

DEPENDENCY WORK, COMPENSATION AND GENDER EQUITY

DEPENDENCY WORK, COMPENSATION
AND GENDER EQUITY

By

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ABSTRACT

Eva Feder Kittay's work *Love's Labor* demonstrates how John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* makes certain assumptions about the citizen who is included in the fair terms of agreement necessary for social cooperation. As a result, Rawls' theory excludes dependency concerns altogether. Kittay amends Rawl's theory to argue for providing compensation for dependency work. Though Kittay's proposal is intended to degender and redistribute the work, because she does not include a standard of gender equity, her compensation system risks reinforcing the sexual division of labor. By introducing Nancy Fraser's complex conception of gender equity into the analysis of any compensation system, it is possible to illustrate that what is needed to achieve more equitable circumstances is to increase men's participation rates as providers of care. In order to gain men's participation, theorists often look to the Nordic countries as their combination of social policies assumes that citizens have responsibilities as both workers and as caregivers, thus their policies facilitate the participation of all members of society in both the public and private realms. Though the structure of policies in the Nordic countries are more progressive, there is still a gendered gap in earnings, more women remain in part-time employment and women still take the majority of the parental leave. While Nordic countries have made gains towards gender equity, social policies can make social institutions more equitable but this is only a partial solution. I argue that in addition to social policies, we also need to change the ways in which gender is recognized and how gendered recognition norms can be highly influential enabling individuals to enter into and occupy particular roles more easily than others. When certain roles are easier for individuals to occupy it raises questions about how unconstrained the choice to enter into dependency work is.

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INTRODUCTION

Interest in issues of dependency, dependency work and dependency workers has been increasing, which can be seen reflected in the literature on this subject. Interest in dependency work is important because the work is necessary labor. Every individual begins life in state of dependency and remains dependent for a number of years. Some individuals will remain dependent throughout their lives as in the case of extreme dependency. As adults, dependency needs can arise through illness or injury and periods of dependency may be brief or prolonged. As we mature, through illness and/or through the natural process of degeneration we again become dependent on others during these times that we are unable to care for ourselves. Thus, dependency is both inevitable and inescapable. Because dependency is certain, the needs of dependents must be met. Those who fulfill the needs of others are dependency workers.

Unfortunately, despite the fact that every individual will require care, most political theorists have excluded dependency workers from their discussions. To address the problems that arise within dependency work and the disadvantages that develop from it, various solutions have been presented which intend to provide resources that support dependency relationships in ways that enable the dependency worker to care well for both the dependent(s) and herself.¹ In this thesis I will examine why the problems that arise from dependency work cannot be solved through compensation alone because compensation cannot enable us to reach a state of gender equity.

¹I use feminine pronouns when discussing dependency workers because this work has been and continues to be disproportionately performed by women.

The exclusion of dependency workers from most political theory, making them invisible in the social/political sphere, is not the only problem that arises from dependency work. The reason that compensation seems like the solution to the problem of dependency work is because it involves an introduction and reallocation of resources. However, it is difficult to isolate a single cause of the problem of dependency work thus the problem cannot be addressed by introducing a single solution.

In order to have a clearer understanding of the problems of dependency work, it is useful to briefly examine the idea of nested dependencies. For example, in the case of a newborn, his/her dependency needs require a dependency worker. In meeting the needs of the newborn, the dependency worker uses her available resources, reallocating them to the dependent. When the dependency worker allocates most, or all, of her resources to the dependent, she then has limited resources to meet her own needs. In some cases, if the dependency worker has a partner, her partner can contribute resources to the dependency worker. The partner, in turn, is dependent on her employer for resources and so forth. Unfortunately though, for many dependency workers, when they invest most of their resources into meeting their dependent's needs, they often do not have enough resources to meet their own needs. Moreover, these particular dependency workers often have nowhere to turn to supplement their loss of resources. The idea of nested dependencies helps to demonstrate the interdependent nature of dependency relationships as well as how meeting the needs of a dependent can place the dependency worker in a situation where she lacks the ability to sustain herself, her dependent and the dependency relationship simultaneously. Committing resources to dependents increases one's own

dependency likelihood. However, society does not accommodate the dependency likelihood.

If the needs of dependents fail to be met, society will not survive. Although dependency work is necessary labor, the work of dependency is distinct from other kinds of work because it requires a greater commitment than any other work. Unlike other kinds of work that may be perceived as being demanding, the needs of dependents may arise at any given time. For dependency workers, this can require their presence and call for their ability to be prepared to fulfill the needs of dependents at any time of day or night. Moreover, dependency work itself is physically and emotionally demanding.

It is not simply that dependency work can be significantly more demanding than other kinds of work; but it is also work that is disproportionately performed by women, often without compensation. The relationship between women and care is circular. Historically, care has been an activity that occurs primarily in the private realm of the family. Women have historically been associated with the private sphere of the home. Thus, as Jennifer A. Parks notes, "... the task of caring 'naturally' devolves upon them [women]".²

Because care has historically been provided both unpaid and in the home, it has been framed as a "labor of love". When provided in the private realm within the family, care is thought to be given altruistically. Framing care as an activity motivated by altruism indicates a connection between care and unpaid work. It is often believed that the act of giving care should not find motivation in financial reward. When dependency

² Jennifer A. Parks, *No Place Like Home?* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 57.

work is paid, dependency workers receive low wages, which increases their risk of exploitation.

Since dependency work is often unpaid yet dependency needs must be met, this situates the dependency worker in a nested dependency. When the dependency worker can have her needs met through receiving resources from her partner, she has few reasons to find those resources elsewhere. Furthermore, as noted the dependency that the dependency worker has on her partner is not always a favorable one, as the relationship may be abusive, or their joint resources may be insufficient.

Dependency work can be additionally problematic when a lack of resources prevents dependency workers from pursuing their life projects and goals. Dependents often require constant care and compensation is often uncertain. If the dependency worker cannot afford to employ another and does not have access to alternate care providers, she may rarely get relief from the work. She may be unable to actively pursue a variety of activities throughout her life that are additionally meaningful and purposeful for herself.

Dependency work is typically women's work. The dependency worker incurs a large number of disadvantages without cause. Women, then, disproportionately incur a number of disadvantages without cause. Therefore, the problem of dependency work is an issue of gender equity.³

³ Canadian statistics demonstrate both a wage disparity and a notable difference in the amount of time spent on unpaid labor. Even when women are employed in full time, year round employment their average yearly earnings are \$36,500, 71% of what men employed both full time and year round earn (Statistics Canada. *Women in Canada A Gender-based Statistical Report Fifth Edition*. Catalogue no. 89-503-XPE in Statistics Canada [database online]. Ottawa, Ont., 2006. [accessed May 1st, 2010]. Available from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/89-503-x2005001-eng.pdf>

Chapter 1 begins by exploring Eva Feder Kittay's critique of John Rawls' theory of justice specifically because it fails to address the inevitability of human dependency, thus it also neglects a commitment to care. This chapter explains how dependency workers are excluded from the fair terms of agreement necessary for social cooperation. Moreover, the failure of political theory to include dependency workers in their theories has positioned dependency workers as socially and politically invisible. Kittay suggests that if dependency concerns were included in Rawls' theory it would be possible to make the case for providing dependency workers with compensation. Despite the benefits of Kittay's proposed compensation scheme, because it does not challenge who is responsible for providing care it risks reinforcing the sexual division of labor.

Chapter 2 uses Nancy Fraser's complex conception of gender equity to explore the two common compensation schemes that are often presented as viable options for addressing the problem of dependency work. The application of gender equity to The Universal Breadwinner Model and The Caregiver Parity Model will further demonstrate why a single solution cannot solve a multifaceted problem. The introduction of a complex conception of gender equity draws attention to the areas of dependency work where compensation is ineffective and therefore only provides a partial solution.

Chapter 3 builds upon a number of theorists' contention that achieving a standard of gender equity will remain increasingly challenging without gaining men's fuller

(May 1st, 2010): In Canada, 6 in 10 hours of informal care work is performed by women. Canadian women are more likely to take on unpaid work than men and spend more time on unpaid caregiving activities. 4 in 10 women between the ages of 25 to 44 are doing informal caregiving: meaning that care responsibilities are taken on during the time frame in one's life that would likely be their most active time in the labor force; Nancy Zukewich, "Unpaid Informal Caregiving" *Canadian Social Trends* (Autumn 2003) Catalogue No. 11-008. Available from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2003002/article/6622-eng.pdf>.

participation in dependency work. In order to increase men's participation, it is suggested that adopting existing social policies from countries that prioritize the individual citizen's responsibility as both a worker and carer will help fulfill the requirements of gender equity, thus creating a more gender equitable society. While increasing men's participation in dependency work is critical for achieving gender equity, it is not clear that this is going to make dependency work accessible and acceptable for all individuals.

The final chapter examines how implementing social policies is only a partial solution to the problem of dependency work. Taking on the role of dependency worker contains certain gendered assumptions and individuals who occupy this role also assume the burdens and disadvantages associated with it. Recognition from others is critical for an individual's self-understanding. Our self-understanding occurs interdependently through our interactions with others. When recognition norms reinforce gendered assumptions about dependency work, it raises questions about the choices that individuals have to enter into the role of 'dependency worker'.

Dependency workers have been excluded from political theories making them invisible in the social and political spheres. It is suggested that the burdens and disadvantages that arise from dependency work can be addressed through providing an adequate compensation system that protects dependency workers from a number of inequalities that arise from the work. In what follows, I will explain how attempts to provide dependency workers with compensation alone cannot address the problems of

dependency since they fail to realize that the problems are those of gender equity and recognition.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*

In *A Theory of Justice*⁴ John Rawls' project is to present a conception of “justice as fairness” through a reconciliation of equality and liberty. The starting point of his concept of justice as fairness begins by determining what principles free and rational people would agree to if they were able to choose such principles within a conceptual space not influenced by knowledge of their social circumstances, both the advantages and disadvantages, that may befall them once they step outside of this conceptual space.

This theoretical space in which members of society are to decide the principles of justice Rawls terms the *Original Position (OP)*. As Rawls writes, “...the original position of equality corresponds to the state of nature in the traditional theory of the social contract”.⁵ This is a hypothetical situation where the individuals within the *OP* are unaware of their place within society, their class, social status or income, their abilities, their intelligence and other similar traits/characteristics.⁶ Within the *OP*, the principles of justice are determined behind what Rawls calls the *veil of ignorance*. He introduces the *veil of ignorance* as a kind of protective feature of the *OP*. The veil is a measure ensuring that regardless of where one ends up in society after the principles of justice have been agreed upon, no individuals will experience particular advantages or disadvantages once the principles have been established.⁷ The *OP* behind the *veil of ignorance* ensures that, as Rawls writes, “Since all are similarly situated and no one is able to design principles to

⁴ John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971).

⁵ Ibid, 12.

⁶ Ibid, 12.

⁷ Ibid, 12.

favor his particular conditions, the principles of justice are the result of a fair agreement or bargain”.⁸ The veil of ignorance essentially eliminates any biases that individuals may have towards manipulating principles of justice to work in their favor.

Within the *OP*, Rawls claims there are two principles of justice that would be agreed upon by individuals.⁹ As Rawls writes, “First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. Second: social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone’s advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all”.¹⁰ Rawls believes that individuals will choose these principles because regardless of where they end up in society once they emerge from behind the veil of ignorance, they will be assured that even if they end up as one of the least advantaged, they will still experience some benefit.¹¹

Within Rawls’ project he assumes a particular state of affairs in order to develop his theory. The circumstances of justice, according to Rawls, determine the preconditions for justice within society. He describes the circumstances of justice as “...the normal conditions under which human cooperation is both possible and necessary”.¹² They establish the parameters within which those characterized as free and equal persons are able to both establish and agree to the rules and principles for a just society. When Rawls

⁸ Ibid, 12.

⁹ Ibid, 60.

¹⁰ Ibid, 60.

¹¹ Rawls has been criticized by both feminists and non-feminists for the assumptions that he makes about the individuals behind the veil of ignorance. For example, Rawls assumed that individuals would be risk averse rather than taking the chance that they would end in the most well-off group. However, if individuals were risk takers, Rawls would not be able to get the difference principle.

¹² Ibid, 126.

speaks of the circumstances of justice he focuses on the objective circumstances as being those of moderate scarcity where there is neither an overabundance of resources nor too few resources so that “cooperative arrangements”¹³ are not possible. In terms of the subjective element, Rawls acknowledges that individuals will be roughly similar in their physical and mental abilities in so far as no single individual has the capacity to dominate the rest.¹⁴ When Rawls approaches the idea of equal vulnerability he is specifically making reference to the vulnerability of attack: as he explains, “all [members of the *OP*] are subject to having their plans blocked by the united force of others”.¹⁵

In addition to the assumptions made with regard to the circumstances of justice, Rawls makes certain clarifications about the contractors within the *OP*. He explains that because individuals are pursuing their “own conception of the good ... they are not bound by prior moral ties to each other”.¹⁶ But Rawls admits the problem that arises from assuming there are no prior moral ties is, “... whether the persons in the original position have obligations and duties to third parties, for example, to their immediate descendants”.¹⁷ His response is that he is going to assume that the individuals within the *OP* are representing the overlapping interests, the “continuing lines of claims”¹⁸ over the past two generations.

¹³ Kittay, 84.

¹⁴ Rawls, 127.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 128.

Rawls goes further to say that it is useful to think of the parties in the *OP* as “heads of families”¹⁹ who have an overall interest in the “the welfare of their nearest descendants”.²⁰ Rawls does make it clear that we do not have to think of the individuals in the *OP* as heads of families; however he does indicate that generally he is going to do so. What seems to be more important for Rawls is, as he states, “each person in the original position should care about the well-being of some of those in the next generation”.²¹

Rawls has been heavily criticized for assuming that representatives in the *OP* were also heads of families. The main criticism, for a number of feminists, was that Rawls assumed the family is already a just institution. As Susan Moller Okin argued in *Gender, Justice and the Family*, in Rawls’ theory “...the parties formulating just institutions are (male) heads of (fairly traditional) families, and therefore not concerned with issues of just distribution within the family or between the sexes”.²²

Okin points out Rawls’ use of “supposedly generic male terms of reference”.²³ Rawls speaks of the *individual* and the *moral person* and uses these terms interchangeably with *men, mankind, he* and *his*.²⁴ While in the *OP*, as noted above, there will be particular elements that will remain unknown to representatives e.g. class, social position, natural abilities and so forth. Yet, among the all the elements that are unknown,

¹⁹ Ibid, 128.

²⁰ Ibid, 128.

²¹ Ibid, 126.

²² Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender and the Family* (New York: Basic Books, Inc.). 95.

²³ Ibid, 90.

²⁴ Ibid, 90.

as Okin writes, "...'his' sex is not mentioned"²⁵; it is not clear if representatives will be aware of their sex.

In explaining the *OP*, Rawls makes it clear that even though representatives do not know particular elements of their status in society and their individual assets, representatives will "...know the general facts about human society".²⁶ Okin takes issue with this point because if the representatives are aware of the gendered structure of society yet it is not clear whether they will be aware of their gender, this could have an influence on the fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of society.²⁷ Okin's concern here is that when we speak of "female headed households" we often use this phrase to indicate the absence of a male figure.²⁸ Speaking more generally of "heads of families" is, to a certain degree, implying heads of families will be men. The assumption that heads of households are men, that members of households share interests, and that burdens are equally distributed across genders exposes Rawls to a critique from the perspective of care provision, as we will see.

1.2 Rawls and Dependency

In *Love's Labor*²⁹ Eva Feder Kittay critiques Rawls' theory of justice specifically because it fails to address the inevitability of human dependency, thus neglecting a "commitment to care".³⁰ This lack of a commitment to care has serious consequences for

²⁵ Ibid, 91.

²⁶ Ibid, 91.

²⁷ Okin, 91.

²⁸ Ibid, 92.

²⁹ Eva Feder Kittay, *Love's Labor* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

³⁰ Ibid, 102.

both dependency workers and those they care for by excluding them from engaging as free and equal citizens within society.

There are five points within Rawls' theory which Kittay explores: the circumstances of justice, the concept of the ideal citizen as fully cooperating throughout a complete life, the free person as a self authenticator of valid claims,³¹ the moral powers of a person, and social goods and social cooperation.

1.3 Circumstances of Justice

In general, Kittay is in agreement with Rawls' conception of the circumstances of justice. However, she maintains that Rawls' treatment of the subjective and objective elements of the circumstances of justice is too simplistic and too vague.³²

According to Kittay, the objective circumstances arise from our dependency as infants for a significant portion of our lives and again in maturity as our dependency needs resurface. Additionally, for those who are temporarily or permanently disabled, dependency may be prolonged and in some cases inescapable. The subjective element of dependency relates to the fact that individuals want and need to be cared for and we want those who are important to us to also be adequately cared for.³³ Despite the familiarity of both the objective and subjective elements of dependency as conceived by Kittay, these concerns are not directly addressed in Rawls' treatment of the circumstances of justice.³⁴

³¹ I have chosen to exclude the explanation and exploration of this point from my overall discussion because the remaining four points of Kittay's critique are more significant to my overall discussion in this chapter.

³² Kittay, 84.

³³ Ibid, 83.

³⁴ Ibid, 84.

In describing the circumstances of justice, Kittay explains that Rawls does not specifically address the inevitability of human dependency.³⁵ While he does acknowledge forms of vulnerability, he assumes that the individuals within the circumstances of justice are “*equally* vulnerable”.³⁶ Because Rawls’ notion is of equal vulnerability, it is not the same kind of vulnerability that arises from dependency. As Kittay states, “Vulnerability originating in dependency is not a condition in which all are *equally* vulnerable, but one in which some are *especially* vulnerable”.³⁷

Though Rawls does not specifically speak of dependency he does indicate the importance of intergenerational justice where, as noted, individuals in the *OP* are genuinely concerned about the well-being of future generations.³⁸ Accordingly, Rawls introduces the “just savings principle”, which maintains that the heads of household will be motivated, in theory, to protect along intergenerational lines for the future benefit of others.³⁹ This principle, however, is directed towards protecting against the depletion of resources for future generations. While Rawls notes that there may be concern for the well-being of future generations, this concern is manifested as the need to protect resources, not specifically to care for others.⁴⁰ As Kittay states, “Even as he [Rawls] talks about a member of each generation ‘caring about’ one in the next, he urges us not to presuppose extensive ties of natural sentiment”.⁴¹ Furthermore, it remains problematic to position heads of families as the representatives of particular groups, as even though they

³⁵ Ibid, 84.

³⁶ Ibid, 84, (emphasis in original).

³⁷ Ibid, 84, (emphasis in original).

³⁸ Ibid, 84.

³⁹ Ibid, 85.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 85.

⁴¹ Ibid, 85.

may be dependency workers themselves, there is no guarantee that they will take the interests of dependency workers as a group into account. Thus there is no assurance that the needs and interests of dependency workers will be well represented.⁴²

1.4 Fully Cooperating Members Over a Complete Life

The second criticism Kittay presents is directed towards the idea that the representatives of citizens in the well-ordered society will be capable of respecting the principles of justice and will also be fully cooperating citizens “throughout their lives”.⁴³ The idea of fully cooperating throughout one’s life can be interpreted in both a strong and a weak sense, and even the weaker interpretation Kittay contends is incomplete.

The strong interpretation of fully cooperating throughout one’s life assumes that an individual will be capable of cooperating at every point in his/her life. Kittay maintains that this assumption excludes the difficult cases such as special needs and disabilities that may prevent one from fully cooperating. Because there is no individual who is fully capable of cooperating at every point throughout his/her life, this is an unreasonable idealization. It is unrealistic, then, to place fully cooperating throughout one’s life as a requirement for being able to participate in justice as fairness (or as she says, equal citizenship).⁴⁴ The weak interpretation of fully cooperating throughout one’s life assumes the individuals make decisions in the *OP* fully aware that they may be or become dependent and/or that they may become responsible for the care of dependents.⁴⁵

⁴² Ibid. 85.

⁴³ Ibid. 88.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 89.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 89.

The weak interpretation appears more accommodating to dependency, since if dependency were included in the circumstances of justice, even when one is in a state of dependency s/he will still be considered an equal and functioning citizen.⁴⁶ This would provide some security for all citizens that in periods of dependency their needs and interests will be attended to. Though this weaker interpretation could allow for dependency, it would do little to address the needs and interests of the dependency worker.⁴⁷ While a representative at the bargaining table may have a similar conception of the good and/or may be similarly rationally self-interested, there is no guarantee that the representative will identify with the dependency worker.⁴⁸

Even if we assume that the representatives would identify with the dependency worker, additional problems arise.⁴⁹ In determining the principles of justice, each independent and full functioning person counts as one and assumes the responsibilities and burdens of one. But the dependency worker represents the needs and interests of more than one, thus also assumes the responsibilities and burdens of more than one.⁵⁰ If the dependency worker casts her vote and chooses principles in the interests of her dependent(s), though her vote counts as one, because she is representing the interests of more than one person she is placed in a position where she is required to prioritize one set of interests. If she places a higher value on the interests of her dependent(s), her own interests risk becoming un(der)represented.

Jane English echoes Okin's criticism about Rawls' particular assumptions about

⁴⁶ Ibid, 89.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 89.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 90.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 90.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 91.

the family. As English explains, “By making the parties in the original position heads of families rather than individuals, Rawls makes the family opaque to claims of justice”.⁵¹ This is a problem because, “... suppose that, due to efficiency, all families gain significantly if the natural child bearers are universally appointed as child rearers”.⁵² In such a scenario, if the family is considered a single entity, choosing principles of justice from the perspective of the head of the family may produce a good for the family as a whole, but result in unfair equality of opportunity, if being appointed as a child rearer interferes with personal, economic and political opportunities.

Not only is there concern about the assumptions being made about the institution of the family and its united interests, there is also a related concern about the assumptions being made about the ideal citizen. Citizens making decisions related to justice are assumed to be independent and fully functioning. Because of this assumption, those who are dependent and those who care for others often fall outside the boundaries of theories of justice. Moreover, those who are responsible for the care of others are limited by the extent to which they are able to take on the benefits and burdens of social cooperation.⁵³ As Kittay states, “If only those who are equals and free in the Rawlsian sense are eligible to participate in social cooperation, then dependency workers can not be included among the ‘free’ individuals who have an equal claim to the fruits of social cooperation”.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Jane English, “Justice Between Generations,” *Philosophical Studies* 31, no. 2 (1977): 95.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 94.

⁵³ Kittay, 90-91

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 99.

1.5 Moral Powers of the Person

The third point that Kittay raises against Rawls concerns the moral powers he attributes to the individual. Rawls claims that social cooperation is possible among persons who have certain moral capacities: a conception of the good and a sense of justice.⁵⁵ Along with these moral capacities, Rawls also generates his list of primary goods,

... things which it is supposed a rational man wants whatever else he wants. Regardless of what an individual's rational plans are in detail, it is assumed that there are various things which he would prefer more of rather than less. With more of these goods men can generally be assured of greater success in carrying out their intentions and in advancing their ends, whatever these ends may be⁵⁶

Rawls categorizes the primary goods into rights and liberties, opportunities and powers, income and wealth⁵⁷ and most important for him is the social basis of self-respect.⁵⁸

Samuel Freeman explains the primary goods as follows, "The primary goods are the all-purpose social means that are necessary to the exercise and development of the moral powers and to pursue a wide variety of conceptions of the good".⁵⁹

For Kittay, Rawls' index of primary goods combined with the presumption that citizens hold these two moral powers does not satisfactorily address the needs of dependents and those who care for them.⁶⁰ Because the conception of the good may differ for each individual, some may be concerned for dependents; that is, they may cultivate

⁵⁵ Ibid, 101.

⁵⁶ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 92.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 92.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 440.

⁵⁹ Samuel, Freeman, "Original Position", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2009 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2009/entries/original-position/>.

⁶⁰ Kittay, 101.

sentiment, a capacity to care for others.⁶¹ However, simply because it is possible that some individuals *may* cultivate this capacity, there is no guarantee that *any* of them will. The concern is that if individuals do not cultivate this capacity, the needs of dependents and dependency workers will remain exempt from the index of primary goods and outside of the moral powers of the individual. Secondly, a sense of justice is “...an other-directed moral power”.⁶² While the second moral power seems to entail reciprocity, it says very little about meeting the needs of others who are incapable of reciprocating.⁶³ As Kittay explains, “... the moral capacities for care are never invoked in the moral capacity of justice as construed in Rawlsian constructivism”.⁶⁴

Kittay contends that care needs to be included in the moral powers and on the index of primary goods. She maintains that “a capacity to respond to vulnerability with care”⁶⁵ needs to be added as a third moral power. We cannot have any theory of justice if the theory fails to recognize the need for care, and a social order that does not respond to the need for care is one that is unjust.

1.6 Social Goods

The final point that Kittay presents concerns Rawls’ concepts of social goods and social cooperation. Rawls’ list of primary goods ensures basic liberties of freedom of thought and liberty of conscience, the freedom of movement and free choice of occupation.⁶⁶ His list secures political and civil liberties but its neglect of dependency

⁶¹ Ibid, 101.

⁶² Ibid, 102.

⁶³ Ibid, 102.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 102.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 102.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 101.

needs, specifically the social good of being cared for and supported in the care of others, denies full social citizenship to dependency workers.

As Kittay explains, there are three goods missing from Rawls' list of primary goods, and these arise from the lack of a commitment to care. Kittay claims first that the goods in the list do not ensure "that we will be cared for if we become dependent".⁶⁷ Second, the list does not guarantee that we will be supported if we take on the role of providing care.⁶⁸ Finally, if we become dependent, those who depend on us are not assured adequate support and care.⁶⁹ The individual within Rawls' theory can have all the goods on the list without any guarantee that they will be cared for if they become dependent or that they will be supported when they become caregivers.⁷⁰ Securing these social goods of a commitment to care is essential to incorporating the needs and interests of all citizens.

Kittay argues that the needs of dependency ought to be reflected in the list of primary goods for two reasons. First, anyone, regardless of their conception of the good, would want to be assured that the needs of dependents and dependency workers are met. Second, if those who are most vulnerable to dependency and to becoming responsible for care of dependents are unable to secure the goods necessary to support the relationship, and this prohibits them from participating as equals within a well-ordered society, then the conditions of justice are incomplete.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Ibid. 102.

⁶⁸ Ibid. 102.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 102.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 102.

⁷¹ Ibid. 103.

1.7 Public Conception of Social Cooperation

For Rawls, social cooperation is always about mutual benefit and this encompasses two related ideas.⁷² First, the members of society “... have a shared notion of the fair terms of cooperation”⁷³ and it is reasonable for each member to accept these terms so long as all members of society similarly accept them. When members agree to the fair terms of cooperation, they also agree to share in the benefits and burdens of social cooperation.⁷⁴ For Rawls, social cooperation is the reasonable element while the rational element refers to “... each participant’s rational advantage; what ... the participants are trying to achieve”.⁷⁵

If dependency concerns are both rational and reasonable, they should be reflected in the fair terms of agreement necessary for social cooperation.⁷⁶ As Kittay explains, since society is comprised of both dependent and independent persons, it is reasonable that we consider the interests of others along with our own. Moreover, we would also think it is reasonable to care for those who cannot care for themselves. Dependency concerns are rational in Rawlsian terms because even though we may not be dependent when we choose our principles, we are aware that such circumstances may arise. It is rational to desire the necessary provisions to be available if we become dependent or

⁷² John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 300.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 300.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 300.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 300.

⁷⁶ Kittay, 104.

become responsible for providing care for others.⁷⁷ Thus, it is rational to expect that a well-ordered society will attend to the needs of others.⁷⁸

While it seems both reasonable and rational to include dependency concerns into the concept of a well-ordered society, these concerns are hardly acknowledged by Rawls.⁷⁹ He includes dependency that falls within the boundaries of “normal health care”.⁸⁰ But normal health care needs tend to be based on the idea that reciprocation will occur. The assumption is that even in temporary dependency, one has reciprocated or will be in a position to do so. Realistically, however, reciprocation may never occur.

1.8 Reciprocity

Rawls brings up the idea of reciprocity in a number of different contexts throughout his work. Though he does not provide a definition of reciprocity, he writes of the idea of reciprocity being “a tendency to answer *in kind*”.⁸¹ Rawls speaks of the difference principle as expressing “a conception of reciprocity ... a principle of *mutual benefit*”.⁸² He also states, “By giving justice to those who can give justice in return, the principle of reciprocity is fulfilled at the highest level”.⁸³ In most of the sections where Rawls discusses reciprocity he uses a notion of more or less equal exchange. The only point in his work where he specifically notes any imbalance in reference to reciprocity is in the context of his discussion about the problem of justice between generations.⁸⁴

⁷⁷ Ibid, 104.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 104.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 104.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 104.

⁸¹ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 494 (italics my emphasis).

⁸² Ibid, 102 (italics my emphasis).

⁸³ Ibid, 511.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 284.

In characterizing the problem of intergenerational justice, Rawls does provide more details about his understanding of reciprocity:

Normally this principle [of reciprocity] applies where there is an exchange of advantages and each party gives something as *a fair return* to the other. But in the course of history no generation gives to the preceding generation the benefits of whose saving it has received. In following the savings principle, each generation makes a contribution to later generations and receives from its predecessors⁸⁵

In an effort to account for how to determine justice between generations, Rawls indicates the importance of establishing a “just savings principle”.⁸⁶ Rawls is aware that the actual exchange that occurs between generations is unequal, an exchange only occurring in one direction. He notes that because the reciprocal exchange between generations cannot occur, “the question of justice does not arise”.⁸⁷ As Rawls states, “Obviously if all generations are to gain (except perhaps the first), they must choose a just savings principle which if followed bring it about that each receives from its predecessors and does its fair share for those which come later”.⁸⁸ The problem of intergenerational justice is presented as a unique set of circumstances where the common application of reciprocity becomes problematic and requires the introduction of a just saving principle.

Rawls’ notion of equal exchange as reciprocity falls within the fair terms of agreement necessary for social cooperation. The fair terms of agreement in relation to reciprocity suggest that dependency workers and dependents should be able to

⁸⁵ Ibid, 290 (italics; my emphasis).

⁸⁶ Ibid, 287.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 291.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 291.

reciprocate “in kind”. Those who are incapable of reciprocating, either temporarily or permanently, fall outside the boundaries of social cooperation; and as a result they are also denied social citizenship.⁸⁹ This assumption that citizens are capable of *equal* reciprocation is problematic. Kittay points out that even if reciprocation is possible, equal reciprocation very often does not occur. In many cases, dependency workers do not receive reciprocation from their dependent(s), at least not reciprocation in the Rawlsian sense. Dependency workers may be limited in their ability reciprocate to others outside the dependency relationship because the majority of their resources are being allocated to the dependent(s). Also, people outside the dependency relationship are not expected to provide any (or very much) help to the dependency worker because he/she may be unable to reciprocate. Dependency work gets pushed back into being both an individual and private responsibility.

Kittay suggests there is a need to “expand the notion of reciprocity”⁹⁰ in order to help facilitate the inclusion of dependency workers into the fair terms of agreement for social cooperation. An avenue for doing so can be seen in Amy Mullin’s work on friendship and reciprocity. In *Reconceiving Pregnancy and Childcare: Ethics, Experience and Reproductive Labor*,⁹¹ Mullin discusses reciprocity in friendship, illustrating how reciprocity as an equal exchange can be problematic within friendships and similarly within dependency relationships. Specifically, when reciprocity is assumed to be an equal exchange it increases the instances in which it is likely there will be a

⁸⁹ Ibid, 105.

⁹⁰ Kittay, 106.

⁹¹ Amy Mullin, *Reconceiving Pregnancy and Childcare: Ethics, Experience, and Reproductive Labor* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

failure of reciprocity within an otherwise morally valuable relationship. In discussing the reciprocity of caring, Mullin begins by examining what occurs when an equal exchange of caring is expected even when one of the individuals within the friendship may have greater needs and fewer resources.⁹² The individual with fewer resources is expected to refuse any goods and services if he/she cannot reciprocate in kind.⁹³ Conversely, the friend with fewer needs and greater resources is expected to refuse to provide care if he/she will not be reciprocated.⁹⁴ It is problematic to expect a friend with increased needs and lesser resources to refuse help simply because they cannot reciprocate equally or to expect a friend with more resources to no longer help because s/he will not receive equal reciprocation.⁹⁵

Since reciprocity in caring is problematic, Mullin examines whether reciprocity in equal value works better. Mullin is similarly dissatisfied with the connection between reciprocity and equal value, as she explains

It seems perverse to me either to insist on the equality of value or to attempt to provide some common measure, whether in terms of money or utility, that would make it possible for us to assess whether or not he [the friend with lesser resources] has reciprocated equally⁹⁶

Mullin does not agree with the expectations of reciprocation and suggests it is more realistic, "...to demand that the various parties to a friendship be prepared to meet the needs of their friends, depending on their resources and abilities, but not that they should

⁹² Ibid, 162.

⁹³ Ibid, 162.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 162.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 162.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 162.

seek to provide goods and services of equal value to what has been received”.⁹⁷ In the same way that reciprocity as an equal exchange can seem too rigid within friendships, it also can with dependency work. Mullin explains that we would not suggest that a dependency worker refuse to care for a dependent, or that a dependent refuse to receive care because reciprocation was not possible.⁹⁸

Both Kittay and Mullin support a widening of reciprocity that includes mutuality. This notion of mutuality paves a way for dependency workers and dependents to participate as full social citizens. Mullin provides an explanation of the two concepts of reciprocity and mutuality, which is useful to quote at length:

Reciprocity requires both parties to seek, explicitly or implicitly, to provide something to the other. The reciprocity may be in the exchange of goods and services, and it may aim at equivalency, or it may be reciprocity in valuing or reciprocity in seeking to bring one another joy. Mutuality is broader. Mutuality is a matter of what the relationship to which each contributes achieves for the other, such as moments of fun, opportunities for growth and learning, and the making of new connections to others outside the immediate relationship. This should not be taken to excuse those who have the ability to contribute more directly to the other person and choose not to because the other is seen as unworthy of care. However, it does provide us with models of reciprocity and mutuality that permit the participants, whether children or adults, to be unequal in status, abilities, and resources, while still having an ethically valuable friendship⁹⁹

By broadening the concept of reciprocity and including the idea of mutuality we are able to point to the ways that dependency workers are reciprocated by dependents, particularly when dependents are unable to reciprocate in the traditional sense.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 164.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 164.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 173-4.

In many dependency relationships, the dependent is not capable of providing reciprocation (in the Rawlsian sense) for the work that the dependency worker does. But as Mullin points out, there are benefits that accrue such as mutual trust, moments of fun, and the teaching and learning of “physical, emotional and moral skills”.¹⁰⁰ Dependents may not reciprocate equally but they do contribute to dependency workers’ lives in countless ways.

The dependency worker, who devotes an overwhelming majority of her time to meeting the needs of dependents, is also often unable to fully participate in society, to reciprocate in Rawls’ sense. Yet her/his contribution in giving care is a vital social function without which society could not reproduce itself. However, being incapable of Rawlsian reciprocation, her/his full citizenship status is called into question, as is the citizenship status of her dependent.

Dependency concerns then, do not seem to have a place in the Rawlsian construct of social cooperation. And yet as Kittay explains, these concerns are important for political justice for three reasons. First, being both rational and reasonable, dependency concerns are important for developing a conception of justice as fairness.¹⁰¹ Second, a society that is considered well-ordered must account for the needs of dependents and their caregivers so that the actions of caregivers are neither exploitive nor supererogatory.¹⁰² Third, as Kittay states, “When we reorient political insights to see the centrality of human relationships to our happiness and well-being, we recognize

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 173.

¹⁰¹ Kittay, 104.

¹⁰² Ibid, 105-6.

dependency needs as basic motivations for creating a social order”.¹⁰³ By limiting the idea of social cooperation to interactions between independent, fully functioning individuals we overlook the contributions made within dependency relationships.

1.9 Reciprocity and the Doula

The concept of reciprocity as outlined by Rawls applies to “all who cooperate”¹⁰⁴, but as Kittay explains, both reciprocity and those who qualify as fully cooperating members of society are limited on his model. As such, Kittay maintains that dependency concerns could become a part of justice as fairness if “we ... reconceive fairness”¹⁰⁵ and expand the narrow conception of reciprocity. Expanding reciprocity will, as Kittay states, “... open up a conceptual space for dependency concerns within social cooperation in a just society”.¹⁰⁶

What Kittay proposes is a model of reciprocity based on the concept of the *doula*. In certain cultures a *doula* is an individual assigned to the postpartum mother to help meet the needs of the mother, the family and household, while the mother provides for the needs of her newborn infant.¹⁰⁷ Kittay characterizes *doulia* as a relationship of “...interdependence ... [reflected as] nested dependencies – linking those who help and those who require help to give aid to those who cannot help themselves”.¹⁰⁸ The *doulia* is an arrangement of care provided to those who become needy because they are required to

¹⁰³ Ibid, 106.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 106.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 106.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 106.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 107.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 107.

attend to the needs of others.¹⁰⁹ The principle of the *doulia* is defined as follows, "... just as we have required care to survive and thrive, so we need to provide conditions that allow others - including those who do the work of caring - to receive the care they need to survive and thrive".¹¹⁰

Typically, care has been kept as a private matter and the *doula* as described by Kittay is still confined to a private dependency relationship. However, she wants the concept of the *doulia* extended to the public domain.¹¹¹ In doing so, society not only acknowledges the caregiver's responsibility to provide care for the dependent but also supports the well-being of the caregiver so that she may fulfill her responsibilities towards her dependents without being exploited in the process.¹¹²

This public conception of the *doulia* acknowledges the inevitability of dependency and recognizes the moral obligation that dependency workers have to give priority to the needs of the dependent.¹¹³ Kittay argues that this public conception of the *doula* is needed in order to reach the "...tripartite goal of treating the dependency worker equitably, providing care for dependents, and respecting the dependency relations in which fundamental human attachments grow and thrive".¹¹⁴ A principle of care must support dependency relations in a way that allows individuals to care and to be cared for.¹¹⁵ Kittay explains that to enable dependents to be cared for, the responsibility to

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 107.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 107.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 107.

¹¹² Ibid, 107.

¹¹³ Ibid, 108.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 108.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 108.

provide care cannot be placed solely on the caregiver and that social institutions must aid and support dependency workers.¹¹⁶

In addition to principles of rights and justice, Kittay maintains that we need to include "...a principle and practice of care".¹¹⁷ If society fails to include a principle and practice of care, if it is capable of surviving at all, it will survive poorly and the individuals within it will certainly not flourish.¹¹⁸ Kittay claims that the relationships established within dependency are the foundation upon which "all civic unions depend".¹¹⁹ Thus, it is important for a political theory to address the well-being of the caregivers and the dependents as well as the relationship between the two. According to Kittay, "In order to grow, flourish, and survive or endure illness, disability and frailty, each individual requires a caring relationship with significant others who hold that individual's well-being as a primary responsibility and a primary good".¹²⁰

Extending the notion of reciprocity as proposed, and instituting the *doulia* would require, according to Kittay,

... That the value of receiving care and giving care would be publicly acknowledged; that the burdens and cost incurred by doing the work of caring for dependents would not fall to the dependency worker alone (even when dependency work is freely assumed); and that the commitment to preserving caring *relations* would be assumed by society¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 108.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 108.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 108.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 108: A similar claim is made by Virginia Held in *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political and Global*.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 108.

¹²¹ Ibid, 109.

The principle of *doulia* has two requirements. First, that dependency relations and dependents become a social responsibility, and second, that social institutions must acknowledge and support dependency work.¹²²

1.10 Kittay's Proposal

By exploring where Rawls' theory is lacking and using an expanded notion of reciprocity based on the *doulia*, Kittay maintains that dependency work requires reciprocation from the wider society as a part of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation. Since full reciprocation cannot come from the dependent, it needs to occur within the public realm. And while it can occur in any number of ways, Kittay argues that reciprocation should take the form of a "...socialization and universalization of compensation for dependency work".¹²³ Just as we established different social programs such as worker's compensation and unemployment insurance universally for workers in the public realm, we must also provide similar benefits for dependency workers.

The compensation scheme that Kittay proposes is intended to provide a form of assistance to caregivers. The disadvantages that dependency workers experience cannot be completely alleviated by simply putting care on the list of primary goods. Kittay maintains however that if care were on the list, it would be possible to make a case for compensating dependency workers, by grounding it in richer concepts of reciprocity, social responsibility, social cooperation and so forth. If care was added to the list of primary goods and it was possible to establish that as individuals develop conceptions of the good they would want to be assured that they will be cared for and that dependency

¹²² Ibid, 108.

¹²³ Ibid, 142.

workers will be supported in their efforts to care for others, then it seems quite reasonable that providing compensation could reinforce and guarantee the support needed.

With Kittay's additions to Rawls' theory, we now acknowledge the inevitability of human dependency and the importance of incorporating care into a theory of justice. Accordingly, we would have three principles of justice. We would keep the two principles of justice originally outlined by Rawls – the liberty principle and difference principle - and add Kittay's third principle of social responsibility: "To each according to his or her need for care, from each according to his or her capacity for care, and such support from social institutions as to make available resources and opportunities to those providing care, so that all will be adequately attended in relations that are sustaining".¹²⁴ We would also add care to both the index of primary goods as well as the moral powers attributed to the individual. The addition of this third principle to Rawls' theory, for Kittay, is based on a more realistic understanding of how caring for those who cannot care for themselves excludes certain groups from the fair terms of agreement necessary for social cooperation.

I agree with Kittay that if we incorporate her suggestions into a theory of justice, we can quite reasonably make the case for providing dependency workers with compensation. Kittay provides a very broad overview about her proposed compensation

¹²⁴ Ibid, 113. While Kittay does not provide any further explanation of what this third principle would look like, I think that it is possible to see government as one social institution that could provide various resources including financial assistance as well as other benefits such as health care, vacation time and so forth. In addition, support from social institutions would also make it possible for dependency workers to attend to their dependency relationships in ways that enable the work to be fulfilling. As well, the introduction of resources would allow dependency workers to redistribute the work so that they could pursue their hobbies and interests, the elements that make their individual lives meaningful.

scheme. Her overall suggestion is a “socialization and a universalization of compensation ... with benefits [being] rationalized and routinized (and extended without stigma)”.¹²⁵

For Kittay compensation is provided directly to the dependency worker and he/she distributes it according to his/her needs. Given her proposal of compensation, I think it is important to explore whether her compensation scheme will adequately address her feminist goals of having a fairer distribution of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation specifically for dependency workers.

1.11 Benefits of This Model

Kittay’s model of compensation provides a number of benefits for dependency workers. If compensation were provided, dependency workers would receive benefits similar to workers in the public realm of paid employment. Doing so would respect the dependency worker as a worker¹²⁶ and would enable them to be viewed as fully contributing members of society. By establishing a principle of social responsibility, dependency work would receive long overdue and much needed social recognition, while dependency workers would receive public support for the work that they do.

Having compensation would also improve dependency workers’ bargaining position, enabling them to increase their entrance, allocation and exit options.¹²⁷ Women

¹²⁵ Ibid, 142.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 113.

¹²⁷ Diana T. Meyers, “Gendered Work and Individual Autonomy,” *Recognition, Responsibility and Rights: Feminist Ethics and Social Theory*, ed. Robin N. Fiore and Hilde Lindemann Nelson (Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 30. When discussing women’s entrance options, I am referring to how they actually choose to enter into a position of motherhood and/or dependency work. Because men and women are often find themselves on very particular and very gendered life paths, that women will become mothers and be primarily responsible for caring for children is a cultural assumption that remains prominent within society. Allocation options refer to how the work is distributed while exit options refer to the ways which individuals are able to exit a dependency relationship. For example, women often become financially

will be less economically dependent on male partners. Moreover, single mothers and other socio-disadvantaged workers will be less likely to be exploited by employers.¹²⁸ Regardless of one's social position he/she will be adequately supported if he/she chooses¹²⁹ dependency work. Finally, the compensation scheme in combination with the model of the *doulia* supports alternate family forms. As Kittay explains,

It [this compensation scheme] would honor different familial forms of caring: a child caring for an elderly parent; a gay man caring for his partner with AIDS; a lesbian woman caring for her lover, and her lover's children, through a bout of breast cancer; a single parent household or a multiple adult household in which children are being raised¹³⁰

This compensation system recognizes need and as Kittay states "...vulnerability arising from the responsiveness to need".¹³¹

In addition to the benefits cited by Kittay, this compensation scheme will be effective for combating poverty and will relieve many dependency workers and women from their dependence on social assistance. Allowing dependency workers the option of caring for dependents or allocating funds to alternate care providers is essential to increasing the individual's choice to provide care, to pursue a career, or to combine both simultaneously.

dependent on their partners as a result of caring for dependents. When women become financially dependent on their partners they end up having very few (if any) options for leaving a relationship that becomes fragile or strained.

¹²⁸ Nancy Fraser, "After the Family Wage: Gender Equity and the Welfare State." *Political Theory* 22, no. 4 (1994): 608.

¹²⁹ The extent to which becoming a dependency worker is freely chosen is an issue that will be explored in Chapter 4.

¹³⁰ Kittay, 145.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, 145.

While it seems tenable that compensating dependency workers would provide them with the means to support the dependency relationship, and it is possible that this model of compensation will achieve most of Kittay's goal to incorporate dependency concerns into a conception of a just society, it is not clear that her proposal is complex enough to address the very gendered assumptions of providing care.

1.12 Limitations of this Model

There are two criticisms challenging Kittay's proposal that require exploration. The first is provided by Diana T. Meyers who claims that despite the obvious benefits of Kittay's model, merely compensating the work does not eliminate the coercive context that continues to support the sexual division of labor.¹³² As much as Kittay aims to degender the work, her proposed compensation scheme cannot do so. Secondly, compensating dependency work does not redistribute who is ultimately responsible for care.¹³³

If one of the goals of feminism is to examine the social structures that contribute to women's subordinate status, then a compensation system which does little to challenge the gendered division of labor may only be fair in economic terms. It is not, however, a way to address the distribution of labor nor does it challenge the cultural assumptions of gendered responsibilities. If a compensation system is to meet Kittay's concerns about justice for dependency workers and her specifically feminist concerns surrounding the

¹³² Meyers, *Gendered Work and Individual Autonomy*, 28.

¹³³ *Ibid*, 28: This is a generalization. Though it has become more socially acceptable for men to become primary caregivers, dependency work is still overwhelmingly labor done by women

exclusion of dependency workers because of the gendered assumptions related to the work itself, it is going to need to incorporate a concept of gender equity.

1.13 Why Compensation Needs to Include Gender Equity

It comes as no surprise that gendered norms continue to funnel men and women down particular life paths. For women, this expectation tends to lead them into bearing and raising children. Because of these gendered paths, Meyers remains unconvinced that the choice to become a mother and become a primary caregiver is an unconstrained choice.¹³⁴ That is, becoming a dependency worker is not a choice that presents itself outside of a coercive context. As our cultural expectations surrounding dependency work have remained for the most part unchallenged, and the social and economic conditions - particularly for women - reflect and reinforce these cultural assumptions, providing compensation alone will not degender the work. This means though that we need to examine the cultural assumptions regarding who is responsible for providing care to dependents.¹³⁵

The coercive social context, the cultural assumptions surrounding care and redistribution of labor are interconnected. If the coercive context within which women choose is not challenged, if the compensation scheme does not address cultural assumptions surrounding care, then a redistribution of labor seems highly unlikely. A compensatory scheme that does not require an equitable share of dependency work may actually reinforce the sexual division of labor.

¹³⁴ Meyers, *Gendered Work and Individual Autonomy*, 24.

¹³⁵ An examination of the cultural assumptions surrounding caring responsibilities will be explored in a later chapter.

It is possible, in theory, that compensation could redistribute caring labor.

If the work were paid, men and women could each choose to do this work. This could increase the number of men becoming dependency workers. Yet, given the gendered gap in earnings that men and women currently experience, unless compensation were on par with the income levels experienced by men generally, it does not seem likely that many people will opt for a lesser income in order to become a dependency worker.

Although women may allocate their compensation to another by contracting out their caregiving responsibilities, this does not mitigate the cultural assumptions and expectations surrounding who is ultimately responsible for providing care. For example, in circumstances where a paid employee does not show up for his/her shift, women become, as Meyers states, "...caregivers of the last resort".¹³⁶ Even if women are willing to use their compensation to contract out dependency work, if the paid help fails to show up, the expectation to do the work remains. Thus, the obligation to provide care is still expected of women. In so far as this responsibility will seemingly 'belong' to women it threatens to interfere with their life projects and with individual flourishing. Compensating dependency workers is not going to redistribute or degender the work in a way that enables us to move beyond these cultural assumptions surrounding care. While compensation may be economically fair, it is not fair in terms of the sexual division of labor.

It seems that we should be cautious of how effective compensating dependency work will be for challenging established caregiving roles if we look at parental leave

¹³⁶ Meyers, *Gendered Work and Individual Autonomy*, 28.

policies in Canada as an example. While the number of men becoming primary caregivers after the birth of their child has increased, statistically the number of men and women providing care is far from equal.¹³⁷ This is not to deny the progress that has been made in this area, but it is important to recognize that simply because the option exists for men and women to be (in theory) financially equally able to take parental leave does not mean they will do so.

In addition, the problem that arises when men and women are both financially able to take parental leave is that domestic help is often employed as a means of redistributing the labor. When allocating care work and domestic tasks, it is often lower class, immigrant women who are employed to take on the care of others. These immigrant women can face very exploitive circumstances, remaining in such circumstances because they lack options. While dependency workers in general experience exploitation, alleviating their circumstances through the addition of compensation can contribute to the exploitation of other women.¹³⁸

More importantly, compensating the work without challenging who does it risks trapping women in what Diemut Bubeck calls a “circle of care”.¹³⁹ Since men and women tend to follow particular gendered paths, the fact that women are funneled into bearing and raising children and then become compensated for the work can contain women within the private realm of the family. While engaged in care work, dependency

¹³⁷ There are other contributing factors for the unequal number of women and men taking parental leave. But these factors often link back to gendered gap in earnings. For example, women are often more likely to becoming the primary caregiver because it makes more economic sense, particularly if their earnings are significantly lower than their partners.

¹³⁸ The issue of exploiting immigrant women as domestic helpers or secondary dependency workers will be explored in Chapter 2.

¹³⁹ Diemut Bubeck, *Care, Gender and Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 171.

workers will cultivate and refine their caring skills. If women are primarily the ones doing this work and their skills are developed to a greater degree than men's, it would make sense for women to continue in caring roles even in the public realm. Once a dependency worker's services no longer warrant compensation, they might be very likely to continue caring for others as a source of income. Furthermore, if women continue in these caring roles, if dependency needs resurface within the family for example, the expectation will remain that since she has been compensated for this work previously and has the necessary skills to continue caring, it only seems fitting that she care for those in periods of dependency. There is a concern then that it might become relatively easy for women to become trapped in a circle of caring responsibilities. And it seems possible that compensating the work could contribute to this.

Addressing the sexual division of labor and the cultural assumptions surrounding care is going to need more than fair compensation. In the context of Kittay's discussion, a fair compensation system should not reinforce the gendered nature of dependency work. While Kittay does acknowledge the importance of degendering the work, it is not clear that her proposal is going to provide enough of a challenge to merit its implementation.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 *Complex Conception of Gender Equity*

For a considerable time feminists have discussed the concept of gender equity by focusing on either equality or difference where, as Nancy Fraser states, “... equality means treating women exactly like men, and where difference means treating women differently insofar as they differ from men”.¹⁴⁰ Theorists who situate themselves within the equality-difference debate, while generating significant discussion, have not yet settled on which concept should be the focus when discussing gender equity. Difference feminists have been critical about focusing on equality as doing so often assumes a masculine standard as the norm.¹⁴¹ Conversely, equality feminists have explored how focusing on difference often uses essentialized notions of femininity that result in reinforcing gendered stereotypes.¹⁴² This tension between equality and difference results in what Carole Pateman called the ‘Wollstonecraft Dilemma’, where on one hand in order to be equal women try to be like men.¹⁴³ On the other hand, by acknowledging that women are different and that their differences should be taken into account we are asserting that to achieve equality, women need to be treated differently.¹⁴⁴ There is an unresolved/unresolvable tension within the equality/difference debate regarding which concept provides a sufficient guide for achieving gender equity.

¹⁴⁰ Fraser, 594.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 594.

¹⁴² Ibid, 595.

¹⁴³ Carole Pateman, “The Patriarchal Welfare State,” in *Readings in Contemporary Political Sociology* (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 252.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 252.

Gender equity cannot be adequately addressed by assuming that everyone is equal or by acknowledging that there are differences between men and women. Gender equity has been treated within the equality-difference debate as a simple concept, but for Fraser it is a complex concept consisting of multiple elements.¹⁴⁵ Because both equality and difference feminists have brought out many important points when theorizing equality, Fraser wants to build upon this work by exploring gender equity as a complex idea. Through recognizing that it is no longer useful to focus on either equality or difference, Fraser contends that a complex conception of gender equity would provide additional conceptual resources to draw from when developing alternate gender equitable social policies.

2.2 Five Normative Principles

When Fraser begins her discussion about gender equity she does not make it clear how she is defining and using the term. For the purpose of this paper, I will use the following definition of gender equity¹⁴⁶: Gender equity is a state that a society is in where gender matters if and only if it is relevant.¹⁴⁷ Fraser introduces five principles which help to guide us towards gender equity and these principles give rise to the criteria which help to determine/measure if gender equity has been achieved: the anti-poverty principle, anti-exploitation principle, equality principle, anti-marginalization principle, and the anti-

¹⁴⁵ Fraser, 595.

¹⁴⁶ The definition of gender equity that I provide may be fairly limited to the discussion within my thesis. The term 'gender equity' has not been very well defined yet has been used freely within discussions where gender has been considered relevant. In her own work, Fraser makes it clear that while she expands on the criteria of a complex conception of gender equity, she is uncertain as to whether her criteria would be of any benefit to similar but distinct issues where certain groups experience disadvantages. How the criteria involved in this conception of gender equity extend to equity in other respects is an issue that warrants further discussion but requires much more detail than I am able to provide here.

¹⁴⁷ I am grateful to Brynna Loppe for her assistance in developing this definition.

androcentrism principle. On this model, according to Fraser, any social policy that claims to be gender equitable must be capable of conforming to these principles.

2.3 Anti-Poverty and Anti-Exploitation Principles

The anti-poverty principle requires that any social welfare program's rudimentary goal should be to prevent poverty.¹⁴⁸ This principle, on its own, is not enough to establish and maintain gender equity, as preventing poverty can be achieved in any number of ways, not all of which are desirable or acceptable.¹⁴⁹ The anti-exploitation principle is needed in addition to the anti-poverty principle so that both poverty and exploitable dependencies can be simultaneously avoided.¹⁵⁰

2.4 Equality Principle

The equality principle is composed of income equality, leisure time equality, and equality of respect.¹⁵¹ The equality of income principle does not require that men and women have equal incomes, but it does require a significant reduction in the gendered gap in earnings that is presently experienced.

Equality of leisure time requires that caregivers will no longer participate in double shifts of paid employment as well as informal care while men (generally speaking) continue to contribute only a single shift within the workforce.¹⁵² The equality of respect principle, as Fraser states, "... rules out social arrangements that objectify and denigrate women – even if those arrangements prevent poverty and exploitation".¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ Fraser, 598.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 597.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 598.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 598.

¹⁵² Ibid, 598.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 598.

2.5 Anti-Marginalization and Anti-Androcentrism Principles

The anti-marginalization principle requires that social policy establish provisions for women such as daycare and elderly care so that they are able to participate in all areas of social life at the same rate as and in similar ways to men.¹⁵⁴ According to the fifth and final principle, the anti-androcentrism principle, women should not be required to be like men in order to have similar standards of well-being.¹⁵⁵

A woman could keep herself above the poverty line while still being exploited. For example, many servers in the food service industry rely primarily on their tips for their income, as their hourly wage tends to be at the lower end of the wage scale.¹⁵⁶ In general, servers can control their wage through the degree of emotion they invest in their labor and into their customers. She may exploit her labor, specifically a form of emotional labor, doting on particular customers in specific ways in an effort to increase her overall income. She is also at risk of exploitation if, for example, an employer threatens to cut her shifts if she does not work overtime. Conversely, she could be the victim of sexual harassment in the workplace. Even though she may be earning an income ensuring that she is not in poverty, she remains at risk of being exploited.

A woman could avoid poverty and exploitation but still experience inequalities in income, respect and leisure time. Even though a woman could be earning a comfortable income, she may still not be earning the same wage as her male equivalent. Fraser

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 599.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 599.

¹⁵⁶ This example is specific to most service industries in North America. Thank you to Dr. Hitchcock for pointing this out.

maintains that income equality does not require an “absolute leveling”¹⁵⁷ of income, but it needs to mitigate situations such as a divorce, where women’s income is reduced by almost half and men’s income doubles.¹⁵⁸ For example, a recent *Catalyst* study found that despite equal qualifications and experience, a gendered wage gap still exists between female and male MBAs even in entry-level positions.¹⁵⁹ The topic of equality of income also continues to be a subject of debate within academia.

A female general practitioner may have chosen her particular line of work in order to combine both working and caring. While she may avoid poverty and exploitation and have equality in income and respect, she may not experience equality of leisure time. When women are working full shifts and returning home at the end of the day to do the majority of tasks in the domestic realm, they are engaging in what is known as the “second shift”. If women are laboring in two distinct realms, they often are unable to have equality of leisure time so that they may pursue their own projects and interests.

As Fraser explains, all the above principles could be met and yet women can still be marginalized. Fraser uses generous mothers’ pensions to illustrate her point. Such pensions can help women become financially independent and ensure equality of leisure time and respect, but the support could also contain women within the private realm, keeping them separated from the public realm of employment, politics and so forth.¹⁶⁰

Finally, women could achieve all the above requirements but still be subjected to a particular standard that may not be related to good performance. For example, to date,

¹⁵⁷ Fraser, 598.

¹⁵⁸ Fraser, 598.

¹⁵⁹ Nancy M. Carter and Christine Silva, “Pipeline’s Broken Promise.” Available from: http://www.catalyst.org/file/340/pipeline%27s_broken_promise_final_021710.pdf

¹⁶⁰ Fraser, 599.

there have been very few instances of women playing on men's professional hockey league teams. To be eligible to participate in the league, these female players will often be held to a particular standard. If they can achieve the standard that sport requires (i.e. if they play the sport like men do) then these female players could be involved. Yet to achieve this, these women must demonstrate that they have the same skills that men do. In women's hockey body checking is not permitted but in men's hockey it is. A female hockey player must demonstrate that she is capable of checking like the male players. If she cannot do so, she will be unable to meet the standard required for team membership. However, women's hockey, I think, is a good illustration of how body checking is not a skill that is required for good performance (in fact, it could be argued that the lack of body checking actually makes the game more challenging). The established standard isn't always questioned, and women who want to be involved must demonstrate that they can meet this standard even though it may not be related to performing the sport well.

By viewing the concept of gender equity in a more complex way, Fraser demonstrates why multiple elements need to be taken into account. These elements, when applied to the two dominant and competing proposals of systems of compensation further illustrate why providing compensation to dependency workers is not likely to achieve gender equity. Fraser looks at two models, the *Universal Breadwinner Model* and the *Caregiver Parity Model*, but she does not support either model. Both models have developed within the context of the equality-difference debate. Theorists that are concerned with equality and who assert that women can be equal to men often support the *Universal Breadwinner Model* whereas others who support equality but do not want

to dismiss differences may support the *Caregiver Parity Model*. Analyzing these models using a complex conception of gender equity enables Fraser to further demonstrate how each proposed compensation model cannot address the problems of dependency work and consequently cannot achieve gender equity.

2.6 *Caregiver Parity Model*

With a more thorough conception of gender equity, Fraser takes her criteria and applies them to a model of compensation similar to Kittay's, calling it the *Caregiver Parity Model*. The main difference between Kittay's model of compensation and Fraser's is their focus on where the caring labor or dependency work is done. Fraser indicates that the *Caregiver Parity Model* aims to achieve gender equity by supporting informal care work.¹⁶¹ Though Fraser does not elaborate on her use of the term 'informal care', she acknowledges that in the *Caregiver Parity Model* the work done in the private realm such as childrearing and domestic responsibilities would be "elevated to parity"¹⁶² with work done in the public realm. Kittay uses the term dependency work to include both paid and unpaid caring labor in both the public and private realms. Fraser's criteria are instructive for developing a better understanding of how a particular form of compensation will have both benefits and limitations for those who engage in dependency work. The *Caregiver Parity Model* is considered beneficial because it supports domestic labor in a way that does not pressure women to become like men.

Kittay's focus on treating the dependency worker as a worker is also echoed by Fraser. While Kittay maintains that dependency workers require health benefits, vacation

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 605-6.

¹⁶² Ibid, 606.

time and exit options,¹⁶³ both authors agree that social benefits such as unemployment and disability insurance as well as retirement benefits are also necessary.¹⁶⁴ Fraser also requires significant reforms to the workplace. The major change that needs to occur is that the workplace needs to become flexible to allow individuals to enter and exit without penalty when they are required to attend to the needs of others. In sum, workplace reforms must enable individuals to combine both working and caring.

While a reasonable argument could be established to support a compensation system within the framework of social contract theory as Kittay proposes, I think that when Fraser expands the common conception of gender equity she helps to bring out some of the more subtle concerns surrounding what gender equity means as well as how to achieve it. As a result, Fraser's work demonstrates both the benefits and the limitations of Kittay's system of compensation for dependency workers.

Anti-Poverty and Anti-Exploitation Principles

It is clear that the *Caregiver Parity Model* will be beneficial for both alleviating and preventing poverty. This model will be particularly beneficial for solo caregivers by enabling them to care for themselves and their dependents through the introduction of sufficient financial assistance. Dependency workers would be able to choose how to distribute care duties allowing them to combine full- or part-time work and care or they could opt to do all the work themselves.

Fraser maintains that this model of compensation will be beneficial for alleviating the exploitation of dependency workers and dependents. From a first-person perspective

¹⁶³ Kittay, 143.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 143; Fraser, 606-7.

this means that one should not exploit others. But from the perspective of public policy, we should try to prevent the exploitation of vulnerable individuals before it occurs. In Fraser's view, the anti-exploitation principle should prevent three specific kinds of exploitable dependencies, "exploitable dependence on an individual family member, such as a husband or an adult child; exploitable dependence on employers or supervisors; and exploitable dependence on the personal whims of state officials".¹⁶⁵ These exploitable dependencies will decrease under *The Caregiver Parity* model as compensation will improve women's bargaining position within the family, reducing their dependence on a husband or partner for financial reasons. In addition, this model helps to provide financial security to single mothers. Similarly, it also reduces dependency workers' risk of exploitation by employers.

While the *Caregiver Parity Model* may be an effective means of reducing exploitation, it cannot be entirely prevented by this model. There is very little within this proposal that will prevent the exploitation of the domestic workers who become employees of dependency workers. While it is important to ensure that a compensation system alleviates the exploitation of dependency workers, we also need to remain aware of how any compensation system may potentially increase the risk of exploitation for others. The exploitation of immigrant women as domestic workers has become a well-documented issue. The risks of immigrant women being exploited in developed countries increase for a variety of reasons. Some immigrant women are in these countries illegally. As a result, when they accept a job as a caregiver or a domestic worker, they may be

¹⁶⁵ Fraser, 597.

unable to complain about their working conditions because of the risk of deportation. Not only will this particular group of women be unwilling to challenge and change their working conditions; they may also be more likely to work for low(er) wages as they may be unable to find any other form of employment. Even immigrant women who are in developed countries legally, may be confronted with similar concerns. Canadian statistics indicate that even though immigrant women tend to be better educated than Canadian women they are still more likely to be unemployed.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, the more recently these women have arrived in Canada, the more likely they are to be unemployed. When one's financial situation becomes critical immigrant women (and most individuals for that matter) may be much more willing to accept a low wage in an effort to merely survive. Moreover, since immigrant women face greater challenges upon arriving in Canada in terms of finding employment, the likelihood of them accepting any work despite the poor wages increases.

Some women immigrate to Canada by participating in Canada's *Live-in Caregiver Program*. As Jarrah Hodge explains, the women who enter this program are largely visible minorities who come from "economically marginalized nation[s]".¹⁶⁷ Canada's *Live-in Caregiver Program* requires domestic workers to live in their employers' home as well as have a grade 12 education (or equivalent), "supplemented with domestic training".¹⁶⁸ Those who participate in this program to come to Canada and who desire to become a Canadian citizen can do so only after living in their employers'

¹⁶⁶ Statistics Canada, 214.

¹⁶⁷ Jarrah Hodge, "'Unskilled Labor': Canada's Live-in Caregiver Program," *Undercurrent III* 2 (2006): 61.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 62.

home for a minimum of two years. Since these temporary workers generally desire to remain in Canada, they may tolerate exploitative circumstances so that they will not be deported and/or denied immigrant status.¹⁶⁹ This requirement of living in the employers' home increases the risk of exploitation, which in turn increases the vulnerability for domestic workers in general. Moreover, the restrictions placed on immigrants means that many women will have to leave their families behind under the care of another female family member.¹⁷⁰

Canada's *Live-in Caregiver Program* is an example of one of the ways that compensation could be used to employ domestic help as well as a way in which the exploitation of immigrant women could increase. Presently, immigrant women who participate in this program already experience exploitive circumstances. It is likely that such unfavorable circumstance could increase if dependency workers have the financial means to employ these women.

The *Canada Live-in Caregiver Program* is certainly only one example of how exploitation could increase for particular groups of women. There is nothing within this compensation model that prevents dependency workers from seeking out the most affordable care at the expense of domestic workers. At one time employing domestic help, such as a housekeeper or a nanny, was a luxury only the elite could afford. However, recent literature shows that this is no longer the case. In Canada, there are an increasing number of families employing domestic help from a range of income levels.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 62.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 62.

¹⁷¹ Boris Palameta. "Who pays for domestic help?" *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, 4, no. 8 (2003).

In fact, as Boris Palameta explains, one of the main indicators of whether a dual-earner family will employ domestic help is the wife's earnings.¹⁷² Though it is not surprising that higher income families are more likely to purchase domestic help, despite the overall income of a family, if the wife's income is greater than the husband's this influences how the income is going to be spent.¹⁷³ As Palameta states, "... purchases [of household services] are more likely if the wife makes 100% of a \$20,000 household income than if she makes less than 57% of a \$60,000 household income or less than 15% of a \$100,000 household income".¹⁷⁴ In sum, the overall income of a household is not the best indicator whether a portion of that income will be used to purchase domestic help. What seems to matter is whose income it is.

Another group that will be at risk for increased exploitation under the *Caregiver Parity Model* is dependents. On this model, as Guy Standing notes, the dependency worker could accept compensation without providing the required level of care. In addition, the dependency worker could make the "recipient dependent on the need for care"¹⁷⁵ presenting problems both in paying the dependency worker and in ensuring that the cared for is having all his/her needs met. While dependency workers may avoid exploitation, compensation may potentially give rise to the exploitation of particular groups. A compensation system cannot be just if it reduces the exploitation of one group while maintaining or even increasing the "exploitable dependencies" of another. These

Available from: <http://www.statecan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/75-001-x2003008-eng.html>

¹⁷² Ibid, 12.

¹⁷³ Ibid, 14.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 14.

¹⁷⁵ Guy Standing, "Care Work: Overcoming Security and Neglect," in *Care Work: The Quest for Security*, Ed. Mary Daly (Geneva: International Labor Office, 2001), 31.

concerns will need to be addressed prior to providing dependency workers with compensation, specifically because without determining how to deflect such potentially exploitative consequences it will remain difficult to achieve and maintain both a just and gender equitable compensation system.

Equality Principle

In relation to the equality principle, Fraser maintains that the *Caregiver Parity Model* does not fare well.¹⁷⁶ It is often because of care responsibilities that women tend to fall in and out of the workforce. Being unable to remain in the workforce without interruption ultimately affects dependency workers' income earning potential. Though there will be a degree of income equality while in a dependency relationship, once (and if) care is no longer required it is very likely that the gendered wage gap will remain. Fraser's assertion about the continuance of the gendered wage gap is reflected in the most recent statistics on women and men's earnings, though there has been a significant increase in the number of women entering the paid workforce.¹⁷⁷ Recent research from the *Institute for Women's Policy Research* (IWPR) indicates that for every dollar men earn women earn 77 cents.¹⁷⁸ The IWPR also notes the results of a longitudinal study on the overall incomes of both men and women. This study found that over a 15-year time period, on average women will earn \$273, 592 whereas men will earn \$722, 693.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Fraser, 608.

¹⁷⁷ Statistic Canada reports that 58% of all the women over the age of 15 are currently employed, an increase from 46% in 1976. Yet, women still have lower income earnings than men.

¹⁷⁸ Institute for Women's Policy Research, (IWPR #C366), 1. Available from: http://www.iwpr.org/pdf/C366_R1B.pdf

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 2.

Though the results presented by the IWPR are based on statistics generated from United States data, the status of the gendered wage gap in Canada is not remarkably different.

Statistics Canada reports that even when women are employed in full time, year round employment their average yearly earnings are \$36,500, 71% of what men employed both full time and year round earn.¹⁸⁰ The only group of women that comes closest to earning what their male equivalents do are single, never married women.¹⁸¹ Furthermore, the only group of women that actually exceeds their male equivalent in income earned are single, never married women over the age of 45.¹⁸² In the case of the single, never married woman it is very likely that her ability to remain closest to and even exceed men's average earnings over time is partially related to her ability to labor similarly to men, that is, without familial responsibilities influencing her ability to meet common workplace standards.

Married women, on the other hand, make much less than their partners. In 2003, married women's earnings were 65% of those of married men.¹⁸³ The situation for solo mothers is even less favorable, "In 2003, 38% of all families headed by lone-parent mothers had incomes which fell below the after-tax Low Income Cut-offs".¹⁸⁴ What the statistics indicate is that the majority of women are earning a lower average income than their male counterparts but single mothers face the most significant financial disadvantages.

¹⁸⁰ Statistics Canada, 139.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, 140.

¹⁸² Ibid, 140.

¹⁸³ Ibid, 140.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 144.

Though there are unaccounted reasons that contribute to the gendered wage gap, many women tend to work primarily in part time, lower paid employment. While women with children have experienced a significant increase in employment, 73% of women with children were employed in 2006, up from 36% in 1976¹⁸⁵ and many work in part time positions (less than 30 hours a week). Moreover, 1 in 5 women indicated that they worked part time because of family responsibilities¹⁸⁶ whereas only 3% of men employed part time indicated personal or familial responsibilities as the reason they were not working full time.¹⁸⁷

The most current statistics on the status of women in Canada indicates that having familial responsibilities may be a significant factor in relation to why women statistically earn less than men. While having personal/familial obligations is clearly not the only factor influencing the gendered wage gap it is a highly influential one and it is a factor that seems to have a greater impact on women's lives than men's. Moreover, an underlying cultural assumption surrounding who is responsible for care also contributes more to women's overall earnings than men's.

Leisure Time

In relation to leisure time, compensating dependency workers is valuable because women currently in the workforce will be able to avoid the double shift as access to financial support may generate additional time through having the material resources to

¹⁸⁵ Marcia Almey, "Women in Canada: Work Chapter Updates" *Statistics Canada*. Catalogue no. 89F0133X1E in Statistics Canada [database online]. Ottawa, Ont., 2007 [accessed May 2, 2010]. Available from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89f0133x/89f0133x2006000-eng.pdf>

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

redistribute the labor.¹⁸⁸ Because compensation facilitates a redistribution of labor, dependency workers will have more options available in terms of remaining or becoming a primary caregiver, participating in part- or full time work in the public realm of employment or a combination of both. However, Fraser is not convinced that providing compensation will create equitable amounts of leisure time for dependency workers.¹⁸⁹

Having the choice to redistribute the work in theory should also increase dependency workers' available leisure time. However, many women may continue to combine both work and care - simultaneously decreasing their available leisure time - because it is financially beneficial to do so in the long term. As Fraser indicated earlier in relation to income equality, while in a dependency relationship women may receive equitable compensation but it is the interrupted periods from the public realm of paid employment that will have a greater effect on dependency workers' careers and current/future earnings. Fraser does not see the option to forego one's employment opportunities and future earnings as a choice that is "truly costless".¹⁹⁰ Even if dependency workers accept compensation this will not necessarily increase their available leisure time. If dependency workers choose to return to the workforce, many of the domestic tasks that were previously done by them will require redistribution. Yet, there is no guarantee that men will relieve women of domestic responsibilities – including care - in their leisure time so that women can have equitable amounts of it. Those women without a partner will remain solely responsible for all domestic

¹⁸⁸ Fraser, 608.

¹⁸⁹ Fraser, 609.

¹⁹⁰ Fraser, 609.

responsibilities; thus their leisure time will be affected to a greater degree, at least in principle, than women with partners. However, statistically women are still spending more time on domestic tasks than men,¹⁹¹ so the likelihood that women with partners will experience a more equitable share of domestic duties on this model and consequently a more equitable amount of leisure time is questionable.

Principle of Respect

In terms of the third aspect of the equality principle, the principle of respect, Fraser notes that dependency workers will theoretically be treated as equals in this model.¹⁹² It is likely that caregivers may be given more respect once their labor is both viewed as and compensated as work equal to that done in the public realm. However, it is also very likely and of equal concern that instead of dependency workers receiving respect for the work that they do, compensation could instead provoke resentment.¹⁹³

In theory, caregivers will be treated as equals under this model. The fact that the dependency worker will be treated as a worker and compensated accordingly, means that he/she may be afforded increased respect given that compensation will help to publicly recognize and compensate this work as work. However, as Fraser rightfully maintains, the worker and the caregiver will not, in reality, be on par with each other.¹⁹⁴ Providing

¹⁹¹ Katherine Marshall, "Converging Gender Roles" *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, (July 2006): 7. Available from: <http://www.statecan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/10706/9268-eng.pdf> Statistics Canada – Catalogue Number 75-001-X1E. (2006).

¹⁹² Fraser, 609.

¹⁹³ Fraser indicates that in the *Caregiver Parity Model* compensation would be provided through public funds but she does not identify how compensation will be distributed. If compensation were provided as a government cheque, it is likely that resentment could occur. However, the concerns surrounding resentment could be reduced if compensation took the form of refundable tax credits as opposed to a government cheque. I am thankful to Dr. Hitchcock for drawing this to my attention.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 609.

care will overwhelmingly remain associated with femininity while breadwinning will remain primarily associated with masculinity (though whether or not one receives pay for it will no longer be an issue). It is likely then that the work performed in the public realm will remain the legitimate, respectable and respected means of earning an income.

Equality of respect is important not only to the implementation of a gender equitable compensation system but also to the work of providing care. In order to challenge the oppressive circumstances surrounding care of dependents there is a need to have support for dependency work from the wider society. Yet, if compensation is viewed as a “handout” and if the work continues to be viewed as something women are responsible for (whether this expectation is implicit or explicit), it is very likely that instead of increasing respect compensation will only fuel resentment. Without some consciousness raising and consciousness changing surrounding dependency work in general, achieving respect will remain a challenge.

Anti-Marginalization Principle

While Kittay acknowledges the importance of degendering the work, her compensation system may actually work to reinforce the connection between care work and femininity. This connection already limits women’s unrestricted participation in social and political realms. A model that reinforces the association between providing care and femininity does very little to challenge the gendered structure of the work. As a result, Fraser explains, the *Caregiver Parity Model* does not fare well in relation to the anti-marginalization principle. While the *Caregiver Parity Model* may be useful for raising dependency workers’ status as well as their available resources, by failing to

challenge the gendered division of labor, it may actually work to reinforce who is primarily responsible for providing care.

Anti-Androcentrism

In relation to the anti-androcentrism principle, this model is fair according to Fraser. Compensating dependency work recognizes that it is not only masculine activities and life courses that are significant, but that dependency work is also an intrinsically valuable activity.¹⁹⁵

In sum, the model that Kittay proposes in combination with Fraser's complex conception of gender equity demonstrates that the *Caregiver Parity Model* would be successful at preventing poverty and reducing exploitation for particular groups of people. Although this model may not be as effective fulfilling the remaining principles of equality, anti-marginalization and anti-androcentrism, it would certainly be an improvement over current arrangements.

2.7 Universal Breadwinner Model

Fraser not only applies her conception of gender equity to a single model of provisioning care; she also focuses on what she calls the *Universal Breadwinner Model*, a form of compensation presented as an alternative to the *Caregiver Parity Model* (and for some this is also a better means of provisioning care). The *Universal Breadwinner Model* places a different focus on how to provision care. It suggests providing universal care for all dependents so that dependency workers are able to labor in the public realm, thus generating an income that is sufficient for one person to provide the financial means to

¹⁹⁵ Fraser, 609.

support all her dependents. I assume from Fraser's description of the *Universal Breadwinner Model*, that dependency work performed in the public realm will be afforded a breadwinner wage; however, it is not clear from her discussion whether dependency workers in the private realm (i.e. those who take care of dependents such as infants or elderly family members instead of pursuing a breadwinning employment opportunity) will only have access to public care provisions if they labor in the public realm.

This model shifts care from the private realm to the public realm of the market or the state. In a footnote, Fraser indicates that there are a variety of ways that such provisions could be established.¹⁹⁶ For the purpose of this chapter I am going to work with the assumption that provisioning care is both paid for and regulated by the government or state. Although having the government or state pay and regulate this model would increase taxes which some would consider disadvantageous, it would also take the sole responsibility of providing care to dependents off individual families (and specifically women) consequently creating equal opportunities for women, children and families. Moreover, being regulated by the government has the potential to ensure fair treatment of the dependency worker and the dependent.

In this model, gender equity is achieved by facilitating women's participation in the public realm of employment.¹⁹⁷ Care is provided universally through daycare and elderly care programs so that women can participate in full time employment at rates and

¹⁹⁶ Fraser, 616, 27n.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, 601.

in ways comparable to men.¹⁹⁸ The only real descriptor that Fraser provides for this model is that it shifts the majority of dependency work from the private realm onto the market and state.¹⁹⁹ She does not provide any details as to how these facilities would be structured for both the dependency worker and the dependent.

How these care facilities would be maintained is an issue that requires much more analysis and exploration than I am able to give in this chapter and in my thesis overall. However, I think placing provisions for care in the public realm requires an additional conversation about how such facilities would be structured so that they protected both the dependency worker and the dependent. In order to have fair treatment of dependency workers, it would seem reasonable to place particular regulations on their workdays so that they are expected to labor and are also given similar benefits as many other workers. For example, their wage could be determined through some method of comparable worth; they should be afforded the opportunity to gain additional training relevant to their occupation; they should have access to health benefits and vacation time, among many other factors. In relation, issues such as how many dependents they are required to care for at any given time and whether the dependency workers will labor in a “network of caregivers”²⁰⁰ ought to be addressed. Because dependency work involves a number of vulnerabilities, a variety of elements would have to be explored in greater detail to ensure that in government regulated facilities the dependency worker and the dependent are being both adequately protected and fairly treated.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, 601.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 602.

²⁰⁰ Mullin, 177.

Even though the *Universal Breadwinner Model* has particular strengths, just like the *Caregiver Parity Model*, it still has particular limitations, which makes fulfilling the criteria for gender equity incomplete even under this model. The *Universal Breadwinner Model* would clearly be effective for alleviating poverty as long as there is an adequate number of well paying employment opportunities available.

Anti-Exploitation

Like the *Caregiver Parity Model*, the *Universal Breadwinner Model* also effectively prevents exploitable dependencies. This occurs primarily because with secure, well-paid employment opportunities women are better able to increase their exit options if the dependency relationship becomes fragile or strained.²⁰¹ In addition, with an increase in secure, available employment opportunities as well as alternate care providers, it is possible that women will be able to increase their options for where the dependency work is done and who will do the work (meaning that they will have more options as to how they will distribute the work). These options will increase because women will have the assurance that alternate care providers will be both available and affordable; thus their entrance into the workforce and their ability to remain in the workforce will be less constrained than it currently is. Under the *Universal Breadwinner Model*, women's participation in the public realm may not be affected by any lack of care provisions. Clearly, there will be periods of time where remaining in the workforce will not be possible, for example, just before and following childbirth. Aside from the most evident circumstances where participating in the workforce is not feasible, if adequate

²⁰¹ Fraser, 603.

care provisions are available, this should enable women participate equally in the public realm.

Unlike the *Caregiver Parity Model*, it may also be possible under the *Universal Breadwinner Model* to reduce the potential exploitation of immigrant women who work as domestic helpers, as well as the exploitation of dependents. If alternate care providers were regulated in terms of what they were required to pay dependency workers and had enough available spots for dependents, then the secondary dependency workers would receive a fair wage and dependents would be guaranteed a spot in a care facility. Moreover, the risk of making the dependent reliant on the need for care may be reduced because the dependency worker would not be relying on a single income attached to a specific dependent. In addition, the dependency worker would face less significant financial disadvantages upon (re)entering the workforce because the availability of alternate care providers would enable the dependency worker to participate in the workforce in accordance with the demands of the labor market.²⁰²

Equality

For Fraser, income equality remains only fair in this model because while some caregivers would benefit from full time employment, this model maintains a distinction between those who are breadwinners and those who are not.²⁰³ If women held breadwinner jobs and had access to alternate care providers, it would narrow the gender

²⁰² This is not to say that dependency workers (women in particular) would no longer face any exploitation or be discriminated against within the workplace. However, some of the problems such as falling in and out of the workforce specifically because of care responsibilities would be greatly reduced under this model.

²⁰³ Fraser, 603.

wage gap.²⁰⁴ Reducing income inequality will also lessen the inequality within social insurance packages.²⁰⁵ In addition, just as one's exit options will improve with the addition of the anti-poverty principle, introducing a principle of income equality will likely lead to a more equitable distribution of resources within families as the inequalities experienced by women because of their dependency on partners for financial support will be reduced.²⁰⁶

While income equality would improve under this model, Fraser's concern is that, because of the distinction it creates between breadwinners and others and because every job would not provide a breadwinner wage, the disadvantaged 'Others' in this model would primarily be women.²⁰⁷ If dependency work became an occupation that earned a breadwinner income, then a majority of women in particular may be in a position to become breadwinners. Dependency work in this respect could become an occupation that earned a sustainable living. However, there would still be occupations that did not earn a breadwinner's wage and I think Fraser is right to be concerned that the individuals working in such occupations may very likely be women. Additionally, Fraser also cautions that while gender will no longer be as significant a factor, more weight will then be placed on other variables such as race-ethnicity, class and age (among other factors).²⁰⁸

While I understand Fraser's concern in relation to the disadvantaged 'Others', I am not certain I entirely agree. If women remain in part time, traditional feminine

²⁰⁴ Ibid, 604.

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 603.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 604.

²⁰⁷ Ibid, 604.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, 604.

occupations, then it is quite possible these “Others” may be women. But if women take advantage of alternate care providers their entrance into the public realm will have less of a stigma attached to it (i.e. the assumption will not be that women will always remove themselves from the workforce to care for dependents). We may begin to decrease the assumptions attached to women’s responsibility for dependents, which could also mean that women may face less discrimination in the workplace related to the assumption that they are primary care providers. They will be able to labor more freely with the introduction of an alternate care providing system in addition to jobs that can support dependency relationships. Being able to labor with the demands of the workforce means that, at least potentially, women can progress further economically than they have been able to. The potential for women to be the disadvantaged ‘Others’ exists but the potential for women to get and maintain breadwinning employment opportunities will also be increased.

While particular women, particular Others, may not be as disadvantaged as they once were, I think Fraser has a very real concern that factors such as race, class and ethnicity will become aspects that are more heavily weighted. Some women may benefit when gender is less, or no longer, a factor that oppresses or disadvantages them. But for many women, gender is only a part of the problem. Many women do face oppression, but some women, for example those who are not white or those who are from a lower class, are exposed to multiple oppressions. Providing a wage for dependency work may change the profile of the individuals who actually do dependency work but it is unlikely that it will change the profile of the Others. Dependency work may become a breadwinning

occupation but those who then considered qualified to fill such positions will likely not be the same individuals who previously dominated the work when it was un(der)paid. Again, it is likely that the profile of the Other will not change, but in this particular context, gender will be a less significant factor. Others will likely still experience Othering, it just may not occur as significantly in the context of dependency work.²⁰⁹

Leisure Time

In terms of leisure time equality, this model rates poorly though it does provide some improvements on current circumstances. The underlying assumption is that care responsibilities can be shifted away from the family and onto the market or the state. Yet, some elements of care cannot be shifted so easily (e.g. caring for ill dependents). Moreover, the other domestic labor that occurs within the private sphere will also require redistribution.²¹⁰ Similarly to the *Caregiver Parity Model*, unless the contribution to domestic responsibilities becomes more equitable between genders, it is unlikely that women will experience an increase in leisure time.²¹¹

Equality of Respect

The final element within the principle of equality, the concern surrounding respect, does increase under this model according to Fraser. If the public facilities where care is occurring are provided and regulated by the state, dependency workers will be earning a breadwinner wage, and it is very likely that equality of respect will increase for these individuals, particularly for women. Additionally, if the women who put their

²⁰⁹ While gender equity may be more attainable it is not certain how other dimensions of disadvantage will be affected.

²¹⁰ Fraser, 604.

²¹¹ Ibid, 604.

dependents into publicly provided care do so in order to participate in the workforce, it is likely that they will be earning a breadwinner wage and will also experience an increase in equality of respect. The work of dependency will require a breadwinner wage, so the work of dependency when highly paid and positioned as a public responsibility there will potentially be increased respect given to dependency workers.

Anti-Marginalization Principle

This model is only fair in relation to the anti-marginalization principle. While it promotes employment for those who are capable of full-time work, the definition of participation is narrow.²¹² According to Fraser, “It [the universal breadwinner model] fights women’s marginalization ... in a one-sided ‘workerist’ way”.²¹³ The *Universal Breadwinner Model* will provide support for dependency workers only in so far as they find employment in the public realm. This model does not provide support in the form of provisions for all dependency workers, whether the work is done within the public or private realm, to help relieve some of the burdens and disadvantages associated with care unless these women find paid employment. Under this model, dependency work is not necessarily given the respect it needs. This model facilitates women entering and remaining in employment in the public realm of work, it has care provisions in the public realm for those who participate in the labor market, and it compensates dependency workers (those within government-regulated facilities); however, it is not clear if this model provides support for individuals who choose to care for dependents in the private realm. It is possible that dependency work would become a breadwinning opportunity

²¹² Ibid, 605.

²¹³ Ibid, 605.

that both women and men could choose. However, because care provisions are put in place only for those who are participants in paid employment, it demonstrates that support will be given to those who care for others in the public realm. But it is not clear that support will be provided for individuals who choose or even desire to care for their own dependents.

2.8 Kittay's Critique of "Self-Sufficient"

Kittay adds to the critique of the *Universal Breadwinner Model* because even within a highly idealized world where employment opportunities enable one individual to be the sole provider for her family, there is a problem with assuming that this relationship is "self-sufficient".²¹⁴ The breadwinner/caregiver scenario is assumed to be a private arrangement that does not require any social support and this, as Kittay explains, is problematic for three reasons.

First, any employed individual is dependent in some way on another.²¹⁵ While the dependency worker may become dependent as she is attending to the needs of others, any employed person, to a large degree, is also dependent.²¹⁶ The individual who is characterized as the sole provider for his/her family remains situated within nested dependencies.²¹⁷ The employee is dependent upon the employer as well as the economy that requires particular marketable skills and services.²¹⁸ As Kittay states, "The appropriate contrast between a dependency worker and other workers is not between

²¹⁴ Kittay, 140.

²¹⁵ Ibid, 141.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 141.

²¹⁷ Ibid, 141.

²¹⁸ Ibid, 141.

those who are self-reliant and those who are dependent, but between those whose labor results in some sorts of vulnerabilities rather than others”.²¹⁹

Secondly, the breadwinner/caregiver model requires that there is both access to and availability of employment opportunities that provide the financial means to support a dependency relationship on a single income. Fraser admits that her application of gender equity assumes an idealized context in which both models are functioning. She acknowledges that her analysis presumes that full-time, well-paid employment is abundant and easily found – particularly in the context of the *Universal Breadwinner Model*. Despite the idealized context, Fraser would agree with Kittay’s point, however, that today it is often quite challenging for many providers to find employment while simultaneously finding employment that yields the financial resources to adequately meet the needs of all dependents.²²⁰ In reality, within most two-parent families women are still primarily responsible for both domestic duties and dependency work. In addition, however, women often maintain employment that is rarely as well paying as their partner’s and is more often than not a part-time position.²²¹ While the *Universal Caregiver Model* gives the illusion of a distinction between a provider and a caregiver, it rarely maintains this distinction.²²²

The final criticism Kittay raises against this model is in relation to exit options. Because the very nature of dependency work creates a dependency for the dependency

²¹⁹ Ibid, 141.

²²⁰ Ibid, 141.

²²¹ Ibid, 141.

²²² Ibid, 141.

worker, if the relationship between the provider and the caregiver becomes strained the woman often has very few choices if she needs to exit the dependency relationship.²²³

2.9 Where These Two Models Leave Us

Fraser illustrates with a complex conception of gender equity how neither compensation model is entirely able to meet the requirements for achieving a system of compensation that is gender equitable. Both models will be effective for reducing and potentially even eliminating poverty as well as reducing exploitation. Yet, in terms of fulfilling all the elements of equality and preventing marginalization and androcentrism, both models are lacking. As neither model can address the majority of Fraser's criteria and both seem to have shortcomings with regard to the same principles, it seems that it may be useful to determine how to facilitate positive changes where these areas are deficient.

Both compensation models' inability to simultaneously fulfill all the elements of gender equity results not necessarily from a failure within either model, rather it occurs because of the stereotypical gendered roles. Fraser suggests that neither of these compensation models can function properly given the current structure of society and our current gendered roles. Women and men are often sent down very particular and very gendered life paths and because the roles that men and women have in relation to dependency work are highly gendered, meeting the requirements of a gender equitable compensation system remains challenging. For Fraser, in order to develop a gender equitable compensatory system, there is a need to deconstruct gender and begin to model

²²³ Ibid, 141.

social policies after women's lives.²²⁴ As she states, the construction of social policies needs to "...make women's current life patterns the norm"²²⁵ so that having responsibilities in both the public realm of work and the private realm of care will be prioritized when developing policies.

Suggesting modeling policies after women's lives seems like a strange comment for Fraser to make given that it is what is normative about women's lives that is precisely the problem. I think Fraser's overarching point is that because dependency needs are both inevitable and inescapable, policy reforms and policymaking need to take dependency into account. Policies should not only reflect the realities of gendered dependency work but they should also assume that being given adequate support when providing care and supporting those who provide care are social responsibilities in which all are implicated.

2.10 Little Encouragement for Men to Change

Fraser's main concern with the *Caregiver Parity Model*, and the fundamental change she thinks needs to occur in order to address the limitations within both models, is that there is very little within these proposals that encourages men to change. The concern regarding men's participation is echoed by Meyers and is also acknowledged by Kittay as being critical to degendering the work. Any model of compensation to be effective requires men to change their current behaviors. But the question that still needs to be addressed is how to facilitate changes in men's gendered roles.

²²⁴ Fraser, 612.

²²⁵ Ibid. 612.

Meyers explicitly maintains that men's participation is required within dependency work in order to challenge gendered norms.²²⁶ She suggests that gay men who become parents alter gendered expectations simply by being male caregivers. As the number of gay men becoming parents is continuing to increase, there are presently occurring challenges to gendered norms. Meyers also maintains that men in management positions who take parental leave demonstrate to other employees, specifically other men, that it is acceptable to fulfill caring responsibilities.²²⁷ When workplaces are structured to be more accommodating to their employees' needs for a work-family balance, this also challenges gendered norms by showing that no one is penalized for having care responsibilities.²²⁸ While I agree with Meyers' suggestions and examples, actually challenging such norms to the extent that the obligation to care falls on the shoulders of both genders equitably may require more influence than merely hoping that male dominated workplaces will create environments that support informal care work. Challenging gendered norms needs more than having a few men choose to take parental leave.²²⁹

After analyzing these two very different theories of compensation we still seem to be left with two unanswered questions: How to increase men's participation in

²²⁶ Meyers, *Gendered Work and Individual Autonomy*, 32.

²²⁷ *Ibid*, 32.

²²⁸ *Ibid*, 32.

²²⁹ Equally important though and what Fraser believes should be done presently is that when policies are developed, they need to begin with the assumption that individuals have responsibilities as workers and that they also have obligations as dependency workers. If policy makers worked with this assumption in the construction of social policy it would create important changes to the structure of the workplace including shorter workweeks and "employment enabling" services.

dependency work, and how to reduce the coerciveness of women's dependency obligations.²³⁰

Meyers was initially quite supportive of Kittay's original compensation scheme in so far as she saw it providing certain benefits for dependency workers. The compensation scheme was considered beneficial specifically because it allowed dependency workers to redistribute the work allowing them to pursue their own life projects and interests.²³¹ She also found that Kittay's scheme enabled dependency workers to do their work more autonomously by enabling them to hire experts and professionals.²³² But, she remarks, "...state dispersed compensation would not solve the problem of women's coerced entrance into dependency work and their tendency to become overcommitted to it".²³³ Because compensation neither redistributes nor deconstructs dependency work, it does not address or challenge who ultimately remains responsible for the work as well as who then experiences the disadvantages attached to providing care.²³⁴

Meyers wants to address how the sexual division of labor "governs the distribution of default dependency work".²³⁵ Moreover, addressing the coercive context in which women 'choose' to be dependency workers, for Meyers, is a higher priority than

²³⁰ The first question was raised in the previous section relating to how we gain men's participation in dependency work if their participation will realistically improve the areas where the compensation systems are deficient. The second problem is that even if either of these two systems be implemented, any actual compensation system is not going to address Meyers' foremost concern about the "coerciveness of women's dependency obligations.

²³¹ Meyers, *Gendered Work and Individual Autonomy*, 27.

²³² *Ibid.*, 28.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 28.

²³⁴ See also Jennifer A. Parks for a similar response to providing compensation to familial caretakers, 109-111.

²³⁵ Meyers, *Gendered Work and Individual Autonomy*, 28.

developing a gender equitable and just system of compensation. Any suggestions for compensating dependency work, however well intentioned, fail to address some of the more pressing concerns associated with providing care.

CHAPTER 3

At the close of the second chapter we are left with two concerns that have yet to be addressed. First, after applying Fraser's criteria for gender equity to two of the dominant systems of compensation, it is clear that the majority of the criteria comprising gender equity cannot be satisfied simply by compensating dependency work. In fact, as Fraser maintains, the areas where the compensation systems lack can be fulfilled if men simply increase their participation in dependency work. Fraser's assertion is supported by a number of theorists who agree that if men were more active in dependency work many of the inequalities that arise from and within dependency work – specifically for women – would decrease. The second outstanding concern is Meyers' claim that even if it is possible to develop and subsequently implement a fair compensation system, the compensation system on its own cannot eliminate the coerciveness of women's entrance into dependency work.²³⁶

Meyers, Fraser, and Kittay (among many others) all agree that men's participation in dependency work is a fundamental part of challenging the sexual division of labor.²³⁷ If we can increase the number of men performing dependency work, this will challenge the gendered associations with care. The purpose of the following chapter is to discuss how to effectively increase men's participation rates within dependency work. As well, this chapter will assess the existing research in an effort to understand which social

²³⁶ Ibid, 19.

²³⁷ Because there is a wealth of existing literature surrounding the terms gender and sex, using the phrase the sexual division of labor may be more appropriate for the context of my discussion. Though I do not have the space to explore the issue here, I do believe that more exploration should be done on whether we should be discussing gender equity or sexual equity. Thank you to Dr. Hitchcock for raising this issue.

policies have been implemented to facilitate men's participation and to what extent such policies have been effective. Using childcare as an illustration, this chapter will examine how to increase men's participation as dependency workers and how this will help to achieve gender equity. Furthermore, it will briefly explore if some of the policies implemented in other countries could be extended beyond the realm of childcare.

The first section of this chapter provides a brief explanation of the current research on dependency work and the focus that has been placed on increasing men's involvement. In recent years, there has been a considerable amount of literature discussing various aspects of men providing care to dependents. Moreover, there has been a particular focus on men who take on the role of primary caregivers of their children.

The second section provides a brief illustration of the structure of social policies surrounding dependency work in Canada. Paul Kershaw²³⁸ identifies how particular policies negatively influence both the public realm of work and the private realm of care. On their own, individual policies that impact dependency work may in fact be relatively harmless. However, when these policies begin to interact they often result in reinforcing the gendered division of labor instead of creating and maintaining gender-neutrality. For Paul Kershaw, the structure of particular policies limits men's ability to participate in care work while making it easy and most often advantageous to the family as a whole if women become and/or remain primary caregivers.

²³⁸ Paul Kershaw, *Carefair: Rethinking the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005).

The third section of this chapter will explain that the most common response to the conflicts between policies surrounding work and care is to adopt a similar structure of policies to those found in the Nordic countries. The Nordic countries including Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Finland, place an important focus on creating a balance between the responsibilities of work and care. Countries such as Sweden and Norway have existing policies that would be useful to adopt in order to address and alleviate some the problems that are unique to dependency work. I will present the common features found within these policies to explain why they are favored by so many theorists.

The fourth section of this chapter will assess whether it will be beneficial to adopt and/or integrate the European models into society by exploring first, if the structure of these systems provides benefits to dependency workers and second, if they are effective at increasing men's participation in the private realm of the family. The fifth and final section will examine whether a more radical scheme is needed to resolve the difficulties that dependency workers are confronted with.

3.1 Current Research on Men's Involvement in Dependency Work

In an effort to address many of the tensions that arise within dependency work and dependency relationships there has been a marked increase in the research, theory and practice surrounding increasing men's active participation in providing care for others. There is a general consensus that the particular inequalities that women experience from their expected involvement in dependency work could be resolved if men's participation in dependency work could be facilitated. In countries where policies surrounding work and care are incomplete, some theorists have identified how both the

structure and interaction of policies, though gender-neutral in theory, actually end up reinforcing gendered roles. Other theorists suggest that addressing the inequalities that women experience because of their involvement in care requires reforming and, in some cases, introducing social policies so as to present men with very realistic options that enable them to become more active in dependency work.

To a large extent, when policies are premised on the assumption that citizens have responsibilities in both the public and private realms this results in a more equitable distribution of private work. Such policies aim at achieving two goals. First, they aim at increasing men's participation rates as care providers within the private realm. Second, the development, implementation and promotion of these policies simultaneously works toward challenging gendered roles. In particular countries, achieving these two goals is presently becoming a reality, whereas in other countries the achievement of these two goals is impeded by the policies themselves. The Nordic countries are an example of the former and Canada is an illustration of the latter. Paul Kershaw, examining the Canadian context, has shown that while social policies in Canada provide for some care responsibilities, the way these policies are structured makes it difficult for men to participate in, and for women to distance themselves from, dependency work. To illustrate his point, Kershaw explains what occurs when policies surrounding parental leave, employment standards and childcare interact.

Parental Leave

In 2001 Canada's maternity/parental leave was extended from six weeks to just under one year, with fifteen weeks being reserved specifically for biological mothers. The

remaining thirty-five weeks were defined as parental leave which can be taken by either the mother or father.²³⁹ The benefit afforded to maternity/parental leave is calculated at 55% of the “recipient’s earnings up to a maximum benefit of \$413 per week”.²⁴⁰ As discussed in Chapter 2, given the gendered gap in earnings that remains between men’s and women’s incomes, the structure of the financial incentives within the maternity/parental leave policy drives women to become and remain primary caregivers and men to remain in the workforce. This is particularly prominent in families where one partner contributes a significantly higher income, making it very unrealistic for the partner who generates higher earnings to take a 45% reduction in wages. Moreover, most full-time employment in Canada exceeds the maximum financial support given for parental leave, making the reduction in wages even more than 45%.²⁴¹

Employment Standards

The second area of public policy that limits men’s participation in dependency work is employment standards. After the Second World War policy makers introduced the concept of a family wage which enabled the breadwinner to labor and receive a wage that was sufficient to support a wife and dependent(s).²⁴² The family wage was only realized by a few successful trade unions and eventually phased out, it has yet to resurface as an option for supporting dependency relationships.²⁴³ Even though the family

²³⁹ Ibid, 131.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, 131.

²⁴¹ Thank you to Dr. Hitchcock for bringing this point up.

²⁴² Kershaw, 132.

²⁴³ There are a number of reasons why a family wage is no longer a reasonable option. Labeling it a “family wage” does not indicate if it could be used to support non-familial dependency relationships. This wage also puts the responsibility of providing a family wage on employers. In addition, employers could discriminate against hiring people with dependents or those who are

wage may not be a reasonable option at present, the distinction it made between the breadwinner and caregiver remains within current policy. The ideal worker in this scheme was, and still is, one who is able to work in accordance with employer demands because s/he has no other responsibilities conflicting with his/her ability to labor.²⁴⁴

Kershaw explains that current trends in employment show an overall decrease in the number of employees working 35-40 hours per week. There has been an increase in both shorter and longer work weeks, but the shorter work week has become more pronounced.²⁴⁵ However, when employment trends are divided by education and gender, studies show that women experience shorter workweeks more frequently than men.²⁴⁶ As well, individuals working more than the average forty hours per week tend to be higher wage earners, university educated, professionals, managers and blue-collar workers in male-dominated industry.²⁴⁷ What the statistics are telling us overall is that many industries rely on well-paid, experienced, educated workers for an increased amount of hours.²⁴⁸ This suggests that the ideal worker is able to gain well-paid employment by becoming educated and is also able to participate in a longer workweek specifically because s/he has fewer (if any) responsibilities conflicting with employer demands.

To illustrate further, when provinces such as Ontario and British Columbia changed policy to accommodate employers, by permitting employees to work additional

perceived to be approaching an age where dependency could likely occur. Third, the family wage risks reinforcing the distinction between a breadwinner and a caregiver, and thus also risks keeping women in the private realm. These are a few, among a number, of the reasons why a family wage no longer seems to be a reasonable option.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, 132-33.

²⁴⁵ Ibid, 133.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 133.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, 133.

²⁴⁸ Ibid, 133.

hours without being compensated for overtime (approximately 60 hours per week), such workplace standards required flexible workers. Those with the least flexibility such as solo parents are often unable to fulfill the role of the ideal worker. This limitation becomes particularly prominent when there is a lack of affordable childcare facilities to accommodate dependency needs in relation to the demands of the workforce.

Childcare Policy

The third area of concern, Kershaw adds, is that even when provinces have policies that allocate funds to parents in the form of a child tax benefit, this benefit does not reflect the cost of such care. For example, in B.C. the provincial government allocates \$274 dollars per year for each child under the age of thirteen while the monthly cost of childcare can range anywhere from \$494 to \$705 per month. While there are provisions for childcare, they are not enough to facilitate parent(s) participation in paid employment.

When these policies begin to interact with one another, they end up creating barriers for both mothers and fathers. When maternity/parental benefits make it financially unrealistic for the higher wage earner to participate in dependency work, the obligation to care falls to the lower-wage earner. Individuals without care responsibilities, or those who can easily assign their care responsibilities to another, are able to meet the demand for flexible employees. When these employees do have children, they are often dependent on their partners in order to be able to labor in a particular way. If the lower-wage earner is already the primary caregiver and his/her partner has the opportunity to increase the family income, then it may be beneficial for the two partners to maintain the division of labor between breadwinner and caregiver. In addition, when quality childcare

is not available and/or is not affordable, and part-time employment is not financially beneficial, there is little incentive for women to return to work, particularly if their additional income merely covers the cost of childcare. Without reforming existing social policies that continually reinforce the gendered division of labor, encouraging men's participation will remain challenging.

3.2 The Nordic System – Provisioning for Dependency Work

In an effort to reform and/or enact social policies to achieve a fairer distribution of the responsibility of dependency work as well as provide equal opportunities in the public realm, many theorists have looked to the countries that have actively worked towards establishing a more gender-egalitarian society by trying to create a balance between working and caring. Many theorists consider the Nordic countries as forerunners with regard to policies that enable citizens to combine their responsibilities as a worker and as a carer. While the individual policies within these countries are not enough to make dependency work more gender equitable, the combination of these policies makes achieving gender equity a more realistic goal. The majority of these countries tend to have (a) higher than average wage replacements, (b) extended maternity/parental leave, (c) mandatory father leave or a "daddy quota", (d) flexible leave schemes and (e) publicly provided child care.

Paid Family Leave and Wage Replacement

According to Janet C. Gornick and Marcia K. Meyers, these countries share some commonalities in the area of paid family leave. First, they provide maternity leave for almost all employed mothers. Maternity leave extends anywhere from several weeks to

several months and is supplemented by both a wage replacement and job security.²⁴⁹ Sweden, Iceland and Norway all provide a wage replacement at 80% of the dependency worker's former wage up to an overall maximum whereas in Finland and Denmark the wage replacement is 66%.²⁵⁰ While these wage replacement schemes are an improvement over other countries, they still do not seem sufficient to provide the financial incentives to enable the higher income earner to participate in care, particularly if there was a large gap in earnings within a dual-income household. An 80% wage replacement is significant but if the wage gap is substantial between earners, the 20% loss of earnings for the higher wage earner may be much greater than the 20% loss of earnings for the lower earner. Furthermore, if the higher income earner exceeds the maximum compensation that can be received, the difference in financial loss may be even greater for the individual earning the higher wage.²⁵¹

Parental Leave

Sweden was the first, among the Nordic countries, to introduce parental leave into the structure of their family-friendly policies. In 1995, the parental leave period was extended from twelve to sixteen months. Fourteen months of the leave is designated as parental leave permitting the mother or father to become a primary caregiver without restrictions. The remaining two months of the leave are reserved specifically for the

²⁴⁹ Janet C. Gornick and Marcia K. Meyers, "Institutions that Support Gender Equality in Parenthood and Employment," in *Gender Equality: Transforming Family Division of Labor*, ed. Janet C. Gornick and Marcia K. Meyers (New York: Verso, 2009), 28.

²⁵⁰ Nabanita Datta Gupta, Nina Smith, and Mette Verner, "Child Care and Parental Leave in the Nordic Countries: A Model to Aspire to?" *Institute for the Study of Labor Discussion Paper Series No.2014 8* (2006), <http://ftp.iza.org/dp2014.pdf>. The wage replacement in Finland is 66%, while the wage replacement in Denmark averages out to 66%.

²⁵¹ Thank you to Dr. Hitchcock for adding this point.

mother and father (4 weeks for each) and if either parent declines his/her designated portion of the leave, the time becomes non-transferable to the other parent. In 2002, the time reserved for fathers, i.e. the daddy quota, was increased to 2 months.²⁵² Increasing this time from two months to four months is on the agenda for the September 2010 election.²⁵³

In addition, parental leave allocates time to both mothers and fathers. In Sweden, Norway and Denmark fathers have increased benefits and incentives if they take part in parental leave.²⁵⁴ Most of these countries allocate a particular period of time for fathers, time that is based on the notion of “use it or lose it” so that if fathers do not take their leave the time is lost to the family as a whole.²⁵⁵ In these same countries, if men take their portion of the leave, parental leave is extended by four weeks in Norway and Sweden and by two weeks in Denmark.²⁵⁶ Such parental leave benefits essentially support gender equality by establishing certain rights and benefits to fathers while also creating policy elements that encourage fathers’ participation in care.²⁵⁷

Higher than average wage replacement schemes in combination with extended parental leave increase the incentives for either parent to participate in the leave. Both the type of compensation scheme and individual circumstances contribute to which parent the economic incentives will likely attract to take up leave. If the mother and father have a large gap in earnings, even an 80% wage replacement may not be enough increase the

²⁵² Ibid, 6-7.

²⁵³ *New York Times* (New York), June 9, 2010.

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/10/world/europe/10iht-sweden.html?_r=2

²⁵⁴ Gornick and Meyers, 31.

²⁵⁵ Ibid, 31.

²⁵⁶ Ibid, 31.

²⁵⁷ Ibid, 31.

number of fathers taking parental leaves. But in situations where partners' earnings are approximately the same, the economic incentive should have a neutral effect on which parent actually takes the leave.

Flexibility of Leave Schemes

In addition to the financial incentives to take up leave, a non-monetary incentive is found in the flexibility of the leaves themselves. For example, as Datta Gupta explains, some countries allow the parent to choose if he/she wants to take part time leave for an increased amount of time in place of a full time but shorter leave.²⁵⁸ Some of the policies are actually designed to allow parents to save part of their leave and take the remaining portion of it when the child is older. Again, Sweden is considered to have the most flexible scheme as parents are able to use their paid leave however they choose up to the child's eighth birthday.²⁵⁹

Regulation of Working Time

In the area of working time, all six countries have three common features. First, the number of hours one can work per week ranges from thirty-five to forty hours.²⁶⁰ Secondly, policies make sure that parents have access to four consecutive weeks of leave each year to spend with their families.²⁶¹ And finally, the public realm of employment continues to improve both the availability and quality of part time work.²⁶²

²⁵⁸ Datta Gupta et al., 9.

²⁵⁹ A similar scheme is also available in Denmark. See Gornick and Meyers, 30.

²⁶⁰ Datta Gupta et al., 32.

²⁶¹ Ibid. 32.

²⁶² Ibid. 32.

Child Care and Early Education Policies

The final element found in the European countries is that of policies surrounding childcare. Although each country has distinct policies, they all share three features. First, a large number of infants are in publicly provided care, and full-day preschool programs provide early education for children between the age of three and entrance into public school.²⁶³ Secondly, early childhood education and childcare is both quality care and affordable.²⁶⁴ Finally, the dependency workers providing early childhood education and care are well trained professionals and compensated accordingly.²⁶⁵

It is this combination of policies in the Nordic countries that enables dependency work to be more gender equitable. The wage replacement on its own is not really enough to enable both men and women to participate in providing care. However, when the wage replacement is combined with parental leave that reserves time for both men and women, it is likely that each will provide care. The flexible leave schemes also contribute to gender equity by giving men and women options with regard to their leave. This enables both men and women to provide care but in different increments depending on their circumstances. For example, one may want to provide care but also is at a point in his/her career where s/he desires to spend more time at work in order to complete projects that are important both personally and professionally. Flexible leaves schemes allow that

²⁶³ Ibid, 34: The number of children in publicly provided childcare reflects the type of parental leave scheme each country has. In Denmark about half of the children between the ages of 0-2 are in publicly provided childcare, which may be a consequence of Denmark's shorter maternal/parental leave. Conversely, Finland has both a longer maternal/parental leave period and a childcare subsidy until the child reaches age 3, which may explain why the number of children in publicly provided childcare is quite low.

²⁶⁴ Gornick and Meyers, 35.

²⁶⁵ Ibid, 35.

simply acquiring a dependent does not require immediately removing oneself from one's career path, though one does have this option.

The regulations of working time and childcare and early education policies are also important additions to the overall scheme. Kershaw illustrated how not having regulations on working time maintained a gendered division of labor, setting up limitations for men and creating barriers for women. And in a way, the working regulations are needed in connection with childcare facilities. The working regulations create the opportunity for more equal time to be spent within both the public and the private realm, potentially contributing to more equitable earnings by placing realistic working standards for those who choose to work. The provisioning for childcare is also an important factor to help achieve gender equity. Without having alternate care providers, those who are responsible for dependents will not be able to participate at the same rates and in the same ways as those without dependency responsibilities. It is the combination of these policies in these areas that helps work towards more gender equitable circumstances.

3.3 Adopting the Nordic Model

In *The Real Utopias Project* Gornick and Meyers acknowledge the tension that exists for women and men to have both the time and resources to promote the healthy development of dependents and themselves, while also enabling and promoting gender equality within the public realm. Like Kershaw, they recognize that in order to endorse a society that supports “gender-egalitarian caregiving”²⁶⁶ social institutions need to respond

²⁶⁶ Ibid, 4.

to the changes that have already occurred in both social practices as well as the economic realities that individuals currently face.²⁶⁷ These theorists have identified the conflicts that develop when certain policies concerning the public and private realms influence one another and they have also put forth various recommendations to help improve it.

Gornick and Meyers and Kershaw suggest that in order to alleviate the tensions between the public and private realms of dependency work and paid work, North America needs to take note of the types of policies found elsewhere that promote gender equity. Incorporating the favorable elements of the countries will be beneficial in two respects. If the European models are effective, then incorporating a similar model into North American society should achieve a fairer distribution of work and care. They agree that the areas of parental leave, employment standards and childcare require reforms in order to work towards a more gender egalitarian society.

Reforming Parental Leave

Gornick and Meyers recommend five key changes that need to be incorporated into the area of parental leave. First, they claim that there needs to be a 100% wage replacement scheme available to primary caregivers.²⁶⁸ Second, those who become caregivers must have job security so that they may return to the workforce if and when they so choose.²⁶⁹ Third, there needs to be non-transferable time set aside for both parents. Fourth, leave time must be flexible so that parents are able to choose to participate as either full or part time workers.²⁷⁰ Moreover, parents need to be able to

²⁶⁷ Ibid, 4.

²⁶⁸ Gornick and Meyers, 22.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, 22.

²⁷⁰ Ibid, 23.

choose whether they want to take their leave all at once or take shorter portions of it at different points in their child's life.²⁷¹ Fifth and finally, both parents need additional time off with pay for short term and unpredictable dependency needs.²⁷²

Reforming Work Time

The second area that needs reforming is the regulation of working time. In order to strike a balance between the needs of employers and the needs of the family, limits should be placed on the workweek so that the weekly hours are regulated.²⁷³ Instead of employers being able to work their employees for up to 60 hours per week without paying overtime, the workweek needs to be regulated from anywhere between thirty-five to forty hours per week.²⁷⁴ This will reduce the amount of hours many men, and to a lesser degree, women are required to work, giving both additional time that could be put back into the family. Secondly, Gornick and Meyers suggest that part-time workers should receive similar benefits as full time employees who are doing similar work in the same business so that part-time workers cannot be discriminated against because they combine work and care.²⁷⁵ Third, the authors maintain that employees should be able to make a formal request to their employers for flexible schedules and reduced hours.²⁷⁶

Childhood Education and Care

The third and final area that Gornick and Meyers maintain requires improvement is to early childhood education and care. They claim that early childhood education and

²⁷¹ Ibid, 23.

²⁷² Ibid, 23.

²⁷³ Ibid, 24.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, 24.

²⁷⁵ Ibid, 24.

²⁷⁶ Ibid, 24; Though an employer may deny this request, before it can be denied it would have to be subject to government approval to ensure that there are sound reasons for denying the request.

care should be available and it should be both high quality and publicly subsidized.²⁷⁷

Having accessible, available, and affordable care would enable parents to return to/remain in the workforce. Moreover, if early childhood education/care were publicly subsidized it would enable families from all income levels to have equitable care provisions which would in turn enable them to enter employment with fewer restrictions.

3.4 Reforming Canadian Policy

For Gornick and Meyers the European model has two key elements that help to encourage men's participation: the combination of a high wage replacement and non-transferable leave time. While they all want to encourage men's participation, Kershaw not only acknowledges the importance of men becoming actively involved in dependency work, he adds to the discussion by suggesting certain policy reforms, specifically for Canada, to increase the incentives.

Kershaw proposes significant changes in these areas of social policy as a means of obliging men to care as well as to reduce some of the barriers they are confronted with when they are expected to be the primary income earner and the labor market is better suited to accommodate men's stereotypical activities and life course. His policy reforms structure financial incentives in ways that will encourage men to participate in caring for dependents.

Kershaw is in line with Gornick and Meyers that there needs to be reduction in the amount of hours individuals are actually required to work, so that they have the

²⁷⁷ Ibid, 24.

ability to create a work-life balance.²⁷⁸ Restructuring the workweek would make men's and women's work lives more similar. Men's income may be reduced (and for some significantly), but it may also provide the financial ability to facilitate men's participation in care work. Or the additional time that men gain could be used to participate in caring labor more so than may currently be possible.²⁷⁹

Kershaw also agrees with Gornick and Meyers in terms of increasing the wage replacement for the duration of the maternity/parental leave. Currently, in Canada there is a maximum weekly percentage that a caregiver can receive as well as an overall maximum of \$39,000. If the overall wage replacement were increased, this could give fathers the financial ability to take parental leave, as a smaller wage reduction would become an economically realistic option. In addition, the time allotted for maternity/parental leave also needs to be extended, with a larger portion of time being reserved specifically for fathers.²⁸⁰ Reserving this time and making it time non-transferable to mothers will contribute to achieving gender equity.

One of the most interesting reforms that Kershaw suggests is connecting individuals' participation in informal care work to a reduction in the amount of months one must contribute to Canada and/or Quebec Pension Plans.²⁸¹ He suggests that for each month that a wageworker removes him/herself from employment to participate in informal care work, s/he should receive a four-month decrease in the required

²⁷⁸ Ibid, 139.

²⁷⁹ While this may decrease the hours men spend at work, there is no guarantee that men's increased time will be allocated to care responsibilities.

²⁸⁰ Kershaw acknowledges here that appropriate exceptions should be made for family units that fall outside the traditional family arrangements.

²⁸¹ Ibid, 145.

contributions to pension plans.²⁸² This would establish both social recognition and responsibility for caring labor.²⁸³ Moreover, this particular reform would as Kershaw states, "...reconstruct the symbolic meaning of fatherhood".²⁸⁴ Establishing a connection between parental leave and pensions illustrates that providing care for others is work done by both genders and rewarded according.

3.5 Addressing Men's Involvement

This chapter began by posing two concerns requiring further discussion. First, because Meyers, Fraser and Kittay maintain that increasing men's participation is needed in order to challenge gendered roles, the question arose as to how this might be done. Second, this chapter also set out to examine (a) how increasing men's participation is going to be beneficial and (b) if their participation is going to contribute to gender equity. Though my overall focus is on dependency work in general, I have included the structure of the policies found in the Nordic countries and their potential application in a Canadian context as men's participation is significantly higher in these countries and I want to understand if it would be useful to adopt such policy changes in Canada. It might also be worth considering if the policies found in these countries have a wider application in other areas of dependency work.

3.6 Limitations

The statistics support that increasing various benefits and establishing non-transferable time provides incentives, both monetary and non-monetary, for fathers.²⁸⁵

²⁸² Ibid, 145.

²⁸³ Ibid, 145.

²⁸⁴ Ibid, 145.

²⁸⁵ Gornick and Meyers, 39.

Moreover, these incentives can facilitate the increase in men's participation. However, while I think it is important to implement various incentives, it is possible that the benefits that result from such incentives may have limitations.

Providing incentives for men, in the context of childcare, will likely be beneficial in any family where a father is present. These incentives are favorable because they provide men with the financial ability to take leave and the non-transferable time pushes men to become more involved with their dependent(s). The more that men participate the more they challenge the stereotypical masculine roles.

Even though I agree that these incentives are useful, I am concerned about who actually benefits when fathers participate in care. In families where men are involved, not only will the incentives encourage men's participation but they will also benefit families in particular ways. Part of the importance of increasing men's participation was to challenge stereotypical gendered roles so that gender equity could be achieved. But in households where there are no men that can be encouraged to become involved, women may experience fewer benefits. My particular concern is for those whose social circumstances may already put them at a disadvantage, such as solo dependency workers. While solo caregivers will benefit from some of the reforms, for example, the availability of childcare may facilitate a single, separated, divorced or widowed caregiver's participation in the workplace. As a single caregiver though, she remains the primary caregiver. Even with childcare provisions, if her child's dependency needs exceed the boundaries of universal care, she may be unable to rely on care providers. For example, if a child becomes ill and cannot be cared for in a public facility, the solo caregiver remains

obligated to provide care. Because they do not have a partner with whom they can exchange care responsibilities, these women, as Meyers states, "... will remain the default dependency workers-the caregivers of the last resort".²⁸⁶

In general, although the suggested policy changes may not directly benefit all caregivers, providing the resources to get men more involved will be beneficial in changing stereotypes. The more that men become responsible for care and the less we consider those who do as acting altruistically, the greater the challenge that is presented to the gendered division of labor. Gaining men's participation though is only part of the solution. If particular groups of women are only going to benefit marginally when men participate, then additional protections may be needed for those who may still experience disadvantages even when men's participation increases.²⁸⁷

3.7 CPP Contributions

Kershaw's introduction of linking a reduction in contributions to the pension plan with men's participation in care work is an example of a policy element that could, in theory, be applied across various areas of dependency work. Being able to access one's pension is an element of social citizenship, a benefit that is linked to one's participation in the public realm as an employee.²⁸⁸

While this proposal is useful to consider, the main problem with attaching reductions to pensions to participation in care work is that pensions do not provide a

²⁸⁶ Meyers, 28.

²⁸⁷ What type and how far disadvantages should be compensated for is an issue that requires further explanation. If the disadvantages that are brought about by dependency relationships are being addressed in a particular way and benefiting a particular group of dependency workers, the problems of dependency are not being addressed for all dependency workers.

²⁸⁸ Kershaw, 145.

living wage. Depending on one's income level, it may actually be more beneficial to give up parental leave time because the income one makes provides a greater benefit overall than accessing a pension at a later time. However, if pensions provided more financial gains than they do, creating a connection between dependency and a reduction in one's pension could be quite successful and may actually be applied beyond the realm of childcare.

3.8 Benefits of the Nordic Model

As a case study in point, the European models have been beneficial for increasing men's involvement specifically in the area of childcare. Their high wage replacement in addition to the non-transferable leave time has facilitated a notable increase in the number of men providing care within families. For example, the introduction of daddy leave policies in Norway resulted in approximately 70% of fathers taking parental leave²⁸⁹ compared to the 5% of fathers who took leave when shared parental leave was engaged in on a voluntary basis.²⁹⁰

With adequate provisions and men's increased take-up rates, women are able to take on employment more freely because either they have alternate care providers or their partners are contributing more time within the home. Moreover, women's ability to enter and/or remain in the labor market enables them to establish an economic independence from their male partners.

²⁸⁹ Kershaw, 145; Arnlaug Leira, "Caring as Social Right: Cash for Child Care and Daddy Leave," *Social Politics* 5, no.3 (1998): 370.

²⁹⁰ Gornick and Meyers, 39.

In relation to challenging gendered roles of providing care, the benefits are not quite as clear. The daddy quota is symbolically significant because, as Leira indicates, it “promotes the idea of the wage-working male as carer for children”.²⁹¹ Institutions have become more flexible, to a certain degree, assuming that most fathers will take their leave and fewer stigmas seem to be attached to men who do take leave. In addition, it has opened up a space where the identities and stereotypes surrounding masculinity can be negotiated.²⁹² Even though there are favorable outcomes that result from certain policy reforms, the options that men have are framed as rights and not as responsibilities.²⁹³ Again, men seem to have the ability, to a much greater extent than women, to opt out of care responsibilities.

3.9 Limitations of the Nordic Models

Despite the “progressive” stance of Nordic schemes it is possible that they have not improved women’s situation or gender equity as significantly as it is often believed. Despite the positive elements, there is still a gendered gap in earnings within the Nordic countries²⁹⁴. As Gornick and Meyers explain, the gendered gap in earnings is partially explained by the high levels of occupational segregation.²⁹⁵ More women take jobs in the public sector. While these jobs offer lower wages, they do provide family-friendly employment.²⁹⁶ But it is also suggested that the occupational segregation occurs because

²⁹¹ Leira, 375.

²⁹² Ibid, 375.

²⁹³ Ibid, 375.

²⁹⁴ Datta Gupta et al., 19.

²⁹⁵ Gornick and Meyers, 19-20.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, 49.

employers may be resistant to hiring women into particular positions.²⁹⁷ Women may be working in the public sector because it is more accommodating to their family life, the lower wage may be a trade off for a more flexible schedule. The effects of the gap in earnings, the high number of women with dependents employed in the public sector and the resistance against hiring women for certain positions have less favorable consequences for all women, not only those with dependents.

In the Nordic countries women are still taking the majority of parental leave despite men's increased take-up rates. Some theorists contend that although some women may want to pursue a career others do not. Their desire to become stay-at-home mothers does not result from social pressure, gendered life patterns or cultural expectations; these women genuinely desire to be mothers. In some ways it seems quite reasonable that some women actually prefer to fill the role of providing care to dependents. The choice women make to become primary caregivers lends itself to one explanation of why there is a gendered gap in earnings, why women are concentrated in part-time employment, why they provide the majority of care consequently also taking up the majority of parental leaves.²⁹⁸ While I think such claims of genuine preference are somewhat reasonable, I also tend to agree with Gornick and Meyers' concern about this issue when they state, "In our view, it is more accurate to conclude that women's intrinsic preferences cannot be identified until gendered expectations and institutional constraints erode".²⁹⁹ It is difficult

²⁹⁷ Ibid, 49.

²⁹⁸ Ibid, 47.

²⁹⁹ Ibid, 47-48.

to assess whether women take on the role of dependency worker as a result of a genuine and unrestricted choice.

3.10 Where Does this Leave Us?

Using the area of childcare as an illustration, it is clear that increasing men's participation within this area of dependency work does have particular benefits as the statistics in the Nordic countries illustrate. Even though the European countries are not getting a 100% participation rate, there has been a significant increase in the number of fathers taking the time to care.

In the area of childcare it seems that there are very realistic ways of facilitating men's participation in care. The wage replacement and the non-transferable time are two key factors but they operate in conjunction with the social policies surrounding work and childcare provisions. While these policies have got men involved and are continuing to challenge the gendered division of labor, childcare is a limited area of dependency work and only part of the solution. Facilitating men's participation in other areas of dependency work may prove to be more difficult.

If giving men certain quotas in addition to a higher wage replacement would facilitate an overall increase men's participation within all areas of dependency work, then it seems reasonable to suggest that similar policies might help to do this as well. What is less clear is actually how this could be done. I do not have an answer to how social policies could be structured to increase men's participation in all areas of dependency work. However, because the loss of wages seems to be critical and the allocation of time seems to be beneficial, then perhaps something similar could be done

in other areas of dependency work. Since increasing men's participation is part of what is required for gender equity, and certain social policies are presently structured to encourage this, it is important to look at how beneficial men's participation is.

Men's participation is challenging gendered roles but only when there is a financial incentive and non-transferable leave time. Particularly when men are simply fulfilling the minimum requirement, i.e. taking only the time allocated specifically to them, it is merely making men and women less unequal in the public and private realms. It is demonstrating that institutions are recognizing that men need to play a more participatory role in care but they are not expected to play an equal role.

3.11 Men's Involvement and Gender Equity

In chapter 2, Fraser argued that increasing men's participation would meet all her requirements for a system of compensation that is gender equitable. The areas that could not be fulfilled by either the *Caregiver Parity Model* or the *Universal Breadwinner Model* were equality, anti-marginalization and anti-androcentrism, and I agree with her claim that men's participation is needed. Examining the structure of the European model demonstrates that it is possible to increase men's participation in particular areas of dependency work. Yet, despite such progress, it still is not entirely clear how to increase men's involvement outside of this area of care. We currently have some useful tools that can help us move towards a more gender equitable society. But achieving gender equity isn't only about getting men to participate, it also requires fulfilling the other criteria associated with gender equity and there may still be areas that are not entirely fulfilled when men participate.

In terms of the principle of equality (recall this principle is composed of income equality, leisure time equality and equality of respect), the European countries still have a gendered gap in earnings and have high concentrations of women working within family-friendly areas of employment in the public sector. The division of labor in the household still finds women doing the majority of the tasks in the private realm; even though men may have an increased presence in the private realm this does not necessarily translate into an increase in women's leisure time. I am hesitant to believe that women's leisure time is increasing, particularly because, even though women's rates in employment have increased, men's participation rate in the private realm is not paralleling women's participation rates in the public realm. Moreover, even as women increase their presence in the public realm, they still do the majority of work in the private realm. It remains unclear then if women are experiencing an increase in leisure time.

Finally, in terms of equality of respect, it is difficult to determine if it is being achieved. It seems quite possible that the improvements made within the Nordic countries have demanded more respect for the work of care. Gaining men's involvement has certainly challenged gendered roles. That institutions are assuming that individuals are both workers and carers is an acknowledgment of respect for the work being done in the private realm. Yet the gendered wage gap persists. Women, even in these countries, still maintain employment in jobs or sectors that are more conducive to combining work and care. There is the suggestion that women are being overlooked in the hiring process and while this is not necessarily directly related to their providing care, the expectation that women will have children and will care for those children may be a factor, perhaps

unacknowledged. In one sense, then, equality of respect is being achieved, but in others it may not be.

The principle of anti-marginalization is, for the most part, met by the European models. Because provisions for dependents are available (e.g. childcare and early education programs) this helps to facilitate women's less restricted participation in all areas of social life. In addition, because this principle also requires deconstructing masculine work cultures and political environments that are not women friendly, once men become more active in dependency work this challenges the masculine climate of work and politics, again demonstrating that the typical worker/employee has responsibilities as both a worker and a carer.

And finally, the principle of anti-androcentrism, involves as Fraser states, "...decentering masculine norms".³⁰⁰ This requires a change to the existing masculine standard as the point of comparison. The expectations cannot be that women should become more like men in order to have similar levels of well-being. Since the European models are making assumptions that all citizens are providers of care and participating in employment, the established policies have challenged and still are challenging the stereotypical masculine norm. Yet, at the same time, given that the majority of fathers who do take parental leave are participating only for the allotment of their non-transferable time, it is unclear whether a masculine norm has changed.

³⁰⁰ Fraser, 600.

3.12 *Something More Radical?*

While reforming policies together so that men are presented with incentives and opportunities to provide care are important, it seems that this combination of policy reforms is only going to provide benefits to a limited number of people. There are though a number of theorists who believe that something more radical is needed to challenge gendered roles and not merely appease others. Theorists in the area of citizenship studies often argue that there are certain rights and responsibilities that are required of all citizens. Citizens are afforded particular rights but with these rights also come certain responsibilities and it is argued that care should be added as one.³⁰¹

For example, Taylor-Goodby³⁰² maintains that it should be the responsibility of the state to ensure that care obligations are being fulfilled and that the state should apply penalties when these responsibilities are not met. Theorists such as Diemut Bubeck³⁰³ and Marten Lagergren³⁰⁴ support an alternate strategy where dependency workers would be able to draw from a “universal care service”. Bubeck explains that, instead of trying to work out appropriate social provisions for dependency workers, if care were conceived as an obligation of citizenship it would be a requirement that each individual provide care. Bubeck’s approach requires that men and women both have an equal obligation and each

³⁰¹ Kershaw; Lister.

³⁰² Peter Taylor Goodby, *Social Change, Social Welfare and Social Science* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1991).

³⁰³ Diemut Bubeck, *Care, Gender and Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

³⁰⁴ M. Lagergren, “Time to Care in the Advanced Welfare State – Some Observations from a Swedish Futures Study ‘Care in Society’,” in *Time to Care in Tomorrow’s Welfare Systems*. L. Balbo and H. Nowotny (Vienna, European Centre for Social Welfare Training and Research, 1986)

would be required to contribute a share of their lifetime to a “caring service”.³⁰⁵ Such an approach, she maintains, would provide dependency workers with the assistance they often need to draw on to relieve themselves of some of the burdens of care. This would not only give care the social recognition it needs, but also it would dramatically reduce, if not eliminate, the exploitation of dependency workers, as no individual would be exempt (within reason) from providing care. Moreover, for Bubeck, it would eliminate the gendered division of labor, as providing care would be a requirement of citizenship and not something that one has the option of not doing.³⁰⁶

Even though Bubeck takes a somewhat radical approach, this scheme or something similar to it could be useful. While referring to Bubeck’s scheme as a “care corps”, Meyers finds this approach positive in so far as it increases women’s delegation options with regard to dependency work.³⁰⁷ If dependency workers have a reserve of carers to draw from when they need help, this would provide a form of relief. In addition, because Bubeck’s scheme places equal expectations on both men and women, it is also gender blind.³⁰⁸ Yet, for Meyers, it is not clear that even this approach will challenge men and women’s gendered roles specifically in the area of care.³⁰⁹ Having a care obligation in the public realm would not necessarily transfer back into the private realm; at least it is not clear that it would.³¹⁰ Mullin agrees with Meyers on this point because, even if such a solution was possible, mothers would continue to care for children in a privatized context

³⁰⁵ Bubeck, 180.

³⁰⁶ Ibid, 180.

³⁰⁷ Meyers, *Gendered Work and Individual Autonomy*, 29.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, 29.

³⁰⁹ Ibid, 29.

³¹⁰ Meyers, *Gendered Work and Individual Autonomy*, 29; Ruth Lister, *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*, 3rd ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 179.

except they would now have access to a “publicly provided safety net”³¹¹. Men could fulfill their public obligation and not necessarily increase their participation in the private realm. Ruth Lister expresses concern that having an obligation to engage in citizenship-related work in the public realm may actually make men less willing to participate in tasks in the private realm.³¹² Moreover, such obligations may not produce their intended effects; they may in fact provoke resentment as opposed to providing genuine care.³¹³

Even though Bubeck’s proposal is not an acceptable solution, it has a particular strength in not allowing dependency work to be an option. This element alone is something that I think is lacking from the majority of approaches to reforming dependency work. In the context of childcare, even though fathers in the Nordic countries are provided with incentives, they are still able to choose to disregard their portion of the parental leave. The same gendered assumptions surrounding care may run a bit deeper than we care to acknowledge. Particular policy reforms would be useful, facilitating and encouraging men’s participation, but the same standards do not apply equally to men and women. Men can be encouraged to participate in care but their opting out is conceived as less problematic than if women do the same. At the very least Bubeck’s proposal does not allow individuals exit options when it concerns the provision of care and the social responsibility that should be associated with it.³¹⁴

³¹¹ Mullin, 151.

³¹² Lister, 179.

³¹³ Ibid, 179.

³¹⁴ Diana T. Meyers is critical of Bubeck’s proposal because it infringes on individuals’ freedom. Equally concerning is that people would be forced to provide care who had no desire to do so, thus this presents particular harms to the individuals being cared for. While I would not suggest that Bubeck’s model is the option to implement, I do think there is something worth examining within it.

Chapter 4³¹⁵

Introduction

At the close of chapter three it is apparent that the support that we provide dependency workers has to be more than simply providing them with a wage. We need to accommodate the criteria of gender equity so that dependency workers will have access to the resources needed to sustain dependency relationships. Additionally, incorporating gender equity will ensure that dependency workers are providing care within a system that actively guards them against a multitude of inequalities that cannot be protected against through compensation alone. We need more men participating in dependency work so that the gendered roles associated with dependency work will be challenged. But instituting governmental policies that help achieve gender equity provides only a partial solution. Social policies are useful in that they do end up challenging gendered assumptions but they cannot entirely renegotiate gendered roles. There are gendered assumptions that permeate our society and whether individuals enter these roles as a result of being able to make an unconstrained choice remains questionable. In what follows I am going to discuss how recognition from others is critical for an individual's self-understanding. Moreover, I will suggest that the ways in which gender gains recognition raise questions about the choices individuals have to enter into dependency work.

The first section of this chapter is going to focus on how recognition occurs

³¹⁵ I am indebted to Heather Kuiper for being a patient listener and helpful critic throughout the writing of this chapter.

through our interactions with other members of society within which we are situated. Because recognition contributes to one's self-understanding, and recognition occurs through our interactions with others, the society we are in is highly influential in our process of self-understanding. The first section of this chapter outlines what recognition is and the various senses in which recognition occurs: this includes recognition of personhood, agency, and personality. The second section will explain how recognition is connected to our interactions with others. In order to understand ourselves as being distinct from others we need to construct our self-understanding both through others and independently from them. This understanding of ourselves occurs through the community giving us the proper recognition that enables us to have our experiences heard, understood, validated and respected. When recognition is lacking or is absent, as Misha Strauss states, it "... affects the quality of the resources available to the individual that go into the forming of self-understanding, as well as the conditions for making belief and behavior coherent".³¹⁶

4.1 Recognition From and Through Others

Recognition is a judgment and/or a validation of respect as well as an acknowledgement of understanding individuals in the same way they understand themselves.³¹⁷ As Strauss further indicates, because recognition is a social process, "...

³¹⁶ Misha Strauss, "The Role of Recognition in the Formation of Self-Understanding." in *Recognition, Responsibility and Rights*, ed. Robin N. Fiore and Hilde Lindemann Nelson. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003). 47.

³¹⁷ For the purposes of this chapter I have excluded Strauss' further exploration of how non-recognition or misrecognition leads to harms of exclusion and demoralization because it is beyond the scope of this paper.

[it] reveals an important kind of dependency individuals have on others when it comes to the formation of self-understanding”.³¹⁸

For Strauss, recognition matters to self-understanding because although we understand ourselves as individuals, as being distinct from others, our understanding and interpretation of ourselves, our environment and our actions are influenced by others. Or, to put it simply, being able to adequately construct one’s self-understanding is not something that occurs in a vacuum. It is the wider society within which we are situated that determines how and in what circumstances we are recognized. The communities that we are a part of constantly engage in a process of establishing recognition norms.

Our community contributes to our own self-understanding by first giving us access the conceptual space where “shared understandings” and “collective identities” are presented and understood.³¹⁹ Simply because the community grants individuals access to these conceptual spaces, does not mean this is where the community’s influence ends. Individuals must also be given the opportunity to voice their experiences and have those experiences heard and understood.³²⁰ In addition, once their voice is heard, the community can recognize the experiences of others hence giving credibility to their experiences.³²¹ Gaining credibility requires that individuals have some authority to “influence ‘social interpretations and practices’”³²² (e.g. the shared understandings of being a good mother or father). This process of self-understanding cannot be done without the support and validation of others. To illustrate, Strauss explains, “Just as the

³¹⁸ Strauss, 39.

³¹⁹ Ibid, 46.

³²⁰ Ibid, 46.

³²¹ Ibid, 46.

³²² Ibid, 41.

slave cannot make herself free by declaration alone, neither can any individual make some aspect of herself mean something particular by assertion alone”.³²³

4.2 Issues Arising From a Lack or Absence of Recognition

When discussing issues such as equality, certain features of the recognition process are recognized as relevant. Kittay illustrated one example of the importance of recognition when she criticized Rawls for his failure to recognize dependency workers and dependents thus excluding them from being participants in constructing the fair terms of agreement necessary for social cooperation.³²⁴ To be treated as an equal and to be included in the deliberation process that determines what it means to be equal require recognition from others based on certain shared traits.

Recognition also shapes self-understanding in so far as popular cultural images, or what Strauss calls “iconic images”³²⁵, can construct inadequate representations of individuals and groups. Strauss explains that these images appear through various forms of media, they are images that “form our cultural mythology”.³²⁶ Such images are important because they provide the scripts or narratives that individuals can identify with and use in the process of constructing life plans and life stories.³²⁷ Individuals use these existing representations to help construct their own self-understanding. These images are constructed by society as a reflection of our understanding of “collective identities”³²⁸;

³²³ Ibid. 42.

³²⁴ See Chapter 1

³²⁵ Ibid, 40.

³²⁶ Ibid, 41.

³²⁷ Ibid. 41.

³²⁸ Ibid. 41.

when an individual cannot identify with these shared identities and understand themselves through these identities, individuals may end up lacking recognition.³²⁹

In addition, when the community has shared understandings about collective identities, and certain traits become invisible and consequently unrecognized, it can result in “‘the deprivation of opportunity’ to ‘occup[y] roles or enter...into relationships that are identity constituting’”.³³⁰ Conversely, certain features may be recognized but determined to disqualify one from occupying certain roles.³³¹ To illustrate how certain roles can become unavailable to certain individuals, Strauss mentions that being a priest is not a role available to a Catholic woman.³³²

Strauss acknowledges that individuals can find recognition within “smaller subcommunities,”³³³ hence they will still have access to the resources they need to construct an adequate self-understanding. However, she contends that even if one can find the recognition needed within a subcommunity and the construction of their self-understanding benefits, they still have to cope with a lack or absence of recognition within the wider society.³³⁴ As with many subcommunities, though they may be able to provide recognition, validation and support to the members within their communities, they often lack the authoritative voice found within the wider society.

This section on recognition has shown how self-understanding occurs through recognition. What follows in the second section is an exploration of how gendered

³²⁹ Ibid, 41.

³³⁰ Nelson cited in Strauss, 42.

³³¹ Strauss, 42.

³³² Ibid, 43.

³³³ Ibid, 48.

³³⁴ Ibid, 49.

recognition can compromise one's self-understanding and ultimately limit the roles that individuals are able to occupy. Self-understanding and the construction of individual identity occur through the influence of the wider society. Constructing an adequate self-understanding, an identity, occurs through our interactions with others; thus self-understanding is relational. When the wider community gives us the recognition that allows us into the conceptual space where our experiences are expressed and our voices are heard, the members of the community help us to interpret and understand ourselves and our environment. Moreover, they assist in the processes of deliberation, and they help us understand the roles we can occupy and the identities that we have access to. They aid us not simply through recognition but also by supporting, validating and respecting the ways in which we attempt to understand ourselves. Because our interactions with others have a significant influence on how we understand ourselves, the content of our interactions can be guided by particular recognition norms. When individuals' particular traits receive recognition, whether through their personhood, agency or personality, this establishes a norm. Self-understanding and the construction of identity can be limited when recognition establishes particular norms.

4.3 Recognizing Gender

We can see how gender is recognized even before birth. For those who choose to find out the sex of their fetus, acts of decorating the nursery and filling closets and drawers with gender-specific clothing directs the unborn child down a distinctly gendered life path. Newborns are touched, talked to and interacted with differently depending on their gender. Parents are likely to describe their children in terms that are stereotypical of

their gender. Katherine Hildebrandt Karraker, Dena Ann Vogel and Margaret Ann Lake found that newborn girls were described by their parents as being "... finer featured, less strong, more delicate and more feminine"³³⁵ than newborn boys. The responses to girls' and boys' actions are different as well. The infant male who grasps another is interpreted as demonstrating strength (e.g. "he's got a firm grip") whereas the same action performed by an infant girl is interpreted as a sign of delicate affection (e.g. "she's so gentle").³³⁶ It is through their interactions with others, this recognition of gender, that boys and girls begin learning what traits are appropriate to have and which are not.

Children's toys and the way children engage in play further maintain particular ways of recognizing gender. Toys and activities that are recognized as being appropriate for boys encourage particular skills such as dexterity and spatial relations, while stereotypical girls' toys and activities reinforce skills of domesticity and nurturance.³³⁷ When boys start developing certain skills at an early age and the toys that are deemed appropriate for them increase particular skills, it facilitates gender stereotypes. For example, particular stereotypes that boys are better at math and girls are better at reading are true to a certain extent. As Lise Eliot explains though,

There are basic behavioral differences between the sexes, but we should note that these differences increase with age because our children's intellectual biases are being exaggerated and intensified by our gendered

³³⁵ Katherine Hildebrandt Karraker, Dena Ann Vogel and Margaret Ann Lake, "Parents' Gender-Stereotyped Perception of Newborns: The Eye of the Beholder Revisited," *Sex Roles* 33, no. 9-10: (1995), 697.

³³⁶ Sally Foley, Sally A. Kope, and Dennis P. Sugre, *Sex Matters for Women*. (New York: Guilford Press, 2002), 11.

³³⁷ Current examples with links to numerous other examples can be found here: http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2009/06_24/10117.

culture. Children don't inherit intellectual differences. They learn them. They are a result of what we expect a boy or girl to be³³⁸

It is not only the toys that contribute to gender socialization but also the way that different sexes are encouraged to play. As Alice Hendrickson Eagly, Anne E. Beall, and Robert J. Sternberg explain "... gender-typed play ... differentially emphasize[s] relational activities for girls, such as playing at mothering dolls, and collective activities for boys, such as sports teams".³³⁹ Gender is still reinforced in stereotypical ways. The interactions that children have with others, the interpretations of their actions by others and the skills they learn through engagement with others all contribute to gender socialization.

This does not suggest of course that infants are always treated in gendered ways. However, in general these gendered acts and interpretations continue to saturate gendered norms. This gendered socialization is so prominent that some parents actively isolate their infants from gendered norms by exposing them to a variety of activities while also treating and interacting with them in gender neutral ways. Most recently, one couple even went so far as to hide their child's sex to allow their child to grow up in as gender-neutral conditions as possible.³⁴⁰

Despite the effort of parents to protect their children from gender socialization, their efforts come into conflict when their children begin to interact with others outside

³³⁸ Lise Eliot in Robin Kylie, "Male and female ability differences down to socialisation, not genetics." *The Observer*, August 15, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/aug/15/girls-boys-think-same-way>

³³⁹ Alice Hendrickson Eagly, Anne E. Beall, and Robert J. Sternberg. *The Psychology of Gender*. (New York: Guilford Press. 2004),176.

³⁴⁰ Lydia Parafianowicz. "Swedish parents keep 2-year-old's gender secret." *The Local*. 23 June 09. <http://www.thelocal.se/20090623/>

their family and close friends. Parents often note the difficulties of maintaining their own gender-neutral standards once their children begin interacting with others.³⁴¹ Boys may develop attitudes that they cannot like the color pink, that boys do not like to bake cakes and that, when they engage in play activities, they do not fulfill the roles associated with nurturing and domesticity. Similarly, girls may develop attitudes that they are supposed to dislike the color blue; that they shouldn't have short hair; that they like playing dress-up and make-believe; and that, when they engage in play they tend to take on the nurturing and domestic roles.³⁴² As much as parents try to prevent their children from being funneled into particular gendered stereotypes, this is difficult to do. It is also more challenging for parents to maintain this gender-neutral upbringing when their children are increasingly exposed to gendered stereotypes and standards.

These gendered characteristics are constantly reinforced, in some ways perhaps unintentionally, on women and men as they mature. A multitude of media outlets help to keep gender in its place. Magazines directed at teens and young women provide relationship and beauty advice. They make suggestions about hiding flaws and losing weight. They provide tests that help to determine if your crush is interested in you and how to attract the attention of young men.³⁴³ Television and films follow women as they pursue romance. Occasionally women are characterized as career-oriented but they are

³⁴¹ See <http://feministphilosophers.wordpress.com/2010/07/21/the-gender-stereotype-game/> and *Sociological Images* for additional illustrations.

³⁴² For example, <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2008/02/02/hasbro-teachers-girls-to-be-good-housewives/>, <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2010/01/09/socialization-and-gendered-job-segregation/>, <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2010/07/15/gendered-chemistry-sets-for-kids/>

³⁴³ See *Seventeen* and *ELLEgirl* websites for further illustrations of quizzes, beauty and fashion advice.

also portrayed as having a somewhat unfulfilled life, particularly in private life.

Television and film consistently romanticize love, marriage and childrearing. Much of women's lives are directed towards developing the skills required to make them a "good mother" and /or a "good wife" and media outlets seem to reinforce these roles for women.³⁴⁴

Similarly, men are also pressured to conform to certain standards. They are strongly encouraged to be independent, competitive, dominant and heroic. If they do not exhibit and/or pursue these characteristics, they will be unable to experience the ideal of masculinity. In film and television shows men's lives predominantly unfold within the public realm. They are shown pursuing careers which reward them both personally and financially while simultaneously finding themselves in positions of authority and expertise. Men are portrayed in powerful and authoritative positions as lawyers, police officers, doctors, and the like. Their contributions to the public realm are framed as important in various ways (e.g. they save lives, they protect the innocent).

It is not uncommon to see men portrayed as having families, but they will rarely be the primary caregiver to their dependents. They are not often cast into roles where they provide care for others. In the cases where they are portrayed as a primary caregiver, men's entrance into this role is usually something they enter into involuntarily (e.g. films such as *Mr. Mom*, *Three Men and a Baby*, *Daddy Day Care*). It tends to result from a variety of circumstances where the female partner has become absent. In addition, in many cases the role of men as primary caregivers is portrayed in a very comical manner,

³⁴⁴ See *target women on infomania* [http://current.com/shows/infomania/target-women:](http://current.com/shows/infomania/target-women)

reinforcing that men are not competent care providers. Most of the skills and traits that have been associated with them because of their gender are more successfully applicable in the public realm.

To a large extent, through our recognition of gender and through the media's cultural imagery, men and women are groomed for particular roles. Women spend a large portion of their lives being taught all the necessary skills to maintain a home. A girl has practiced cooking and serving skills in her childhood mock kitchen. It is very likely that she has spent most of her childhood with a variety of dolls who require emotional and physical attention. Throughout adolescence and well into adulthood, she has been bombarded with advice on how to gain men's attention and once she is successful, she is provided with further advice on how to maintain the relationship. As she matures, there is continual reinforcement about the success in finding a partner, getting married, becoming pregnant and raising children.³⁴⁵ There is a stereotypical life progression that both genders become subjected to.³⁴⁶

It is assumed that most women first and foremost desire to marry and to have

³⁴⁵ See *Cosmopolitan*, *Allure* and *Elle* websites for illustrations about pursuing and gaining men's attention. Magazines such as *Wedding Bride* and *Today's Bride* give priceless wedding/bridal advice, as does www.brides.com. *Fit Pregnancy* and *Today's Parent* provide advice about parenting and pregnancy.

³⁴⁶ While this description of gender socialization may seem out of touch with the status of women today, I believe these gender life trajectories are still very prominent. Women have increased their presence in the public realm. Even though we see many more women in law and medical schools, these women still tend to dominate particular areas. Many more female physicians are general practitioners as opposed to specialists and more male physicians are found specializing in various areas. Not only is a general practitioner a more caring role than others, but women often pursue a career as a GP because it gives them greater flexibility to raise a family and maintain a career.

In addition, even though half the students in university may be women, there is a significant decrease in the representation of women in the education levels after an undergraduate degree. Though this is a significant and a very positive change, it also could be argued that women are still pursuing a gender life path, however they may be delaying their entrance into motherhood.

children. It is not uncommon that men may also marry and have children, but having a family is almost a secondary expectation. There seems to be more acceptability for men's choice to remain a "content bachelor" than the voluntarily childless woman who pursues a career perhaps instead of having a family. This gendered recognition about marriage and particularly about conceiving and giving birth to children is associated with both genders but is much more pronounced for women. Being able to conceive and bear children is considered to be fulfilling and an important experience for a woman. There is considerable positive reinforcement and praise extended to women who are expecting. Expecting a child becomes, to a certain degree, a kind of accomplishment.³⁴⁷

The same type and degree of praise and excitement is not extended to women who achieve their own individual life goals. Women end up being recognized and praised for their ability to have children but there is arguably a lack of recognition that occurs for the career-oriented woman. Society suggests that a woman's greatest achievement is bringing a human life into the world, and few, if any, other accomplishments are equally valuable. Having a child is not the same thing as for example publishing a book. But for certain individuals, their published book is their greatest achievement. It is their life's work and it's a part of how they end up understanding who they are, yet their work is not received in the same way as the motherhood of another woman. If a woman does not receive

³⁴⁷ I am not trying to paint a picture of pregnancy that is only positive. There are negative consequences that come along with pregnancy as well. Most pregnant women's behaviors become socially monitored, and some women become monitored to a much greater degree than others based on their social status, race, education and so forth. Certain expectations are placed on mothers who are expecting. It is highly recommended that they engage in socially regulated practices. They are expected to get an ultrasound, eat right, follow the doctor's orders in relation to optimizing the health of the fetus and also be compliant about the recommended method of birth. The negative aspects that befall expectant mothers are important, but they are a lesser part of the common discourse.

recognition from those around her, her self-understanding is conflicted.

The woman who actively chooses a life without children is atypical. The voluntarily childless woman is often questioned about her choices and simultaneously judged despite perhaps having valid reasons. In media, there is a tendency to portray this woman as selfish or empty. Her life could be richer if she sought a relationship, marriage and a family. Aside from the cultural imagery of the media, in society many of these women, when vocalizing their desire to remain childless, actually spend a better part of their lives being told that their desires will change. Others often offer motivational advice, suggesting that once she has children she will experience a fulfillment and a joy unlike any other. Few will be able to respect her decision to remain childless and many will go further suggesting that her feelings surrounding motherhood will change and that eventually she will “come around”. Of course, this is not to suggest there is no truth to such statements but just as it would be alarmingly inappropriate for the others to invalidate the feelings of women who desire to be mothers by suggesting that they may regret their decision to opt for motherhood it also seems inappropriate that voluntarily childless women are not assumed to know better about their own desires. More importantly though, by undermining an individual’s judgments about her own desires and preferences, recognition norms are affecting her confidence in her own agency and failing to give her the recognition she needs. And it is these attitudes and behaviors that reinforce the gender norms that coerce women into dependency work.

The cultural assumption is not simply that women will have children, but once their children are born, they are expected to become primary caregivers. This is not to

suggest that men have no expectations in the realm of providing care, but their expectations do not parallel women's. The recognition men receive is that they are expected to provide the financial support to sustain their family. While they may receive recognition for providing some care for their children, their main responsibility is as a breadwinner requiring them to spend a majority of their time in the workforce.³⁴⁸ This often results in their exemption from care responsibilities.

Unsurprisingly, this recognition that women have the necessary skills for providing care exceeds simply caring for their own children. There is an expectation of care from women that extends through generations. In many families, there is an expectation that the care that was given to female children will be given in return.³⁴⁹ Sometimes this takes the form of mothers expecting their daughters to have children so they can, in a sense, "pay forward" the care they were given as children to their own dependents. However, it is not uncommon that, as family members age, their daughters will care for them when they can no longer care for themselves.³⁵⁰ In situations where a family may not have a biological daughter to take on the work, it often becomes the expectation that another female family member will provide care (in many cases, if the

³⁴⁸ While the traditional usage of breadwinner assumed that a single wage would adequately support any number of dependents, the idea of a breadwinner wage has changed since its original inception. Presently the breadwinner wage is a significantly higher wage in a family with more than one income. Many two-parent households often see both partners contributing throughout their lives in employment. However, it still tends to be women who work in lower paid and/or part-time employment. Women are also more likely to take time off from paid employment to care for their dependent(s).

³⁴⁹ Glenna Spitze and John Logan, "Sons, Daughters, and Intergenerational Social Support," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 52, (1990): 420-30. Douglas Wolf, Vicki A. Freedman, and Beth J. Soldo. (1997). "The Division of Family Labor: Care for Elderly Parents." *Journals of Gerontology* 52B, (1990).

³⁵⁰ Karen McGarry, "Caring for the Elderly: The Role of Adult Children," ed. David A. Wise (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). 133-63.

son is married, his wife may be expected to provide care). To a certain extent, the female family members are expected to be willing to negotiate their life and career plans in order to meet the needs of those who require care whereas the same expectation does not tend to occur with men.³⁵¹ Moreover, it is often assumed that men need to provide for their own families and so renegotiating their work is less of an option.

In order to have the best of both worlds, women often give up time in other areas of their life (i.e. their leisure time, time spent on domestic tasks and sleep) to strike a balance between their responsibilities of work and care. The woman who receives recognition for her participation as a worker, if she is perceived as working too much, is deemed neglectful of her dependents. As a result, her child's well-being and future life prospects are considered compromised. The mother who spends an excess of time attending to her dependent's every need is overwhelming and is over-involved in her dependent's life. In contrast, the man who works excess hours is a good provider setting his needs and desires aside for the needs, and ultimately the well-being, of his family.

As a member of a wider community, a community that contributes to an individual's self-understanding through recognition, support and validation, an individual ends up having their sex recognized in a variety of ways. Because gender gains recognition in particular ways and for each gender differently, it can contribute to one's self-understanding in unfavorable and unequal ways. When certain characteristics and

³⁵¹ John C. Henretta, Martha S. Hill, Wei Li, Beth J. Soldo, and Douglas A. Wolf. (1997). "Selection of Children To Provide Care: The Effect of Earlier Parental Transfers." *Journals of Gerontology* 52B, no. 4: 110-119; German Council for Social and Economic Data (RatSWD). *Intergenerational Relationships*. Working Paper No. 116. July 2009. http://www.ratswd.de/download/RatSWD_WP_2009/RatSWD_WP_116.pdf

roles are recognized as being associated with gender and when the wider society does not have an ongoing dialogue in relation to why particular characteristics gain recognition and thus also who receives recognition, these gendered traits are unintentionally reinforced. The individuals who are trying to negotiate their own self-understanding within society can find it challenging to do so on their own.

Recognition would not be as significant an issue in the realm of care if the characteristics of an individual who is capable of providing adequate care were not overwhelmingly traits “found” in women. Moreover, it is not simply that these particular traits are found in women, but also that these traits are *not* recognized as being found in men. When our cultural imagery reinforces the distinction between the public and private realms and which gender is overwhelmingly found within each realm, it limits the individual’s ability to identify with alternative representations of who and what they can be.

When male care providers are portrayed as lacking the necessary skills and any such attempts are portrayed as being comic, it can remain difficult for a man to understand himself as being capable of taking on such a role. Similarly, when career-oriented women are recognized as being lonely and cold-hearted, leading unfulfilled lives, there can be a disconnect between how a woman understands herself and how those she feels she can identify with are portrayed. Moreover, if she is unable to receive recognition, or if there is an absence of recognition in relation to her life projects and commitments and she does not receive validation from those she interacts with, she may not have the resources she needs to construct an adequate self-understanding.

When recognition is lacking or even misplaced it complicates an individual's ability to be included within the conceptual space where the dialogue of collective identities and shared understanding occurs. This remains critical for understanding the roles that people are able to enter into. The dependency worker is an illustration of one such role. Because gender is being recognized in stereotypical ways and is being reinforced throughout one's life course, women have easier access to roles as dependency workers regardless of whether they choose this path. Conversely, men who may prefer to take on this role will have a more difficult time gaining access and being recognized as capable of providing care. It is not just that men might not be able to take on this role, because to a certain extent we do recognize that men can provide care. But in order for men to enter the role of a dependency worker and understand how what they do contributes to who they are, they require the recognition, support and validation of the society within which they are a part. When that recognition is absent or lacking it undermines the ability to access that role and engage in that role both confidently and competently.

4.4 Recognition and Gendered Norms

In the first two sections of this chapter, I have discussed the ways in which gender receives recognition from society and how this contributes to establishing and maintaining stereotypical gendered norms. Recognition entails a dependence on others and gender gains recognition from others in particular and often in disadvantageous ways. The recognition of gender is influential in the formation of self-understanding and in the roles that individuals are able (or unable) to occupy. Since recognition is relational

and gender is being recognized in unfavorable ways or maybe just misplaced, it raises questions about the choices that individuals have with regard to entering into and occupying the role of 'dependency worker'.

Why does gendered recognition compromise choice?

Individuals' decisions regarding what role(s) to occupy within society need to be freely chosen. To freely choose indicates a choice that is both reflective and undetermined. When I discuss whether the role of dependency workers is freely chosen, my concern is whether the individual would make the same choice to take on this role if the options that she had available to her were not pressured. Because the self is relational, the choice that is made entails both an individual factor and an external factor. The individual agent is reflective when s/he critically examines the options available. A choice is undetermined when all the options are reasonably validated by society through recognition norms. Though I am not certain if it is possible to assess whether individuals can ever have a truly "free choice," I do have concerns about how easily individuals can understand the roles they have access to and the ways in which they can understand themselves within those roles when recognition norms continually reinforce gendered norms and subsequently validate and support the individual. Without an honest and continual reevaluation and recognition of these norms in our interactions with society, our ability to enter into and occupy certain roles risks being compromised.

When certain roles are easier to occupy, and are given recognition and the corresponding support and validation from the wider society, people are encouraged to take up those roles. When recognition positively reinforces gendered roles, it can make it

easier for people to understand what roles they can occupy and how they can construct and negotiate their identities within those roles. But when recognition is absent or lacking, choosing and functioning within these roles is difficult.

External factors do affect the choices that we make. However, in the case of providing care, it is not clear that individuals who enter into the role of the dependency worker do so because it is one that they have consciously chosen from a wide range of possibilities. Individuals often enter these roles because gendered norms have gained societal recognition and thus provide support and validation in particular ways. Individuals can be uncritical of the roles they play within society. Moreover, they often occupy gendered roles because it is how they best see themselves functioning within society. Recognition norms do contribute to available options we have to choose from and the corresponding roles we have access to.

Section two demonstrated the various ways that gender gains recognition. The recognition of gender continually educates children all the way into adulthood about the kind of lives they ought to pursue. Because one's self-understanding is relational, recognition norms can influence our wants and desires as well as what roles we believe are open to us within society. For example, when recognition norms encourage the skills to care well, this enables many women to see the role of the dependency worker as not simply easily accessible and widely supported and validated, but it is also a role that can be entered into with the least amount of societal resistance. Similarly, when men adhere to recognition norms, the roles they fill in the public realm will remain accessible, supported and respected. When people don't want to adhere, then they do not fit, and it

seems unfair that gendered norms position people into having to choose between fitting into society and doing what they want.

4.5 The Gendered Recognition of Mothers and Fathers

Recognition of Mothers

In her exploration of motherhood, Meyers raises concerns about the context within which motherhood is chosen.³⁵² Reviewing a research study of women's reproductive choices, she explored the nonchalant and uncritical responses women gave about their decision to become mothers.³⁵³ Many mothers commented on how there was an assumption that they would have children. One woman went as far as to suggest that the question of choice was never particularly prominent in any decision making process, as she stated, "I can't remember if I ever thought I had a choice. I think I thought you just did it. You grow up and you have children".³⁵⁴ Women who were unable to conceive reported experiencing feelings of emptiness.³⁵⁵ It is not necessarily the case that these women incorrectly interpreted their wants and their desires. When recognition of gendered roles occurs from a very early age and is reinforced into maturity, the "choice" that we have to enter into particular roles in society occurs well before we have developed the necessary skills to be capable of making that choice.³⁵⁶ Because they indicated that there was really no question about whether or not they would enter motherhood, it raises concerns about whether they reflectively chose to become mothers.

³⁵² Diana T. Meyers, "The Rush to Motherhood-Pronatalist Discourse and Women's Autonomy," *Signs* 26, no. 3(2001): 746.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 746.

³⁵⁴ Mardy S. Ireland, "Reconceiving Women: Separating Motherhood from Female Identity (New York: Guilford, 1993) quoted in Diana T. Meyers, "The Rush to Motherhood-Pronatalist Discourse and Women's Autonomy," *Signs* 26, no. 3(2001): 746.

³⁵⁵ Meyers, *The Rush to Motherhood-Pronatalist Discourse and Women's Autonomy*, 747.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 748.

Women have more roles available than simply becoming a mother. However, these additional roles come with complications. As a woman enters the role of a worker in the public realm, her roles begin to compete and complicate. Chapter 2 demonstrated that women with dependents are able to occupy the role of an employee, but that they may experience disadvantages because of how recognition norms assign care responsibilities. Their roles may require prioritizing and it is often the case that the individual woman does not choose what she prioritizes. The recognition norms that society has established do this for her. When conflicting expectations are attached to competing roles, mothers must negotiate a way to meet the expectations of both simultaneously. Even if she is able to juggle both roles, it may be assumed, based on recognition norms, that she can only adequately occupy one of the roles and the role of the dependency worker takes priority (whether or not she has prioritized it in this way). Women are often assumed to be dependency workers first, and participants in the public realm second. So their role in the public realm can be limited by the recognition norms that label care work as women's work.³⁵⁷ These recognition norms operate similarly even for women without dependents. The woman who pursues a career is still subjected to the recognition norms that assign care work to women. Even if she does not have dependents, the assumption is that she will, and this affects the opportunities that become available to her.³⁵⁸

Moreover, it is much easier for women to engage in the roles that are assumed to be appropriate for her. When gendered norms recognize these roles and the individuals

³⁵⁷ Though there have been efforts to challenge the label of care work as women's work, my point is to demonstrate that it still remains much easier for women to enter into and engage in the role of a care provider than it is for men.

³⁵⁸ See Chapter 2, page 49.

who are supposed to occupy them, it makes understanding one's self through and within these roles less complicated than if another path were chosen. Recognition norms begin reinforcing differences between women and men from the time they are newborns. The continuation of gendered norms begins teaching children particular skills that will become useful for them later in life. Girls begin learning through their interactions with others the skills that increase their ability to care well. Often women develop a particular set of skills that enables them to respond adequately and competently to need. While recognition norms may prepare women for the entrance into motherhood, they are equally prepared³⁵⁹ to provide care to others. This makes women's ability to enter into and to remain in the role of a dependency worker very easy. When dependency work continues to be overwhelmingly done by women it continues to reinforce recognition in specific ways.

Recognition of Fathers

Men can take on the role of the primary care provider. But recognition norms do make occupying this role challenging. In Andrea Doucet's work, *Do Men Mother?*³⁶⁰, fathers expressed how entering and remaining in the role of a primary caregiver was challenging in distinct but related ways. These men expressed concern about how they were perceived to have failed to meet their expectation of providing financial support to their families but they internalized this feeling as well.³⁶¹ In addition, they also found it

³⁵⁹ Even though recognition norms prepare women to enter dependency work, they are rarely prepared at all. The cultural assumption is that mothering is natural and being female automatically means women are good at mothering, which is rarely the case.

³⁶⁰ Andrea Doucet, *Do Men Mother?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

³⁶¹ *Ibid*, 195.

difficult to cope in a role that society expects to be filled by women.³⁶² The challenges they faced in this role are related to the lack of recognition they received in this role. The men in Doucet's research further indicated how, even after taking on work of providing care, their actions became suspect, particularly in public places. One father recounts how his presence was questioned as he read books to his child and other children in the schoolyard.³⁶³ Another expresses how he was singled out in a baby massage class where it was made overtly clear to him that "... you have to be careful that nothing is perceived as sexual touching".³⁶⁴ Other fathers expressed their own leering towards lone men sitting in parks watching children.³⁶⁵ Most of these fathers indicated that, while they had trouble fitting into their roles, they found the responses from others to be less than favorable. They also noted that, in the situations where their actions became suspect, it is likely that no one would have raised questions if they had been women.³⁶⁶ There is a level of social acceptability that is extended to women in the role of primary caregiver that is not equally extended to men. One father went as far as prohibiting his daughter from inviting her female friends for a sleepover because he did not want to take the chance of being involved in a situation where damaging accusations could be made.³⁶⁷

These examples are but a small illustration of some of the challenging responses that men encounter when they try to take on a role that is overwhelmingly attributed to

³⁶² Ibid, 195.

³⁶³ Ibid, 190.

³⁶⁴ Ibid, 190.

³⁶⁵ Ibid, 190. I do not question the legitimacy of this concern. However I do think it makes assuming the role of a male caregiver even more challenging particularly if this is the association that is being made. My point is to show one of the issues men may face in pursuing a care-providing role, particularly if there is a negative association when men have a genuine interest in providing care.

³⁶⁶ Ibid, 190.

³⁶⁷ Ibid, 190.

women. Men may have access to the role of primary caregiver; however, successfully constructing self-understanding remains difficult, particularly when they have limited recognition within and validation from society.

Men do have a choice to become dependency workers. But when they enter into these roles and their presence around children becomes suspect, or when doing the work invokes the characteristics of stereotypical femininity regardless of whether these characteristics are useful for providing care, it may be much more desirable for men to access the roles that are recognized as being more suitable for them to occupy. Again, it seems that the choice for men to be involved in dependency work is influenced by a variety of external factors (e.g. You can choose to be a caregiver but you will be labeled effeminate if you do. Or you can choose dependency work but your presence around children will be viewed suspiciously, as men should not take too high of an interest in children).

For many men who enter into the role of dependency worker, they receive conflicting recognition and validation from the wider community they are situated within. Entering into dependency work is an option for men but it seems to be an option that receives conflicting recognition and validation. When these conflicts occur, men have to continually challenge stereotypical norms. They have to demonstrate that they are competent at dependency work and they have to show that their interest in providing care for dependents is not motivated by inappropriate desires. Simultaneously though, these men also have to be able to understand that occupying this role does not mean they have not fulfilled their responsibilities as a breadwinner and that the role they can most easily

enter into and occupy is one that is career-oriented (that is, when they do not choose dependency work as paid employment). In order to understand one's self within this role the recognition one receives needs to be adequately supported by society in ways that enable one to be reflective about the choices that one has as well as about the choices that they make. It is not clear, when recognition norms continue to operate in a gendered way, if the available options individuals end up being able to choose from are options that are unpressured and whether the individuals assuming these roles make a reflective decision about their options.

Entering into dependency work is often given recognition as a role that women are not just capable of doing, but that they do more competently than men. Motherhood and dependency work devolve into a role that is perceived as natural for women to do. Recognition norms provide positive and continual reinforcement of the association between women and care-giving, making it very easy for many women to internalize this connection. Moreover, recognition norms may contribute to self-doubt for women who may not desire this role and experience a disconnect between what their desires are and how recognition norms reinforce what her desires ought to be. If recognition norms reinforce gendered characteristics, the woman who prefers not to take on the role of dependency worker may find alternate roles not as easy or as accessible to occupy. Recognition norms can influence both how she is able to understand herself within that role and how others view her participation in that role, particularly if she has to contend with conflicting recognition norms within society. When these roles are not easy to enter into and occupy and when the connection between women and dependency work remains

strong because of recognition norms, it raises questions about how free the choice to enter into dependency work is.

If recognition norms are contributing to the gendered paths that individuals are sent down, reinforcing women's connection with motherhood and subsequently with dependency work, it is not clear that the choice to become a mother is as freely chosen as any other role. The role of dependency worker tends to be distinct from other roles specifically because of its entrance and exit options. If there is already recognition given and reinforced regarding the natural connection between women and mothering as well as a reinforced perception that childless women lead unfulfilled lives, this contributes to the context where choices are made available. Because recognition does not tend to question the connection between women and motherhood and instead tends to reinforce it, this raises questions about whether the context within which various roles become available is a coercive one. If the suggestion is that one can lead a fulfilled life through having and raising children or lead a successful but unfulfilled career-focused life, but the positive recognition favors the role of motherhood, most individuals would be drawn to the role that is portrayed as being the most rewarding and fulfilling. Recognition norms raise the question about how easily women are able to enter into the role of dependency work. Equally important is the lack of exit options a woman has once she is within a dependency relationship. Once within a dependency relationship, it is very difficult to

exit from it. Moreover, exiting from a dependency relationship is not presented as a realistic or acceptable option for mothers.³⁶⁸

The entrance and exit options that are attached to dependency work help to illustrate why this role is distinct from other roles that individuals may have access to. If the context in which we choose dependency is coercive and if there are no acceptable exit options, this distinguishes the role dependency workers occupy from other available roles. For the most part, we believe, individuals can enter into the role of, for example, a physician, a lawyer or a mechanic more or less as a result of a free choice. While family pressures may create a coercive context and lead some people down particular life paths (e.g. everyone in one's family is a doctor, so it is expected that that individual will be one as well) these individuals can still receive recognition and validation from the wider society. They may understand through their interactions with others that, while becoming a doctor is a positive role, there are other roles that one can take on despite familial expectations. Moreover, even if one decides to pursue a medical degree because of familial expectations, the mere fact that a person took on this role does not mean that they gave up the option to remove themselves from this role. They can choose an alternate role and still receive recognition from others. In contrast, once women have children, they have very few (if any) socially recognized and validated exit options. Thus, once a woman enters into this role, she may lack the recognition needed to exit. If the context in which we choose this role is coercive and once we occupy this role we are extremely

³⁶⁸ Whether one should have the option to exit a dependency relationship is a highly contentious issue. Though society holds men accountable to a certain extent, there is a much greater stigma attached to women who "abandon" their dependents. I am not suggesting that it is ever acceptable to exit a dependency relationship, however I do think that whether exit options are ever acceptable should be examined.

limited in how or if we can exit, it makes the role of dependency worker distinct from any other role one can occupy.

This chapter has explored how constructing an adequate self-understanding is dependent on one's interactions with others as well as on receiving proper recognition from the larger community one is a part of. When individuals are recognized in favorable ways and supported by society for entering into particular roles, the question of whether the choice to be a dependency worker is one that women actively choose from an array of alternate options is uncertain. It is not clear that a free choice is made when recognition norms encourage a certain manner of behavior and place certain expectations on particular individuals and the society that maintains those recognition norms responds, supports and validates those individuals favorably when individuals enter roles that draw very close and very "natural" connections between dependency work and gender. When the context in which dependency work is chosen is coercive and exiting the role becomes problematic, it raises concerns about the disproportionate number of women doing the work, how they can end up trapped in a "circle of care" and whether their choice to enter into the role is freely chosen.

Conclusion

This project began by exploring how most political theorists have excluded the dependency concern from their discussions. The failure to acknowledge dependency concerns has made dependency workers and dependents politically and socially invisible. Because dependency is both inevitable and inescapable, its exclusion is a serious concern for all members of society. These concerns are specifically a feminist issue because

dependency work is disproportionately performed by women; consequently, women experience disadvantages socially, economically and politically. Dependency has also become an issue of social justice, as the failure to recognize dependency concerns has excluded dependency workers from discussion about the fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation. To address the inequalities and disadvantages that arise from dependency work, various solutions have suggested that compensation would adequately address the needs of dependency workers, dependents and the dependency relationship. This thesis examined why the problems that arise from dependency work cannot be solved through compensation alone, specifically because compensation alone cannot enable us to reach a state of gender equity.

Using Eva Feder Kittay's dependency critique, the first chapter explored how John Rawls' highly influential work *A Theory of Justice* failed to recognize the inevitability of human dependency. By failing to acknowledge dependency concerns, Rawls' theory excluded dependency workers as free and equal citizens, and thus also failed to include them as participants in the fair terms of agreement necessary for social cooperation. Kittay suggested that, even though Rawls' theory neglected a commitment to care, it could be modified through a more reasonable understanding of dependency concerns. By expanding a number of concepts within Rawls' theory, Kittay maintains that not only would this include dependency workers in considerations of justice, but also once these concerns were addressed it would be possible to present a reasonable argument for providing dependency workers with compensation. Despite the ways that compensation could alleviate some of the disadvantages associated with dependency

work, because compensation schemes cannot negotiate who is responsible for the work, it actually risks reinforcing the sexual division of labor. Thus, even if it were possible to provide dependency workers with adequate compensation, the compensation alone would not move dependency work towards more gender equitable circumstances.

Chapter 2 used Nancy Fraser's complex conception of gender equity to examine if the dominant models of compensation would provide a gender equitable solution to dependency concerns. Neither *The Universal Breadwinner Model* nor *The Caregiver Parity Model* were adequate compensation systems, as neither could resolve all the disadvantages that arise from dependency work. Fraser's conception of gender equity highlighted the areas where compensation could not be successful. Specifically, Fraser noted that increasing men's participation in dependency work was needed to fulfill the requirements of gender equity. Moreover, Fraser's assertion has been echoed by a number of theorists who all maintain that, if men were more involved in dependency work, more equitable circumstances could be achieved.

Focusing on the area of childcare, the third chapter examined both how to increase men's participation in dependency work and the benefits of doing so. The current policies in the Nordic countries, particularly in Sweden, have successfully reformed social policies so as to increase men's ability to become involved in providing care for their children. Gaining men's participation in care is important for achieving gender equity and in the area of childcare it is fairly clear that their participation is actively working towards this. However, it is not clear how to encourage men's participation in other areas of dependency work, as the same incentives may be difficult

to establish. Moreover, supplementary resources ought to be provided for solo dependency workers who do not have a partner to exchange care responsibilities with. Despite the usefulness of social policies that assume that the citizen has responsibilities as both a worker and a care-giver, these policies still allow individuals to opt out of dependency work, which risks the work continuing to be disproportionately done by women.

The final chapter explored why social policies are only a partial solution to the problems that arise from dependency work. Because the self is relational, recognition norms that reinforce gendered characteristics raise questions about the coercive context of dependency work. The dependency worker is a role that is distinct from various other roles that individuals are able to occupy. The dependency worker role is often situated within a coercive context which makes it uncertain whether the worker's choice to enter the role was a choice both reflective of the agent and undetermined by society. Moreover, once one assumes this role, exiting it is not a viable option, which is particularly prominent in the realm of motherhood. Therefore, unlike other roles that individuals may occupy, dependency workers may choose their role within a coercive context and then be unable to exit it.

Because the problems that arise from dependency relationships are the result of a number of related factors, trying to solve the problem with compensation is not an adequate response. Moreover, if compensation is reinforcing the sexual division of labor as it relates to dependency work, then it seems as though compensation is only a temporary solution that masks the problems of dependency.

The illustrations of the distinct experiences, challenges and rewards that mothers and fathers encounter when they occupy the role of the primary caregiver are examples of how difficult or easy it may be for one to become a dependency worker. It seems reasonable to understand how recognition can funnel individuals down distinct life paths. When women are encouraged to learn the skills that enable them to care well, their capabilities make them natural choices for participation in dependency work. When recognition norms facilitate learning the skills applicable for providing care, when women become expected to provide care and when women recognize that they are capable of responding to need, they may care because they are capable of doing so. In addition, when men do not experience the recognition norms that facilitate and encourage the skills needed to care well for others, entering into dependency work may not be something they can really understand themselves as being successful at. Moreover, because recognition norms may not provide the support and validation required for participation in this role, many men may find it difficult to see themselves within the role, thus continuing to distance themselves from it entirely.

The issues raised by recognition norms illustrate an important final point about the relationship between how social policy can help achieve gender equity and how gender equity can actually be achieved. The restructuring of social policies is needed to facilitate changes to institutions as they work towards gender equity. But social policy reforms alone are only a partial solution. Individuals need to be able to understand how there are able to interact within society and what roles are truly available for them. They have to be genuinely capable of choosing a life plan that, even though influenced by

interactions with others, is enacted on an individual level. Presently, recognition norms are still functioning in stereotypical ways, creating pressure regarding the choices individuals have to construct an adequate self-understanding. Consciousness changing needs to occur so that individuals and the wider society provide the necessary support, validation and respect for the various life choices that they make.

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