Home, But Not Alone:
Socio-Cultural and Economic Aspects of Canadian Young Adults Sharing Parental Households

Barbara A. Mitchell

ABSTRACT

This paper explores several socio-cultural and economic dimensions of intergenerational living arrangements. Data are drawn from a random sample of 1,907 Canadian young adults (aged 19-35) from four ethnocultural groups: British- , Chinese- , Southern European-, and Indo-Canadian. Issues germane to the prolongation of parental roles, midlife mothering, and unpaid work are also highlighted.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article explore plusieurs dimensions socio -culturelles et économiques des arrangements de co-habitation entre générations. Les données sont tirées à partir d'un échantillon aléatoire de 1907 jeunes adultes canadiens (âgés entre 19 et 35 ans) venant de quatre groupes ethnoculturels : Britanniques, Chinois, Européens méridionaux, Indo –Canadiens. Les questions se rapportent à la prolongation des rôles de parents, être mère dans la quarantaine, et le travail non rémunéré est aussi souligné.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout many Western societies, young adults have been remaining in the parental home until later ages, a trend that has extended the "child launching" period of family development and shortened the "empty nest" phase for midlife parents. Indeed, Statistics Canada data drawn from the 2001 Census show that 41% of the 3.8 million young adults (aged 20-29) lived with their parents, a dramatic increase since 1981 when only 27% of young adults lived at home. It is also important to note that delayed home leaving is partly the result of a contemporary phenomenon known as "boomerang kids," or adult children who return home to refill parental nests. Recent national data reveal that approximately one-third or 28% of Canadian young women aged 20-29 and 33% of their male counterparts have returned home at least once after an initial departure (Statistics Canada 2003).

Changing economic conditions, increased post-secondary enrollment, and later ages of marriage and family formation are frequently cited reasons underlying extended coresidence (Mitchell 2000; Mitchell and Gee 1996). There also appears to be a socio-cultural component to sharing parental households (Boyd 1998; Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1999). Boyd (1998), for instance, finds that ethnic origin is one of the strongest factors related to intergenerational sharing, regardless of other factors. Other social factors are also found to increase the likelihood of extended coresidence. Notably, parental relationship quality is found to affect the probability of young adults living at home. Young people with more supportive parent-child relations, for instance, are far more likely to remain at home or to return than those with weak or conflictual family ties (Mitchell, Wister and Gee 2000).

In addition, several other economic or "materially-based" factors such as family socio-economic status, as well as characteristics of young adults themselves (e.g., gender, age, marital status, personal income and employment status) are also found to predict the likelihood of coresidence (Aquilino 1996; Boyd and Pryor 1989; Gee, Mitchell and Wister 1995; Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1999; Mitchell, Wister and Gee 2000; Whittington and Peters 1996). For example, young adults with full-time jobs are more likely to establish a separate residence than those who are chronically unemployed and sons are more likely to live with "the folks" than daughters.

However, it is unclear how various types of socio-cultural and economic resources embedded within parental households and family relationships influence the decision to coreside. Moreover, by closely examining the specific reasons why young

adults remain at home or return, we can shed light on some of the social and economic implications of extended coresidence on parents at this particular stage of life. Research has tended to focus on the parenting of children at younger ages of the family life cycle, a time in which gender differences in domestic work quickly become specialized, with mothers as primary caregivers (Fox 2001). Therefore, given the dramatic rise in delayed leaving and "boomeranging" in an era of economic restructuring and globalization, we can consider both the positive and negative ramifications of intergenerational coresidence for contemporary patterns of parenting and domestic labour.

In light of these research gaps, the main purpose of this paper is to explore the broader meanings and implications of reasons for staying and returning home based on preliminary, descriptive findings of an ongoing SSHRC-funded research project entitled, "Culture and Coresidence Study." Socio-cultural and economic dimensions of coresident living arrangements will be targeted, including: (1) the economic and non-economic reasons why young adults aged 19-35 live with their parents, as well as the advantages they accrue from living at home; and (2) cultural variations in the propensity of young adults to share parental households, as well as the common pathways out of the parental household. These patterns will be investigated with the intention of identifying and discussing their implications for prolonged parenting, gender roles, and domestic labour. The four ethnocultural groups under study include: British- , Chinese- , Southern European- (SE), and Indo-Canadian young adults residing in the Greater Vancouver Regional District of British Columbia.

A SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESOURCE PERSPECTIVE

This paper builds upon life course theory (Elder 1978 & 1985; Giele and Elder 1998; Hagestad 1990) by emphasizing the role of social, cultural, and economic forces in both the causes and consequences of parent-adult child living arrangements. At a macro-level, life course behaviours are viewed as the result of socio-demographic, geopolitical, economic and cultural changes, such as fluctuations in the economy and high levels of immigration. Thus,

family-related transitional events and living arrangements are shaped (and reshaped) by changing societies. They are also moulded by family background and cultural factors (e.g., norms, values) and social relationships embedded within family, as well as individual-level behaviours and life histories (Hareven 1996).

There are two fundamental tenets of life course theory that are relevant to this paper. First is the notion of heterogeneity, or the idea that diversity in resources can affect the propensity for young adults to coreside. Second is the theme of "linked lives," which is used to highlight how patterns of coresidence can affect day-to-day parental responsibilities in relation to domestic labour.

HETEROGENEITY AND CAPITAL IN HOUSEHOLD LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Researchers commonly challenge the assumption that there is an "institutionalized life course" (George 1993; Meyer 1986). As a result, diversity in transitional behaviours is widely recognized. Notably, life course patterns can vary according to the resources that are available during transitional points or events. These resources often take the form of economic or social capital to which young adults can have differential access. Economic capital, such as income earned from paid labour, can facilitate residential independence whereas access to parental economic and material capital while attending school may make intergenerational coresidence a viable life style choice. This is because young adults can directly benefit from the "comforts of home" (e.g., household amenities).

Social capital, on the other hand, is less "tangible," and "exists in the relations among persons" (Coleman 1988, 100). Although this concept has been defined in numerous ways (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988 & 1990; Lin 2001), it is generally agreed that this resource represents the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures (Portes 1998). Thus, social capital is a particularly valuable resource in that it is productive - it makes possible the achievement of certain ends that would be unattainable in its absence. For example, a young adult with supportive parental relations is more likely to remain at home or return home in time of need (e.g., if unemployed) than

someone with poor or strained relations (Mitchell 2000). Social capital also represents a filter through which the financial and human capital of parents is transmitted to and invested in by children (Teachman, Paasch and Carver 1997). As such, social capital can either enhance or dilute the presence of other parental resources, such as financial capital (Coleman 1990).

Since social capital resides in social relationships, it can be found when young adults are embedded within certain families and ethnic communities. It manifests itself as family connectedness or support, and it can be influenced by parent-child relationship quality (e.g., positive parent-child interactions) as well as by cultural or ethnic factors (e.g., norms, values and expectations). And, despite the fact that considerable diversity exists even within a particular ethnic group, it is assumed that cultural membership can shape the timing and pathways of transitional behaviours. Cultural groups can create and reproduce their own "social capital" which generates distinctive "social timetables." These refer to the normatively scheduled occurrence of key life course events that provide individuals and their families with social and cognitive "road-maps" to guide life course decisions (Hagestad and Neugarten 1985). Young people often conform to these timetables in order to avoid the negative social sanctions associated with the violation of group social norms and expectations.

Therefore, it is expected that young adults' decision to live in the parental home will be affected by cultural membership. In particular, Canadian young adults from highly familistic or "traditional" cultural backgrounds (e.g., Indo) are expected to remain at home longer and to leave home mainly for conventional or family-centered pathways such as marriage. Conversely, those from more "individualistic" backgrounds (e.g., British) are more likely to leave home at earlier ages to achieve "independence" because of a stronger preference for individual autonomy.

LINKED LIVES

Another important tenet of the life course perspective is that family lives are interdependent and reciprocally linked on several levels. Societal and individual experiences are linked through the family and its network of shared relationships (Elder 1992). As a result, macro-level events (e.g., economic recessions, need for higher education) can significantly influence individual behaviours (e.g., a young adult returning home) and this can dramatically affect family roles and interactions. For example, a young adult returning home may refill a previously empty nest and this can move parents back into the child launching phase of family development. This transition "reversal" alters parental roles and responsibilities, family dynamics, as well as the quality of intergenerational relationships (Mitchell 1998). In particular, midlife mothers may be uniquely affected by their children's extended coresidence, since they generally perform the bulk of domestic labour in the household (Jackson 1996; Luxton and Reiter 1997).

DATA AND METHODS
Sampling

The data presented in this chapter are drawn from an ongoing 4-year SSHRC-funded study entitled "The Culture and Coresidence Study" (1999-2003). Data were collected in 1999-2000, and involved a random sample of 1,907 young adults between the ages of 19 and 35 residing in the Greater Vancouver area. The sample includes only young adults who self-identify with one of four ethno-cultural groups - British, Chinese, Indo, and Southern European origin.

The majority of respondents (90%) were obtained through random sampling from purchased directories of Greater Vancouver household telephone numbers and those with subfiles of Chinese and Indo-Canadian surnames, in combination with Greek, Italian, and Chinese ethnic directories. Another 10% of respondents were drawn using a random digit dialling process. A CATI system was employed for contacting, callbacks, screening, and the telephone-based interviews. A number of the interviewers were bi- or multi-lingual in English and Cantonese and Mandarin, and in English and languages of India. In total, about 8% (or 76) of the Chinese and Indo-Canadian interviews were conducted in the interviewee's home language. The response rate is calculated at 51%, after eliminating all "ineligibles."

The sample consists of 790 (41.4%) men and 1,170 (58.6%) women between the ages of 19

and 35. Roughly equal numbers are found in each ethnocultural group: n=502 (British), n=462 (Chinese), n=487 (Indo), and n=456 (Southern European). The mean age of the total sample is 26.5 years.

Interviews

Several versions of structured interviews were administered to those in one of three possible living arrangement groups: (1) home stayer, (2) home leaver, or (3) home returner/"boomerang kid." Each person was asked a series of questions (closed and open-ended) related to their specific living arrangement, including reasons for changes in that situation, timing of the change, and what they liked and disliked about it. Basic socio-demographic information was also collected (e.g., gender, age, ethnocultural membership, marital history). All interviews were conducted by telephone, in the preferred language of the respondent, and ranged from about 35-55 minutes in duration. Everyone was assured of complete confidentiality and anonymity, and they were informed that they could discontinue the interview at any time and/or not answer any question that made them feel uncomfortable.

ANALYSES

Several types of analyses were conducted for this paper, including descriptive and crosstabular analyses, as well as an exploratory content analysis of verbatim data. These qualitative data allow respondents to elaborate on the benefits of living at home with their parents. With regard to the univariate and crosstabular analysis, four tables are presented: economic and non-economic reasons for remaining at home, economic and non-economic reasons for returning home, living arrangement by ethnic group, and the (first) reason for home leaving by ethnic group. Young adults were also asked an open-ended question, "What aspects do you like about living at home with your parents?" A content analysis of these data revealed consistent, emergent themes, and discussion of these findings is integrated into the results section.

MEASUREMENT OF KEY VARIABLES
Ethnocultural Identity

Young adults were asked the question, "To which ethnic group do you most closely identify?" In order to be included in the study, they had to identity with one of the following four groups: "British," "Chinese," "Indo," or "Southern European" (SE). The British group consists of persons who self-identify as English, Scottish, Irish or Welsh (or any combination); the Chinese group consists of persons with origins in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland China; the Indo group contains individuals of Indian, Pakistani, or Sri Lankan backgrounds, and the Southern-European group consists of persons of Greek, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese origins (the latter two groups including persons of Latin American heritages).

Living Arrangement

Respondents were queried about the current and past living arrangements and were placed into one of three categories: (1) home leaver (left home for at least four months, never returned for four or more months); (2) home stayer (has never left home for four or more months); and (3) home returner or "boomerang kid" (has left for at least four months and has returned for at least one period of four or more months). It is important to note that two categories of home returners, current and past, are combined for the purposes of this paper.

Reasons for Home Staying, Home Leaving and Home Returning

Young adults were also asked to indicate their reasons for staying home from a list of reasons. These reasons were re-grouped into: economic reasons (financial or school-related) and non-economic (affective/emotional reasons or tradition). They were also asked their reasons for leaving home and returning home (the first and last time, if applicable) from a list of reasons (including an open-ended "other" response). If the respondent chose more than one reason, they were also asked to indicate their primary reason for leaving or returning. For ease of data manageability, responses were collapsed into six commonly reported home leaving pathways: independence, school-related

reasons, work, marry or cohabitate, conflict at home, and "other" reasons (e.g., to travel). Home returning categories include: school-related, to save money, financial problems, high cost of housing, relationship ended/no where to go, transitional reasons (e.g., need home base after completing school), psychological need (e.g., not emotionally ready to live apart) and parents needed help at home (e.g., companionship due to death of spouse or divorce).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 (see Appendix) shows the economic and non-economic reasons for remaining at home (for only stayers). These tables indicate that the primary reasons for staying at home is almost evenly divided between economic (56.2%) and non-economic reasons (43.8%). The two most common economic categories include financial reasons (40.4%), such as a need to save money, and school-related reasons (15.8%), such as "it is cheaper to live at home while attending university." Turning to the most frequently occurring non-economic categories, the most popular reasons include affective reasons (26.8%), such as "still need the emotional support from parents," and "cultural tradition" (17%), such as, "it is our cultural tradition to remain at home until marriage."

Economic and non-economic reasons for returning home are presented in Table 2 (see Appendix). Here, economic reasons clearly take precedence over non-economic ones, with 85.7% of all reasons falling into an economic category. Interestingly, a majority (45.1%) cites transitional or temporary reasons (e.g., just finished school or travel and need a temporary "home base"). Other economic reasons for returning are: save money (12.7%), school-related (10.4%), financial problems (9.4%), relationship ended (7.1%), and housing costs (1%). Non-economic reasons for returning include: parents needed help at home (7.8%), psychological reasons (4.5%), and personal health problems (1.9%).

Both economic and non-economic themes are also reflected in the open-ended responses that young adults provided when they were given an opportunity to elaborate on the advantages of living at home (including "boomerang kids"). What is interesting about these qualitative data is that it is common for young adults to emphasize both economic and non-economic benefits to the living arrangement. Generally, living at home is viewed as a positive "family-oriented" lifestyle choice. For example, many young adults emphasize the importance of the companionship and emotional support that they receive from their families. Many also perceive living at home as an adaptive response to current economic realities (e.g., educational inflation, low wages, high costs of living). Thus, living in the parental home provides young adults with a means to ease the transition to adulthood. It maximizes their social and economic well-being, given that they are typically unmarried, still attending school, looking for work, or while employed but trying to save money.

Some examples of their verbatim responses include: "It's easy to save money, it's rent free, there are home-cooked meals, and I have company at home. Also, buying a house is very expensive" (30 year-old Chinese female, employed); "What I like is the financial help, convenience. They have everything such as a T.V., computer and food. We can have a family relationship too" (23 year-old Chinese female, looking for work); "My folks help me out financially. I can do as I please. There are no restrictions. I get along with my folks" (25 year-old SE female, student); "I get emotional and financial support. There is harmony in the family. I get to see my brother and my pet" (20 year-old British female, employed); "It gives me a chance to get back on my feet after getting into a lot of debt" (29 year old British male, employed); "I don't have a full-time job. My daughter has a roof over her head and I have the love of my family" (29 year-old British male, employed).

Many respondents also articulate mutual advantages and the pooling of economic and social resources, particularly when young adults identify with traditional ethnic backgrounds. Examples of these verbatim responses include: "I like the emotional and financial support I receive. It goes both ways" (31 year-old Indo male, employed) and "It is better to spend time with your parents. We can save a lot of money living together" (29 year-old Indo male, looking for work).

Moreover, it is important to note that many advantages accrued by living at home relate to mothers providing large amounts of domestic help to their children. For example, young adults

commonly talked about the benefits of "mom's home cooked meals," and many reported that they enjoyed "having laundry and the housework done by mom." Sons appear to be significantly more likely to report that they received domestic services than daughters. Daughters on the other hand, generally face greater expectations to contribute to domestic chores and are less reliant on their mothers for these services. This is particularly evident in more traditional families, or families from cultural backgrounds in which a strong gendered division of labour is more normative and gender roles are more rigidly defined.

Table 3 (see Appendix) shows a cross-tabulation of living arrangement by ethnic group. Consistent with national trends in coresidence, home staying or delayed home leaving is more common among young adults from traditional ethnic backgrounds. Young adults who identify with Chinese, Indo or Southern-European cultural backgrounds are more likely than those who identify with British backgrounds to be home stayers (41.6%, 36%, and 36%, respectively). British young adults are the least likely to be living at home and are more likely to be home leavers (61.9%) compared to the other groups. However, they are also more likely to have "boomeranged" home than the other groups (23.5%, compared to 17.3% Chinese, 8.7% Indo and 15.8% Southern European), although future research is required to more fully understand cultural differences in the propensity to return.

We also investigated diversity in pathways out of the parental home, based on the assumption that ethnic groups may have their own unique social timetables, or socially expected reasons for leaving home. The main reason for the (first) home leaving by ethnic group is displayed in Table 4. One striking trend is that British and Southern European young adults are the most likely to state that they left home in order to seek "independence"(34.3%, and 34.9%, respectively) than the Chinese and Indo young adults (9.3% and 6.4%, respectively). Another dramatic finding is the tendency for Indo young adults to leave home to marry/cohabit. In fact, 70.1% of Indo home leavers report that they left home at the time of marriage, compared to only 13.5% of British young adults. It should also be noted that almost half of these young adults told the interviewers that their marriages involved some type of arrangement by their families. Finally, home

leaving for school-related reasons is the most common for Chinese young adults (53.7%), and leaving due to conflict at home is more commonly cited among British (8.9%) and Southern European young adults (7.9%), and is rare among Chinese (1.5%) and Indo (1.3%) young people.

Overall, these data demonstrate the importance of considering both economic and non-economic factors in understanding contemporary patterns of intergenerational coresidence. Moreover, there appears to be considerable diversity in social and economic resources that influence the desirability and benefits of coresidence, as well as in the pathways out of (and back into) the parental home. While it is recognized that youth transitions are affected by societal-level socio-demographic change (e.g., later ages of marriage) and broad macro-economic conditions (e.g., need for post-secondary education, employment opportunities), life course events are heterogeneous and socially structured at the family and individual level.

Economic situations or circumstances can make coresidence an attractive life style choice, and in particular, can "trigger" a return to the parental home. However, coresidence is also shaped by social and ethnocultural factors. This is consistent with previous research showing that social capital and ethnocultural membership influences the likelihood of children living at home (Boyd 1998; Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1999; Mitchell 1994; Mitchell, Wister and Gee 2000). In this study, supportive family relations are found to be critical to the formation of intergenerational households. Young adults identifying with Asian backgrounds (Indo or Chinese) also tend to remain at home longer than the British or Southern-European groups. Additionally, they are less likely to leave home to seek "independence" than British or Southern-European young adults. Indo young adults tend to leave home predominantly to marry, while Chinese young adults tend to depart for school-related reasons. These transitional routes have different levels of permanency and therefore may also affect the propensity for subsequent returning home.

Interestingly, although British young adults leave the parental home at the earliest ages, they are also more likely to have "boomeranged" home than the other groups. However, given the cross-sectional

nature of these data, a more sensitive approach to the timing of the event is required to more carefully examine patterns in home returning. Recent American research, for example, finds no differences in home returning by cultural origin once a number of factors are carefully controlled, such as religiosity (Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1999).

A principal theme connecting the findings in this study is that young people have differential needs, norms and preferences underlying decisions about when to stay or when to go, and furthermore, when and if they return home. These include changing employment and educational opportunities, family formation patterns, cultural factors and relationships with their parents. Consequently, some parents experience young adult's prolonged home staying and/or a "refilled nest," and this can have profound implications for parental roles and responsibilities during midlife.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MIDLIFE PARENTS, GENDER ROLES AND UNPAID DOMESTIC LABOUR

It is understood that socio-demographic and economic change, as well as reduction and restructuring of government programs, shift the burden of informal care onto families. This creates greater reliance on parental households until later ages. Parental roles and responsibilities have become transformed and more unpredictable due to social change (Buck and Scott 1993). In fact, almost a decade ago, Ambert (1994) encouraged us to begin to discard outdated notions of parenthood and to recast this construct, including its rights and duties. This is important, she argued, given social and economic change and because of the strong likelihood that parents will continue to be held accountable for their children's survival, socialization, and well-being.

This research reveals that extended family responsibilities are particularly salient for certain segments of the population since not all parents face the additional challenges related to the continued household dependence of adult children. This prolonged dependence on parental households is an especially important issue for women, given that they tend to perform more day-to-day domestic labour than men, such as cleaning, meal preparation and laundry (Jackson 1996; Luxton 1990; Luxton

and Reiter 1997; Marshall 1994). It should be noted, however, that domestic work generally becomes less intensive as children mature.

Furthermore, previous research documents considerable reciprocity in exchanges of instrumental and emotional support during midlife coresidence (Mitchell 1998 & 2001), although mothers continue to do the bulk of domestic chores when young adults live at home (Veevers and Mitchell 1998). It is also noteworthy that many mothers report that they thoroughly enjoy providing care to their coresident children (as long as it is not permanent), as well as their daily companionship and friendship (Mitchell 1998 & 2000). In this sense, social capital can benefit family members, regardless of the fact that bi-directional flows of instrumental assistance are not equal.

On another level, this continued reliance on mothers for domestic services can create even more challenges for middle-aged "sandwich generation" women as they attempt to balance family and work roles. For example, women are more likely than men to also provide care for aging relatives (Keating et al. 1999). They are also more prone to modify their paid labour force patterns to accommodate family caregiving, and tend to do so at middle stages of their life cycle. In short, the way in which parenthood and domestic work is balanced differentially between women and men can reproduce gender inequities (Fox 2001). This can have economic ramifications for women in their later life, since they are less likely to accumulate pension benefits or savings as a result of paid labour force participation.

Moreover, a drastic reduction in many social and health-related community services and programs may produce additional stress and burden for mothers who are trying to provide assistance to those who have financial, physical or health problems. For example, recent cut-backs to social and mental health services in Alberta, Ontario and British Columbia means that there will be fewer supports for parents trying to deal with a child's problem such as substance abuse, disability or mental illness. These trends lend further support to the contention that women in families have become the new "unpaid social workers" as the welfare state continues to retrench. It also illustrates how women "pick up as individuals the bits and pieces not covered by the paid labour market, as women

always have in families" (McDaniel 1996, 210). Indeed, families, and in particular, mothers, continue to be treated as a social safety net in the form of "free" unpaid work. Therefore, while prolonged coresidence or a return to the parental home can carry with it many satisfying elements, we should not overlook the potential for a deepening of gender inequality in societies.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This exploratory research identifies many areas worthy of future attention. In particular, more research is needed that disentangles socio-cultural and economic factors in the propensity of young adults to share parental households. Interactions between cultural and family relationship factors also necessitate further consideration. The present analyses also do not fully explore diversity within cultural groups and does not consider additional cultural measures such as immigration history and participation in ethnocultural social networks.

Additional research is needed to provide more in-depth analyses of how parents and children negotiate living arrangement decisions and the division of domestic labour when young adults live at home. Ethnic and gender variations also warrant further consideration. For example, preliminary findings of this study suggest that traditional "ethnic" parents have different expectations of daughters than sons with regard to the "proper" timing of home leaving, as well as their expected contributions to the family and household unpaid work when they remain at home. It may also be important to conceptualize home leaving processes as multidimensional; comprised of various degrees of independence. For example, young people can physically leave home but continue to rely upon parental household resources and their mothers' domestic services.

More study is also needed that carefully examines several social policy issues. Economic policies in the areas of education, labour, and housing require re-evaluation given the apparent delaying of home leaving. It is also important to recognize that some young adults do not have the option of remaining in, or returning home to a supportive family environment, which places them at a distinct disadvantage. With regard to policies related to caregiving, a good starting point is the

collection of comprehensive national data on unpaid domestic work patterns at all stages of the life cycle. Although the 1996 Census made an important first step by including questions on unpaid work, more complete information of this "shadow economy" is needed to reveal its social and economic relevance for households including Canadian young adults (The Economic Justice Report 1997). Census data, for example, can offer unique information and opportunities "for feminist and labour activists to develop progressive 'family politics' that could fortify their existing programs and undermine current conservative directions in social and economic policy" (Luxton and Vosko1998, 74).

Finally, we also need to directly assess both the short- and long-term outcomes of intergenerational coresidence. This would help us to address a number of research questions. For instance, does extended coresidence strengthen families by enhancing intergenerational solidarity and well-being? Or, does it create more strain, particularly for families with limited economic resources and for mothers with multiple roles? And, how will changing trends in coresidence influence the reproduction of gender inequalities and women's status in the long run? These questions are particularly relevant in the face of economic restructuring and globalization, high levels of immigration, and shifting family demographics. Clearly, we require a fuller comprehension of how the life courses of Canadian young adults and their families are integrally linked to contemporary socio-cultural, economic and political contexts.
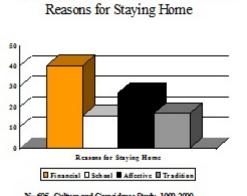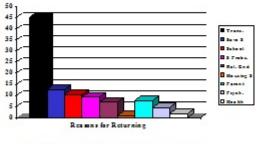
APPENDIX
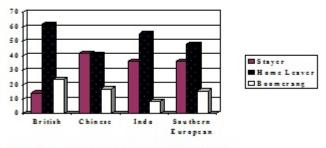
Table 1: Economic and Non-Economic
Reasons for Staying Home

N= 605, Culture and Coresidence Study, 1999-2000
Missing = 23

Table 2: Economic and Non-Economic
Reasons for Home Returning

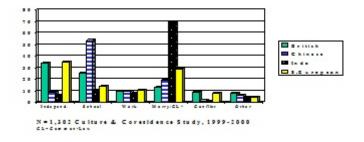N=308, Culture and Coresidence Study, 1999-2000

Table 3: Living Arrangement
by Ethnic Group

N=1,907 Culture & Coresidence Study, 1999-2000

Table 4: Reason for (First) Home Leaving
by Ethnic Group

N=1,502 Culture & Coresidence Study, 1999-2000
CL=Common-Law

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

REFERENCES

Ambert, A.M. "An International Perspective on Parenting: Social Change and Social Constructs," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 56.3 (1994): 529-43.

Aquilino, W.S. "The Returning Adult Child and Parental Experiences in Midlife," *The Parental Experience in Midlife*, C.D. Ryff and M.M. Seltzer, eds. Chicago, Ill: U. of Chicago Press, 1996, pp. 999-1010.

Bourdieu, P. "The Forms of Capital," *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, J.G. Richardson, ed.. New York: Greenwood Press, 1986, pp. 241-58.

Boyd, M. "Birds of a Feather: Ethnic Variations in Young Adults Living at Home," Paper presented at the Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Chicago, Ill., April, 1998.

_____ and D. Norris. "Changes in the Nest: Young Canadian Adults Living with Parents, 1981-1996." Paper presented at the Canadian Population Society Annual Meeting. Ottawa, Ontario, June, 1998.

Boyd, M. and E.T. Pryor."The Cluttered Nest: The Living Arrangements of Young Canadian Adults," *The Canadian Journal of Sociology* 14 (1989): 461-77.

Buck, N. and J. Scott. "She's Leaving Home But Why? An Analysis of Young People Leaving the Parental Home," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 55. 4 (1993): 863-74.

Coleman, J.S. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, (Suppl., 1988): S95-S120.

_____. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1990.

Economic Justice Report. "Out of the Shadows: Policy Principles to Recognize Women's Unpaid Work," *Canadian Business and Current Affairs* Vol. 8. 3 (1997): 1-12.

Elder, G.H., Jr. "Approaches to Social Change and the Family," *American Journal of Sociology*, 84 (Suppl., 1978): S1-S38.

_____. *Life Course Dynamics, Trajectories and Transitions, 1968-1980.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell UP, 1985.

_____. "Life Course," *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, Vol. 3, E.F. Borgatta and M.L. Borgatta, eds. Toronto: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992, pp. 1120-30.

Fox, B. "Reproducing Difference: Changes in the Lives of Partners Becoming Parents," *Family Patterns, Gender Relations*. Don Mills, Ont.: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 287-302.

Gee, E.M., B.A. Mitchell and A.V. Wister. "Returning to the Parental 'Nest:' Exploring a Changing Canadian Life Course," *Canadian Studies in Population*, 22.2 (1995): 121-44.

George, L.K. "Sociological Perspectives on Life Transitions," *Annual Review of Sociology* 19, (1993): 353-73.

Giele, J.Z. and G.H. Elder, Jr. *Methods of Life Course Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1998.

Goldscheider, F.K. and C. Goldscheider. *The Changing Transition to Adulthood: Leaving and Returning Home*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1999.

Hagestad, G.O. "Social Perspectives on the Life Course," *Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences*, R. Binstock and L. George, eds. New York: Academic, 1990, pp. 151-68.

_____ and B.L. Neugarten. "Age and the Life Course," *Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences*, R.H. Binstock and E. Shanas, eds. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1985, pp. 35-61.

Hareven, T., ed. *Aging and Generational Relations: Life-course and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1996.

Jackson, C. "Measuring and Valuing Households' Unpaid Work," *Canadian Social Trends*, Catalogue 11-008-XPE, 25-30, 1996.

Keating, N., J. Fast, M. Fredrick, K. Cranswick, & C. Perrier. *Eldercare in Canada: Context, Content and Consequences*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division, 1999.

Lin, N. *Social Capital: A Theory of Social Structure and Action*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Luxton, M. "Two Hands for the Clock," *Through the Kitchen Window: The Politics of Home and Family*, M. Luxton, H. Rosenberg, and S. Arat Koc, eds. Toronto: Garamond Press, 1990, pp. 39-55.

_____and E. Reiter. "Double, Double, Toil and Trouble: Women's Experience of Work and Family in Canada, 1980-1995," *Women and the Canadian Welfare State*, P.M. Evans and G.R. Wekerle, eds. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997, pp.197-221.

Luxton, M., and L.F. Vosko. "Where Women's Efforts Count: The 1996 Census Campaign and 'Family Politics in Canada,'" *Studies in Political Economy*, 56 (1998):49-81.

Marshall, K. "Balancing Work and Family Responsibilities," *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Minister of Industry, 1994, pp. 26-30.

McDaniel, S. "The Family Lives of the Middle-Aged and Elderly in Canada," *Families: Changing Trends in Canada*, M. Baker ed. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1996, pp. 195-211.

_____. "Women's Changing Relations to the State and Citizenship: Caring and Intergenerational Relations in Globalizing Western Democracies," *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 39.2 (2002): 125-50.

Meyer, J.W. "The Self and the Life Course: Institutionalization and Its Effects," *Human Development and the Life Course: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, B. Sorenson, F.E. Weinert and L.R. Sherrod, eds. Hillsdale, NJ:Lawrence Erlbaum, 1986, pp. 199-206.

Mitchell, B.A. "Family Structure and Leaving Home: A Social Resource Perspective," *Sociological Perspectives,* 37. 4 (1994): 651-71.

_____. "Too Close for Comfort? Parental Assessments of 'Boomerang Kid' Living Arrangements," *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 23 (1998): 21-46.

_____. "The Refilled Nest: Debunking the Myth of Families-in-Crisis," *The Overselling of Population Aging: Apocalyptic Demography, Intergenerational Challenges, and Social Policy*, E.M. Gee and G. Gutman, eds. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 80-99.

_____ and E.M. Gee. "Young Adults Returning Home: Implications for Social Policy," *Youth in Transition: Perspectives on Research and Practice*, J. Hudson and B. Galaway, eds. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing Inc., 1996, pp. 61-71.

Mitchell, B.A., A.V. Wister and T.K. Burch. "The Family Environment and Leaving the Parental Home," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 51 (1989): 605-713.

Mitchell, B.A., A.V. Wister and E.M. Gee. "Culture and Coresidence: An Exploration of Variation in Home-Returning among Canadian Young Adults," *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 37.2 (2000): 197-222.

Portes, A. "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 1-24.

Statistics Canada. *2001 Census Analysis Series - Profile of Canadian Families and Households: Diversification Continues*. Catalogue 96F0030XIE20011003. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2003.

Teachman, J.D., K. Paasch, and K. Carver. "Social Capital and the Generation of Human Capital," *Social Forces* 75.4 (1997): 1343-59.

Veevers, J. E. and B.A. Mitchell. "Intergenerational Exchanges and Perceptions of Support within 'Boomerang Kid' Living Arrangements," *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 46.2 (1998): 91-108.

Whittington, L.A. and H.E. Peters. "Economic Incentives and Financial and Residential Independence," *Demography* 33.1 (1996): 82-97.