***Community, Work and Family* and the metamorphosis of social change**

Carolyn Kagan, Manchester Metropolitan University and Suzan Lewis Middlesex University

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We are very pleased to have this opportunity, to revisit our hopes/aims and expectations when Community, Work and Family was first developed, as a journal and later as a conferences ; to reflect on where we are now; and to look forwards to the challenges posed by current and future contexts.

What was on the agenda when we started *Community, Work and Family*?

We published the first issue of Community, Work and Family in April 1998, following an 18 month consultation and development period. The aim was to provide a place in which the interconnections between community, work and family, and between research, practice and policy can be explored, from multiple perspectives.
Since 1998 we have both experienced transitions and transformations in our own personal work, family and community lives which have inevitably influenced our perspectives on current and future challenges. At the time of starting the journal, we were both working full time, belonged to various communities at work, at home and worldwide, and were daughters, mothers, partners, aunts, sisters and cousins.

We are now phasing out of full time work. [CK worked part time for a year and now holds an Emeritus position at MMU, but is Director/Trustee of two community companies and two charities. SL now works half time in phased retirement from Middlesex University and is an active member of various community groups.]

Our family roles have evolved too. We no longer have living parents, but now have grandchildren, so have added parents-in-law and grandmothers to our family roles. So, we view the bigger picture from different work, family and community perspectives from those of 1998.

The Editorial Board we gathered together in 1998 consisted of a range of academics, practitioners and policy makers from around the world. Nearly all have undergone important life events –political and social turmoil in their local contexts, serious illness, job changes, country changes, family reconstructions and some, unfortunately are no longer with us . We have been in close contact with them all and their life experiences too have influenced our perspectives on the challenges ahead.

From the outset, our stance had been one that placed community, work and family in wider social and policy contexts, including national contexts. These wider contexts underpin different starting points of thinking about community, work and family interconnections: in some places it is the workplace and interest in organisations that stimulates interest; in others it is the social policies around family life and in yet others the starting point is local communities.

We believed, when we started that there were major cross-national themes of interest and concern, all of which reveal contradictions and controversies as well as global interdependencies. In particular we highlighted the central role of women in communities, work and families; citizenship and participation in democratic processes, the changing nature of families, work (and employment) and communities; social exclusion and marginalisation; social and environmental responsibility in business; corporate citizenship; environmental sustainability; and the growth of social movements (Kagan and Lewis, 1998:5).

The contested nature of the field, and of each of the contributory institutions, was acknowledged from the start. As we said in our opening editorial (Kagan and Lewis 1998:6,7), " At different times and in different places, each concept means something slightly different and may be used for different purposes. Each is intangible with a degree of fluidity in meaning, thus difficult to identify and define. … Community, work and family all have, at the same time, boundaries that separate them and mutual influences that join them".   We wanted to encourage debate and critical examination of, and reflection on, existing perspectives, frameworks and practices. We also wanted to combine the interests of researchers, practitioners, policymakers and those affected by research, practice and policies. In order to achieve this we aimed to publish work that challenged the status quo, encouraged personal reflection and reflexivity, and put professional and lay views side by side. Our *Voices* and *Contention and Controversy* sections were established to provide a challenge to conventional academic publishing, opening doors to new forms of work.

What did the field look like at the time of the first conference in 2005?

We had the opportunity to re-visit the priorities for the field, when we convened the first *Community, Work and Family* conference, in Manchester in 2005. And isn't it fantastic that conferences held every two years since , in Portugal, the Netherlands, , Finland, Australia and now Sweden.

Our closing address at the first conference, based on our life and research experiences, editing the journal and listening to the lively debates held at the conference, again emphasised the importance of understanding that context drove concerns about Community, work and family and their intersections. The two specific features of macro-context framing the research field, we identified in 2005, were the spread of neoliberal ideology; and globalisation (leading to changes in the discourses of human relations

from caring to non-caring; and the emergence of savage competition within and berween corporations).

Culture and identity in its many guises was a recurrent theme, addressed throughout at lots of different levels: national, organizational , social institutional, and within social relationships. Whilst this arena is complex, the challenges were to continuously try to both understand and at the same time influence cultural norms and associated policies. It was important not to see these macro contexts as normalised, as inevitable states of affair.

Wellbeing, not yet embedded in policy in 1998, emerged as a major theme linking work being done in the field of community, work and family by 2005. Wellbeing was closely intertwined with those contextual and cultural issues referred to above, but the opportunity to develop a more social understanding of wellbeing, one that was dependent on work, family and community lives, was afforded by the community, work and family research.

The role of policy analysis and relevance was clear. Social and organizational policies in the field were essential but not sufficient in contributing to change. Policies both highlighted and obscured the needs of diverse social groups; they were often double edged, appearing to be beneficial to some, but less progressive in practice to others. Many studies revealed the gap between policies and practices – the implementation gap, where progressive policies had failed to reach the parts that could influence people's lives. We emphasised in 2005, the need for policies and practices that created systemic change – transformation not amelioration.

By 2005, effective processes of change – largely in organisations and communities, were characterised by collaboration – between organisations, agencies, people, and roles; and by working at different levels, from the individual to the group to the larger organisation and more widely. We highlighted the important debate about where engagement, flexibility and participation lay on the dimension of choice to social control. The continual process of problematisation – rendering the taken for granted open to scrutiny was seen to be key to our work. This was well articulated by(the late) Rhona Rapoport , a keynote speaker at the Manchester conference when she argued that systemic change requires us to ask the unaskable questions and to think the unthinkable, with a social justice lens.

That first conference demonstrated the merits of working at the intersections, not only of community, work and family, but across academic disciplines and the research-practitioner-receiving end divides. However, it also raised the questions of boundaries within our own field: who was not involved in the conference; who else is needed to take the issues forward; and what other ways might we work together to take these issues forward.

Now, we think all these issues are still important, but might frame the challenges rather differently. But before we discuss new perspectives and challenges we consider whether (or how far?) the journal has met our original expectations so far.

Has the journal met our expectations?

The journal has lived up to our hopes and expectations in many ways, although inevitably we still see scope for growth.

The editors who succeeded us have done a great job . looking back over the years we are impressed by the richness and scope of papers that have helped to highlight and consolidate our understandings of interconnections between community, work and family, and between research, practice and policy. There remains more focus on work and family connections, but recently the number of papers with a primary focus on community has been increasing and we are delighted that there are growing number of papers that focus on the intersection of all three institutions.

We welcome the many papers reflecting on the diverse and changing nature of families, work and communities, within a growing range of contexts. The strong focus on gender continues, with a marked trend towards bringing men, especially as fathers, into the picture, as do concerns about social exclusion and inequalities, culture, identity and well being. As the journal developed, new voices have been represented ; for example those who are homeless, adapting to new countries or facing deportation and those who have experienced global conflicts and disasters. This enriches our broader understanding of community, work and family issues.

Many papers adopt traditional research methods but nevertheless provide new insights and we are pleased that they are complemented by innovative approaches and critical analyses that constantly challenge complacency and help us to understand issues in different ways.

A few papers refer explicitly to the concerns we mentioned in 2005-globalisation, the spread of neoliberal ideology, and the problems they bring for human relations and care. However these macro factors implicitly form essential background to almost all the pressing issues that are debated in the pages of CWF. It would be good to see these contextual issues more often made visible and examined in analytic frameworks and discussions.

Critical analyses of policy and practice have also been crucial to understand what has the potential to make a difference to people's lives and the many barriers and challenges that remain to be addressed in order to bring about the systemic change that we have argued are necessary in all intersecting institutions .

Overall, the journal and these conferences have helped to develop a strong community of practice which should ensure that the quality and scope of research and debates continue. There is nevertheless scope for further development. The Voices and Controversies sections started strongly but have not featured much in recent volumes. We think they add a useful dimension to debate and critique. So we would urge you all to encourage your students, research participants and collaborators who can provide a different perspective on what goes on in communities, workplaces and/or families to write a "Voices" piece to submit to CWF. Since CWF began , several other journals have included a Controversies section (under various names –…) and they are very valuable. We hope that more of you will consider writing a Contentions and Controversies piece too. Perhaps a good starting point will be to write something provocative about some of the controversial issues that we hope will arise at this conference!

Meanwhile some voices are still missing from the research and debates in the pages of the journal . In particular, despite the expanding geographic spread of papers, they remain, with a few exceptions, largely centred on high income countries , neglecting the developing world and people working in subsistence and informal economies everywhere. We hope to see more attention to such contexts in the future. Moreover, we would welcome more explicit attention to the impact of context in all contributions, particularly as global and local contexts are throwing up new challenges for us all.

How do we see the field now, in 2015 and the challenges facing us now?

First of all it is clear that the connections between community, work and family and contexts are as important as ever. We still see the need for systemic change and transformation through collaborations and dialogue   as crucial goals . But we also recognise that changes often have unanticipated consequences and that the cycle of changes both globally and locally throw up new challenges

We are at a time of unprecedented turmoil. Ulrich Beck in his book The Metamorphosis of the World, describes unfolding global evets as not just changing or transforming but metamorphosing. He   uses the metaphor of a caterpillar   undergoing a transformation in its cocoon with no idea what is taking place to describe the current transformation and challenges facing humankind. There are a number of gathering storms –global social trends which can be described as crises and form the contemporary context for communities , workplaces and families and their interface. These include :

1.   Economic crisis: economic trends and the worldwide adoption of neoliberal economic practices and ideologies. These forces have built on and exacerbated an increase in inequalities, within and between groups and nations worldwide, in all types of economies they threaten social justice and underpin an increase in insecure work,

long working hours, work intensification and feelings of alienation at work which then have a knock on effect on families and social instability.

2.   Demographic crisis: Population displacement: population mobility is greater across the globe than ever before with estimates of 214 million people now living outside their country of origin (OHCHR, 2013) in search of protection or opportunity. Some of this mobility is economic as people move to seek work, fracturing their family ties and supports and inventing new forms of family. Some is a result of conflict or natural disasters. For many displaced people their lives are characterised by fear, degradation, and danger, with the violence they seek to escape appearing in other forms including in-family violence, workplace hostilities and weakening of community cohesion) Other demographic changes are transforming social lives, unevenly in different places. Ageing populations, reduced fertility in some contexts and population growth in others all affect families, the communities in which they live and both the nature and experience of work.

3   Gender crisis: Women still experience a greater degree of powerlessness than men, played out in many different areas of their lives. They have unequal access to education, health, well paid jobs – even any jobs- and economic resources more generally and are underrepresented in government, corporate boards and other positions of power and disproportionately at risk of living in poverty . Whilst in many places great strides have been made to improve the situation of women, we still see the dominance of gendered assumptions, patriarchal attitudes and ideologies played out at every level and in just about every place, with impacts on work and workplaces, families and communities. Gender intersects with other categories of course and there are multiple sources of disadvantage.

4. Crisis of care. Care continues to be regarded as predominantly women's work and is undervalued. With ageing populations and lack of or cut backs in state provisions for social care the burden falls on families, predominantly women. to provide informal, unpaid care, often on top of intensified paid work. As families, workplaces and communities have changed there has been a growth in the formal care sector workforce in many contexts , again predominantly women, who are typically underpaid and with poor working conditions

5.   Crisis of violence: Violence is a central feature of life for many families and communities: sometimes people are caught up in wars and large scale conflicts; sometimes attempts to resist oppression are met with violence of a different scale; sometimes it is state perpetuated violence through torture or the demeaning treatment of minorities, low paid workers and those supported by state benefits, - what McCormack and Fryer (2012) refer to as the war without bullets ; sometimes it is violence enacted at a domestic level, affecting women and children across the globe.

6.   Ecological crisis: the degradation of the environment is a threat not only to wellbeing but to human life itself. These threats are ecological and include the crisis of energy, with peak oil approaching and a need to find alternative ways of living that do not rely on energy linked to the depletion of natural resources. Greedy economically driven activities have shaped working lives, decimated natural resources, destroyed communities and severed long standing practices of living in harmony with nature. As people's habitats are squeezed we can expect to see more conflicts of the most basic kinds – competition for resources to sustain life. Global warming and climate change often seem remote from the everyday challenges facing people in families, workplaces and communities, but we ignore them at our peril.

These crises are:
1) interdependent, and
2) have a systemic nature (not easily described, not easily predicted, complex with properties that emerge, non-linear - have feedbacks and subsystems).
3) differentially affect the poor, women, disabled people, the elderly, children, the working class and those reliant on the informal economy, peasants and members of minority or dominated ethnic groups.
4) are likely to lead to a succession of waves of misery, conflict, population churn, hunger and want.

Much of this 'future' is here already, which perhaps presents us with OUR greatest challenge – to understand the contribution we as community, work and family researchers can make, and not to get disheartened by the scale of the problems.

These global challenges frame all of our lives and within them we can see trends at the levels of individuals, families, work and communities.

Trends

When we started the journal, in 1998, the scale of internet usage, social media and social networking that we have now was unimaginable. This has transformed families workplaces and communities in unanticipated ways, both positive and also challenging , as children have to dragged from their computer, tablets or phones to actually talk to people , work can be done 24/7 and new , virtual communities emerge

Technology and the internet have also revolutionised opportunities for reserachand research methods

Reproductive technologies also make a difference to people's lives in some contexts and technology has enabled access to education (again in some places) and transformed women's and family lives

Inequalities always existed but the rapid growth of income inequality across the globe, but at unprecedented levels in some of the richest countries, as well as the reach of the financial crisis is staggering.

Tolerance and intolerance are both on the rise. Tremendous strides have been made – in some places - in recognising and valuing different sexualities: gay marriages, adoption practices, even employment practices in some places are more progressive and inclusive. Nevertheless, stigma, discrimination, sometimes backed up by legal systems an social attitudes remain and we must not get complacent. The rise of extreme right wring political movements again in Europe and different forms of fundamentalism seen around the world has a direct impact on people's fear, family stability and work opportunities and experiences. Yet, in other places, political change has brought about greater citizen participation and transformed working lives with new forms of organization emerging.

In workplaces, despite the spread of discourses of work-life balance around much of the world , gendered assumptions about what is valued work and valued ways of working persist The glass ceiling remains firmly in place, for women, people from ethnic minorities, disabled people, in those places where work-life integration policies are in place. The motherhood, black, disabled worker penalties are still strong. There have been advances in maternity and paternity protection, although again, not everywhere and not always enforced . Yet the ever increasing demands of paid work means that it has not necessarily become easier to reconcile employment and family life and sometimes it becomes more difficult . Meanwhile the prioritisations of profit over people embedded in neoliberal ideology is evident in large organization and their supply chains that strive to provide ever cheaper products and services . At the extreme these can have tragic outcomes for workers.

To return to Beck and his caterpillar analogy ; we are a world that is not just transforming but metamorphosing . The challenge is to better understand the process of metamorphosis at the intersections of communities, work and families. Has our field of research made a difference? There have been small wins of course but they are often overshadowed by the scale of the challenges . Nevertheless our field has already challenged some inevitabilities relating to the community, work and family interface simply by questioning the taken for granted assumption that these are separate and unconnected spheres, and other assumptions and by beginning to draw attention to the impact of layers of context . But it remains important to recognise how far we have to go in a number of areas of life, to sustain and build on the progress that has been

made in the face of ongoing crises.   Continuing to challenge the inevitability of old responses to new issues facing communities, work and families in the global context is one way forward.

Beck, U(2015) The Metamorphosis of the World

Fryer, D., & McCormack, C.(2012). The War Without Bullets: Socio-structural Violence from a Critical Standpoint. Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice, 3(1), 87-92. see from http://www.gjcpp.org/