This article integrates and analyzes research on workplace family policy and suggests areas for further inquiry. It highlights salient themes such as corporate culture, gender and class differences regarding support for policies, and the role of government. A theoretical framework for understanding barriers to progressive family policies in the workplace is articulated that identifies competing social, cultural, and psychological forces. Thus the article delineates factors that support and circumvent creation and successful implementation of work-family policies. In so doing, it specifies reasons for employer and employee resistance to progressive gender roles. Although future research might elaborate more systematically the relative tenacity of and intersections between various barriers to progressive policy, it also needs to evaluate on a larger scale and with greater precision the costs and benefits of traditional versus progressive programs. These and other issues figure prominently in a research agenda for the 1990s.

The Evolution of Workplace
Family Policy Research*

MARJORIE E. STARRELS
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Few employees, employers, family members, and family and organizational scholars escape recognition of the range and extent of work-family tensions in the United States. Dramatic shifts in family structure, patterns of family formation and dissolution, and labor force participation of women have contributed to links between the workplace and family life that are increasingly viewed as problematic. Scholars have also documented the scarcity of family-responsive workplaces and public laws and policies that address this concern. The demise in 1990 of the Family and Medical Leave Act typifies the widespread resistance in the United States to reducing work-family stress through formal mechanisms.

In December 1990, *Journal of Family Issues*, under the guest editorship of Joan Aldous, published a special issue devoted to the impact of workplace family policies. The issue provides an excellent overview of problems that employees face, types of benefits that employers provide, the prevalence of such policies, and their impact on individuals and firms (see, for example, Aldous, 1990; Galinsky & Stein, 1990).

This essay examines several major themes in the special issue as well as other scholarship on work-family intersections. The first is the nature of corporate culture with regard to extant values, norms, and informal versus formal supports and barriers to progressive policies and practices. Research consistently finds that corporate support, broadly defined, is essential for the reduction of work-family tension. At the most macro-structural or formal level, family-friendly policies and practices are necessary to facilitate employees' coordination of work and family roles.

At a more informal level, managers must interpret and implement formal policy in such a way as to be consistent with the purpose and intent of the policies. All too often, managers subvert well-designed and well-intentioned policies by failing to apply policy fairly. Due to their own social and/or personal resistance to changing roles, they make it difficult for employees to take advantage of progressive programs. At the most microstructural and informal level, disapproval from managers and co-workers discourages workers from using work-family programs to their fullest. For example, the workplace stereotype that it is not properly masculine for men to take parental leave is very common, as is the notion that if women cannot balance family and work obligations perfectly, they should not be doing both. Thus workplace attitudes contribute to feelings on the parts of both men and women that they should be able to manage their private (i.e., family) lives without "help" from their employers.

Second, I examine gender and class differences in effects of as well as support for family-responsive policies. Because women generally assume greater responsibility than men for child rearing, they tend to suffer more than men from the inadequacy of work-family policy. Not surprisingly, this shortage has clear negative consequences for women's equality, and we observe more female relative to male support for policies. Indeed, gender, more than political orientation or social class, predicts opinions on the helpfulness of employers' policies and services to workers with family obligations. However, although women are more supportive of policies than are men, they have less power to formulate them. Although gender and class are interwoven in that women typically earn less than men, some features of work-family policies are distinctively class or gender based. Lower-status employees, particularly women, suffer more than their higher-status counterparts from the scarcity of programs.

Third, I analyze the role of government in creating workplace family policy, because distinctions between public and private policy are significant. Although individual firms often create policy on the basis of economic cost-benefit, governmental policy more often cites ideological

or moral justifications quite distinct from economic costs or benefits. The above themes are interrelated within a theoretical framework for understanding barriers to progressive family policies in the workplace. I specify competing social, psychological, and cultural forces that support or inhibit the creation and successful implementation of policy. In so doing, I detail causes of employer and employee resistance to progressive gender roles and suggest potentially fruitful areas for further inquiry.

CORPORATE CULTURE

The nature of corporate culture with regard to norms, values, and informal versus formal supports and barriers to progressive policies and practices is a critical focus of current research on workplace family policy. Undoubtedly, corporate culture may either advance or thwart development and effectiveness of work-family programs. Although several corporations have progressive programs (see Auerbach, 1990; Galinsky & Stein, 1990, for features of such organizations as well as delineations of levels of responsiveness), the overwhelming majority of corporations do not (Aldous, 1990). Furthermore, existing programs often inadequately meet the demand for services. Although some companies, for instance, have introduced child-care programs, there is little evidence that they will fill the gap between what is available and what is needed (Aldous & Dumon, 1990).

A nuanced understanding of corporate culture depends decidedly on an evaluation of formal versus informal supports for workplace family policy and practice. Although some corporate leaders implemented new policies after recognizing the link between productivity and reduced work/family conflict, formal policies are insufficient in producing desired change. In particular, one must consider whether and how policy and practice support, reinforce, or contradict one another. What are their cumulative as well as separate effects?

Policy and practice often conflict, as do formal and informal supports (Raabe, 1990). The primary explanation for these disjunctures is that unsupportive supervisors and organizational cultures commonly counteract formal policies. Managers who oversee implementation of new policies often do so with limited success because they hold strong biases in favor of old policies (Geiger, 1989). Because policy implementation is partially based on supervisor discretion, progressive policies are likely subverted by negative attitudes and nonsupportive organizational cultures (Galinsky, 1988; Geiger, 1989; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987; Raabe & Gessner, 1988).

Indeed, the National Council of Jewish Women's study (1988) of almost 2,000 employed women before and after childbirth in 80 communities found that having a supportive supervisor has about the same effect on stress as having a supportive spouse. In a study by Merck & Company, Inc., male employees with supportive supervisors reported lower levels of stress and fewer stress-related health problems. Female employees similarly reported less stress (Hughes & Galinsky, 1988).

Another key problem is that legislation on child care and maternity/family leave benefits is, for the most part, gender neutral with regard to eligibility requirements (Aldous & Dumon, 1990), yet informal norms and practices circumvent the intended neutrality. This, together with higher wages, helps explain why men take parental leave less often than women, even when it is equally available. Because it is not normative for men to be engaged fully in family work, they can suffer even greater career fallout than can women (Pleck, 1989).

Some of the most prevalent biases held by managers are: (a) Dedication to a career is measured by the amount of time one spends in work or in informal get-togethers after work hours; (b) men are "wimps" if they choose to care for children; (c) women should be the ones who take care of children; (d) potential maternity issues must never be discussed at the workplace; (e) working parents should make the balance work perfectly or they should not be working (or they should not be parents); (f) careers must be a straight, uninterrupted, vertical path through the hierarchy; (g) when parents reduce their work hours to take care of children, they are essentially "on vacation"; (h) one must always do the job at the workplace; and (i) women are not really dedicated to their careers (Geiger, 1989). Some co-workers also hold such attitudes, further derailing innovative work-family connections.

A more general bias reflected in corporate culture is discouragement of multiple career paths (Evans & Bartolome, 1980). With the exception of the "mommy track," companies have been reluctant to admit the viability of alternate career trajectories. Organizations and individuals would likely profit from heightened awareness that some career paths are more compatible with desired life-styles than others (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1986). Education might help stimulate appreciation of the myriad ways in which employees can contribute to an organization and experience "career success."

Indeed, a more appropriate conventional career trajectory may be the "slow burn" approach in which job challenge and time involvement start off at moderate levels and gradually increase over time as family demands

subside (Bailyn, 1980). For some, this approach would necessitate uncomfortable revisions of the nature and meaning of career success and its chronological location within a multiplicity of life course transitions and trajectories. Yet, it might have extraordinary payoffs in terms of reducing work-family tension, enhancing the viability of dual-career families as a normative family form, and improving parenting due to less stressful working conditions.

Although family-responsive programs have focused on flexibility and providing accurate information (Galinksy & Stein, 1990), organizational actions might also include support services for employees facing specific work-family dilemmas (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1986). To supplement direct aid and support such as child-care programs, support groups provide opportunities to develop problem-solving and coping skills. Such groups might address a variety of issues including conflicting time demands, emotional spillover, career priorities between spouses (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1986), child development, child care, gender division of household labor, leisure, and so on.

As Hochschild (1989), Fowlkes (1987), Mills (1959), and others have suggested, individuals and couples frequently perceive as personal and idiosyncratic problems that in reality, are socially and culturally constructed and mediated. Therefore, talking in a supportive environment to others at similar stages in individual and family life cycles should, at minimum, help people to discern the public as distinct from private sources of their strain.

In addition, support groups might lead to greater demands for organizational and legislative change. Indeed, the collective nature of such efforts should attenuate fears of individual employees that they might be sanctioned for vocalizing concerns potentially unpopular with management. To the extent that their jobs are less secure than those of higher-status employees, lower-status employees could benefit the most from these endeavors.[1]

SUBGROUP VARIATIONS

GENDER DIFFERENCES

There are remarkable gender differences in effects of as well as support for family-responsive policies. Indeed, gender, more than political orientation or social class, predicts opinions on the helpfulness of employers'

policies and services to workers with family obligations. Political ori-
entation is the second strongest predictor (Martin, Seymour, Courage,
Godbey, & Tate, 1988). Arguably, workplace family policies are rather
uncommon because women, in the aggregate, support them more than do
men but have less power to develop them. Both in the workplace and in
other public arenas, women have lacked the corporate and political power
to push for family-friendly policies. In particular, women in lower-status
jobs typically lack a formal mechanism for making such demands and they
fear negative sanctions should they choose to vocalize them (Auerbach,
1990).

Because these gender interests cut across traditional class lines, an
increase in the numbers of women in middle- and upper-management
would help promote, create, and successfully implement policies that
advance the interests of women. Women tend to be more supportive of
work-family policies because they have the most to gain.

> Family responsibilities are normatively a woman's issue, and management
> and union men are unlikely to view programs to assist workers with family
> obligations as a high priority.... It seems safe to say that if home and family
> were normatively men's responsibility, employer-provided services might
> long since have been adopted. (Martin et al., 1988, pp. 388, 395)

Accordingly, because women bear disproportionate responsibility for
child rearing, they tend to suffer more than men from the inadequacy of
work-family policy. Not surprisingly, this shortage has clear negative con-
sequences for women's equality (Auerbach, 1990). Indeed, the "mommy
track" (Schwartz, 1989) exemplifies corporate attempts to routinize and,
indeed, celebrate women's domestic responsibilities over and above their
workplace commitments. By enabling predominantly professional women
to remain on their career trajectories, albeit at a slower pace, companies
display a striking combination of opportunism and traditionalism.

Arguably, the mommy track enables corporations to balance their
needs for talented, valuable employees with their interests in reproducing
the traditional division of labor by gender. Although some women may
prefer a more limited commitment to employment in order to devote more
time to child rearing, it is crucial to recognize possible connections be-
tween these desires and the larger social structure (for instance, as mani-
fested in corporate culture) that may cultivate nurturing propensities of
females more than males.

Indeed, such policies are gender specific rather than gender neutral, as
was the intent of the Family and Medical Leave Act. The gender-specific
nature of this career trajectory, illustrated by the absence of a "daddy

track" or a "parent track," enforces traditional expectations that child rearing is primarily women's work. Furthermore, a woman with a husband in a professional or managerial position may have many unpaid yet well-defined duties to assist her husband's career (Fowlkes, 1987). Certainly, such responsibilities tend to limit wives' participation in the labor force (Voydanoff, 1989).

CLASS DIFFERENCES

Effects of, as well as support for, workplace family policies also vary by class. Although gender and class are interwoven in that women typically earn less than men, some features of work-family policies are distinctively class or gender based. In particular, lower-status employees, especially women, suffer more than their higher status counterparts from the scarcity of programs. For example, flexible schedules and on-site child care are less available to those with lower paying jobs. Furthermore, middle-class parents can afford better child care which emphasizes child development and learning opportunities, whereas working- and lower-class parents can obtain only the most basic services, often from unlicensed providers (Aldous & Dumon, 1990). Thus the best benefit for working-class employees could be a wage increase, whereas the most advantageous benefit for many middle-class employees is often a reduction in hours and earnings (Raabe, 1990).

Hourly workers also get fewer work-family benefits because unions, male-dominated for the most part, typically do not fight for these benefits. Wages and other benefits are generally placed on the bargaining table before work-family benefits, highlighting once again the interface between gender and class interests and forces. A notable exception, however, is the Communication Workers of America (CWA), probably the most liberal union in the United States. Having recently concluded with AT&T a 10 million dollar dependent (child and elder) care contract including leaves, care centers, and insurance coverage, it emerges as much more responsive than the average union to women's and families' needs.

Class differences also exist with regard to benefits allowed by government. For instance, the dependent-care tax credit allows a family to deduct a small portion of its annual child-care expenses from its federal taxable income. Yet, this provision benefits only middle- and upper-class families because less than half of all working mothers pay enough taxes to claim the deduction. These inequities are starting to be addressed in a piecemeal fashion. For example, in 1990, Congress expanded earned-income tax

credits, thereby making dependent-care tax credits refundable to working families with incomes too low to pay taxes (Aldous & Dumon, 1990).

In sum, intragender class tensions do exist, notwithstanding the fact that gender interests often cut across class lines. Thus divergent views on family policy among workers in different wage groupings present a formidable obstacle to galvanizing interclass support for work-family benefits. And because economically powerful corporate personnel are likely to have greater political clout, it is difficult for lower-wage workers to find programs that meet their needs. Overall, the prognosis for bridging these class divisions in the near future is grim. Class differences are expected to widen in years to come (Kingston, 1990; Martin et al., 1988), especially among women (Jacobs, 1989).

GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT

Workplace family policy research also attempts to ascertain the best role for government in policy formation. The distinctions between public and private policy are significant. Although individual firms often create policy on the basis of economic cost-benefit, governmental policy more often cites ideological or moral justifications quite apart from economic costs or benefits. For example, goals of gender equality and individual and familial well-being are frequently articulated legitimations for work-family policies that are, in some measure, autonomous from economic considerations. On these grounds, together with greater resistance of public policy to cyclical expansions, contractions, and related vagaries of economic life,[2] many argue that private initiatives should be supported by governmental regulation, particularly in light of predictions of modest corporate reform (Aldous, 1990; Cherlin, 1988; Kingston, 1990).

Although prospects are uncertain, this scenario may reach fruition. Due to the large number of employed mothers, lawmakers have expressed growing interest in child-care legislation and maternity/family leave benefits (Aldous & Dumon, 1990). Congress is planning to reconsider a new, watered-down version of the Family and Medical Leave Act, although it is doubtful that, even if enacted, it would be as comprehensive as many recommend.

Governmental initiatives are also evident at the state level. Presently, about 11 states offer leave policies to their employees. New Jersey, for example, recently introduced a 12-week leave policy, without pay but job guaranteed, for all state employees. Oregon, Rhode Island, Wisconsin,

and New York have similar programs. Thus, in the absence of federal policies, states are beginning to address employee needs. It is vital to consider, however, that these state policies cover only state employees. Proposed federal legislation, on the other hand, would assist employees in the private as well as public sectors.

Another advantage of public policies addressing work-family conflict is that government may provide valuable symbolic leadership that can hasten nongovernmental adjustments to workplace policy (Cherlin, 1988). Again, however, one must recognize the tenacity of many corporate officials, notwithstanding governmental policy based on different norms. And, of course, there are key differences between family objectives of liberal and conservative politicians. Whereas liberal politicians favor greater governmental support, some conservatives, such as Reagan and Bush, regard family support as not within the proper scope of government. However, to try to win the vote of working parents, Orin Hatch and other conservatives have developed Republican bills on some work-family issues, such as child care.

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Although a central focus of future research must be a finer elaboration of the relative tenacity of and intersections among various barriers to progressive policy, another significant theme is the need for more and better evaluation research on costs and benefits of traditional versus progressive programs. The dearth of evaluation research, particularly high-quality research, figures prominently in a research agenda for the 1990s. Following is a discussion of these and other suggestions as they relate to themes explored above.

EVALUATION RESEARCH

There are large gaps in our knowledge of the costs and benefits of workplace family policies. Few studies address explicitly the associations between family-oriented personnel policies and the quality of family life. Neither is there abundant research on costs and benefits to corporations. Indeed, firms often claim that insufficient evidence of program effectiveness is a major reason for ambivalence or resistance to such policies. However, employers' lack of interest in systematic program evaluation is related centrally to corporate climate (Galinsky & Stein, 1990). If employ-

ers, consistent with organizational goals, were truly interested in improving work conditions, they would effectively ascertain the impact of workplace family policies on employees' overall well-being, productivity, absenteeism, sick leave, work satisfaction, retention, and so on.

Irrespective of the explanations for minimal evaluation research, one of the major reasons for modest corporate change is the rather poor quality of evaluation research (Kingston, 1990). Thus the need for well-designed studies is of paramount importance. Because research is quite limited in both quantity and quality, this is one arena in which social scientists and policy analysts can play a key role. Moreover, specific interventions must be evaluated in the particular context in which they are implemented. For instance, despite persuasive evidence that work schedule flexibility can directly or indirectly reduce work-family conflicts (Pleck, Staines, & Lang, 1980; Staines & Pleck, 1986), the effectiveness of a particular flextime program is likely to depend on congruence between its features and the needs of different groups of employees within a given organization (Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981).

In terms of work patterns such as absenteeism, turnover, and impaired job performance, it is also vital to uncover the costs of having versus not having work-family policies (Raabe, 1990). Although much previous research examines employee problems, new research should focus more centrally and systematically on work-family tensions as contributors to workplace difficulties (Voydanoff, 1989). Indeed, studies show that work-family tension negatively affects job performance. High levels of employee stress can be dysfunctional to an organization and detract from its ability to accomplish goals, and costs of stress-related illness, accidents, poor decision making, turnover, and death in the United States may reach at least $75 to $90 billion annually (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980). Moreover, state workers' compensation laws and recent court decisions hold employers liable for physical and psychological injuries from continued stress on the job, highlighting further the need for organizational interventions to reduce employee stress (Ivancevich, Matteson, & Richards, 1985).

Some studies reveal that work-family programs have modest benefits and costs (see, for example, Christensen & Staines, 1990; Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981, on flextime), and their impact on mothers' well-being is mixed. However, better designed studies often show greater benefits. The first major comprehensive study on the accommodating workplace (National Council for Jewish Women, 1987) shows that employees (and, by extension, employers) fare better when they have the flexibility

to balance work and family (Galinsky & Stein, 1990). Accordingly, future research on flextime should assess more extensively (a) the quality as well as quantity of family time; (b) use of, not just access to, flextime; and (c) needs of different subgroups defined by family type and stage in the life cycle. Researchers must also confront the issue of how best to define flexibility. Is it reduced time commitment, variation in place worked, variation in scheduling, or some combination thereof (Christensen & Staines, 1990)? With regard to scheduling, flexibility is most useful when it is maximized — that is, when workers may change their starting and stopping times on a daily or weekly basis as the need arises (Staines, 1990).

Furthermore, limited availability of salient benefits circumscribes the gain that accrues from them. For example, child care, the single largest work-related expense for working parents, is not widely offered by employers. In addition, larger organizations are more likely to sponsor child care. However, because employees of small firms typically earn less than their counterparts at large firms, workers most in need of child care are least likely to receive it (Shelton, 1992).

One viable way for employers to provide child care is to offer credits within a flexible benefit package. This enhances the child-care purchasing power on the part of those who need it without penalizing those who do not. A second, less popular, child-care strategy is to pay higher wages, thereby helping families procure quality care and other services that reduce work-family strain (Aldous, 1990). Finally, on-site child care, provided by solo employers and consortiums, is available through some organizations. The consortium model, in which several organizations get together to fund one center, is particularly useful for employers without adequate resources to fund a solo center. Arguably, such programs would reduce the disadvantages discussed above with regard to workers in small firms.

However, attitudes toward on-site child care are not as favorable as many might expect. Although some find it very beneficial to working mothers and dual-earner families (e.g., Martin et al., 1988), the child-care panel of the National Academy of Science finds it to be nearly as unpopular with employees as it is with employers (Hayes, Palmer, & Zaslow, 1990). Thus further research is needed to resolve inconsistencies among studies and to ascertain variation between solo and consortium-sponsored care.

Similarly, flextime, 10-hour days, and extended weekend work have been introduced on a limited basis by companies, but variable schedules

are least available to those who need them most — mothers in the labor force in lower-paying jobs. Part-time work, shared jobs, and work performed at home are other methods of easing work-family stress, but these have also been used on a very limited basis in the United States. In addition, some of them have drawbacks. For example, there has been considerable movement of computer-based work to the home. One benefit of home work is the facilitation of more egalitarian family relationships. However, because confinement to the home has been a frequent source of discontent among women, the effects of home work need to be studied systematically (see also Shamir & Salomon, 1985).

CORPORATE CULTURE AND ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

One of the most critical directions for future research is to determine precisely why the business sector is not more responsive to family needs. Four primary reasons have been suggested to explain this resistance. First and foremost is a concern with corporate profit and uncertainty as to whether workplace family programs benefit firms financially. Employers often fail to see benefits as advancing their own interests (Aldous, 1990). Another theory is that companies lack the requisite degree of commitment to draw up and implement policies.

Additional reasons are equity and demand. Equity is often cited by both companies and employees as an objection to workplace family policies. Although corporate concern in this area may camouflage lack of commitment to new policy, there are valid issues surrounding this objection. Indeed, to preserve equity, a benefit offered to one group of employees (e.g., parents) may have to be offset by alternate benefits to other employees (e.g., nonparents). Flexible benefits (e.g., cafeteria plans that permit employees to pick and choose) help employees and employers alike to deal more effectively with equity objections.

Although this approach appears more constructive than avoiding new programs, employers might resist this solution due to its economic price tag. Nonetheless, a crucial issue remains: To what extent are financial reasons and, perhaps, concern for equity merely pretense for insufficient ideological commitment and to what extent are they valid, uneasily surmountable problems in a given place, time, and organizational context?

Another pivotal question is the extent to which managers and co-workers hold biases (included, but not limited to, those discussed above) as well as the degree to which employees adopt traditional configurations of employment and family obligations as a result of these attitudes.

Similarly, research is needed on the nature and levels of corporate expectations of "female service," including entertaining, networking, relocation, child rearing, housework, nursing sick relatives, and so on (especially during the workday and when a husband travels on business).

For example, it would be interesting to know more about the family roles of male managers who decide disproportionately whether to adopt work-family policies and how such policies will be implemented. If, as Fowlkes (1987) has suggested, their corporate success is enhanced by wives who are available for extensive caregiving and support, these men may have strong structural as well as psychological resistance to shifting gender roles. Their interests are well served by the status quo and, either overtly or covertly, may impede efforts to create different textures and configurations of family and work commitments. Male managers are, in large part, the gatekeepers of corporate America. Until their daughters, wives, co-workers, or others resocialize them, or until their companies train them effectively in this regard, they will inhibit progress in work-family coordination.

The need for such research is highlighted by Moen's (1989) important study of Sweden. Although liberal policies abound, it is not clear why men typically are reluctant to alter their behaviors. One likely explanation is that informal workplace norms and sanctions provide disincentives to take advantage of progressive programs.

On a broader level is the perplexing problem of why workplace policies, even those optimally comprehensive, fail to alleviate substantially the work-family tensions they were designed to reduce. Although Sweden has a full range of social policies designed to promote these ends, being on leave was not associated with less distress or fatigue among working mothers from 1968 to 1981. Part-time employment was associated with less fatigue but not less distress. Cautiousness is also indicated by Moen's observation that American women's levels of stress are declining even without the elaborate system of formal support found in Sweden.

Another important change that Moen (1989) identifies is the decline in working fathers' psychological well-being. Their levels of fatigue have risen and their stress levels have declined less than those of women. Moreover, because fathers who work part-time report higher levels of stress than those who work full-time, stress may be induced by rejecting the traditional, male breadwinner role. In this context as well, there may be tensions between formal and informal support. Similarly, other factors might improve women's well-being in both Sweden and the United States. Arguably, social climate and ecological context play a key role.

For example, despite formal support for egalitarian gender roles in Sweden, informal allocations of labor in work and family spheres belie the level of public support. By 1984, 85% of fathers took advantage of the 10-day childbirth-related benefit, staying home an average of 8 days following the birth of a child. However, comparatively few participated in the parental leave program. Only one in five took a portion of the leave, staying home an average of 41 days. Although this rose to 44% by 1990, they took only 14% of total available days (Haas, 1992b). Those with female co-workers and/or public sector jobs are more likely to take parental leaves.

Some men do not take such leaves for fear of ridicule from colleagues (Haas, 1987; Ministry of Labor, 1986; Sandqvist, 1987) and lack of social support (Haas, 1992a). Furthermore, the availability of women to assume primary responsibility for child care and housework may dissuade men from participating fully in fatherhood. Swedish women, like their U.S. counterparts, continue to do most of the housework (Moen, 1989). In addition, almost half of employed Swedish women, 54% in 1986, worked part-time, compared to only 31% of American women in 1987, about 5% of whom were seeking full-time employment (Shelton, 1992; Sundstrom, 1987). Although part-time workers in Sweden receive many benefits available only to full-time workers in the United States, the restricted labor force involvement of Swedish women, especially mothers, reflects a notable disparity between national ideology and individual experience.

Indeed, gender asymmetry is rather widespread, as occupational sex segregation is as great in Sweden as it is in the United States. The Swedish "solution" to work-family conflict has been for women to hold mainly public sector jobs in which interruptions and part-time work are less disruptive to the workplace. Again, however, it is not clear what proportion of these women prefer a more limited time commitment to paid labor and how many are propelled in that direction by men's failure to participate fully in family work. Also note that the gender gap in earnings is much narrower in Sweden than in the United States. Thus the gender asymmetry in occupations is not mirrored in wages, which may also explain Swedish women's greater involvement in part-time work.

GENDER, CLASS, AND GOVERNMENT

Research is also needed on specific gender and class issues as well as on the role of government in workplace family policy. We would profit from greater integration of gender issues into research on work-family

intersections in several different ways. First, more research is needed on recent changes in family structure, particularly the increase in one-parent families, and how these changes affect the work-family interface. Second, assumptions that parental leave and part-time work are appropriate only for women must be examined more systematically because they limit women's opportunities for some types of advancement, reinforce occupational segregation and the male-female earnings gap, and impede male efforts to become more involved in family life. The debunking of such assumptions through gender-neutral policies is also likely to encourage better parenting by facilitating men's involvement in child rearing.

Similarly, we need broader and deeper inquiry into why men incorporate family work into their worlds at a slower pace than women incorporate nonfamily work into theirs. Women often suffer negative occupational and other consequences from the gendered structure and demands of parenthood fostered by dominant cultural ideals (Voydanoff, 1988). Significantly, this disjuncture expands women's "second shift" (Hochschild, 1989), often escalating work-family stress in many dual-earner families.

More generally, some social changes, such as increased female employment, have altered the relationship between domestic and economic arenas. However, the evolution of such changes and the nature of their consequences for women and men are salient issues that need to be addressed more fully. This research focus is particularly useful for analyzing experiences and problems of elderly, minority, and other subgroups of women because they are especially vulnerable to the differential between the two spheres (Voydanoff, 1988).

Third, we need more studies on elder care to complement research on child care. Research indicates that significant minorities of caregivers, especially women, alter or consider altering their participation in the labor force in order to care for elderly relatives (Voydanoff, 1989). Yet the salience of these issues for women relative to men highlights further the gender gap in consequences of workplace policies.

Policies on elder care are also worthy of deeper investigation because they have the potential to unify gender as well as class groups within organizations. Most, if not all, adults have one or more parents and, increasingly, women and men have elder care responsibilities. Of corporations, 44% will have or are planning to develop elder care programs in the near future (Galinsky & Friedman, 1991). And, although women remain the primary elder as well as child-care providers, a few studies reveal that men do proportionately more elder care than child care. Thus more

research is needed to determine if men are more supportive of elder care than they are of child care. If so, elder care would emerge clearly as an issue that could consolidate a workforce potentially or actually divided in their sentiments regarding workplace family policy.

Work-family scholarship also needs to examine more systematically the class differences in provision and consequences of, as well as demand for, work-family policies. Employees' strong and clear articulation of their needs in this area will help firms understand that it is to their advantage to implement new programs. New research also needs to overcome the tendency to ignore the structure of the economy and labor force. Because the structure and health of the economy determine what and how many jobs are available, these facets of social life have important implications for many families. Moreover, it is quite possible that unfavorable economic conditions in the United States will further impede progress toward progressive work-family policies (Kingston, 1990). When the supply of skilled workers exceeds demand, there is less incentive for employers to increase wages and benefits.

Finally, it is imperative that we better understand how dynamics of work and family spheres affect diverse income groups differently (Voydanoff, 1988). For example, adjusted family income rose from 1970 to 1986 but decreased for low-income single mothers and for families with heads under the age of 25 (Voydanoff, 1989). Indeed, these data support our prediction that class differences between women will become more pronounced. Such differences are also apt to increase over the life course, because women and minorities generally have less access to high-paying jobs with good benefits. Occupational disadvantage of this sort often leads to low pensions and poverty in old age (Aldous & Dumon, 1990).

Research in the nineties should similarly address the long-standing tensions between divergent political perspectives on governmental support as well as the nuances therein that may shift according to political and economic climate. More fundamentally, additional research by sociologists, political scientists, policy analysts, and economists is needed to explore how public solutions compare to private ones and how they may be complementary in producing optimal benefits and containing costs.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there is a complex interaction among public policy, worksite-specific cultures, social milieus in which we formulate beliefs,

and psychological predispositions to one or more patterns of "doing gen-der" (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Gender, class, government, and corpo-rate factors, both formal and informal, serve as structural and cultural barriers to progressive family programs in the workplace. Important gender scholarship also details a range of sociocultural and psychological forces that impede progressive gender roles in the realms of work, family, and most significantly, their intersections.

Jacobs (1989) and Williams (1989) offer alternate explanations for resistance to gender role integration in the workplace. Whereas Jacobs identifies systems of social control that create and reinforce gender asym-metry over the life course, Williams views gender inequality as rooted largely in gender personality, family structure, and intrapsychic motives. In a similar fashion, Hochschild (1989), Gerson (1985), Hunt and Hunt (1987), and Weiss (1987) explore obstacles to role symmetry with regard to housework and labor force involvement. Overall, although women undoubtedly contribute to the maintenance of traditional gender roles, scholarship consistently finds that men are less supportive of progressive work-family roles and egalitarian divisions of labor by gender.

Although men have been slow to accept a more egalitarian division of work, employers have been slow to ease coordination of work and family roles. New studies might explore more extensively the sources of these twin liabilities for women and families as well as the ways in which they interact and mutually reinforce one another. More generally, one of the central tasks of work-family scholarship in the 1990s will be to better explicate and untangle the relative influences of government policy, corporate culture, and social-psychological proclivities in aiding or cir-cumventing progress toward gender equality in the realms of work and family.

NOTES

1. Note, however, that union attention to work-family policies is growing. The Interna-tional Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), Communications Workers of America (CWA), and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), which went in with CWA on the AT&T agreement, have supported these policies. Even the Teamsters, in some areas, have increased their advocacy of work-family benefits, especially when they represent locals with many female members.

2. Labor market trends may have interactive effects. Presently, high unemployment rates may impede progress, but labor shortages in specific occupations would encourage progress.

REFERENCES

Aldous, J. (1990). Specification and speculation concerning the politics of workplace family policies. *Journal of Family Issues, 11*, 355-367.

Aldous, J. & Dumon, W. (1990). Family policy in the 1980s: Controversy and consensus. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 52*, 1136-1151.

Auerbach, J. D. (1990). Employer-supported child care as a women-responsive policy. *Journal of Family Issues, 11*, 384-400.

Bailyn, L. (1980). The slow-burn way to the top: Some thoughts on the early years of organizational careers. In C. B. Derr (Ed.), *Work, family, and the career* (pp. 94-105). New York: Praeger.

Beutell, N. J., & Greenhaus, J. H. (1986). Balancing acts: Work-family conflict and the dual-career couple. In L. L. Moore (Ed.), *Not as far as you think: The realities of working women* (pp. 149-162). Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Bohen, H. C., & Viveros-Long, A. (1981). *Balancing jobs and family life: Do flexible work schedules help?* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Cherlin, A. J. (1988). The changing American family and public policy. In A. J. Cherlin (Ed.), *The changing American family and public policy* (pp. 1-29). Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

Christensen, K. E., & Staines, G. L. (1990). Flextime: A viable solution to work/family conflict? *Journal of Family Issues, 11*, 455-476.

Evans, P.A.L., & Bartolome, F. (1980). *Must success cost so much?* New York: Basic Books.

Fowlkes, M. R. (1987). The myth of merit and male professional careers: The roles of wives. In N. Gerstel & H. E. Gross (Eds.), *Families and work* (pp. 347-360). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Galinsky, E. (1988, August). *The impact of supervisors' attitudes and company culture on work family adjustment.* Paper presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Atlanta, GA.

Galinsky, E., & Friedman, D. (1991). *Corporate reference guide.* New York: Families and Work Institute.

Galinsky, E., & Stein, P. J. (1990). The impact of human resource policies on employees: Balancing work/family life. *Journal of Family Issues, 11*, 368-383.

Geiger, K. (1989). Long-held bias impedes efforts to support work/family needs. *Business-Link, 4*, 4-5.

Gerson, K. (1985). *Hard choices: How women decide about work, career, and motherhood.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Greenhaus, J. H., & Parasuraman, S. (1986). A work-nonwork interactive perspective of stress and its consequences. *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management, 8*, 37-60.

Haas, L. (1987). Fathers' participation in parental leave. *Social Change in Sweden, 37* (November). New York: Swedish Information Service.

Haas, L. (1992a). *Equal parenthood and social policy: A study of parental leave in Sweden.* Albany: SUNY Press.

Haas, L. (1992b). Nurturing fathers, working mothers—Changing gender roles in Sweden. In J. Hood (Ed.), *Men, work and parenting.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Hayes, C. D., Palmer, J. L., & Zaslow, M. J. (Eds.). (1990). *Who cares for America's children?: Child care policy for the 1990s.* National Academy Press.

Hochschild, A. (1989). *The second shift.* New York: Avon.

Hughes, D., & Galinsky, E. (1988). Balancing work and family life: Research and corporate application. In A. E. Gottfried & A. W. Gottfried (Eds.), *Maternal employment and children's development: Longitudinal research* (pp. 233-268). New York: Plenum.

Hunt, J. G., & Hunt, L. L. (1987). Male resistance to role symmetry in dual-earner households: Three alternative explanations. In N. Gerstel & H. E. Gross (Eds.), *Families and work* (pp. 192-203). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Ivancevich, J. M., & Matteson, M. T. (1980). *Stress and work: A managerial perspective.* Dallas, TX: Scott, Foresman.

Ivancevich, J. M., Matteson, M. T., & Richards, E. P. (1985). Who's liable for stress on the job? *Harvard Business Review, 68,* 60-71.

Jacobs, J. A. (1989). *Revolving doors: Sex segregation and women's careers.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Kamerman, S. B., & Kahn, A. J. (1987). *The responsive workplace.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Kingston, P. W. (1990). Illusions and ignorance about the family-responsive workplace. *Journal of Family Issues, 11,* 438-454.

Martin, P. Y., Seymour, S., Courage, M., Godbey, K., & Tate, R. (1988). Work-family policies: Corporate, union, feminist, and pro-family leaders' views. *Gender & Society, 2,* 385-400.

Mills, C. W. (1959). *The sociological imagination.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Ministry of Labor. Working Party for the Role of the Male. (1986). *The changing role of the male.* Stockholm, Sweden: Ministry of Labor.

Moen, P. (1989). *Working parents: Transformations in gender roles and public policies in Sweden.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

National Council for Jewish Women. (1987, November). *Accommodating pregnancy in the workplace* (NCJW Center for the Child Report). New York: Author.

National Council for Jewish Women. (1988, August). *Employer support for child care* (NCJW Center for the Child Report). New York: Author.

Pleck, J. H. (1989, March). *Family-supportive employer policies and men's participation.* Paper presented at the National Research Council Panel on Employer Policies and Working Families, Committee on Women's Employment and Related Social Issues.

Pleck, J. H., Staines, G. L., & Lang, L. (1980). Conflicts between work and family life. *Monthly Labor Review, 103,* 29-32.

Raabe, P. H. (1990). The organizational effects of workplace family policies: Past weaknesses and recent progress toward improved research. *Journal of Family Issues, 11,* 477-491.

Raabe, P. H., & Gessner, J. (1988). Employer family-supportive policies: Diverse variations on the theme. *Family Relations, 37,* 196-202.

Sandqvist, K. (1987). *Fathers and family work in two cultures.* Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiskell.

Schwartz, F. N. (1989, January-February). Management women and the new facts of life. *Harvard Business Review,* pp. 65-76.

Shamir, B., & Salomon, I. (1985). Work-at-home and the quality of working life. *Academy of Management Review, 10,* 455-464.

Shelton, B. A. (1992). *Women, men and time: Gender differences in paid work, housework and leisure.* New York: Greenwood.

Staines, G. L. (1990, August). *Flextime and the quality of work and family life.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Boston.

Staines, G. L., & Pleck J. H. (1986). Work schedule flexibility and family life. *Journal of Women Quarterly, 7*, 147-153.

Sundstrom, M. (1987). *A study in the growth of part-time work in Sweden.* Stockholm, Sweden: Arbetslivscentrum.

Voydanoff, P. (1988). Women, work, and family: Bernard's perspective on the past, present, and future. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 12*, 269-280.

Voydanoff, P. (1989). Work and family: A review and expanded conceptualization. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 3*, 1-22.

Weiss, R. S. (1987). Men and their wives' work. In F. J. Crosby (Ed.), *Spouse, parent, worker: On gender and multiple roles* (pp. 109-121). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender & Society, 1*, 125-151.

Williams, C. L. (1989). *Gender differences at work: Women and men in nontraditional occupations.* Berkeley: University of California Press.