

Carefair

Paul Kershaw

Assistant Professor, Social Care and Citizenship
Human Early Learning Partnership/Faculty of Graduate Studies
University of British Columbia

Paper Prepared for the Gendering the Nation-State Workshop, Canadian Political Science
Association Annual Meeting, June 2004, University of Manitoba

Carefair

A principal theme in feminist citizenship and welfare research is the need to reorganize social institutions and policy to induce far more men to modify their behaviour and attitudes to become more like most women today – people who shoulder considerable primary care work in addition to other citizenry obligations and ambitions. Fraser (1994) has been an especially prominent champion of this social reform with her influential discussion of the universal caregiver model.

Beyond feminism, the theme enjoys some attention among other academic circles. The imperative to reject andocentric patterns and norms in policy is conceded by prominent mainstream scholars of comparative welfare regime research. Esping-Andersen (2002, 70), for instance, observes that “The egalitarian challenge is unlikely to find resolution unless, simultaneously, the male life course becomes more ‘feminine’. In other words, if we want more gender equality our policies may have to concentrate on men’s behaviour.” Similarly, in the communitarian literature, Etzioni (1993, 63) acknowledges that:

few people who advocated equal rights for women favored a society in which sexual equality would mean a society in which all adults would act like men, who in the past were relatively inattentive to children. The new gender-equalized world was supposed to be a combination of all that was sound and ennobling in the traditional roles of women and men. Women were to be free to work any place they wanted, and men would be free to show emotion, care and domestic commitment.

The need to encourage men to care more is also taken seriously in the political arena in some social democratic countries. Both Norway and Sweden have experimented for nearly a decade with parental leave policy by reserving one month of benefits exclusively for fathers in an effort to redistribute caring for young children between men and women. By most accounts, the policy has had modest success at best, since a significant share of fathers continue to take no or very little parental leave (Leira 1998; Hojgaard 1997; Olson 2002, 390; Esping-Andersen 2002, 93). The slow pace of male reform in these countries prompts some scholars to recommend that governments reserve longer periods of leave benefits solely for fathers so as to increase the economic incentive for men to assume early childrearing responsibilities (for example Kershaw 2002). Sweden has since moved further in this direction by adding a second month of parental leave benefits to its national system for which fathers alone are eligible.

The modest response demonstrated by Swedish and Norwegian fathers to the daddy month(s) underscores that changing men’s behaviour is no small task. The challenge lies in large part with what Olson (2002, 393) terms “a circular relation between choice and cultural background norms.” The actions, attitudes and decision of citizens in any democratic welfare state “will be inextricably entangled with its cultural, economic, and social milieu.” Therefore, before men will choose on mass to care more, norms about masculinity, fatherhood, mothering and employment must evolve to endorse male caregiving as a valuable practice on par with other citizenry pursuits that enjoy more social status for men. Before such norms will become solidly woven into the cultural fabric, however, men must start to care more irrespective of the patriarchal values and patterns that pervade their cultural context and which they often embody. The circular relation thus underscores a classic chicken and egg scenario. Which change must come first?

The most target efficient way around this circular problem of choice and cultural inertia is to use public policy to influence men's choices directly so that they resist patriarchal routines and patterns in favour of more gender progressive decisions and actions. I will defend this strategy below, in part by proposing for Canada a more aggressive version of the daddy leave policy that has become the norm in Scandinavia.

This proposal is bound to invoke considerable resistance from some. Any invocation of the state to use the coercive power that inheres in its policy design capacity specifically to alter some citizenry decisions sits in considerable tension with the reality that freedom of choice is a key feature of any broadly democratic political system, especially systems that draw on the intellectual heritage of J.S. Mill. Representing this resistance, Olson is very sensitive to the fundamental place that choice enjoys in welfare theory. He states that:

In a general sense, democrats see the state as a choice-promoting institution, one that opens up a wide variety of life options for its citizens rather than dictating particular forms of life to them. Any [broadly democratic] state would have to countenance a certain amount of choice in the benefits people receive. For instance, universal caregiver would presumably permit people to choose their own mix of caregiving labor, other forms of labor and leisure. Presumably it would allow people to choose whether their caregiving takes the form of official economic work or informal work. And presumably it would permit people to decide the extent to which their informal, unwaged labor involves caring for friends and relatives, to what extent it involves voluntary community activities, and to what extent it pursues completely different ends, such as education or job training (2002, 387).

Accordingly, Olson (2002, 394) rejects any proposal to “radicalize the daddy month,” as I will propose below. He concedes that this sort of policy reform may promote sharing of infant care more equally between women and men “by subsidizing [this activity] to the fullest extent only when it is evenly divided.” But, it would also “introduce[e] a substantial amount of paternalism into welfare, stipulating social relations in a way that welfare theorists find quite problematic in other contexts.”

Rather than employ economic incentives to influence (coerce?) male citizenry choices, Olson aims instead to circumvent the circular relation between choice and enculturation by focusing policy change more on the issue of socialization. To this end, his reform agenda is motivated by a somewhat abstract discussion of the concept of “cultural agency,” which connotes an individual's ability to influence or renegotiate social norms. At a practical policy level, Olson (2002, 402-03) recommends two policy strategies that concentrate on cultural politics to restructure gender patterns and values. The first would facilitate greater female participation in the political arena so that women can access the political levers necessary to unmask the contingent character of androcentric social norms and thereby mitigate the way in which these norms are institutionalized by social practice. The second would tinker with education policy so that school curricula articulate gender equality norms that challenge the legacy of patriarchy.

Olson goes to some lengths to argue that such policy changes would not represent “a paternalistic conception of the state.” The regime he describes:

...promotes gender equity while countenancing a wide array of choices for individual citizens. It does this by ensuring fair and equitable grounds for choice while placing few restrictions on actual choices themselves. It is thus consistent with both liberal commitments to individual autonomy and social-democratic commitments to equality and universalism. This conception also avoids paternalism because it does not view the state as the organizational centre of society, nor does it

privilege its progressive capacities over those of individuals. Here the state is charged only with levelling the playing field on which individuals negotiate norms and structure institutions... (2002, 405-06).

Olson should be applauded for his attention to the broader cultural effects of social policy. And who can disagree that there is much to be gained by promoting women's agency in the political arena and revising education policy? In regard to the latter, research indicates that men's education is a strong predictor of parental leave use among men (Bergman and Hobson 2002, 117; Leira 1998, 370), as well as a predictor of the propensity for men to share domestic care commitments more generally (Walker and McGraw 2000, 567).

Nevertheless, the level of anti-paternalism that Olson professes ultimately undermines his analysis of the status that 'choice' enjoys in democratic political systems and, as a result, derails his insightful diagnosis of the circular relationship between choice and gender socialization before he can carefully assess its policy implications. For in contrast to his assertion that a radical daddy leave policy would stipulate "social relations in a way that welfare theorists find quite problematic in other contexts" (2002, 394), the paternalistic use of state policy to privilege some social choices over others has become a (the?) dominant view among welfare theorists in respect of the primary subject of debate – unemployment and income assistance. Mainstream welfare scholarship is replete with favourable discussions of welfare contractualism and 'workfare', which impose a work test or job search obligation as a condition for receipt of social benefits. This development in scholarship tracks a burgeoning policy and electoral trend in liberal welfare regimes that has seen policy makers and the electorate alike ascribe renewed attention to work and other obligations to counterbalance the alleged excessive emphasis on social rights that emerged in welfare policy in the first decades following World War II.

It is precisely this level of academic and cultural support for enforcing social obligations through paternalist policy that I argue should become the model for a universal caregiver policy blueprint. Just as many governments employ active labour market and other workfare policies to encourage or compel citizens to discharge their paid work obligations, so we also need a *carefair* policy commitment to encourage or compel citizens who neglect informal care activities to discharge citizenship duties in the domestic domain. Cross-nationally, more governments are cracking down on so-called 'deadbeat dads' to ensure their fulfillment of financial obligations to children (Hobson 2002). A comparable level of tenacity, I will argue, must be demonstrated to urge fathers to fulfill some of their care responsibilities.

Strategically, a principal virtue of this argument is that it draws on a policy logic that is pervasive in the liberal regime cluster. While a more aggressive daddy leave policy would borrow from the Scandinavian model, the proposal I recommend is not a case of implanting a policy that works in one cultural context into another milieu where the policy logic does not resonate. To the contrary, a radical parental leave policy that more insistently urges fathers to discharge some of their care responsibilities turns for its justification in Canada and other liberal states to two arguments that currently defend workfare successfully in these countries: what I label below (1) the moral hazard argument; and (2) the new paternalist 'competence' argument.

My case for institutionalizing a caregiving analogue to workfare develops in five sections. The first summarizes the rise of duty discourse across ideological camps and summarizes the two

arguments that are typically invoked to defend the imposition of work duties. Since some scholars regard duty discourse as an attack on the Marshallian tradition of social citizenship, I draw on recent work by Stuart White (2003; 2000) to argue in section two that this concern is misguided at the conceptual level, but does have merit at the practical level given the current socioeconomic context and the design of active labour policy in liberal states. The third section engages with a shortcoming of White's work: namely, that the model citizen who emerges from his theory of justice is only obliged to engage in paid work – not care. He thus overlooks that the distribution of care is itself a question of justice. I argue that a *carefair* reform commitment is necessary to correct for this shortcoming. In section four, I defend the *carefair* concept by drawing on the moral hazard argument typical of workfare debates. The discussion cashes out the idea by applying *carefair* logic to the question of parental leave in Canada and investigating the policy reform it would require. The fifth section offers a second justification for the proposed leave reforms by invoking a version of the new paternalist 'competence' argument.

The Rise of Duty Discourse Across the Political Spectrum

I remember back six years ago, this Western life I chose.
And every day, the news would say some factory's going to close.
Well, I could have stayed to take the Dole, but I'm not one of those.
I take nothing free, and that makes me an idiot, I suppose.

– From Stan Rogers (1981), "The Idiot"

Legendary Canadian folksinger Stan Rogers foreshadowed the rise of duty discourses in Canada and other liberal welfare regimes with his song "The Idiot." His lyrics implore "fine young fellows" from the East Coast "who've been beaten to the ground" by unemployment to forgo "the government Dole [that] will rot your soul" in order to embark on a west-ward odyssey. Although Rogers concedes that "western life's no paradise," "it's better than lying down," he maintains, because it holds open the possibility of "self-respect," "a steady cheque" and freedom in the dust-filled refineries of oil-rich Alberta.

The Idiot that Rogers celebrates in his narrative has since become the heroic citizen envisioned by many policy reformers in liberal welfare regimes who advance the concept of welfare contractualism. Proponents of this concept reassert the importance of social duties in our conception of postindustrial welfare, particularly the duty to work. The assumption is that entitlement to welfare and other social benefits is one part of a reciprocal contract between individual citizens and their community. The second part is a series of social duties that the individual is bound to discharge. Thus, in return for social benefits, the community may legitimately compel benefit recipients to fulfill their reciprocal responsibilities, including labour force participation, which is of principal concern in the current debate.

Within the liberal welfare regime cluster, the rise of duty discourse has occurred across ideological schools. The feminist care ethic literature motivated by Gilligan (1982), for instance, articulates the need to address the risk of dutiless rights. Her care orientation depicts moral problems in terms of conflicting responsibilities rather than competing entitlements. Responsibility, on this view, signals the need for response, "an extension rather than a limitation of action" (Gilligan 1982, 38). Whereas negative rights primarily impose restraints on

aggression, responsibility in the care paradigm demands an active response to the needs of others, one that requires we *do* what others are counting on.

New communitarianism also laments the egoism implied by negative rights as part of its broader concern about the evolution of the so-called ‘me’ generation that is allegedly less mindful of moral order, social tradition and custom. According to Etzioni (1996, 40), communitarianism is “a corrective to excessive individualism,” one that does not pose a challenge to specific entitlements or to the idea of rights more generally so much as it seeks to restore balance to an era of overheated individualism. His objective is to thwart the advance of unconditional rights by reasserting “communitarian ideas and ideals [that] have been part of our intellectual heritage for a long time” (ibid., 39), but which have been overshadowed by the rise of egoist aspirations. The remedy that Etzioni (1996, 42) and other communitarians propose is “a *temporary* moratorium on the minting of *new* rights” in order to restore equilibrium between individual autonomy and obligation to communal order.

Among neoliberals, Mead (1986; 1997a; 1997b) led the way toward welfare contractualism by charging that, too often, welfare “programs that support the disadvantaged and unemployed have been permissive in character, not authoritative... [T]hey have given benefits to their recipients but have set few requirements for how [recipients] ought to function in return” (1986, 1). Neoliberal interest in social obligations is not just about “paying taxes, obeying the law, or serving in the military” (1986, 6). Rather, social order “also requires that people function well in areas of life that are not directly regulated,” including the fulfillment of expectations that others hold about our roles as workers, neighbours or strangers. This expectation “requires not only self-discipline but activity and competence.” Thus, according to Mead, citizens must be encouraged to cultivate “those habits of mutual forbearance and reliability which we call civility,” habits that are premised on “the capacities to learn, work, support one’s family, and respect the rights of others.” The attainment and exercise of these capacities constitute what he terms “a set of *social* obligations” that citizens incur as a condition of the privileges that accompany community membership.

Finally, left of centre, Giddens (1999, 65) maintains that the “prime motto” of third way politics is “*no rights without responsibilities.*” Just as individualism and lifestyle diversity is expanding, so there should be a corresponding “extension of individual obligations,” he surmises: “we need more actively to accept responsibilities for the consequences of what we do and the lifestyle habits we adopt” (ibid., 37). While the theme of mutual obligation was present in old-style social democracy, Giddens suggests that it lay largely dormant within the shadows of postwar concerns about collective provision. This dormancy is no longer feasible, however, given emergent fears about the decline of civic-mindedness. Defenders of social provisioning must therefore “find a new balance between individual and collective responsibilities” in their counterproposals to neoliberalism.

While duty discourses have emerged across disparate political camps, debate about paid work and job search responsibilities has been concentrated among neoliberals and third way proponents. Two arguments in favour of workfare dominate these debates: the moral hazard case; and the incompetence case. The former is evident in both neoliberal and third way circles. The latter is specific to neoliberals, particularly among new paternalists.

The Moral Hazard Argument for Work Duties

The moral hazard concept is typically found in economics discourse, especially in respect of public and private insurance systems. The concept illuminates how policy may provide individuals and firms that are insured against loss with incentives to behave in socially non-optimal ways by taking less care to prevent that loss than they would in the absence of insurance. In welfare debates, morally hazardous dynamics are linked with incentives institutionalized by income insurance and assistance under the guise of what is often referred to as ‘transfer dependency’. As Mead (1986, 3) puts it, “government programs have given [the message] that hard work in available jobs is no longer required of Americans.” If employment conditions are disagreeable or remuneration too low, passive employment insurance and welfare programs institutionalize morally hazardous dynamics by relieving citizens of the responsibility to work for pay. The generosity of income assistance coupled with the failure to obligate benefit recipients does the disadvantaged a disservice, Mead (*ibid.*, 12) maintains, by “undercutting” incentives to acquire “the competencies [they] need to achieve status” and social belonging. The result, he concludes, is a population of social assistance recipients who are permitted to remain dependent on the largesse of the public sphere, rather than strive for self-sufficiency and self-respect as does the Idiot in Rogers’ song.

In response, active labour policy is key plank in any postindustrial welfare platform for both neoliberals and the third way. Representing the latter, Giddens (1999, 114-115) argues that even critics of neoliberalism must countenance the possibility that “Benefits meant to counter unemployment... can actually produce unemployment if they are actively used as a shelter from the labour market.” Unemployment benefits should therefore “carry the obligation to look actively for work, and it is up to governments to ensure that welfare systems do not discourage active search” (1999, 117).

Many versions of the moral hazard argument are careful to divert blame from transfer dependency away from welfare recipients in favour of policy makers. The driving assumption of the argument is that passive income assistance and unemployment insurance institutionalize counterproductive economic incentives to which reasonable people respond. “It isn’t so much that some forms of welfare provision create dependency cultures,” Giddens (1999, 114-115) states, as it is “that people take rational advantage of opportunities offered.” The welfare trap, on this view, ultimately reflects a “system dysfunction,” to borrow a phrase from Courchene (1994a, 29-30), and is “not in any way related to the character of individuals that may get caught in these transfer-dependency syndromes.” Rather, the essence of the welfare trap is that the postwar welfare regime institutionalized incentives that have for decades interrupted the adjustment processes of the national economy, including inter-regional migration among the un(der)employed that Rogers urges in his song. This interference “was bound to serve to entrench and, in many cases, exacerbate the pre-existing degree of disparity [between citizens],” since “[b]y and large, [benefit claimants] have acted *entirely rationally* in the face of a wholly inappropriate set of incentives” (*ibid.*; italics in original).

The New Paternalist 'Competence' Argument for Work Duties

Although Mead acknowledges the system dysfunction that inheres in passive benefit policies, he does not buy that policy makers must divert blame for transfer dependency away from the poor. Rather, anticipating critics, Mead (1986, 10) embraces the charge that welfare contractualism is “nothing more than an elaborate way of ‘blaming the victim’,” but denies that this ascription of blame is punitive. The latter suggestion is misguided, he argues, since accepting personal responsibility is a necessary condition for genuine social inclusion and equality. Commenting on the United States, he argues “true acceptance in... society requires” that citizens face and fulfill social requirements, “such as work” (1986, 4). So long as welfare policy is passive, benefit recipients are “defined by their need and weakness, not their competence” (ibid., 9). An adequate policy regime must therefore “require work as well as offer support... if the recipients [are] to be integrated and not just subsidized” (ibid., 14). In his view, only a reciprocal welfare contract combines social requirement with support “in a balance that approximates what the nondependent face outside of government. This treats the dependent like other citizens in ways essential to equality” (ibid., 10). In contrast, passive welfare “programs infringe equality in this sense as much as they serve it. They raise the income of the needy, but they also exempt them from work and other requirements that are just as necessary for belonging” (ibid., 12). Thus, from the neoliberal perspective, workfare is not so much a measure by which the state blames those who deviate from societal expectations as it is a means to “persuade them to *blame themselves*” (ibid., 10).

Accordingly, Mead argues that the theme of moral hazard must be supplemented with more politically controversial questions about the actual competence of long-term welfare recipients. Competence, in this context, connotes an individual’s ability to make choices and behave in a manner that promotes her or his self-interest. In Mead’s view, this competence cannot be assumed among the poor; we cannot take for granted that it is simply social barriers or dysfunctional policy incentives that impede individuals from acting in their self-interest. This assumption is suspect, he argues, because in the absence of legislated work obligations:

...the effect of welfare incentives and disincentives on how many recipients work is remarkably small. This is hardly surprising, since not working and bearing children out of wedlock, the behaviours that do the most to precipitate the poverty of the working-aged, are themselves contrary to self-interest as most people understand it. They cause poverty or make it worse. If self-interest were a sufficient motivation, living in poverty and being on welfare should themselves motivate people to avoid or leave those conditions (1997b, 24).

Implicit in this analysis is Mead’s (1997b, 28) opposition to the assumption typical of economists like Courchene that all individuals, including the poor, “are rational maximizers who act to advance their own self-interest if not society’s.” No social science, he suggests “that assumes an invariant, optimizing mentality can deal well with the self-defeating aspects of the poverty lifestyle. Understanding dysfunction requires positing a more complex psychology, where people fail to do what they themselves desire and thus fail to exhaust the potential of their environment.” In response, the purpose of directive social policy that enforces employment obligations is to close the gap between intention and action that some long-term poor suffer in regards to paid work.

A Right Unconditionally vs. an Unconditional Right of Reasonable Access

While duty discourses enjoy support across disparate ideological-political camps, some critics of neoliberal restructuring nonetheless regard welfare contractualism as an attack on the Marshallian tradition of social citizenship (for example Shaver 2002; King and Wickham-Jones 1999). Implicit in their critique is the charge that a right implies an unconditional entitlement. This unconditional quality is betrayed by welfare contractualism because it renders receipt of a social benefit contingent on the performance of some activity, typically employment or a job search.

At a textual level, Marshall himself is not obviously sympathetic to this critique. He suggests the need to link social rights with obligations in various places in his seminal work, “Citizenship and Social Class.” Most notably, he affirms that:

If citizenship is invoked in the defence of rights, the corresponding duties of citizenship cannot be ignored. These do not require a man to sacrifice his individual liberty or to submit without question to every demand made by government. But they do require that his acts should be inspired by a lively sense of responsibility towards the welfare of the community (1964, 112).

Building on this textual evidence, Stuart White (2000; 2003) challenges the social rights objection to welfare contractualism from within the tradition of Marshall and other left-of-centre scholars. Conceptually, he argues that this charge is off the mark because there is “no intrinsic incompatibility between work-testing or related measures of welfare contractualism and the idea of a decent income being the focus of a social right” (2003, 138). The critique ultimately fails to contemplate:

the distinction between: (1) a right to be given some resource, X, unconditionally; and, (2) an unconditional right of *reasonable access* to a given resource, X, where reasonable access means, in part, that the resource in question can be acquired and enjoyed by the individual concerned without unreasonable effort. A person can obviously have reasonable access to something, in this sense, without necessarily being directly given this thing. The notion of a social right can quite intelligibly be understood in the second way as well as in the first: as an unconditional right of reasonable access to a given resource, rather than as a right to be given this same resource unconditionally. This distinction is important... because while welfare contractualism does seem incompatible with a social right of the first kind it is by no means necessarily incompatible with a social right of the second (2000, 510, italics in original, see also 2003, 138).

Rather than discredit the unconditionality of social entitlements, White (2000, 513) observes that welfare contractualism has potential to represent an “expression of the ethic of solidarity” on which Marshall’s vision of egalitarianism rests. The welfare contract implies a principle of mutual reciprocity: the idea that anyone who willingly shares in the mutual advantages made possible by society’s cooperative venture has what White terms “a corresponding obligation to make a reasonable... productive contribution to the community in return.” We not only express our solidarity with fellow citizens who discharge their social obligations by offering assistance when they suffer significant hardship through no unreasonable fault of their own; but also by striving to prevent ourselves from falling into a level of dependence on fellow citizens that is unnecessary when we personally can avoid this through reasonable means. “Free-riding on the provision of collectively enjoyed goods (including a collectively provided minimum income),” White concludes, is incompatible with the norms of reciprocity and mutual advantage that inform our intuitive understanding of social solidarity. A society that strives to prevent free-riding may therefore be working to enshrine the values of reciprocity and solidarity more so than undermining them.

While the reciprocity implied by the welfare contract does not unravel the Marshallian tradition at a conceptual level, White advances current debates about workfare by also noting that the practical implementation of work-tests and related obligations may presently be out of step with this tradition. No adequate theory of justice, he argues, can countenance the possibility that citizens may be bound legitimately by a principle of reciprocity *irrespective* of the social conditions that characterize their society. This proviso is critical since current welfare contractual measures in Canada, Australia, the UK and the US risk subscribing to what White (White 2000, 515) refers to as the “simply implausible” idea that “significantly disadvantaged individuals in a highly inegalitarian society may have an enforceable moral obligation to cooperate in their own exploitation.” Chief among White’s concerns is the possibility that citizens may be required to work in the absence of adequate recognition for their labour. To defend against this and other related risks, White argues that a principle of reciprocity only legitimately obliges citizens when their community context satisfies the following four “intuitive conditions of fair reciprocity:”

1. Income adequacy: a minimum standard of productive participation guarantees all citizens a decent share of the social product;
2. Participation adequacy: all citizens enjoy decent opportunities to engage in productive participation;
3. Contribution equity: all citizens (capable of production) are enforced to comply with the minimum standard of productive participation; and
4. Participation equity: different forms of productive participation are treated equally (For a restatement of these conditions, see also White 2003, 134-37).

Many workfare programs in North America violate the first condition, White (White 2000, 515) notes, because they fail to ensure program participants reap a sufficient share of the social product (i.e. earnings) in return for their enforced social participation. Jurisdictions suffering high unemployment rates strain the second condition by severely limiting opportunities for productive labour market participation. The third condition supports policies that would tax inheritances and other wealth transfers to minimize the degree to which intergenerational exchanges allow some citizens to escape the expectation that they owe society a contribution through their own productive participation. But, as White (*ibid.*, 519-520) observes, support for such tax measures is limited in Anglo-liberal countries even outside of economic conservative circles.

The Celebrated Idiot is Not Bound to Care

The focus on employment obligations locates White’s work at the centre of mainstream debates about social responsibilities. However, his analysis has implications that reach beyond the job search and employment duties with which he engages if considered from a gender lens of analysis. The last of his four conditions for fair reciprocity points to this potential by querying what should count as productive participation in society when evaluating whether someone is

living up to the reciprocity principle implicit in welfare contractualism. In his initial article on the subject, White (2000, 515) suggests that there is no reason to limit productive contributions exclusively to those performed in the formal economy when “society has two main institutions for social reproduction: the market and the family.” In his subsequent book, *The Civic Minimum* (2003, 108-113), he gives more attention to this theme by critiquing a recent policy trend in the US. White expresses concern about the shift away from early post-WWII practices that paid single mothers to stay home to raise their children in favour of contemporary income assistance measures which increasingly portray lone mothers on welfare as unproductive, free-riding and non-reciprocating citizens, even when they care full-time for infants and toddlers.

In response, White (2003, 110) argues that “the tendency to identify civic labour with paid employment, to the exclusion of care work, is... highly questionable.” He alludes to the often-repeated argument that “the raising of children has some features in common with public-goods provision.” Parenting work has value that spills beyond the private family to the general public “because it helps to create the next generation of citizens.” All members of the present generation have some economic interest in their successors since it will be on younger workers and caregivers whom they must rely as they age and their productive capacities diminish. White therefore concludes that it is necessary to treat “some quantity of parental care as a form of civic labour,... allowing it to ground claims to the social product, [and to] help ensure that the work involved in providing this particular public good is reciprocated [and] that other citizens do not free-ride on the efforts of those who provide it” (2003, 110-111).

The resulting policy implication, White (*ibid.*, 115) surmises, is that once the basic work expectation, “relating wholly to paid employment, has been specified, it can (and usually should) be adjusted to take account of care work.” For instance:

if the community expects a single adult with no children to perform an average of, say, thirty-five hours per week of paid employment, for a given number of years, then we may adjust the immediate expectation of paid employment down to, say, fifteen hours for a single parent who has childcare responsibilities. In the case of those who care full-time for elderly or sick relatives, or for newborns, we might adjust our immediate expectation of paid employment to zero, treating the individual’s care work as sufficient in itself to satisfy her immediate obligation to perform a decent minimum of civic labour. These figures are, of course, purely illustrative (*ibid.* 115).

White only hints at the more radical feminist potential of his argument, however, because he stops short of defining caregiving as a civic duty that binds all members of society in favour of referring to care simply as an example of civic labour. The result is that White’s theory of justice as fair reciprocity overlooks the fact that the distribution of care is itself a question for justice. His contribution equity condition demands that all citizens capable of production should be required to fulfill at least a socially established minimal contribution. But, for White, this minimal contribution is defined first and foremost as market exchange through employment, with only secondary attention given to the question of when paid work can be substituted in part or in whole with civic caregiving labour. There is thus no specific care duty in his theory that imposes obligations on all citizens capable of production to complement the employment obligation he prioritizes. Rather, White seems to sympathize with the assumption that some people, typically women, will ‘naturally’ choose to care for others as part of their personally selected life plans; and that this social dynamic is not problematic so long as care providers are not penalized for performing less employment whenever their care includes a public good component.

One problem with this assumption, as Baier (1987, 49) has noted, is that an adequate theory of justice or citizenship cannot posit caring as one life-plan among many, as opposed to a moral requirement that binds all life course patterns. Whether one has a taste or temperament for care provision is often beside the point in familial relationships where care obligations arise. Although reproduction regularly is, and should always be, a matter of choice, the obligations to nurture a vulnerable child emerge upon birth and persist for what has become a socially sanctioned period of roughly 18 years in North America. During this time, society does not tolerate neglect of a dependent child, even if the relationship is one that a parent or guardian wishes to terminate as it evolves. Conversely, although the child does not choose its place in a family, receipt of adequate nurturing during one's period of dependence sets in motion social dynamics that may legitimately oblige one to reciprocate care toward former caregivers as they inevitably enter a life course period of renewed vulnerability.

A second problem with the assumption is that we know that the encouragement of some, but not all, to cultivate a disposition to attend familial care obligations in childhood, infirmity and old age has historically led to exploitation of, and disadvantage for, primary caregivers. There is no reason to expect this gender socialization dynamic to produce different results in the future. Although society recognizes that some familial caregiving is publicly vital work, its value does not lend itself well to computation through market exchange. Specialization in care thus marginalizes individuals from the primary nexus of wealth creation in society. Even if we imagine a society where familial care specialists are well compensated monetarily for their socially valuable labour (along the lines of Fraser's (1994) caregiver parity model), the specialists will nonetheless be marginalized from other important areas of social life that offer opportunities for personal fulfillment, social inclusion and the cultivation of power and status. Hence, our theory of justice and citizenship cannot regard socially vital care labour "as an optional charity left for those with a taste for it," to borrow a phrase from Baier (1987, 53). If society aims to sustain itself, it must formally countenance, accommodate and enforce all to participate in the care work necessary to provide for its own continuers,¹ "not just take out a loan on a carefully encouraged maternal instinct" (ibid.). As part of this process, it will be necessary to codify the care obligations that continuers owe those who provided adequately for them during their initial period of dependence in childhood.

If provision of socially valuable care for children, the infirm and/or aged is not merely a matter of taste or optional charity, then White's theory of justice as fair reciprocity is inadequate in so far as it counts this care simply as an example of civic labour. This status means that one can choose *between* care and some form of employment when deliberating about how best to fulfill the civic minimum, just as one may choose between, for example, retail work and computer programming. But this dynamic would socially sanction decisions by some (many?) to free-ride off the publicly valuable care of others so that they may personally garner more opportunities for economic security, power and status through market participation. The only way to defend against this deleterious dynamic is for welfare contractualism to embrace some care activities as a civic duty that binds men as much as women, and which is enforced on par with emergent

¹ For citizens who choose not to reproduce, 'participation' in child-rearing may simply mean publicly recognizing the public value inherent in child-rearing by others by personally subsidizing this work and accommodating the flexibility care provision requires in market and other civil society domains.

employment and job search obligations, as well as taxation. This intention is captured by the concept *carefair*.

The objective of *carefair* is that which informs Fraser's universal caregiver model: to provoke far more men to reorganize their behaviour so that it more closely resembles that of most women today who perform primary care in addition to fulfilling employment and other citizenry ambitions and responsibilities. A primary change implied by this objective is a revamped ideal worker norm to reflect the view that the social citizen is neither wholly a labour force participant nor only an unpaid caregiver but a citizen who interweaves both roles. This conceptual shift would extend to all men the caregiver half of the postwar breadwinner/carer model, just as the breadwinner role has been extended (at least ideologically) to women through pay and employment equity legislation.

Carefair is intended to serve as an analogue to workfare and other active labour market measures. Through workfare, governments employ the power of public policy to compel citizens to fulfill their employment duties as a condition of receipt of social assistance. The *carefair* idea implores governments to demonstrate a comparable concern to use policy to address the gender division of care. The aim is to redesign public policy in order to change the system of societal incentives in which men make decisions about how much time to allocate between employment and caregiving. Under *carefair*, the incentive structure would be reorganized to urge men to assume a more equitable share of the informal care work that is just as essential to social (re)production as is market participation.

As an analogue to workfare, *carefair* does not lend intellectual support to any specific active labour market policy that exists cross-nationally. Nor does it deny the punitive character of workfare in some North American jurisdictions, including the province of British Columbia (for example Klein and Long 2003). Instead, the concept affirms the theoretical defence of welfare contractualism that White (2000) offers. *Carefair* embraces the position that social rights imply an unconditional entitlement of reasonable access to some social good, where reasonable access connotes that a citizen can attain the good without unreasonable effort. This understanding of entitlement allows us to retain the enormous value of social rights to which the Marshallian tradition points, while compensating for any risks to civic-mindedness that this tradition permits because it focuses principally on the issue of individual entitlements. *Carefair* thus accepts in principle a policy that renders receipt of social benefits conditional on the discharge of social duties so long as the conditions for fair reciprocity exist within the community. The *carefair* concept qualifies White's arguments, however, by insisting that caregiving factors in what counts as a duty, as well as what counts as a reasonable contribution to the social product.

The Moral Hazard Argument for Carefair

As a cultural analogue to workfare, *carefair* turns for its justification to the two lines of argument proffered to defend employment obligations: the moral hazard case and the new paternalist argument. The former, the subject of this section, maintains that the habits of free riding on female care permitted half the population is a much more significant case of moral hazard than the relatively small percentage of citizens on social assistance for whom benefits may erode their motivation to engage in paid work. This was Taylor-Goodby's (1991) point more than a decade ago.

The legacy of patriarchy includes a diverse range of cultural, political and economic incentives that encourage men to behave in socially non-optimal ways by performing less caregiving than they could in the absence of the gender division of care. As Taylor-Goodby (1991, 202-203) notes, many state welfare systems in turn “act as a transmission mechanism” for these inequalities that originate elsewhere. Whenever social policy does not explicitly challenge the gender division of labour, it risks becoming implicated in, and contributing to, the pattern of incentives that induce many men to evade care work. In such instances, the welfare state emerges as “an apparatus of moral hazard” in respect of the critical area of social life that the numerous informal systems of domestic care provision represent. Maternity and parental leave benefits in Canada illustrate the point.

Research consistently confirms that the birth of a child sets in motion a series of normative expectations and economic incentives that propel many heterosexual couples to approximate patriarchal patterns in the division of labour. Spouses become more traditional in their care, housework and employment decisions upon the onset of parenthood, with the most significant changes occurring in women’s routines. In particular, the total amount of work that new mothers perform increases disproportionately compared to new fathers, although relatively little of this extra work is in paid employment (for a review of this literature see Sanchez and Thomson 1997).

Decisions by spousal units to reduce the mother’s paid work, particularly following a parental leave period, have long-term consequences for the division of care (Coltrane 1996, 71). Zvonkovic et al. (1996, 99) observe that:

When a couple makes a work-family decision that, to some extent, limits or restricts the wife’s paid work, even if this decision is viewed as temporary and is made for reasons other than conformity to traditional attitudes, the enactment of this decision can serve to sweep the couple along a sea of traditional cultural attitudes and gender work force realities.

Parenthood often crystallizes the gender division of labour because the person who limits attachment to the paid workforce to nurture an infant, typically the female partner, becomes especially knowledgeable and skilled in rearing the child in virtue of her regular, daily caring experiences. In contrast, reduced female earnings often motivate a male spouse to increase employment hours to compensate for the loss of household income. His stronger attachment to the labour market limits the time available to acquire familiarity and expertise in caring for his children when they are very young. The result, Lupton and Barclay (1997, 148) report is that “it is all too easy for men to lag behind their female partner in developing the skills of caring for their children, even when the men may strongly wish to do so, and it can be difficult for them to make up for the lost ground.”

Maternity and parental leave policy in Canada (and other liberal welfare regimes) exacerbate this dynamic, despite recent improvements to the leave benefit system. In 2001, the Canadian federal government introduced new provisions that extend the combined maternity/parental leave benefit period available through Employment Insurance (EI) from roughly six months to 50 weeks.²

² *Budget Implementation Act, 2000*, S.C. 2000, c. 14. Section 3(2) extended the duration of parental leave benefits from 10 to 35 weeks.

The increased benefit period cost the government \$1-billion annually in 2003, raising the annual expenditure on leave to \$2.4-billion in that year (Chief Actuary 2001, 9-13). Leave benefits must be used in the child's first year. Fifteen weeks of the leave period are defined as maternity leave for which only biological mothers are eligible. The remaining 35 weeks are characterized as parental leave, and may be taken by the mother or father (biological or adopted), or shared by both. The value of maternity/parental leave benefits is income contingent, calculated at a rate of 55 per cent of the recipient's earnings up to a maximum benefit of \$413 a week. Access to supplementary employer-sponsored leave benefits is rare in Canada. Just one in five mothers on leave in 2001 reported additional leave remuneration above what is provided through EI (Marshall 2003, 6).

The value of leave benefits in Canada presently constitutes a barrier to male participation in the program. The benefit system generates financial incentives for the lower-earner in a heterosexual couple to take the leave since a couple maximizes household income by deciding not to incur the minimum 45 per cent reduction from the higher earner's salary. Given the persistent gender earnings gap, the lower earner is more often the mother. Together, the structural incentive implicit in the policy and the gender earnings differential help to explain why just two per cent of parental leave benefit recipients in Canada were fathers prior to the extension of the benefit period in 2001 (Statistics Canada 2000, 109). Since the policy change, there has been a notable increase in the number of Canadian men taking advantage of leave benefits. However, fathers still represented just seven per cent of benefit recipients in the first year, and only 11 per cent in the second year ((CEIC) 2003, 18). Men also stay on parental leave for a much shorter period. The median claim period for men in 2001/02 was 15 weeks, compared to 30 weeks for women (ibid.).

To remedy this morally hazardous dynamic in which EI policy is implicated, it is necessary to reorder the economic incentives generated by leave benefits. Numerous changes to the Canadian federal leave system are required to achieve this end, including the following four reforms.

1. The leave system should be removed from EI administrative mechanisms and financed through general tax revenue to which the self-employed contribute.
2. The value of benefits should be increased on two fronts: the level of remuneration should be calculated as 80 per cent of previous income; and the maximum monthly benefit should plateau at annual incomes of \$50,000, rather than the present \$39,000 limit.
3. The number of months of benefits available to a household should be extended. A substantial portion of the time should be reserved exclusively for fathers, with appropriate exceptions for single, divorced and lesbian parents. When fathers do not make use of this reserved time, the leave system should not permit the benefits to be transferred to the mother and should be deducted from the total benefit period available to the family.
4. Take-up of maternity and parental leave benefits should be linked with eligibility for the Canada and Québec Pension Plans (C/QPP) so that every month on leave reduces the total amount of employment time one must bank before being eligible for a full C/QPP.

The first reform proposal reflects the need to expand eligibility for maternity and parental leave benefits. So long as benefits are funded through EI, self-employed workers remain ineligible

regardless of their attachment to the labour market. This is problematic in part because the self-employed represent nearly one in every five workers and they are a growing segment of the labour force. The exclusion of self-employed citizens from the leave system also contributes to the less frequent participation of fathers in the program since men represent roughly two-thirds of the self-employed. This exclusionary character of the current system could be addressed by amending eligibility so that any citizen with annual earnings of \$2,000 or more would be entitled to benefits, thereby including most part-time and self-employed individuals. Such a change would require that Canada detach the leave benefit system from EI in favour of funding the program from general revenue to ensure that self-employed citizens receive benefits from a pool of public revenue to which they contribute.

While *carefair* would increase eligibility for leave benefits, the system should retain the current logic which links benefit levels to previous earnings. This logic is important because the timing of reproductive decisions along the life course influences the gender division of labour. Coltrane (1996, 126-133) reports that heterosexual spousal units which share household work most equally tend to delay childbearing until at least their late twenties or early thirties. Delaying the transition to parenthood increases the likelihood that women will continue employment following the birth of a child because a period of childlessness provides women time to develop strong employment-related identities (Drolet 2002b). Postponing parenthood also appears to help men avoid some of the financial and time constraints that early-birth fathers face when endeavouring to forge simultaneously an employment- and fatherhood-identity. In keeping with this research, a leave system that calculates benefits on the basis of previous earnings is advantageous because it represents a structural incentive for parents to delay child rearing until they develop stronger labour market attachments that yield more valuable benefits.

Beyond the life course timing of parenthood, research also shows that the point at which a father involves himself in primary child care has long-term consequences for the man's participation in childrearing and other household work. Coltrane (1996, 82-83) reports that heterosexual couples who generally share most responsibility for care and domestic labour tend to involve the father in routine child care from early infancy. Similarly, research from Canada and Sweden indicates that men who take advantage of parental leave tend to spend more time childrearing throughout their children's lives (Baker 1997, 66). This research provides reason to revamp and enrich maternity/parental leave entitlements in Canada to counter the structural barrier that limited benefit rates in combination with the gender earnings gap pose to leave participation among fathers. The structural barrier is minimized the more that policy reduces the financial loss that families incur when the higher earner withdraws from the labour force. A leave system that remunerates 80, rather than 55, per cent of previous earnings up to maximum annual salaries of \$50,000, rather than \$39,000, would represent significant progress on this front. In Sweden, where remuneration rates are 80 per cent of previous income, data indicate that a bare majority of fathers now participate in the leave program (O'Hara 1998, 16-17). This figure far exceeds paternal participation in Canada, which stands at 11 per cent as of 2001 (Marshall 2003, 6).

Mitigating the legacy of patriarchy will require more than increased benefit rates, however. The two countries that stand out in terms of the share of fathers who take some parental leave are Norway and Sweden. Norway appears especially exceptional in that roughly 70 per cent of fathers take some leave (Leira 1998, 370-371; Marshall 2003, 10). As discussed in the

introduction to this article, what is unique about these countries is that both reserve some leave time exclusively for new fathers. In 1993 Norway led the way on this front by reserving four weeks of benefits. If a father does not make use of this time, it cannot be transferred to the mother and is deducted from the overall benefit ((EIRR) 2001b, 18). The Swedish government followed suit in 1995, also reserving thirty days of leave for fathers ((EIRR) 2001c, 14-15).

The results of the Swedish experience suggest the importance of being aggressive with daddy leave policy. The introduction of the one daddy month in 1995 saw the share of male parental leave recipients in Sweden rise 2.6 percentage points (from 28.5 to 31.1 per cent) by 1996, an increase that surpassed that of the previous four years combined. The accelerated pace of male participation continued throughout the rest of the decade so that 37.7 per cent of benefit recipients are fathers as of 2000. Swedish men, however, still only use 12.4 per cent of the days for which a parental allowance is paid by the state, up from 9.2 per cent in 1995 and 7.7 per cent at the beginning of the decade.³ In response to the increased (albeit still small) share of days that men take, the Swedish government acknowledged that reserving one month remains too little an incentive to challenge gendered expectations in households and the market. The solution the government has followed is to extend the period of leave reserved exclusively for fathers to two months. No data is available yet that documents the impact of this policy change on male behavioural patterns.

Building on the Swedish experience, a commitment to *carefair* would see the Canadian federal government require fathers in two-parent families (making appropriate exceptions for single, divorced and lesbian parents) to use at least two, and ideally four, months of the 50 week leave period. If the value of leave benefits is enriched to 80 per cent of previous earnings, the four month requirement would constitute a significant incentive for men to involve themselves early in primary child care. Econometric research is required to determine the rate at which men in Canada can be expected to respond to daddy months funded at this level by taking some or all of the time.

Some may worry that reserving several months of the existing leave period for fathers risks penalizing women (through loss of benefits to which they are currently eligible) who reside with male partners unwilling to take advantage of the daddy months. The *carefair* reform would minimize this risk because it proposes to increase benefit levels from 55 to 80 per cent of previous income, representing a minimum 45 per cent increase in the value of leave benefits.⁴ A woman could therefore replace in eight months the value of forgone earnings as a result of the proposed changes that she receives in 11.6 months under the current system. The mother would be free to allocate the financial assistance over a 50-week period and enjoy the same length of leave at roughly the same benefit rate that is currently available under EI. Although it may seem unfair (particularly for mothers) that heterosexual households with fathers who avoid caregiving will benefit from fewer months of leave, social policy that does not alter the patriarchal division

³ I am indebted to professor Anita Nyberg for providing the parental leave data from Sweden. She works at *Svensk modell i förändring Arbetslivsinstitutet*, 112 79 Stockholm. The data is available at www.rfv.se/stat/socfakt/famba for persons who are fluent in Swedish.

⁴ The increase will be considerably more for some mothers with annual earnings above the present \$39,000 insurable limit since the *carefair* reform would grant leave benefits to cover 80 per cent of a citizen's first \$50,000 in earnings.

of care also imposes costs on women that are unjust. These costs manifest themselves in far broader social ills, including the gender earnings gap, feminization of poverty and women's under-representation in political spheres.

The risk to women with resistant spouses could be minimized entirely by extending the total duration of leave benefits to accommodate the daddy leave months, rather than set aside benefits for men from within the time currently available to households. Recent Canadian experience affirms the value of extending the benefit period if undercutting patriarchy is a priority. Pérusse (2003, 14) reports a five-fold increase in the number of fathers who took leave one year after the benefit period was extended by six months compared to one year before the policy change. The extended leave period means that new birth mothers can now share leave benefits with spouses without sacrificing time off in the final months of the last trimester when pregnancy is often a physical ordeal. Still longer leaves would facilitate more male participation in the program without limiting the time away from work that allows new mothers to breastfeed. Research by Lupton and Barclay (1997, 138) indicates that breastfeeding is a factor that tends to limit men's role in early childrearing even among fathers who express a concerted desire to involve themselves intimately in the care of their newborns.

The limited share of leave time that fathers take in Sweden provides reason to remain skeptical that the reservation of benefits exclusively for fathers will trigger an immediate refashioning of the gender order in Canada. A number of scholars who examine parental leave among Swedish parents point to the significance of gender symbolism in explaining the still modest response to daddy months by men (for example Bergman and Hobson 2002; Brandth and Kvande 1998). Højgaard (1997, 258), for instance, argues that a father's decision to care actively for (not just about) his newborn "challenges a very basic symbolic meaning of masculinity as it involves work performance." The decision also runs contrary to other "structural elements of the symbolic order of gender such as the gendering of the economy, the cultural prescriptions of the 'good' mother, and expert advice on child raising" (ibid., 251). Højgaard (ibid., 258) suggests that the resulting symbolic discord between male employment and active caregiving is one "reason that men do not take full advantage of the possibilities of ameliorating the contradictions between work and family that are, albeit ambiguously, offered by the work place culture and by welfare state policies." Symbolic coding of masculinity and parental leave mean that the task of obliging men to fulfill a fair share of care must first clash with the very cultural norms that are the product and self-preservation of patriarchy. As Højgaard puts it, parental leave will become a practicable entitlement of fathers "only on certain conditions." It is a right that is ultimately "dependent on the social construction of parenthood" (ibid., 251).

This line of analysis confirms Olson's point that a universal caregiver policy strategy must engage in a contest of cultural politics to reconstruct the symbolic meaning of fatherhood (without suggesting that simultaneous changes to financial incentives are inappropriately paternalistic). In response, I recommend linking participation in maternity and parental leave programs with eligibility in public pension systems. In the Canadian context, every month of maternity or parental leave that someone takes should reduce by four months the total amount of (self)-employment that one must perform to qualify without penalty for benefits under the Canada or Québec Pension Plans (C/QPP). If such a system were implemented, a parent who takes six months of leave following the birth of a child would qualify without penalty for C/QPP

two years earlier than he or she would in the absence of taking this leave, at age 63 rather than 65.

Under the current system, a citizen's CPP is reduced by .5 per cent for every month she draws on the benefit program before turning 65. Conversely, one's CPP increases by .5 per cent for every month after 65 one delays receipt of benefits (up to a monthly maximum of \$788.75). Thus, to claim the public pension at age 63 results in a 12 per cent benefit penalty. Under *carefair*, if the same citizen took six months of maternity or parental leave, the reform I propose would eliminate this benefit reduction since the point at which she becomes eligible for a penalty-free CPP would drop by 24 months.

Pensions represent the social citizenship benefit that is most definitively linked to extensive work performance. It is a unique point in the adult life course when non-work becomes socially sanctioned in recognition of a successful history of productive contribution. By linking public pension entitlement to participation in maternity and parental leave programs, the *carefair* concept would make explicit that informal care provision is a social responsibility just as much as paid work. It would overtly signal that caregiving counts as critical civic work performance along side labour force participation when the public determines eligibility for its paramount social citizenship benefit. A connection between parental leave and pensions would thus advance at the level of symbolic politics the idea that caregiving should count for masculine (not just feminine) ideals of work performance. At the very least, caregiving would become a contribution that the state would privilege relative to employment at a rate of one-to-four while the citizen is on a care leave, with the implication that employers should endeavour to accommodate more male participation in this mode of social (re)production.

The suggestion that one month of leave should count as four months of employment for public pension entitlement purposes is meant to serve as another plank on the path to restructuring the context of incentives in which citizens decide about time allocation for domestic care and labour force participation – a plank that would leave no doubt as to the state's intended symbolic message. The one-to-four ratio would also help to offset the dynamic consequences that result from labour market withdrawal for care purposes, including the pension penalty that primary caregivers have historically encountered as a result of weaker labour force attachment. As of October 2003, the average income that Canadian women earn from CPP retirement benefits is still under 60 per cent of men's benefits: just \$324 per month compared to \$565 (Government of Canada 2003, table 7). This pension disparity persists despite the fact that pension eligibility calculations exclude periods when mothers' earnings decline due to child rearing responsibilities for children under age seven. The *carefair* proposal to link caregiving leave to CPP calculations would partially address this disparity. Since a caregiver who takes six months on leave would reduce by 24 months the point at which she becomes eligible for C/QPP without penalty, a mother who works until age 65 would enjoy a 12 per cent increase to her public pension compared to the status quo.

Linking maternity and parental leave to pension eligibility is by no means neutral about the choices it would prefer men to make; nor are the other three leave benefit reforms that I propose. Rather, the recommendations presume caregiving is a social responsibility on par with

employment and taxes and publicly strive to entice men to rescind the patriarchal dividend by performing an equitable share of care.

By assigning the state an important role in obliging citizens, the proposed leave reforms invoke a now well-accepted Weberian analysis of the state. As Taylor-Goodby notes:

Many definitions of the state do not pay much attention to the meeting of citizens needs, but all put the ‘monopoly on the legitimate use of violence within a given territory’, in Weber’s terminology, at their heart. Welfare states are not simply about doing good to individuals by meeting their needs, they are about sanctioning, controlling and directing people’s behaviour as well (1991, 208).

Sanctions and controls are vital to the state, even in the liberal tradition, because the state functions as protector and guarantor of individual liberty. A government must rightfully exercise its power to limit a citizen’s activity against his or her will whenever that activity encroaches on the liberty of others or otherwise inflicts injury. This insight is the foundation of John Stuart Mill’s famous harm principle, which argues that “the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others” (Mill 1975, 10-11).

The harm principle in turn illuminates one lynchpin for defending the position that welfare state policy is an appropriate mechanism for addressing the gender division of labour. The perverse incentives which perpetuate male free-riding on the care work of diverse groups of women undermines equality of opportunity and places women at risk of economic insecurity and marginalization from important social areas. The solution to this moral hazard demands a vision of social citizenship entitlements that institutionalizes sanctions as much benefits, just as the harm principle prescribes use of state authority to shield individual liberty. Borrowing from Taylor-Goodby (1991, 208), we must recognize that “Equal enjoyment of rights requires that some people should be prevented from infringing the human need for freedom of others by not participating in the paid and unpaid work that is necessary to the continuance of society.”

The New Paternalist ‘Competence’ Argument for Carefair.

A second case for *carefair* can also be adapted from current workfare debates by drawing on new paternalist discussions of competence. Recall that ‘competence’, in this context, connotes an individual’s ability to make choices and behave in a manner that promotes her or his self-interest. The competence question rejects the assumption that individuals are rational maximizers who optimize their self-interest wherever possible in favour of a more complex psychology that attempts to explain the self-defeating dynamics that occur in contexts of dependence and poverty in which people may fail to do what they desire.

Following this pattern, the second argument for *carefair* also raises questions about dysfunction. But contrary to the right of centre tendency to question only the competence of the poor, the *carefair* argument raises questions about men’s competence more generally as it plays out in respect of the patriarchal culture of male dependence on female care.

Explicit in the competence argument is resistance to the assumption that men’s neglect of some care activities is entirely in their self-interest. Many men benefit financially from the less

encumbered status they enjoy compared to women since men are not culturally, politically or economically expected to perform a fair share of care work. But the appropriate response to this patriarchal dividend is *not* to align care with what Elshtain (1981, 333) famously termed the “shitwork” so as to help citizens minimize the contribution they make to the social product through caregiving. Rather, the Gilligan (1987, 32) inspired literature acknowledges an “essential ambivalence” to human connection that acknowledges care is both a site of immense satisfaction and deep discrimination for women. Care work is not just instrumentally valuable for social reproduction, it is also intrinsically valuable as a source of fulfillment, protection, identity affirmation and group membership.

The latter themes are evident in work by scholars who push the experiences of women of colour to the centre of feminist theorizing, especially Collins (1991; 1994). She explains, for instance, that caring often represents “mothers [of colour] fighting for the physical survival both of their own biological children and those of the larger... community” (1994, 50). Care is thus “a form of resistance” for some minority mothers whose reproductive and care labour on behalf of their own family and ethnic group defies the expectation of servitude to whites (1991, 140).

This line of analysis is significant because it reminds us that domesticity can be a site of refuge and solace where individuals often discover and cultivate the kinds of intimate relationships that are constitutive of social belonging. Family and fictive kin not only provide material assistance when times are difficult, they may also provide important emotional support by affirming the personal values and self-definitions that individuals need in order to flourish. Since this recognition may be lacking in public domains for members of minority ethnic and faith-based groups, as well as gay and lesbian communities, the positive recognition of one’s self-definition that can be found in domestic spaces grows in significance. In this instance domesticity assumes the status of an essential sphere of social inclusion where the nurturing of one’s identity assists individuals to resist externally imposed denigrating images, while fostering the collective identities of the ethnocultural, religious and sexual orientation groups in which citizens belong (for a more thorough discussion of this theme see Kershaw forthcoming, chapter 6). The web of relations in which citizens provide and receive care in domestic spaces thus becomes what Collins (1991, 118) describes as a site where members of marginalized social groups “express and learn the power of self-definition, the importance of valuing and respecting ourselves, the necessity of self-reliance and independence, and a belief in [our] empowerment.”

The role that caring plays in self-definition and group membership remains muted in theorizing which reflects dominant ethnocultural and other group perspectives where the collective identity is not at risk. But relative silence does not mean that time for care is any less critical for the development of identity among members of the dominant culture. Domestic care is an activity that facilitates individuals, regardless of their privilege, to explore their place in a family and community lineage as well as the values and life pursuits that this social location affirms. Thus, although the Collins literature illuminates the importance of domestic care as a form of resistance among some minority socio-cultural groups, it also underscores the broader point that informal caregiving is integral to identity formation among all citizens irrespective of the security of their ethnocultural background. Private time for care is an issue of identity politics that commands attention from us all.

One shortcoming of the Collins literature is that her discourse is almost exclusively about mothering. There is no reason, however, to believe that her treatment of care provision as a potential source of affirmation, identity and social belonging reveals social dynamics that are exclusive to women. To hold this view would border on an essentialism that most feminist scholarship rejects. Accordingly, an important implication of the finding that domestic care fosters identity and belonging is that many successful male breadwinners may be marginalized from an important sphere of social membership. Care ambitions that go unfulfilled or even undiscovered may undermine some men's full participation in this key domain of affectivity.

There is some data to support the view that many men may suffer this under-theorized source of social exclusion. For instance, in research about men living with their biological or adopted children, Eggebeen and Knoester (2001) find that a father's "level of involvement with their children made a substantial difference" to activities well beyond child rearing. "The more these men were engaged in activities with their children, the more satisfied they were with their lives, the more socializing they did, the more involved they were in their communities, [and] the more connected they were to their (extended) families" (ibid., 389).

In addition to evidence that men accrue positive social consequences from involvement in child care, Barclay and Lupton (1999, 1019) report that many new and expecting fathers wish to be much more involved in primary child rearing than were their own fathers. There is a gap, however, between men's intention and actions on this front. According to Barclay and Lupton:

Nearly all our participants found fatherhood, in the beginning at least, to be disappointing and frustrating. Most of the group expected to be more involved than they actually were. Clearly the 'absent father' the men said they had experienced with their own father as children was no longer acceptable to this generation of men, but many were replicating this through force of circumstance rather than choice...

A most remarkable feature of the experiences of this group of first-time fathers is how most remained on the fringes of parenthood for the first 6 months [the duration of the study]. The emotional rewards for new fathers appeared to be in proportion to the amount of time and energy they expended in intimate contact with the child. Only a minority of participants did not want to provide this care, but most men found it difficult to find the time away from paid employment to develop the skills they required to do so adequately (ibid., 1019).

If, as these studies suggest, caring for young children is something many new fathers genuinely wish to do, and it is also an activity that yields spill over benefits for their social networks and life satisfaction, then the patriarchal division of labour raises serious questions about men's competence, in the new paternalist sense of the term. This research indicates that neglecting caregiving in favour of additional breadwinning or leisure is out of step with some interests to which men subscribe. One could therefore reasonably posit that some (many?) men's acquiescence to a rather strict gender division of care reflects the failure "to do what they themselves desire and thus [their failure] to exhaust the potential of their environment," just as Mead indicts the long-term unemployed (1997b, 28).

As a counterpoint to some men's stated care aspirations, the pervasiveness of primary care provision by women reveals in part the degree to which male (and female) behaviour is not fully strategic, but bounded by one's worldview and patriarchal enculturation. Without denying that human behaviour is rational or purposive, men turn to established routines or familiar patterns of

behaviour to attain their purposes. As part of this process, the institution of patriarchy provides moral and cognitive templates for interpretation and action. Men are embedded in a world of institutions constituted by the vestiges of patriarchal symbols, scripts and routines which provide filters for interpretation of situation and self, and thus facilitate deliberation about behaviour. Subject to a legacy of male free-riding on female care, men from diverse socioeconomic and cultural groups risk internalizing a pathology of patriarchal dependence that obstructs their interest-satisfaction vis-à-vis their (potential) network of care relations. In response, directive social policy like the radical daddy leave proposed above is necessary to close the gap between men's care intentions and their actions, just as Mead proposes workfare to assist the economically marginalized to close the gap between their employment interests and dearth of paid work.

Conclusion

A *carefair* analogue to workfare would address Olson's circular relation between individual choices and prescriptive patriarchal norms by employing public policy levers to nudge men economically and symbolically to make more socially responsible and equitable choices about caregiving. The nudge remains a relatively gentle one, since under *carefair* men would not be forced to care more. They may still choose to continue current care patterns; but there would be new consequences, such as postponed eligibility for a full public pension and the loss of leave benefits. Thus, *carefair* would not so much compel care activity as it would change the system of incentives within which men make choices between market and domestic activities. In this regard, the analogue is dramatically less coercive than, say, conscription, which was historically a badge of male citizenship.

The level of suasion characteristic of *carefair* also stands in contrast to the much stronger coercion that Mead advocates in his paternalist vision of workfare. Mead does not even count reforms that redesign policy incentives to encourage work in his preferred category of workfare policies. He discounts tinkering with policy incentives because this sort of policy redesign "leave[s] work as a choice" (1997b, 47). Since Mead rejects the competence assumption, he is leery that individuals will respond to policy-induced economic incentives even when incentives make paid work in their self-interest. Mead therefore concludes that an effective workfare scheme must go beyond reordering policy incentives to coerce citizens to work more directly through supervision.

Although the radical daddy leave I propose is informed by Scandinavian experience, *carefair* does not presume that policy prescriptions suitable for social democratic or corporatist regimes in Europe are culturally appropriate in their liberal welfare regime cousins. Policy innovation stands a greater chance of success if it embraces one or more key norms present in the specific cultural context in which it is to be tried. Gramsci's (1971) theorizing about hegemony reminds us that a paradigm is only hegemonic because it resonates (at least in part) with much of the citizenry, including those who are ultimately disadvantaged by the paradigm. Thus, the path to replacing a dominant paradigm does not lie so much in negating it, as in refashioning critical elements in order to reprioritize values that are currently missing and relocate or exhaust problematic features that are prominent.

Here lies the unique opportunity that the shift toward duty discourses in liberal regimes presents for local proponents of gender equality. In contrast to those who would suggest that the use of state power to privilege some social choices over others introduces a level of paternalism or lack of neutrality into policy about which theorists and the general public alike are skeptical, citizens in these states regularly (re-)elect policy makers who employ the authoritative power of the state to compel citizens to discharge social duties in respect of paid work. Using the same state authority to impose citizenry care obligations can therefore be presented as a logical next step in this cultural milieu. Although the punitive character of some workfare policies appropriately draws critique (for example Klein and Long 2003), it turns out that renewed commitment to enforce civic work obligations represents an especially solid cornerstone for developing a gender equality framework premised on the universal caregiver model. For just as moral hazard and paternalist arguments defend workfare, so they also have potential to champion a policy regime that demands that men discharge civic care duties.

The appropriation of these arguments is not without irony. Who would have thought that the likes of Lawrence Mead could prove to be a closet force for feminism?

Bibliography

- Baier, Annette. 1987. The Need for More than Justice. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* supplementary vol. 13:41-56.
- Baker, Maureen. 1997. Parental Benefit Policies and the Gendered Division of Labor. *Social Service Review* 71 (1):51 - 71.
- Barclay, Lesley, and Deborah Lupton. 1999. The experiences of new fatherhood: a socio-cultural analysis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 29 (4):1013-1020.
- Bergman, Helena, and Barbara Hobson. 2002. Compulsory fatherhood: the coding of fatherhood in the Swedish welfare state. In *Making Men into Fathers: Men, Masculinities and the Social Politics of Fatherhood*, edited by B. Hobson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brandth, Berit, and Elin Kvande. 1998. Masculinity and child care: the reconstruction of fathering. *The Sociological Review* 56:293-313.
- (CEIC), Canada Employment Insurance Commission. 2003. Employment Insurance: 2002 Monitoring and Assessment Report. Hull, QC: Human Resources Development Canada, Strategic Policy, Labour Market Policy Directorate.
- Chief Actuary. 2001. Report on Employment Insurance. Ottawa: Human Resources Development Canada.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 1991. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York/London: Routledge Press.
- . 1994. Shifting the Center: Race, Class, and Feminist Theorizing About Motherhood. In *Mothering: Ideology, Experience, and Agency*, edited by Glenn, Chang and Forcey. New York: Routledge.
- Coltrane, Scott. 1996. *Family Man: Fatherhood, Housework and Gender Equity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Courchene, Thomas J. 1994a. *Social Canada in the Millennium: Reform Imperatives and Restructuring Principles*. Toronto: C.D. Howe Institute.

- Drolet, Marie. 2002b. Wives, Mothers and Wages: Does Timing Matter? Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Business and Labour Market Analysis Division.
- Eggebeen, David J., and Chris Knoester. 2001. Does Fatherhood Matter for Men? *Journal of Marriage and Family* 63 (May):381-393.
- (EIRR), European Industrial Relations Review. 2001b. Maternity, paternity and parental benefits across Europe - part 2. 330 (July):15 - 18.
- . 2001c. Maternity, paternity and parental benefits across Europe - part 3. 331 (August):13 - 17.
- Elshtain, Jean Bethke. 1981. *Public Man, Private Woman*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 2002. *Why We Need a New Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Etzioni, Amitai. 1993. *The Spirit of Community*. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc.
- . 1996. *The New Golden Rule: Community and Morality in a Democratic Society*. New York: Basic Books.
- Fraser, Nancy. 1994. After the Family Wage: Gender Equity and the Welfare State. *Political Theory* 22 (4):591-618.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1999. *The Third Way*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Gilligan, Carol. 1982. *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- . 1987. Moral Orientation and Moral Development. In *Women and Moral Theory*, edited by E. F. Kittay and D. T. Meyers. Totowa, N.J.: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Government of Canada. *Canada Pension Plan Benefit Rates 2003*. Human Resources Development Canada, Forecasting Information and Results Management, Income Security Programs Branch 2003 [cited January 20, 2004. Available from <http://www.hrhc-drhc.gc.ca/isp/studies/trends/cpprates/cpprates2003.pdf>].
- Gramsci, Antonio. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Edited by Q. Hoare and G. N. Smith. New York: International Publishers.
- Hobson, Barbara, ed. 2002. *Making Men into Fathers: Men, Masculinities and the Social Politics of Fatherhood*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hojgaard, Lis. 1997. Working Fathers - Caught in the Web of the Symbolic Order of Gender. *Acta Sociologica* 40:245-62.
- Kershaw, Paul. 2002. The Politics of Time: Integrating a Richer Appreciation for Work-Family Balance into the Canadian Welfare Regime. *Canadian Review of Social Policy* (49/50):113-138.
- . forthcoming. *Carefair: rethinking the responsibilities and rights of social citizenship*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- King, Desmond, and Mark Wickham-Jones. 1999. From Clinton to Blair: The Democratic (Party) Origins of Welfare to Work. *Political Quarterly* 70:62-74.
- Klein, Seth, and Andrea Long. 2003. A Bad Time to be Poor. Vancouver: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives/Social Planning and Research Council of BC.
- Leira, Arnlaug. 1998. Caring as Social Right: Cash for Child Care And Daddy Leave. *Social Politics* 5 (3):362-378.
- Lupton, Deborah, and Lesley Barclay. 1997. *Constructing Fatherhood: Discourses and Experiences*. London: Sage Publications.
- Marshall, Katherine. 2003. Benefiting from extended parental leave. *Perspectives on Labour and Income* (March):5-11.

- Marshall, T. H. 1964. *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*. Garden City, New York: Double Day & Company, Inc.
- Mead, Lawrence M. 1986. *Beyond Entitlement: the social obligations of citizenship*. New York: The Free Press, Macmillan Inc.
- . 1997a. Citizenship and Social Policy: T.H. Marshall and Poverty. *Social Philosophy and Policy* 14 (2):197-230.
- , ed. 1997b. *The New Paternalism*. Washington: Brookings Institute Press.
- Mill, John Stuart. 1975. *On Liberty*. Edited by D. Spitz: Norton.
- O'Hara, Kathy. 1998. *Comparative Family Policies: Eight Countries' Stories*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Network.
- Olson, Kevin. 2002. Recognizing Gender, Redistributing Labor. *Social Politics* 9 (3):380-410.
- Pérusse, Dominique. 2003. New maternity and parental benefits. *Perspectives on Labour and Income* (March):12-15.
- Rogers, Stan. 1981. The Idiot. In *The Northwest Passage*. Dundas, On: Fogarty's Cove Music.
- Sanchez, Laura, and Elizabeth Thomson. 1997. Becoming Mothers and Fathers: Parenthood, Gender and the Division of Labor. *Gender and Society* 11 (6):747-772.
- Shaver, Sheila. 2002. Australian Welfare Reform: From Citizenship to Supervision. *Social Policy and Administration* 36 (4):331-45.
- Statistics Canada. 2000. Women in Canada 2000: A gender-based statistical report. Ottawa: Statistics Canada: Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division.
- Taylor-Goodby, Peter. 1991. *Social Change, Social Welfare and Social Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Walker, Alexis J., and Lori A. McGraw. 2000. Who is Responsible for Responsible Fathering? *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62:563-69.
- White, Deena. 2003. Social Policy and Solidarity, Orphans and the New Model of Social Cohesion. *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 28 (1):51-76.
- White, Stuart. 2000. Review Article: Social Rights and the Social Contract - Political Theory and the New Welfare Politics. *British Journal of Political Science* 30:507-532.
- . 2003. *The Civic Minimum: on the Rights and Obligations of Economic Citizenship*. Edited by W. Kymlicka, D. Miller and A. Ryan, *Oxford Political Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zvonkovic, Anisa M, Kathleen M. Greaves, Cynthia J. Schmiede, and Leslie D Hall. 1996. The marital construction of gender through work and family decisions: A qualitative analysis. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58:91-100.