

PART TIME FOR ALL:  
IN SUPPORT OF FAMILIES, EQUALITY AND  
GOOD GOVERNANCE

"NEW NORMS OF WORK AND CARE:  
RE-THINKING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A RESPONSIBLE  
ADULT"

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Western societies<sup>1</sup> face a set of critical problems that arise out of dysfunctional norms of work and care: unsustainable stress on families, persistent inequality for women, and policy makers who are ignorant about the care work that life requires.

Norms around work and care can change, and have changed hugely over the past few hundred years. Think about ideas about how many hours a work-day should be—from 12 hours a day to the successful battle for 8 hours a day to current norms of 60-70 hour work weeks in the financial sector; who should do care work (should female aristocrats nurse their own babies)? whether the elite should be unemployed (the definition of a gentleman); whether children should work; whether it is ideal for women to be home when their children are young. Many of these issues are still contested while some (like the unemployed gentleman) seem like ancient history.

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<sup>1</sup> Although many of the problems that I address are growing throughout the world, I address my particular recommendations to the Western societies of Europe and the Anglo American world. The importance of a *conversation* about norms of employment and care would apply everywhere, but the proposal I make to focus that conversation may not be applicable in developing economies.

Let me open with an example of a very recent change in norms that captures the kind of change I will be proposing here: a friend of mine asked a young male colleague at Swedish university whether he would be taking the full paternity leave available to him when his wife had their first child—or whether he would feel career pressure not to take the leave. He answered, “Are you kidding? If I *didn't* take the leave all my colleagues would be saying, ‘who knew he was such a money grubbing careerist.’” From concern that to take paternal leave would undermine one’s career prospects (a story one hears everywhere), the norms had so changed that to *fail* to take the leave would subject one to the disapproval of one’s colleagues. That is the kind of change I am looking for. My project here is to radically change the kinds of things that generate approval and disapproval among one’s colleagues, friends, family, neighbors and society in general. I am advocating new norms about how everyone should engage in employment and in care work.

Another way of putting that is that we urgently need to rethink what should be expected from responsible, competent adults. Right now, it is a clear norm that mature adult males should work full time. If they can’t, it is usually a source of distress and embarrassment (although there is small number of stay at home dads who are the recipients of excessive praise from some, as well as puzzlement, pity, embarrassment, and other responses to failure). There is no comparably clear norm about what responsibilities men have for taking care of themselves<sup>2</sup> or providing the emotional support or the shopping, cooking, cleaning or child care that makes the daily life of their families possible. For women, of course, the norms are still in flux. Most women with children are employed in the paid work force (with general social approval), and yet women are expected to do the care work families require (and suffer the disapproval of themselves and others if they are seen to be failing at that). The social status of being a “stay at home mom” is unclear, as is that of the high powered female professional without children. It is, however, quite clear that the combined expectations of work and care leave women stressed and deprived of sleep, leisure time, and time to themselves. One version of these

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<sup>2</sup> I thank Judith Resnick for reminding me that taking care of oneself must be included among normal care responsibilities. Adults (usually men) who think this is someone else’s reasonability are part of the problem to be addressed.

cumulative deprivations is the comment by a young female lawyer with children: I wake up each morning wondering what I will fail at today.

The feminist revolution of the 1970s and 80s got white middle class women into the workplace in unprecedented numbers. But the norms of work and care have barely changed. Workplace structures and expectations that presumed that workers had wives at home have remained largely unchanged, although now those wives are the exception. Neither male nor female workers have them. And by many accounts the expectations around child-care have expanded, even though there is rarely a stay-at-home parent to meet them.

These norms need to be transformed so that all mature, competent adults are expected to be employed part-time (no less than 12 and no more than 30 hours a week) and to do care work part time (somewhere between 12 and 30 hours a week). The failure to meet these social norms would generate the sort of disapproval, embarrassment, pity, and unease that currently would arise if a competent adult male announced at a party that he had never held a job. Without such a transformation, we cannot hope to solve three pressing problems that, in various forms, afflict all Western societies.

The first problem is the unsustainable structure of work and family life that puts enormous stress on families, and forces workers (at all levels) into untenable choices between work and family. The stress has serious consequences (including health) for all, and almost certainly harms children with long term, intergenerational consequences.<sup>3</sup>

The second problem is that the shift in gender norms and the inequality of women improves at a glacial pace, leaving women with less pay, less economic security, vulnerability to poverty, less leisure time, less access

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<sup>3</sup> This is not a claim about the desirability of having children in full time day care, and, of course, it is not a suggestion that women should stay home with their children. It is a comment on the costs of the current stresses placed on families when the combined demands of employment and care are more than they can meet without great stress.

to top jobs and to other advantages such as high quality health care.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, equality more generally requires an equitable distribution of care work. As long as only a subset of the population does the care work, both the work and the people who do it will be denigrated. Shifting the category from women to people of colour will not, of course, improve equality. The failure to achieve equitable care arrangements also undermines democracy. It interferes with access to participation. Women who come home from a full day of work to another 4-6 hours of care work do not have time to advocate for gender equality or anything else either in their workplace or in electoral politics. To some extent this extends to men as well. Indeed, the current structures of work and care are a recipe not only for a wide variety of social ills, but for a population too stressed and exhausted to protest them.

The third problem is that least commented on in the now extensive literature on care. I call it the policy/care divide. This means that those in top policy making positions are almost always people with very little experience of the demands, or satisfactions, or importance of care taking. In my view this means that policy-makers are, for the most part, ignorant of a core dimension of human life. This renders them unfit for the job. We should no more consider electing someone without substantial experience in caregiving to public office, or appointing them CEO of a corporation, than we would someone who had never held a job. Those who DO have the requisite knowledge and experience (primarily women) have very limited access to high level policy making positions.

### 1.1. A Conversation about norms

What I am proposing here is a conversation about changing the norms that underpin these urgent problems. In the later chapters of the book, Tom Malleson will present information and arguments about why these changes are feasible based on existing practices, primarily in Europe. These changes will have to be facilitated by legal changes, which structure incentives, prohibitions (e.g., discrimination in the conditions

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<sup>4</sup> "The Gendered Division of Household Labor: An Issue of Constitutional Rights," in *Feminist Constitutionalism*, Beverley Baines, Daphne Barak-Erez, Tsvi Kahana, eds. pp. 15-47 (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

for part time work), and requirements (e.g. benefits for part time work). But any legal changes need to be guided by a clear sense of what our goals should be. What kind of norms do we want to live by?

Norms are an important challenge for democratic deliberation. Some of the most powerful norms, like gender norms that women should care for their family and the expectation that adult males should be employed full time, are so deeply entrenched that they seem like facts of life rather than collective choices about how we should live. But they are collective choices, and they are subject to change. Everyone knows that norms about women's employment have changed, and they might remember from novels or movies that (as I noted above) there was a time when to be a "gentleman" meant that the man was not employed. It was a mark of superiority, not failure. People might also remember the more recent phrase "bankers' hours," suggesting that men in that elite line of work could play golf in the afternoon. That, of course, is a far cry from the hours that now characterize employment in the financial sector. Indeed, it is one of the interesting puzzles about norm changes that those at the top of many professions, such as elite lawyers and financiers, have transformed their work life<sup>5</sup> from affording significant leisure to a hellish number of weekly work hours<sup>6</sup>. Of course, this also suggests that what causes norm change is complex and not a simple matter of choice.

Despite this complexity, an *intentional* change in norms is a matter of living memory. Perhaps the most dramatic recent change is the wide spread acceptance of same sex relationships. And, of course, one might well characterize the project of second wave feminists as changing gender norms. We were spectacularly successful (for reasons that exceeded the efficacy of grass roots organizing <sup>7</sup>) with respect to the employment norms, and thus opportunities, for white, middle class

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<sup>5</sup> As Tamara Metz points out, his phrase occludes one of problems with contemporary discourse on work/life balance. "First, the Google hits make clear that "work" means paid labor. "Life" means everything else. And the "/" and "balance" tell us that work and life are separate, distinct. Etc. The rhetoric says that when we are working we are working, paid, etc and then we stop and we are living. We aren't working when we aren't being paid." 2013 APSA paper

<sup>6</sup> NYT article, week in review, april 6

<sup>7</sup> wages starting to flat line

women. We failed dramatically in making major changes in the gendered nature of household labour, as well as in the racialized nature of the paid (overwhelmingly female) work force who care for the homes and children of professional women. Whether women are employed or not, they still do the vast majority of household labour, as well as the care work for their extended family.<sup>8</sup>

Democratic deliberation—by which I mean wide spread conversation everywhere by everyone—on the norms of work and care is now urgently needed. (Here I echo Joan Tronto’s eloquent call for democratic care and caring democracy.) The existing norms are generating unsustainable patterns of family life, impeding equality, and guaranteeing that high-level policy-makers are experientially ignorant about care. Individuals can make choices, they can try to resist the norms, but they cannot change those norms by themselves. Norms shape our lives from the most intimate details of our family lives to the matter of who ends up running our corporations and our countries. In many, many instances these norms are making family life stressful, often to the breaking point, and creating a work environment that is inhumane in its hours and its expectations of single-minded devotion to economic “success.”

It is urgent that people everywhere ask themselves and each other what the norms of work and care should be. What is it that we should expect of responsible, competent adults?

To encourage this conversation, I propose a radical answer: part time employment, part time care work for everyone. I will explain and defend this answer vigorously. But my main objective is not to prove that I am right in everything I argue, but to get the conversation to focus on fundamental change.

There is, of course, a lot of related conversation out there. (this section to be expanded) There are many, many expressions of dissatisfaction

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<sup>8</sup> “The Gendered Division of Household Labor: An Issue of Constitutional Rights,” in *Feminist Constitutionalism*, Beverley Baines, Daphne Barak-Erez, Tsvi Kahana, eds. pp. 15-47 (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

with the existing structures of work and care. There are much cited books and articles discussing the problems of professional women. AMS, lean in, (wonderful counters to lean in, Rosa Brooks in Foreign Policy) blogs. There are less high profile books, like Joan William's important, *Reshaping the Work-Family Debate* that remind us that work-family stress is a lot worse for working class families under the incredibly bad US labour law. (For example, one can lose one's job for refusing overtime because one had to pickup a child from day care.) There are regular newspaper articles about how women are opting out of careers, or succeeding, or failing. Or about women opting out of having children so that they don't have to face the insurmountable burdens of a professional life with children. There is a spate of movies about ambitious men (and sometimes women) discovering that their neglected families really matter more to them than their work. There is a vast array of management literature on how to make employees a bit less stressed and miserable over their "work/family balance", without really changing much.

Indeed, from my perspective, almost none of the popular conversation, and too little of the scholarly discussion, has called for the kind of radical change that I see as necessary. With respect (as dissenting judges say), too much of the conversation is tinkering at the edges. It takes the existing structure of the workplace too much for granted. Increased flexibility in work hours, better (or, in the US, any at all) maternity leave, incentives for paternity leave, better leave policy for caring for sick relatives—all of these are desperately needed ameliorations of an unworkable system. But what we need now is not just amelioration, but fundamental change. That change must entail a change in norms.

I will return shortly to say a bit more about the three problems I noted above. But first I want to acknowledge that norms are coercive. (I return to this issue later.) Just because I am focusing on social norms rather than law, does not mean an absence of coercion in my proposal. Think about the power of gender norms to extract hours and hours of unpaid care labour from women. These norms are so well internalized that they now require virtually no state support to make them effective. It is exactly because norms are by their nature coercive (and exclusionary) that we need a democratic conversation about them. Norms function by

generating social approval for those who comply and disapproval for those who fail to do so. Human beings are social creatures so the withholding of social approval can have devastating consequences. (One might say that much of the argument in favour of gay marriage is based on the need to redress social exclusion---and thus inequality-- by including same sex partnerships within the norm of marriage. And there are objections from within the gay community that the focus on marriage will create other forms of exclusion for same sex relationships that do not fit that norm. In this case, of course, the law was complicit in the social exclusion and thus a focus for the transformation of norms.) In having a conversation about the norms of employment and care, we need to remember both that norms can change—and can be intentionally changed—and that they are inevitably coercive. So it is vital that they coerce on behalf of defensible values like equality, children’s well-being, and lives that include leisure, love, and the relationships that support the values people care about.

## 1.2 Problems and Objectives

I began this project inspired by Nancy Fraser’s article, “Beyond the Family Wage,” which argued for a model of universal care-giver, rather than the universal bread winner (women in the work force just like men) or the **compensated caregiver**\* (systems designed to minimize the disadvantage of those who do caregiving). She persuasively argued that a truly just system (she had 7 criteria of equality and non-exploitation) required a universal care-giver model in which men and women equally do the care work human societies require. My focus, like hers, was on gender equality that was consistent with other principles of justice and equality<sup>9</sup>.

As I have worked on this book, however, my objectives have expanded beyond gender equality—as the opening list of problems suggests. Of course, I still think that whatever solutions one comes up with must be consistent with equality for all. And as we will see this poses particular

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<sup>9</sup> “The Gendered Division of Household Labor: An Issue of Constitutional Rights,” in *Feminist Constitutionalism*, Beverley Baines, Daphne Barak-Erez, Tsvi Kahana, eds. pp. 15-47 (Cambridge University Press, 2012).



gender concerns in terms of who is initially likely to choose part time work or to feel the desire to do more care work. As I have argued elsewhere, a transformation of desire will be a necessary part of the transformation of norms I advocate (leading one of my progressive colleagues to liken the project to Maoist re-education). But this transformation of desire and norms is not just for the purpose of gender equality. It is, as most people who write about care argue, about improving the quality of life<sup>10</sup>.

In North America, and increasingly throughout the world, people live in cultures that undervalue care and overvalue economic success and thus the work people do as part of their employment. My project began with the argument that a transformation of the structure of employment was a necessary means to the end of a transformation in care—and thus necessary to redress the problems of family, equality, and the care/policy divide<sup>11</sup>. I still think this necessity argument is correct. It is also important because so many people think that the scale of transformation of employment that I have in mind is impossibly utopian. It matters therefore to convince them that nothing short of that transformation can solve these pressing problems. But there is also an intrinsic importance to redressing the skewed values ascribed to care and to employment (as many care theorists have argued). It is important for people to recognize the centrality of care to the quality of life for individuals, families and societies. Otherwise we will all make poor choices, individually and collectively, about how to spend our time and resources. Ultimately, I hope for a system in which all people know the pleasures of both employment and care, as well as their demands and their significance for the quality of individual and collective life.

### 1.2.1 Families and not just families

The sphere in which I have most changed my sense of focus and urgency is the quality of family life. There is a lot of evidence about the stress that characterizes contemporary family life. <sup>12</sup> [THIS SECTION TO BE EXPANDED] The nature of this stress reveals the close connection

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<sup>10</sup> Cites, quotes

<sup>11</sup> My thanks to Judith Resnick for making this point clear to me.

<sup>12</sup> cites

between the structure of employment and the distribution of care work. The phrase work-family balance hardly captures the reality. Brief description. Recent CBC report in Canada for the first time mental health problems in children are exceeding physical health problems. Depression, stress. Much of the stress work related (including anxiety about having or keeping a job)

This situation is terrible for parents, terrible for children, and terrible for anyone (sick, disabled, elderly) who needs care from stressed, exhausted, and anxious people. My argument about care covers all these forms of need. But there is a particularly powerful argument with respect to children.

What is urgently needed is a system that promotes satisfying family life, good for children, good for parents—so that they enjoy each other and appreciate the pleasures as well as the demands of family bonds and shared family life. This is not just a matter of making people's current lives more pleasant, or even less terrible.

I think almost every problem in the world would be improved if all children grew up feeling loved, secure in the provision of their material and emotional needs, and confident in the sense of their innate value and the joy their care givers take in them. The absence of these things makes people scared, insecure, anxious, and in many instances leads to behavior that causes harm to others as well as to the planet. Insecure people can become greedy, aggressive, frightened, and self-protective in ways that make it difficult for them to enter into the cooperative relationships necessary both for their own well-being and that of others. When parents are routinely stressed and anxious, it is hard for their children not to be. When one adds poverty or war to the mix, of course, matters are still worse.

Of course, improving the quality of family life will not immediately, or of itself, solve the problems of the world. And in some cases, as just suggested, the quality of family life cannot be adequate unless issues of poverty and the inherent vulnerability of war zones are addressed. But conversely, my point here is that we continue to literally sow the seeds of further conflict (including the callousness that permits poverty in the midst of abundance), when children are raised surrounded by

inequality, high levels of anxiety, and a pervasive sense of insecurity—whether in the context of material abundance or want.

It is vital that those of us who live in prosperous countries use that advantage to redress the long-standing failures of the structures of our families. These are failures not only of the kind I just noted, but of equality and of adequate leadership on family and employment policy. As I will argue, these family structures cannot be fixed without a radical transformation of the workplace.

Of course, we currently are those greedy, aggressive, frightened and self-protective people our societies produce. Both the transition and the vision of a workable alternative have to recognize this reality.

As I said, there is a particularly compelling case for good care for children. A society that fails at it will create damaged people who continue to cause harm to themselves and others (whether as "criminals," corporate executives or politicians), perpetuating a cycle of dysfunction. But a decent society also requires quality care for its elderly, sick and disabled. It harms everyone when there are old people who are hungry, cold, scared about how they will survive, or subject to abuse. Just as it harms us all to walk past homeless people on the streets, it harms us to know (even if we don't pay attention to it) that many elderly live in poverty in our rich society<sup>13</sup>. A society that cultivated a recognition of the importance of care could not limit it to children.

In thinking about the problems of contemporary families, it is important to remember the rapidly shifting forms of family life. In the United States two parent families may be the "norm" in the sense that collective myths and aspirations about families picture them that way. But it is no longer the norm in the sense of the families in which the majority of children live. The solutions I propose to distribution of care and employment must be able to address the wide spread reality of single parent families. And, of course, most of these single parents are female. With the decline of marriage rates<sup>14</sup>, women still end up doing the

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<sup>13</sup> See Nedelsky, *Law's Relations*, Introduction.

<sup>14</sup> McClain

childrearing, they just do it alone or with a variety of men over time, and often in poverty.

Finally, while creating patterns of care and work that can sustain good family life is high on my list of objectives, I do not envision care responsibilities as being defined in terms of family relations. Not only is the structure of care a collective responsibility that extends beyond any individual obligation, but the individual responsibility in my system will extend beyond family to friends, neighbors and community (as I will outline in Chapter 3). These extended networks of care will be important for many reasons, including the care needs of single parent families and the needs of those with employment commitments that involve periods of intense work (and sometimes geographic distance).

### 1.2.2 Equality

Women suffer from inequality in both the distribution of care and in employment.

Short summary of stats re household labour and employment.

Gornick and Meyers: p. 11 excellent stats on gendered division of household labour and its consequences. Working mothers still spend a lot of time with their children (2014 Motherload doc on CBC said as much as non working mothers in the 1960s) , but 7 fewer hours per week on housework, 6 fewer hours sleeping, 5 fewer hours on personal care, and 12 fewer hours on leisure activities than non-employed mothers.

Bianchi 2000 Australia reported fewer hours with children than previous generation.

The loss of sleep, leisure time and time to themselves is a loss not just of comfort or pleasure for women, but a threat to autonomy, to the capacity to figure out what they really want in life and to the creativity to pursue it.

One of the striking ways to see the intersection of gender inequality in care and employment is the finding that the [check] 90 (95%) of the persistent wage differential between men and women (about 70%) is accounted for by women having children. That is, women without

children suffer only about a (?) 5% differential. Having children is also the greatest predictor of poverty for women. <sup>15</sup>

Despite the focus of many newspaper articles, these patterns are not just about the access of profession to women to the highest positions or about the stresses they face. The structure of inequality is hardest for the least well off, and the consequences for their children the most serious. The inequality extends to quality or health care as well as many other dimensions of the quality of life.<sup>16</sup> And, as I mentioned above, it affects the capacity to effectively participate in politics.

Finally, I want to add the “global care chain”<sup>17</sup>—women being imported from other countries or regions to do care work-- under the heading of the problem of equality. The global care chain is driven in part by what seems to be a growing consensus around the world that the path to gender equality is full time work for women. (The failure of part time work for women to bring that equality is also manifest around the world.) As more women enter the paid work force, societies find women from a poorer country or region to bring in to do the care work<sup>18</sup>. This then becomes the “solution” to the problem of a structure of employment that is not adapted to the needs of care. But it is a solution that comes at a very high cost, particularly for the children of the women who immigrate to do the care. And this is not a solution that advances gender equality for all. And it is certainly not one that overcomes the general denigration of care, or one that can address the care/policy divide.

### 1.2.3 Care/policy divide

My claim here is that experiential knowledge of caregiving is essential for people who make policy, whether in corporations or government.

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<sup>15</sup> cites

<sup>16</sup> See Nedelsky, 2012 for the links between these forms of inequality.

<sup>17</sup> Ehrenreich and Hochschild, *Global Woman*

<sup>18</sup> Comment in Chile, you can tell when an economy shifts from being developing to developed when people can no longer afford maids (or only the rich can).

Policy makers need to understand the nature of the demands of care-giving, its satisfactions, its importance for life and for death, and the ways in which it matters who does the care giving—that is, the limits to paid substitutes for care by loved ones. The claim is that actual experience of care-giving is what it takes to understand the demands and why it matters. Consider the once classic line by husbands about stay at home wives: “what does she do all day?” He literally didn’t know. I don’t think anyone who has not lived through can really appreciate the chaos of taking care of new-borns: Sleep deprivation, inability to get routine chores done, house a mess, days without managing to brush one’s own teeth. . . .

If one doesn’t know what care involves, one will not know what is reasonable to ask of those who help us with it. WE will know better how to create reasonable conditions for those who are helping us, from soaking the spoon instead of leaving it on the counter, to recognizing the emotional demands of caring for a person with dementia (and thus perhaps the need for breaks or limited hours or backup support). People also won’t know what accommodations (say from employment) are reasonable if they have no sense of the physical and emotional toll of care for a colicky infant or an elder with Alzheimer’s.

I should add that while I am arguing that actual experience of care-giving is crucial, I also think that experience with one kind of demanding care can help one understand better the demands of a different situation. It is the kind of knowledge that makes it easier to do a good job of taking the perspective of other care-givers. Of course, this is important since one cannot expect that every policy maker will have personally experienced every form of care-giving that might be relevant to one of his decisions.<sup>19</sup>

Experience with care helps policy makers know: What people should be paid, how many hours they should have to work, what accommodations with respect employment, how hard the work is, what material and emotional supports can make it better. Indeed when adequate support

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<sup>19</sup> This is related to my argument about judgment and the capacity to take into account the perspectives of others. Cites.

can transform a terrible situation into a meaningful and rewarding one, like caring for a dying parent.

Experience is also necessary to understand the satisfactions and rewards, which is part of why it matters. Spending years of intense work to teach a cognitively disabled child learn to speak when the predictions were that it would be impossible.

Hearing from an aging parent the joy and comfort of feeling one's warmth flow toward them.

The passionate joy of caring for a new born.

The intense bond of caring for a dying parent.

Without an understanding of these things, how can policy makers accord them adequate weight in structuring their policy—whether accommodation in work place, leave time, material support.

This is connected to the overall need for those in power to understand the significance of care for both those who receive and who give it. They need to understand that caregivers are very often not interchangeable. It often matters who is feeding an elderly woman or rocking a sick baby. It matters that those who receive care feel that their caregivers delight in them (not just refrain from mistreating them). They need to understand how important it can be to the adult child to be there for her dying mother. It is important to understand care at both the material and emotional level.

So my claim here is, then, twofold. First, people cannot make good policy if the are ignorant about this most fundamental of human needs and satisfactions. And second that they can only gain the knowledge they need by hands on experience.

Could list a range of policy—health care, social assistance, labour law, education, foreign aid, prison policy, family law, immigration law, that will touch on issues of care. (I will expand a bit on why knowledge of care matters for each.)

The claim about sources of knowledge is more difficult to substantiate, at the same time as it is self-evident to many who have engaged in care work. The strong version of the claim is that one simply cannot learn

what is important second hand: not from books, novels, movies or even stories from friends and family—although all of these can supplement, and even challenge, ones particular (and thus inevitably limited) experience.

Might try to divide the knowledge one needs into three categories: skill, material support, and emotional dimension. But while I think, as I just said, non-experiential sources can provide important supplements to experiential knowledge, they cannot replace it for any of these categories.

There are some other examples of things that we recognize to require first hand experience. First, there are lots of forms of professional training that require practical experience. We don't expect surgeons to learn only from books, lectures or even observation. They need to actually do surgery. People who play an instrument know that actual physical practice is irreplaceable. Learning a foreign language not only requires practice speaking (or reading), but many people find that they only fully learn a new language by spending time in a country where that is the native language. That is a nice example of the irreducible complexity of experience.

Many people would recognize that important emotions like falling in love, or grief over the death of a loved one are not things one can fully understand from books, movies, or the stories of friends. Experience is an irreplaceable source of knowledge and understanding. The same is true for the emotional component of care work: its difficulties, its rewards, and its importance for living according to one's deepest values.

I would also note that I do not see this knowledge as static. To generate new ways of doing and supporting care requires people to do it, and to do it in a way that enables creativity and imagination, not exhaustion and barely managing. To foster such ongoing innovation requires policy makers with sustained (not just a bit when they were young) experience of care-giving.

In sum, care work is routinely discussed as a burden, which, of course, it can be and under current conditions often is (thus harming both care givers and receivers). But part of what needs to be more widely



understood are its joys, satisfactions, and importance for the quality of life. Care is a source of human bonding, and satisfying relationships are at the core of a satisfying life. Those without experience of care giving are likely to be ignorant about all these key points—in a way policy memos will not be able to redress.

Finally, it is important to see the link between equality and the care/policy divide. Any solution to the distribution of care that ends up with one group doing only care or only employment will necessarily exacerbate the divide, and thus needs to be rejected. This is also true for employment that involves care work (an issue I will return to). Any structure that creates sustained ghettos of care employment--whether of women, racialized persons, or people from low social economic status--will also fail to redress the care-policy divide: policy makers are very unlikely to be recruited from such employment ghettos. And, as I said above, when only one group does care work, whether paid or unpaid, both the work and the group will be denigrated.

### 1.3 SOLUTIONS

The solution I propose is part time employment and part time care work for all competent adults. There are to be no exceptions for preference, temperament, skills, or importance of one's employment. Of course, the system will have to have the flexibility to provide some accommodation for all these issues. I will begin with what I mean in terms of care, and then turn to employment. But let me first note briefly here why I have chosen the term employment.

Of course, care entails work and some of that work now, and under my proposal, would be paid work. So the language of contrasting work and care distorts my understanding of both. (I address the care dimension of employment in the next section.) I originally used the term "outside work" instead of employment, to focus on work outside one's home. But as we will soon see, the care work I have in mind will also take place outside of one's home. I resisted the term employment at first because I associated it with paid work. Some of the non-care work I have in mind may not earn much money, or even be paid at all. For artists and musicians, at least in the early stages of their career, pursuing their art

may be the employment that matters most to them. As we think about the norms to foster for mature, competent adults, I want people to bear in mind that some people will be trying to balance their care commitments with time for their artistic calling or their political activism as well as with the need to earn money. So I have opted for the term employment despite its association with paid work. For some people, it will cover both paid labour market participation and the pursuit of an unpaid calling.

### 1.3.1 Care

#### 1.3.1.1 part time

The norm I propose would expect all adults to do care work part of the time. Immediately, one wants to know what I mean by care and what I mean by part time. Let me begin with part time. Here I will just lay out what I think one needs to consider to decide what constitutes minimum participation in part time care work. (I think the maximum is bounded by the requirement that everyone have at least 12 hours a week of employment and meet the needs of self care for sleep, recreation, social bonding, and leisure.) What I am after in terms of the minimum is, first, that everyone devote enough hours per week to do a substantial amount of the care work they need themselves: food shopping, cooking, house keeping, personal care such as hygiene, medical self care they may need (does this include exercise?). Next, each person who lives with others should participate in the collective care the household needs (overlapping with the above list) and attend to others who may need help with care. Those who are sharing in raising children should spend a significant amount of time in caring for them: including play, emotional support, as well as the material needs of changing diapers, feeding (which includes shopping and food preparation), clothing and maintaining their physical space, helping with school work, planning social and extra curricular events, and organizing necessary transportation. For people with young children, the lists above may cover most of their care responsibilities. Many, however, will also have care responsibilities for their aging relatives and perhaps for friends with (physical or mental) health problems. For people whose responsibilities for relatives and friends are not too demanding, the expectation would be that they would also participate in care for

neighbors and members of their communities—which might be faith groups, or clubs, or those with whom they do volunteer work, or share pursuits like music or recreation.

To translate these obligations into hours would require an assessment of both what the total hours would likely be, and what “substantial” participation should mean. As I will elaborate later, my system would allow for people to purchase some of the care work they and their families need—as long as this still allows for “substantial” participation. Suppose a family of two school age children and two adults (recognizing this is not actually a typical family) requires at least 30 hours of adult care work. That would mean 15 hours from each adult. The question then is how much do they need to do themselves for the well being of the family, particularly the children. One needs then to know when it matters that the care be provided by someone close to the children, and whether that person is ideally a parent or can equally well be a grandparent, friend, or a stable care-giver like a nanny or someone in a child-care institution. The next question is how much work a person has to do themselves for their own emotional well being (connection to children and spouse for example) and for the knowledge that everyone needs about care-giving so as to make wise individual decisions about life choices and wise collective decisions about policy. Taking all this into account, I think 10 hours a week from each adult for family care, allowing for an additional two hours for neighbors, friends, extended family would be a good starting point for the minimum norm of care.

#### 1.3.1.2 definitions of care and the puzzles of what counts as care for the new norms

There are a variety of thoughtful definitions of care in the literature. For now, I take Tamara Metz’s definition of intimate care as my starting point: “that variety of life-sustaining energy and attention we exchange beyond the immediate reach of markets and government regulation, i.e. paradigmatically in “families”. Here I want to focus on what I see as the puzzles of what counts as care for the purposes of my norm of part time care for everyone. In the following, I will outline the main points that I will address more fully in later chapters.

The first question, care for whom, is already partly answered above. I do not mean only care for one's immediate family and friends. The new norm would generate expectations of caring attention to the needs of one's neighbors and one's community (however defined). This is, of course, a demanding norm. In particular, it means that one's care obligations would not simply be defined by the arc of an individual life: intense obligations when one's children were young or one's parents were frail or in ill-health, but with the expectation that these intense obligations would decrease over time. Another way of highlighting the demanding nature of what I propose is this: can one ever retire from care? Here I might note that I am now at this stage and enjoying it a lot. My children are in their mid twenties and doing well (although with some health problems). They do not live with us. They claim my attention and concern, and financial support as students, but no day-to-day care. I tremendously enjoy the increased leisure time and general time flexibility. This, in turn, permits me to experiment with taking up wider care engagement. But so far, I must confess, that I treat this community engagement as optional, to be pushed aside when there is an academic deadline—in a way the demands of children cannot be. The norms I am advocating would not treat these wider commitments as a matter of discretion or preference.

The next puzzle is the role of what Joan Tronto calls nurturant vs. non-nurturant care. Should we value both equally? In particular, should the new norm approve of buying non-nurturant or material care in order to be able to spend more time doing nurturant care? Let me confess at the outset that this trade-off is how I managed my own intractable demands of employment and care. (In addition to having a partner who did the shopping and a lot of the nightly clean up) At the very outset, when I hired my first nanny for my 4 month old baby, I explained that I wanted to spend as much time with him as possible. That would mean that whenever I decided to take a break (from writing the book without which I would be denied tenure) to be with him, I would want her to do whatever material work for him—washing his clothes, making food for him—needed to be done. In various ways, hiring people to help clean the cottage so I would have more time to play with the kids, I have kept this practice up throughout their lives. But would I be willing to build that into the new norms? Not without significant limits.

I have already said that buying some care would be part of the norm (as well as using institutionalized child care). But the knowledge that I take to be required extends to non-nurturant care. And the issue of not consigning any kind of care to one group of people also holds as a constraint. The transformations I am looking for cannot take place if the norm is that everyone who can afford it buys themselves out of their non-nurturant care obligations. I think I would be prepared to accept an unequal division, so that, for example, the norm is that adults do at least a quarter of the non-nurturant care they and their families require. (In later chapters I will comment on the ways in which people's talents and preferences may vary in this regard so that those (say some who are on the autism spectrum) who would not seek out intimate care could make their contribution to their communities via material care that suited their preferences.)

A related question is why I privilege hands on, close up care (intimate care in Metz's language) as the norm of care obligation. For example, political activism for better child care institutions, or a basic income, are extremely valuable contributions. They would count as employment in my scheme, even if that work generated no income. But it would not count as care even though it would advance the cause of better care for all. The kinds of bonds formed and knowledge acquired through intimate care is not interchangeable with political activism. Both are valuable, and probably a thriving democracy would generate norms of some forms of public engagement. One might even call them part of care for the world (in Arendtian terms). But the need for a norm of universal participation in intimate care is distinct.

Emotional care definitely counts. So "hands on" is maybe not the right term, since it suggests a materiality that characterizes a lot of care work, but is often not involved in emotional care. Emotional care is a big part of what women do in families. (There has been some effort to measure this.) The provision of emotional care is still highly gendered both at home and elsewhere.

So what about emotional care in the employment context? Providing support—which can be both emotional and professional—is an important part of what should happen in the workplace. Does that count for one's quota of care-work? I could, and will, give examples of what

does—say providing encouragement for an anxious, disheartened student—and what might not, spending extra time helping a student with a research proposal, or connecting them to other scholar. A lot what is usually called mentoring has an element of care, but not, I think, what I want to fall in the care rather than employment category.

But this discussion should reveal that the line between care and employment will never be clear, and indeed one can hope that with the sort of change I am proposing, the line will get fuzzier and fuzzier. People will come to see more clearly, and more often, and in more contexts, that all relationships should be characterized by a caring stance. For example, one should pay attention and be concerned if one's assistant at work does not seem to be feeling well. One should look out for opportunities to provide mentorship and offer it generously. As a teacher, one should be alert and aware of student anxiety and see what can be done to alleviate it. Perhaps this will extend to the kind of courses one teaches, the scholarship one engages in, the sort of products one invests in, the way a CEO structures the workplace. More and more of what people do in their employment will be infused with care and will be shaped by an understanding of the importance of care. This would, of course, be an improvement in the world.

In the context of this blurring of care and employment it is worth highlighting that (contrary to the wages for housework move) I want to carve out a chunk of time in everyone's life that is devoted to the material and emotional care of self and others—for which one is not paid. (Although, in addition, people will continue to provide and buy paid care work.)

There will be a variety of interesting questions about self-care. For example, do exercise, psychotherapy, meditation count as self care for the purposes of one's care commitments? How are these to be balanced with obligations to others? Leisure time is crucial to both autonomy and creativity, and its curtailment is one of the serious costs to women under our current system. But there must be a way of distinguishing between leisure—however valuable—and care requirements.

### 1.3.1.3. Why paid care

There are two main reasons for continuing to have paid care both in people's homes and institutional settings like child-care centres, after school programs, drop in centres for the elderly, and nursing homes. (Although doctors, nurses and teachers provide a lot of care in the course of their work, I am distinguishing their work from what I call paid care work.) The first reason is that I think many people will find they want time for themselves, for friends, for recreation with their partners, and for their leisure interests, in addition to their employment and care work. Especially during times of intense care commitments—like when children are young or aged parents are failing—the best way to get this time will often be to buy some paid care. Sometimes, people will just need a break from the intense care work they are doing. The second reason is that there are people with professional training in caring for children, for the elderly, for people with physical and mental health problems (separate from the medical attention they need). In many cases both the givers and receivers of care will benefit from having some of the care provided by those with professional training.

The issue for the new norms is ensuring that everyone continues to do enough of the care work themselves for the purposes of knowledge, bonding, shared responsibility, and equality.

#### 1.3.1.4 The role of the state

So far I have barely mentioned the state, beyond the need for legal facilitation of this new regime. The shift in norms is to be enabled and enforced informally, socially, not through legal sanctions. And my focus on the need for everyone to be involved in care work has not been about state support. Indeed, one friend and colleague worried that I was reinforcing the privatization of care. This is not my intention. The focus of much academic work on care has rightly been to challenge this privatization. My whole project is driven by the view that the distribution of care work is vital to the quality of life people lead, to the possibility of equality, of democracy, of good governance. It is therefore, of course, a matter of collective concern and responsibility. Hence the need for a vigorous collective conversation about new norms.

What I think distinguishes my approach from some important work on care is that I do not think that it simply follows that what is a matter of

collective responsibility is necessarily a matter for state action. I think this is an important point because I think in general “the left” has moved too quickly from collective responsibility to a call for legal intervention. Sometimes, as in my proposal here, collective responsibility is best enacted collectively but not via the state. Collective responsibility for care work, and for humane employment structures needs to be undertaken, in part, through a change in norms, and thus collective deliberation about norms. And the change will be carried out, as is always the case with norms, through the actions of individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities rather than through the enactment of laws or the creation of another government agency.

Having said that, there will be many roles for the state to play to make such a project work. As I have said there will need to be changes in labor laws, perhaps including maximum hours and minimum wage regulations as well as laws ensuring that part time work is good work, with prohibitions against lower pay and fewer benefits. As I will discuss shortly, the system will need a new version of “the living wage.” But it is important to remember that that concept was primarily a norm not a law enforced by the state. The system would work much better with a Guaranteed Annual income. It would work much better with a well functioning, publicly funded health care system, and with a wide spread severing of benefits from employment (so that employers do not have to constantly calculate proportions of benefits as employees shift the number of hours they work). It would work better if there were state (as well as market) incentives for builders to design apartment buildings with communal kitchens next to child play spaces, so that it would be easy for families to share meals and playtimes. (This is really not much of a stretch from existing “party rooms” in condominiums.) And it would work much better with publicly subsidized childcare and eldercare so that the assistance I mentioned above did not all have to come out of individual resources. Publicly funded institutions would also facilitate jobs for those with professional training. This is also one of the ways in which I think the state should have a role in enacting the collective responsibility for care this approach is based on.

One puzzle for what I am proposing is which of these valuable changes in the role of the state is a prerequisite for the norm changes I am proposing. Tom’s chapters will have more on that. But it is important to



try to distinguish between what is essential to make any headway (like incentives or regulations with respect to part time work), and what can be on ongoing project of change.

I think we cannot wait until we get all these changes—like a guaranteed annual income—to advocate strenuously for the norm changes I propose. The conversation about the norm change is urgent. The dissatisfaction with the current arrangement is high, and families are in a kind of crisis that, among other things is perpetuating patterns of inequality.<sup>20</sup> In addition, I do not see this embrace of responsibility for care work from all—which is not organized around laws or regulation—as a second best choice to even well run, well funded child care institutions. To address the problems I have outlined, we need to radically restructure both employment and care. And while the state will have a role in facilitating the restructuring of employment, and I hope will also provide subsidies for care facilities, the universal change in practices of care work belongs in the domain of norms rather than law. And it will have to be enacted through individual as well as collective action, in homes and neighborhoods as well as in institutions.

### 1.3.2 Employment

First, let me remind you that my proposed norm of work comes with both a maximum and a minimum. The minimum of 12 hours of employment a week means that no one only does care work or unpaid artistic or activist work. Everyone should have some experience of what is involved in earning an income, and everyone should have some engagement with the public realm outside the care work of their own home. I think members of a democratic society should have sufficient knowledge and experience of key dimensions of their society in order to participate wisely in public deliberation. In addition, I think no group should do only care work, even if that group were an elite group of people with partners wealthy enough to support them without any economic contribution of their own. Such social patterns do not foster equality, democracy, or shared norms of employment and care.

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<sup>20</sup> McClain, BU

The maximum, of about 28 or 30 hours, is meant both to enable significant participation in care and to undercut the current norm of the centrality of earning money to status, success and what matters most to identity and life satisfaction. The new norms would involve a great deal more recognition of the importance of care, and corresponding decline in the status of employment.

I should add that I think the new norms would allow for a greater recognition, for more people, of the joys and satisfactions, as well as the demands, of both employment and care. Ideally, many people would feel a passion, even a longing, for participation in both.

### 1.3.2. 1. A part time living wage

What I do I mean by part time employment? First, as I just suggested I mean GOOD part time work. When people hear the term “part-time work” they associate it with what it has in fact come to mean: low pay, no benefits, no security. Or if they are professionals, they may associate it with a “mommy track,” with low prestige and poor prospects for advancement. What I mean is work that is in every way comparable to what is now full time work. (Although I do not pretend that the changes in norms I propose would actually make every job a good job, I think the change could foster many forms of improvement in people’s work lives.)

Equally important is the concern that part time work could not bring in enough money. Many people are struggling to get by with (poorly paid), insecure, full time work, or multiple part time jobs. The last thing they are looking for is less work because they do not want even less income. But what I have in mind is a part time living wage.

It was not so long ago that the idea of a living wage was an employment norm for many.<sup>21</sup> The idea was that a man should be able to earn enough to support a family. (Of course, this was a problem for women because they could be paid less since they were not supporting a family.) This norm lasted, in many sectors, for decades and during some of the most productive and prosperous years of western economies. It doesn’t exist any longer. But there is nothing intrinsic to a successful

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<sup>21</sup> cites re dates, sources. Always exceptions, especially around race

market economy that would prevent its return. (Of course there are problems of one country trying to implement this, or any other part of my plan, while others do not.) The living wage I propose is that one adult should be able to earn enough to support herself and a child by working 20 hours a week. (This is, of course, not much different from the earlier norm that a man should be able to support his wife and children working 40 hours a week.) I leave to later chapters the questions of why this is economically feasible now as it was in the past<sup>22</sup>.

### 1.3.2.2 Puzzles and problems

Here I want to highlight some of challenges for the project. The first is that it entails a radical transformation in people's relation to their work, and to the gender norms that help construct that relation. Any system that were to begin by introducing good part time employment would have to make sure that it was not just women who were taking up those jobs. (As we will see in Chapter 4), the Netherlands has succeeded in creating a lot of good part time jobs; but the family norm has become that women are employed part time and men full time. This might significantly ease the stress on families, but it cannot address the problems of gender equality or of the care/policy divide. Indeed, as I noted above, I think some of for the growing global care chain has been a rejection of part time employment as a path to gender equality. And part time employment would be a source of resistance to my project unless it were designed in a way that would prevent a gender disparity in hours of work. Indeed, it would be a problem even if there were a switch to my part time norms, but most men worked at the upper end of the normal hours (30/week) and most women worked at the lower end. Of course, this would be especially problematic if, as would be likely, there was a corresponding gender disparity in the amount of care work.

The new norm I propose frontally challenges a powerful norm in the professional/managerial world: success requires a single-minded dedication to work, which is manifested in a willingness to spend long hours. In this model, employees with the right kind of ambition and drive can be assumed to have this willingness, and their dedication and

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<sup>22</sup> maybe footnote to Robert Reich Aftershock

future prospects can be assessed (at least in part) on that basis. The single-minded intensity and long hours might not be sufficient, but they are necessary.

Part of what is hard about challenging that norm is that it has come to stand for excellence in other contexts as well. During the Olympics, we hear about the hours aspiring athletes must put in, often at the cost of everything else in their lives. When winning turns on .001 second (and success is defined as winning), there is no room for the sort of balanced life of care, employment (here athletics), and leisure my model aspires to. Single mindedness is the price of excellence. I think something similar happens for very talented and ambitious musicians. Under my system would these people come to be seen as aberrant, violators of the new norms, instead of models of excellence?

My system would allow for the flexibility of short-term intensity. There are jobs, like those of soldiers deployed abroad, lawyers in the middle of a big court case, or scientists during a particularly tricky and important stage of an experiment, where people have to devote themselves single-mindedly to their work—for a while. But then we should expect those jobs to have significant and frequent time off, so that the intensity does not become the norm, even if it is very exciting and rewarding. I do not picture the periods of intensity to cover long periods, like say what are often said to be the peak years of physicists' creativity, from age 20-35. That would push past the edge of the allowance for preference and temperament that I think could be sustained without undermining the structure of the new norms.

Perhaps what is most important is to resist the power of the current norm, that the more important our employment work is, the less care work we should do. Under the current regime, care is simply not something that busy, important, people should waste their time doing. (Under the current system, important people are by definition busy, way too busy to be interrupted by care demands.) Anything that sustains that idea, or threatens to drift back toward it, would threaten the transformation in the status of care and employment in people's lives.

The hardest problem I foresee is directly connected to the power of the current norm of long and intense work. I do not want to make the transformation of employment norms dependent on a radical overhaul of the market economy. This is, I want to find ways of making the new norms work (as a living wage did earlier) within a market economy. The problem then is how to prevent collusion between ambitious (and perhaps greedy, and perhaps particularly passionate) people who want to work longer hours than the new norm and employers who want to reap what they see as the benefits of such employees. Is there a way for the state to help restructure incentives (say including tax incentives) that would discourage employers from providing incentives for such behaviour? Of course, it is almost certainly the case that some of the long hours currently practiced are actually counter-productive in terms of productivity (some evidence of that with respect to the long work week in the US compared to Europe), efficiency, good judgement<sup>23</sup> and creativity. But it may be that if the only values at stake were profit for the employer and income for the employee, longer hours than those I propose would enhance those values. Of course, this is where the power of a change in norms can come in. But there is a huge transition problem of trying to transform one of the most powerful set of norms around success, identity, and value—and a market incentive system built around those norms.

#### 1.4 Challenges of Norms: Coercion and Transformation

As I noted above, there are two important thing about norms: first, that although they often seem like basic facts of life, they change and the can be intentionally changed. Second is that norms are by their nature coercive. People who do not comply can be ostracized and suffer economically, socially and politically. So to propose new coercive norms takes a lot of justification. Of course, the first justification, is that there already are powerfully coercive norms out there about employment and care, and they are bad norms. They undermine equality, democracy, children's well-being and quality of life.

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<sup>23</sup> Rosa Brooks, whose bright idea was it that national security decisions are best made by exhausted people.

But one might argue that the solution is to try to reduce the power of the norms in this sphere, not replace them with different but equally coercive ones. So, for example, in the realm of sexual expression and choice of partner, there has been a huge reduction in the power of coercive norms. There is a much wider scope for individual preference and for experiment. Roughly speaking, with the exception of sex with children, Western society imposes far fewer norms about correct sexual partners or behaviour than it did twenty years ago. So why not simply try to open up the range of acceptable behaviour with respect to employment and care. Rather than try to lay out alternative norms with their inevitable coercion and exclusion, both men and women should be able to do what they want with respect to both care and employment. The object in this scenario would be to break down (or at least radically reduce) all societal expectations (including gender norms) around employment and care.

There are, of course, some obvious answers. The current structure of the workplace is incompatible with relaxed active involvement in family life. One cannot simply opt for both family and many kinds of jobs (the point of a lot of the recent commentary I mentioned). Choice expressed through the market simply has not remotely made available the range of options I am advocating. And there is no reason to expect that it would.

At a different level of complexity, one might still say that we should focus on changing norms say in the workplaces so that the full range of choice by both men and women could be exercised. The focus would still be on enabling rather than restricting choice. There would jobs available with a wide range of hours, but no norms about would be thought to be normal, or desirable, or successful. First, of course, without a norm of a living wage for part time employment, the option of reduced hours would not be a real option. But perhaps the main problem here is existing preferences, which are deeply intertwined with gender identity. Until men learn to want to spend more time in care work, maximizing choice is almost certain to reinforce existing gender imbalances in employment and care. It is not clear to me whether in some utopian future--after everyone has learned the pleasures and importance of both care and meaningful work—the normative strictures on say minimum and maximum participation in care and

employment could be relaxed. Maybe then we could move toward the relaxing of norms and give individual preference and temperament wider scope. But in the foreseeable future, the scope of the transformation that I think is necessary in both care and employment practices, will require a new set of norms.

To say this is not to minimize the depth of the transformation. As I will discuss in more detail in chapter 3, the existing norms are so deeply tied to still prevailing understandings of masculinity and femininity that it will be wrenching to change them. I have already mentioned the need for men learn to want to care, but women will also need to be willing to give up their control over care, particularly over the raising of children.

In addition, these changes will have serious consequences for male economic, political and social power. One should expect some resistance to that in addition to anxieties about a redefined masculinity—since power brings with it privilege and advantage. There is then the important question of whom the project will threaten, so that its advocates can try to anticipate and respond to that sense of threat.

## 1.5 Additional Benefits

Despite all these challenges, there are likely to be a variety of benefits to the new norms in addition to the crucial response to family sustainability, equality, and the care/policy divide. I will close by just briefly noting some of them.

### 1.5.1 Relations of freedom

The first of these is the sort of flip side of the problem of coercion. I think both the process of deliberation I am advocating and the new norms I propose would foster “relations of freedom.”<sup>24</sup> Freedom is, of course, not just the absence of constraint. There is never a complete absence of constraint and the inevitability of coercive norms is an important example of that fact. Good norms (even with their inevitable coercion) can foster the human relations that constitute and enable freedom. To the extent that people are generating a thriving

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<sup>24</sup> Nedelsky, *Gender and Politics*, developing Zerilli’s term.

conversation about the norms of care and employment and their relation to gender norms, they are building relations of freedom. In Arendtian terms we construct our shared world, the public space that both binds and separates us, through relations of freedom. The issues of care and employment are especially important topics of collective world building because they further dismantle long standing divides of public and private by bring care into the public realm of collective deliberation. The very process of doing so brings to light the intertwining of the intimate (family life and sexual bonding), the economic, and the political—and the need for all to be subject to collective deliberation. (This, of course, is not at all Arendtian.) Privacy will necessarily be part of the conversation, as will the appropriate scope for personal choice and preference.

In addition, the norms of care responsibilities that extend beyond family and friends will generate a sense of the importance of bonds of community. These norms will create networks of connection, bonding, reciprocity, and understanding. And I envision that the complex questions of the nature of our responsibilities for neighbors will generate ongoing conversation. Indeed, as we develop our collective understanding of care, and its intertwining with employment and with various forms of volunteer work and activism, the norms of care will evolve—meaning ongoing conversation, meaning the ongoing building of relations of freedom.

### 1.5.2 Reducing time poverty

Another extremely important benefit of this shift in norms would be the reduction of “time poverty.” (I don’t remember where I first encountered this powerful term.) People who feel constantly stressed by the competing demands (and desires) of care and employment feel like they never have enough time. One of the terrible harms of time poverty is that it makes people ungenerous. They don’t think they have time to help, despite the strong motivation to help many people feel—as documented by Stone in *The Samaritan’s Dilemma*<sup>25</sup>. The anxious and ungenerous may even be fearful of people who they perceive as requiring care. When people experience the care of an elderly parent, or

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<sup>25</sup> Stone, *The Samaritan’s Dilemma*



mentally ill adult child as debilitating, exhausting, anxiety producing—instead of all the nice language of riches and reward that Stone documents—it is often because they are stretched beyond their limit because there is not enough support for them. So then people are deprived of the vital rewards of care that Stone talks about, because the structures of support are not there. In such cases, the experience of care will not allow people to acquire the knowledge I have emphasized as coming from the experience of care-giving. Indeed, it may foster the desire to be able to avoid it. The norms of shared responsibility, together with adequate public support, and greatly reduced hours of employment could transform both the experience of care and the painful lack of generosity time poverty produces.

Finally, I would add that the time poverty generated by current norms of employment and care interferes with people's capacity to recognize non-material values like a spiritual life or the life sustaining pleasure of art, whether literature or graphic art. Exhausted, stressed people often end up leading cramped lives. And in North America, this includes people who make a lot of money. As I noted earlier with respect to leisure, the constant time crunch also impedes autonomy. It is difficult to reflect deeply and critically about what one really wants to do in life when there is no time for any reflection.

More mundane, but still important benefits would arise from having time to cook, and to enjoy it. This could radically change the need for fast food, and rushed meals, and meals in front of televisions because no one in the family has the energy for conversation. Similarly, the urge to use ecologically unsound short cuts—from the ubiquitous use of paper towels, to aluminum foil so one doesn't have to clean a broiling pan, to disposable plastic steamers for fast food—would also decline. When people are constantly pressed to the edge with the demands of employment and care, they will buy time in ways that turn out to be very expensive in the long run.

### 1.5.3. Reducing consumption

This is both a problem and benefit. Even with the new “living wage,” many people's consumption capacities will be reduced. (Although I expect those who now struggle with multiple, poorly paying part time

jobs will have more consumption power.) More people will be working at good jobs, but the income of the professional-managerial class will go down. This will require non-trivial adjustment. But it is also an essential change required not just by my proposal, but by environmental sustainability. Many people know (even if they ignore it) that the affluent western countries cannot responsibly continue to use up the vast percentage of material resources that they currently do.

The wider challenge of developing market economies that do not rely on ever expanding growth in the use of material resources (generated by both production and consumption demands) is mandated by long-term environmental sustainability. My proposal intersects with this essential project.

#### 1.5.4 Changes in gender norms

This is yet another example of something that is both a benefit and a problem. Because of the centrality of employment norms to masculinity and care norms to female gender identity (femininity doesn't sound quite right here), my project involves the major challenge of changing core dimensions of gender identity. As I mentioned, this will inevitably make people feel threatened. But the transformations I envision are also intrinsic goods. I am quite confident that incorporating care into norms of masculinity will positively transform the current role of violence in those norms. Engagement in care practices, which routinely involve empathy and emotional support, should also transform men's ability to deal with their own emotions as well as those of others. This is likely to improve all of their relationships. Creating flexible and varied norms of employment should make it easier for men to adapt to changing employment opportunities.<sup>26</sup> If women learn to relinquish control of childrearing and household management, the habits of being controlling in relationships are likely to be eroded—to the good of all.

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<sup>26</sup> Stories of men in areas that have lost manufacturing jobs being unable to consider jobs as nurses or teachers.

1.5.5. Flexible forms of work, maybe easier for everyone (including those with unusual abilities like those on the autism spectrum) to find suitable employment

#### 1.5.6 Stable family bonding

There is evidence that the working poor are avoiding marriage, although not child bearing, because they do not think they have the financial security they think should go with marriage. This has generated a large number of children who grow up in poverty and without long-term stable relations with two parents in the household. Without endorsing traditional marriage (either heterosexual or homosexual), one can hope that lots of good, part time jobs would significantly improve the economic well being of many of the people who find themselves in these positions. The shift in both care and employment norms is likely to make it easier for people to form stable family units, as well as encouraging the development of multiple family forms.

What is needed is a norm of part time work for everyone, including the smartest theoretical physicists, top executives, and public policy makers.

