United States and globally. She has received FIRST and Shannon Awards from the National Institutes of Health to examine the relationships among community services, parents’ work conditions and children’s health. She was principal investigator on “The
Behavioral and Cognitive Development of Children Living in Poverty: How is it Affected by Parental Working Conditions,” a research project funded by the William T. Grant Foundation. As a Picker Commonwealth Scholar, Dr. Heymann has been the principal investigator on a study which examines the work-family balance for high need and resource poor families. As an associate of the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Midlife Development, Dr. Heymann developed sections for a series of national surveys that provide data on the impact of working conditions on family life. Dr. Heymann served as chair of the Johnson Foundation program, supported by the Packard Foundation, on Work, Family, and Democracy. She has served in an advisory capacity to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the U.S. Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, the World Health Organization, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among other organizations.

Bio: Alison Earle, Ph.D., is project director for the Work, Family, and Democracy Initiative and a lecturer at the Harvard School of Public Health. Dr. Earle’s research has focused on how public policies affect the needs of working families in the United States and worldwide. She has conducted extensive analyses of the relationship between work and family health, as well as between parental working conditions and children's development, in the United States. She initiated seminal research on the relationship between caregiving and job loss. She is currently a principal investigator on “The Work, Family, Community Nexus Project”, a research project funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. Alison Earle received her Ph.D. in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where she received both the Henry A. Murray Dissertation Award and a Kennedy Ph.D. Fellowship Award for her graduate work.

Editors Note: The following interview was conducted with Jody Heymann, M.D., Ph.D. and Alison Earle, Ph.D. who co-authored the report, “The Work, Family, and Equity Index: Where Does the United States Stand Globally?”

This report, supported by the Ford Foundation, was prepared under the auspices of the Project on Global Working Families at the Harvard School of Public Health. As stated in the report, “The Work, Family, and Equity Index is the first venture to systematically define and measure successful public policies for working families globally. The Work, Family and Equity Index has two functions: First, the Index identifies essential goals for work-family policy based on the research evidence. Second, the Index enables us to examine individual country’s public policies for working families relative to global standards....To complete the Index, data were gathered from 188 countries that represent a wide range of political, social, and economic systems.”

The Index is comprised of 20 items: Paid leave for childbearing and childrearing; Infant and toddler care; Early childhood education and care; Working adults’ availability to provide routine care for children; Educational opportunities and supervision for school-age children throughout the day; Paid leave and flexibility for children’s educational needs; Paid leave and flexibility for

An Interview with Jody Heymann and Alison Earle, Co-Authors of “The Work, Family, and Equity Index: Where Does the United States Stand Globally?”

Pitt-Catsouphes: Why is it important to look at the lives of working families from a global perspective?

Heymann: There are a number of reasons why we feel it is important to gain a global perspective about these issues. Let me mention a couple of these.

First, even though we are still exploring what globalization means for businesses, employees and their families, companies and countries understand they compete in a global economy; they know that they need to take into account the conditions facing working families in regions around world. To give a concrete example, questions have been raised as to whether the US can afford to offer paid maternity leave. Some have expressed concern that, if US businesses offer paid maternity leave to female employees, we will lose jobs to other countries. In reality, the rest of the world already offers what we are still debating. Countries around the world have already proven that it is clearly economically and politically feasible to guarantee paid maternity leave. 163 countries – countries which represent the range of economic, social, cultural and political circumstances – have paid maternity leave and 139 countries offer paid sick leave. Australia is the only other industrialized nation without paid maternity leave, but it offers 52 weeks of unpaid leave to its working women. Furthermore, Australia’s guaranteed leave applies to all working women, whereas the US Family and Medical Leave Act – the only US policy guaranteeing leave - applies to only about half of the
Second, the US has a long history of learning from other countries in the social policy realm. The development and passage of Social Security provides just one example. Social Security did not emerge only in the US. In fact, most European countries had already instituted social insurance programs by the time Social Security was first proposed in 1934. Decision makers learned from what was happening in other countries and then went on to formulate an American approach. The experiences of these other countries help to show what is possible and what is feasible. International comparisons can help the US make informed decisions by considering the range of approaches that have been developed by other nations.

Earle: It is important to note that the data gathered for the Index includes information from a wide range of countries. In the past, policy comparisons have tended to focus only on European experiences. The Project on Global Working Families systematically collected comprehensive information on countries with different types of economies, political systems, and cultural traditions. That successes were found in countries of all types and in all regions makes a compelling case for the feasibility of establishing policies that support working families here in the United States.

Pitt-Catsouphes: How do you interpret the finding that the US, which has extensive economic resources, has fewer public policy supports for working families?

Heymann: In some sense, it is a real American paradox. While we have one of the strongest economies and one of the highest per capita incomes in the world, we are one of the weakest countries when it comes to protecting working families.

Why did it happen? Historically, the US experimented with a largely voluntary approach that relied on private-sector, employer-based strategies.

What were some of the consequences? First, we have created an unequal playing field among employers. Unless all employers are expected to provide the same supports to employees as part of the employment contract, the employer who tries to do the right thing and who steps up to help working families may, in actuality, be at a competitive disadvantage. Second, as a result, there are grave gender and class inequalities in who has access to important benefits in the US.

Earle: Our research has shown that the US approach has resulted in increasing inequities. For example, low income families, who are often managing greater caregiving burdens with fewer financial and social resources, are in fact less likely to have access to paid leave policies than those in the middle-income brackets. Those in the middle class are less well off with respect to work-family supports than families at the top of the income gradient, but they do better than those at the bottom. This legacy of the US approach is of significant concern.

Heymann: What can be done about it? It is clear that we, in the US, need to provide and expand the fundamental benefits available to working families. The good news from our research is that the US has the resources needed to address this critical social issue. Many of the 163 countries with paid maternity leave have fewer economic resources than the US does and nonetheless can afford to offer this benefit. Moreover, there is no evidence that providing benefits negatively affects the unemployment rate or productivity. In fact, there are countries with higher productivity and lower unemployment than the US that still have better benefits.

Although the US currently guarantees none of these fundamental and critical policies, it is clear that it would be economically feasible for the US to do so.

Pitt-Catsouphes: As you mentioned earlier, many US corporations have worksites in other countries. What are the implications of this?

Heymann: There are several implications particularly for companies that are just beginning to work in other countries and that might not have had a chance to become familiar with the social, economic, and political circumstances of other nations.

First, business leaders need to get access to information that can dispel the frequent misconception that labor standards are probably lower in countries where they locate their factories, particularly if these countries are smaller or have less strong economies than the US. It is important that business leaders
understand that the social and economic supports may actually be better in these other countries. Although wages may be lower, labor conditions may actually be higher relative to the US.

Business leaders then need to consider how they can establish fair and equitable standards across all countries in which they are involved. Even though public policy supports vary from country to country, business leaders need to think about equity across their business sites. At times this will mean ensuring that labor conditions for employees in the US are as well protected as they are in other countries that guarantee basic rights and benefits. At other times this may mean that European companies provide equally decent working conditions in worksites in other nations as those that exist in their home countries. The goal should be a race to achieve decent working conditions not race to the bottom.

**Earle:** It will become increasingly advantageous for business leaders to think about their experiences in other countries as unique opportunities to learn. For instance, companies that are setting up sites across the Mexican border are wrestling with the choices they must make with regard to wages as well as health and safety protections in place in those factories. The global economy really offers US companies a chance to share the best of US business practices and to learn about and incorporate better policies that are already established elsewhere.

**Pitt-Catsouphes:** What do you think is the most important message of the report, “The Work, Family, and Equity Index”?

**Heymann:** First, we should note that there are some areas where we in the US are doing well. It is important to recognize that the US has established the “right to work” regardless of race, gender, age or disability, for example. Similarly important protections exist for the right to an education.

**Earle:** And, the US compares favorably to other countries in terms of the supports and services available to the elderly.

**Heymann:** On the other hand, there are two areas – services for children and labor protections for families – where we are far behind.

These overall findings from the Index clearly point to the feasibility of establishing paid parental leave, paid sick leave so that employees could take care of their own health and as well as that of their family members, paid annual leave which would guarantee a certain amount of time workers could spend with their families, and policies addressing working families’ need for reasonable work schedules and hours such as restrictions on mandatory evening and weekend shifts.

The research is clear; changes such as these would make a significant difference to the health and welfare of children.

We also need to think about the services that we make available to children. We are so far down the list when comes to early childhood education. In fact, the US is tied for 39th place in terms of enrollment in early childhood care and education. We are tied at 93rd when it comes to student-to-staff ratios in pre-primary education. We do have relatively high rates of enrollment of infants and toddlers in formal childcare, but that reflects the fact that other countries have one-year paid leaves which minimizes the need for infant care.

**Earle:** As we look to the future, it is encouraging to realize that countries have tried a range of approaches to support working families. Their policies demonstrate the range of funding structures and sources, and different combinations of private and public sector roles. We do, in fact, have a range of options, and as with other types of policy, we can use the states as laboratories for testing the feasibility and effectiveness of potential federal policies.

**Editor’s Note:** This chart has been adapted from The Clearinghouse on International Developments on Child, Youth and Family Policies at Columbia University [http://www.childpolicyintl.org/](http://www.childpolicyintl.org/) (Table 1.11: Maternity and Parental Leaves, 1999-2002). The original table contains information for over 160 countries. This chart provides information from countries of different continents and of varying sizes.
Additional Resources: Related to Global Equity

**Global Perspectives**
The Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth and Family Policies at Columbia University: This website provides comparative data on family policies, statistics, and work-family benefits for 23 countries.

- Visit the website at [http://www.childpolicyintl.org/](http://www.childpolicyintl.org/)

**Global Perspectives**
OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development): “The OECD groups 30 member countries sharing a commitment to democratic government and the market economy. With active relationships with some 70 other countries, NGOs and civil society, it has a global reach. Best known for its publications and its statistics, its work covers economic and social issues from macroeconomics, to trade, education, development and science and innovation.”

- To view the OECD Statistics Page, click here [http://www.oecd.org/statsportal/0,2639,en_2825_293564_1_1_1_1_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/statsportal/0,2639,en_2825_293564_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)
- To view the OECD Family Friendly Policies page, click here [www.oecd.org/els/social/familyfriendly](www.oecd.org/els/social/familyfriendly)

**Global Perspectives**
The Project on Global Working Families: “A research unit founded and led by Professor Jody Heymann at the Harvard School of Public Health. The Project on Global Working Families is the first program devoted to understanding and improving the relationship between working conditions and family health and well-being throughout the world.”

- Click here [http://www.globalworkingfamilies.org/](http://www.globalworkingfamilies.org/) to visit the homepage.
Global Perspectives

Transitions: This organization provides cross-national research from France, Portugal, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, the UK, Bulgaria, and Slovenia in the areas of work, family, and well-being.

- To view this website, please visit http://www.workliferesearch.org/transitions/index.html
- For summaries of the cross-national Literature Review, click here http://www.workliferesearch.org/transitions/review.html

The Sloan Foundation Corner

Work-Family Book


Nicholas W. Townsend (2002),
ISBN: 1-56639-958-0

Editor's Note: This section of the Network News is usually reserved for working papers and publications that have become publicly available within the past year. However, this book authored by Nicholas Townsend has recently come to our attention and we wanted to be sure that our affiliates have an opportunity to become familiar with it.

The writing of The Package Deal: Marriage, Work and Fatherhood in Men's Lives was supported by a grant from the Sloan Foundation that allowed Nicholas Townsend to spend a semester at Berkeley as a visitor to the Demography Department and a participant in the activities of the Berkeley Center for Working Families directed by Arlie Hochschild and Barrie Thorne.

Mr. Townsend describes his book below.

“This book is based on interviews with thirty-nine men who graduated from the same high school in Northern California in the early 1970s. In order to bring out the complexities of these men's lives and positions I concentrate on twenty of them and I supplement their accounts of their lives with firsthand reports from wives, teachers, and other residents of the town as well as with descriptions of the changing economic and social situation of the region over thirty years. My goal is to understand and analyze the "dominant cultural values" about fatherhood, male success, and the good life in order to understand the sometimes apparently contradictory attitudes and behaviors of men in the contemporary United States. I investigate the meanings of "providing" and "protecting" and the ways in which paternal love is defined and redefined.

My analysis reveals that men aspire to a package deal of employment, home ownership, marriage, and fatherhood. Of particular significance are two tensions within this constellation of values. One is that men devote themselves to employment, putting long hours into work and commuting at the expense of family time despite their almost universal desire to be "closer to my children than my father was to me." The second is that, even though these men's wives are often employed, they put their wives in a "mediating" position between themselves and their children. I argue that this pattern in married couples has implications for men's ability to carry on direct relationships with their children after divorce. My conclusion is a plea for understanding men's cultural position, as one of my reviewers put it as "neither villains nor victims," and for policies that recognize that good fathering is not just an individual task but requires changes in the structure of work and its rewards."

Further information about this book is available at http://www.temple.edu/tempress/titles/1592_reg.html

Announcements
Call for papers

4th Annual Hawaii International Conference on Social Sciences
Deadline for Submission: February 1, 2005

This conference will take place at the Waikiki Beach Marriott in Honolulu, Hawaii on June 13-16, 2005. For submission guidelines and topic areas for papers, please visit http://www.hicsocial.org/cfp_ss.htm.

Global Perspectives - European Academy of Management 2005 Conference, Theme: “Responsible Management in an Uncertain World”
Deadline for Submission: February 15, 2005

This conference will be held in Munich, Germany from May 4-7, 2005. To view guidelines and submission information, click here http://www.euram-online.org/associations/euram/index.asp.

Deadline for Submission: March 1, 2005 for the U.S. papers; May 1, 2005 for the International papers.

For submission guidelines, please visit http://www.tu-chemnitz.de/phil/soziologie/nauck/rc06/CALLFORPAPRS.pdf

American Psychological Association, Theme: “Work, Stress, and Health 2006: Making a Difference in the Workplace”
Deadline for Submission: Workshop Proposal Deadline: April 1, 2005; Proposal Deadline For Posters, Papers, and Symposia: May 1, 2005

Miami, Florida is the site of the American Psychological Association 2006 conference on March 2-4, 2006. For further information about submission guidelines, please visit http://www.apa.org/pi/work/callforpapers.html

Conference Announcements

9th Annual AWLP Conference
Theme: “The Magic of Connections: Strategic Thinking for Contemporary Times”
Where: Disney's Contemporary Resort, Lake Buena Vista, FL - When: February 9-11, 2005

Visit this website for more information http://www.awlp.org/

Global Perspectives - 9th Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference
Theme: “Family Matters”
Where: Melbourne, Australia - When: February 9-11, 2005

Visit this website for further details http://www.aifsconference.org/

College and University Work/Family Association
Theme: “Building the Workplace of the Future: Flexible Career Opportunities in Academia”
Where: Georgia Tech University, Atlanta, GA - When: February 23-26, 2005

Visit this website for more information http://www.cuwfa.org/

Global Perspectives - International Social Policy Conference
The Nation's Network of Child Care Resources and Referral (NACCRA) 2005 National Policy Symposium
Theme: “Who’s Accountable for Quality Child Care and Early Education?”
Where: Omni-Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C. - When: March 1-5, 2005
Visit this website for more details [www.naccra.org/symposium/2005](http://www.naccra.org/symposium/2005/)

Global Perspectives - Community, Work and Family Conference
Theme: “Change and Transformation”
Where: Manchester, UK - When: March 16-18, 2005
Please visit this website for further details [http://www.did.stu.mmu.ac.uk/cwf/index.shtml](http://www.did.stu.mmu.ac.uk/cwf/index.shtml)

75th Annual Meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society
Theme: “Sociology and Public Policy”
Where: Wyndham Hotel, Washington, D.C. - When: March 17-20, 2005
Please visit [http://www.essnet.org/annualmeeting.htm](http://www.essnet.org/annualmeeting.htm) for more information

The British Sociological Association Annual Conference
Theme: “The Life Course: Fragmentation, Diversity and Risk”
Where: University of York - When: March 21-23, 2005
Click here for further details as they become available [http://www.britsoc.co.uk/bsaweb.php?link_id=30&area=item3](http://www.britsoc.co.uk/bsaweb.php?link_id=30&area=item3)

Global Perspectives - Families and Social Capital (ESRC Research Group) International Conference
Where: London South Bank University - When: April 6-7, 2005
Visit this website for more conference information as it becomes available [http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/Call_for_Papers.shtml](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/Call_for_Papers.shtml)

Women work! Conference
Where: Arlington, Virginia - When: April 6-8, 2005
Click here for more information [http://www.womenwork.org/projects/conferences.htm](http://www.womenwork.org/projects/conferences.htm)

American Council on Consumer Interests’ 51st Annual Conference
Where: Hyatt Regency Hotel, Columbus, OH - When: April 6-9, 2005
Visit the following website for more information regarding conference information: [http://www.consumerinterests.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3308](http://www.consumerinterests.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3308)

Global Perspectives - A conference jointly sponsored by the National Poverty Center, Gerald, R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan and the European Union Center, University of Michigan.
Theme: “Changing Social Policies for Low-Income Families and Less Skilled Workers in the EU and the U.S.”
Where: Ann Arbor, MI - When: April 7-8, 2005
Click here [http://www.npc.umich.edu/news/events/npceuconf/index.shtml](http://www.npc.umich.edu/news/events/npceuconf/index.shtml) for further details as they become
6th Annual NCFR Public Policy Conference
Jointly sponsored by National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) and the American Association for Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS)

Visit this website for more information as it becomes available
http://www.ncfr.org/about_us/a_p_p_public_policy.asp

Literature Updates

Each month, we select up to 10 publications from those that have recently been entered into this database.

The Sloan Work and Family Research Network maintains an online database which contains the citations and annotations of work-family research publications.

A year ago, there were 5,740 citations in the Literature Database. As of October 2004, we now have over 6,200 citations.

Click here for a direct link to the Sloan Literature Update articles in the Literature Database.
To Bookmark a direct link to the Literature Database please click here.

- This month, 6 of the publications we have selected for the “Literature Updates” section of this issue of The Network News are publications relevant to the topic of global equity.

This article studies work/family conflict and work hours of employees in the UK, the Netherlands, and Sweden. The results suggest that in the UK and the Netherlands women (especially mothers) are more likely to work part-time, while men are more likely to work long hours. However, women, mothers, and men in Sweden work a similar amount of work hours. Work hours appear to be associated with parents’ work/family conflict. Fathers working long hours report a higher experience of work/family conflict, than do mothers working part-time. Yet, a higher experience of work/family conflict is stated among Swedish women working longer hours. The authors discuss the trade-offs of part-time work for women in the Netherlands and the UK (less pay, less financial independence, less work/family conflict) and women’s long work hours in Sweden (more gender equality in employment, more work/family conflict).


Drawing on data from the Brazilian Living Standards Measurement Survey 1996/97, the 1996 National Survey of Household Income and Expenditure, the South Africa Integrated Household Survey 1994, and the Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey 1997/98, this article examines families working extended hours. More specifically, the authors study dual-earner families, extended families, and single-parent families in which all adults are working at least sixty hours a week. The families studied are from Vietnam, Mexico, South Africa, and Brazil and within the family there is a minimum of one child under the age of fifteen. The findings indicate that single parent families are the type of family most commonly working sixty or more hours per week. In Vietnam there was not a gender difference in extended work hours. In the other three countries studied men work extended hours more than women, yet women engage more in unpaid work/caregiving. The authors identify outcomes of extended work hours for children, parents, and society.


The following list is a selection of some of our most recent additions to the Literature Database.


To download the full-text of this report, click here [http://familiesandwork.org/eproducts/genandgender.pdf](http://familiesandwork.org/eproducts/genandgender.pdf).


This article studies dual-earner first-time parents’ length of parental leave and transition as they return to work. The findings suggest that paternity leaves are longer for fathers with supportive employers and higher family salience. The average length of mothers’ maternity leave in this study is three months. Mothers’ adjustment to work from maternity leave is associated with partner support, depression, number of work hours, and career/family centrality. The authors provide policy suggestions for parental leave.


Drawing on gender role theory and family systems theory, this article provides a literature review of articles related to work-family conflict and impact of gender on women’s adjustment to relocation in international assignments. The author also discusses factors effecting women international managers’ adjustment, such as gender norms, organizational support, and adjustment of partner and children.


Drawing on data from the 1994-1997 Household Panel Study, this article investigates the effects of voluntary (quitting) and involuntary (layoff) job mobility on the wages of men and women in Spain. The results reveal that work experience, education, age, and having a family influence job mobility and wages. Also, women with voluntary job mobility experience less wage discrimination than women with involuntary job mobility.


This article discusses factors that influence employees’ usage of organizational family-friendly programs. By drawing on distributive justice, planned behavior, and help-seeking theories, as well as characteristics of the organization, the authors propose contexts of employees’ participation and non-participation in family-friendly programs. Participation is effected by employees’ beliefs that family-friendly programs will help balance work and family responsibilities, a request to participate will be approved by the organization, and the workplace culture is supportive. Factors that impact non-participation are employees’ expectations that participating will hinder their career, the image that the employee is more committed to their family than the organization, and that participation is a burden to the organization and/or co-workers.

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**Upcoming Issues**

*Take Part in The Network News*

Upcoming issues of *The Network News* will focus on the following topics:

- Shift Work
- Careers
- Older Workers

Is your work related to any of these topics? If so, please contact us.

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**The Sloan Work and Family Research Network** appreciates the extensive support we have received from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the Boston College community.

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