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Roderic Beaujot

*University of Western Ontario, rbeaujot@uwo.ca*

Amir Erfani

*University of Western Ontario*

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by  
Roderic Beaujot  
and  
Amir Erfani

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Paper presented at the meeting of the Population Association of America, Boston, April 2004, Session on Fertility Preferences

**Population Studies Centre  
University of Western Ontario  
London CANADA N6A 5C2**

## **Attitudes that differentiate alternative family sizes**

**Roderic Beaujot**

[Rbeaujot@uwo.ca](mailto:Rbeaujot@uwo.ca)

**Amir Erfani**

[aerfani@uwo.ca](mailto:aerfani@uwo.ca)

Population Studies Centre  
Department of Sociology  
University of Western Ontario  
London, Ont N6A 5C2 CANADA

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*Abstract: Taking advantage of both a national survey on families (Canadian General Social Survey, 2001) and a local qualitative survey (Orientations to Relationships and Childbearing over the Life Course, 2000), this paper studies the attitudes that differentiate respondents who indicate alternate expected or completed family size. While we find some evidence of differing values that differentiate those intending not to have children, there is more evidence of a common culture of reproduction than of heterogeneity in preferences. The alternative outcomes in family size would also appear to be a function of the difficulties experienced in relationships and problems of financial security, given the felt need to make high investments for each child.*

Childbearing can be viewed in terms of the desires that people have, and the constraints under which they operate. In the debate on the relative importance of economic and cultural questions in fertility change, Caldwell (1997) proposes a “unifying theory” that is based both on the changed socio-economic circumstances of people’s lives, and changing ideas and norms on appropriate family behaviour. Axinn and Yabiku (2001) propose that cultural considerations are at stake in terms of desires for having children, while economic considerations are more relevant to the constraints. In theorizing about low fertility, McDonald (2002) proposes that there is considerable desire for children, as seen through childbearing intentions, but the risks and uncertainties of a globalizing world make people hesitate to have children. A globalizing world probably produces more risks which are partly handled through stronger investment in one’s own human capital, leaving less time for reproduction. There is also a heightened awareness of risk, along with sustained efforts to manage and control risk (Hall, 2002). This uncertainty and hesitation also applies to relationships and to the labour market. People may feel that their relationships are insufficiently secure to have children, they may feel insecure in the labour market, or they may feel a lack of support from partners and the broader society, in terms of the division of family work, child care and social services for families.

Clearly, desires and constraints operate together. In studying family size attitudes, Balakrishnan et al. (1993) observe that the rational choice calculations applied to fertility are mediated by values. Thus Szreter (1995) uses the concept of “perceived, relative childbearing costs.” The perception of costs and benefits are important, beyond the constraints as represented by the costs and benefits themselves. For instance, there may be a view that young people lack the security to have children, but this view includes both the objective elements, and associated perceptions and interpretations. These interpretations may change the threshold of acceptable uncertainty under which one proceeds or does not proceed with the decision to have a child. Besides the elements associated with risk and security, there are values that contrast the fulfilment through children with the other pleasures that compete with childbearing, like careers, income and freedom (Caldwell and Schindlmayr, 2003; Livi Bacci, 2001). That is, in addition to the costs of children and the problems of incompatibility between work and childbearing, there is the ideological assumption that individuals should assess these costs and act in their self interest (Bumpass, 1990).

Research that seeks to link alternate value profiles to childbearing has often made comparisons across cohorts or taken whole societies as the unit of analysis (e.g. Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 1988;

Caldwell and Schindlmayr, 2003; Morgan, 2003; van de Kaa, 2001). Using the concept of “preference theory” Hakim (2003) proposes that there can be heterogeneity of attitudes and values in a given society at a given point in time. She proposes in particular that women are heterogeneous in lifestyle preferences, with a differentiation between being “work-centred,” “home-centred,” and “adaptive” in the sense of seeking to accommodate both family and work. This places emphasis on individual actors, along with their goals and personal values, in decision making at the micro-level. Similarly, Moors (1997) considers how attitudes regarding “traditional family values” and “autonomy” influence the likelihood of making transitions in union status and to parenthood.

Our objective in this paper is to investigate both the common elements and the value differentiations as they relate to preferences on family size alternatives. To use the term from Watkins (2000) there may be a common “cultural model of reproduction;” that is, there may be a common orientation to childbearing which provides a logic within which people decide on whether to have children, when to have children and the numbers of children. Alternatively, following Hakim (2003), there may be heterogeneity of preferences for alternate lifestyle choices. We may also observe both differentiation and similarities. These questions will be studied by comparing the profile of values and attitudes that are associated with different family sizes. But first, it is useful to place our discussion in the context of the literature on family change and the cultural basis of reproduction.

### **Family change and the cultural basis of reproduction**

The second demographic transition places family change, including changed norms and attitudes on family behaviour, at the core of demographic change of the last quarter century. Lesthaeghe has described the underlying dynamics in terms of greater individualism and secularization which includes tolerance for non-conformism in family formation and choices in parenthood (Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 1988; Lesthaeghe and Meekers, 1986). Roussel (1979) proposes that partners who adopt modern attitudes no longer want to conform to an outside norm but want instead to build their own relationships as a “*projet de couple*.” Rather than seeing marriage as based on established roles, expectations, commitments and mutual obligations, the continuation of the relationship is dependent on the continuation of strong emotional exchanges and the self-actualization of the individual partners in the relationship. Similarly, Giddens (1991) speaks of “pure relationships” defined and held together by the personal choice of couples themselves rather than by normative considerations. Following Ariès (1980), Giddens also uses the term “reproductive individualism,” that is, having children as a means of self-fulfilment and actualization. Van de Kaa (2001) uses the term postmodern, which extends the concept of individualism and pluralism. Since people are equal moral agents, the ideal of self-realization and personal freedom includes tolerance of and support for diversity as seen through cohabitation, divorce, gay relationships, abortion and marriages without children. Instead of holding marriages together at all costs, which Kettle (1980) called a “dutiful generation,” the prevalent norm in postmodern families is that a good divorce is better than a bad marriage (Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 1988).

If individuals are equal moral agents, then the rights of women and men should be equal with regard to relationships. Stated differently, feminism represents another important value, besides individualism, tolerance and pluralism. For instance, Folbre (2000) reads the gender change over the previous century as allowing women to make choices based on their self-interests. Having control over one's marital and parental status is a key element of individualism. McDonald (2000) further proposes that increased gender equality first started in families. Women's control over childbearing, through modern methods of contraception, increased their control over family life and opened opportunities in other domains. As another example, the more equal treatment of boys and girls in families has probably helped to undermine gender ascription in educational achievement (Wanner, 1999).

These changes can be placed in a longer historical context that has been described by various family theorists. Burgess et al. (1963) speak of a movement from institution to companionship, Farber (1964) sees a change from orderly replacement of generations to permanent availability, while others speak of a move from instrumental to expressive relationships (Scanzoni and Scanzoni, 1976; Thadani, 1978) or the de-institutionalization of the family (Harris, 1983). Thornton (2001) proposes that change included the ideal "that individuals are free and equal and that social relationships are based on consent." The modern family clearly includes partners choosing each other rather than arranged marriages. In addition, there is a weakening of the norms against divorce, pre-marital sex, cohabitation and voluntary childlessness, with increased importance of independent thinking among children, rather than strict obedience (Thornton, 2001: 189). The values of the modern family thus include a greater focus on individual rights along with less regulation of the private lives of individuals by the larger community.

Life course decisions are therefore linked to ideas about appropriate ways of living in families (Lesthaeghe and Moors, 2000). In particular, the values of the modern family include choices in childbearing, including the choice not to have children. However, there are also ideals that support childbearing, including the very pleasures associated with interacting with children and the long term relationships that children represent. When we focus on childbearing, it is important to appreciate that family size may be secondary to other personal and family goals, from self-fulfilment and reducing uncertainty, to increasing social capital and social capillarity, and achieving a life that is more family-centred (Van de Kaa, 1987; Friedman et al., 1994; Schoen et al., 1997; Ariès, 1980; Ni Bhrolchain, 1993). That is, cultural models of reproduction are ultimately approaches for fitting production and reproduction into the life goal of maximizing well-being. This includes the possibility that having children does not fit into these broader personal and family goals. Children may be obstacles to self-actualization, and childbearing is not an intrinsic element of "pure relationships" (Hall, 2003). On the other hand, the benefits of children as a means of self-expression social embeddedness may outweigh the negatives (Van de Kaa, 2001).

### **Measuring profiles of values and preferences**

Some researchers have used the European Values Survey for indicators of relevant family values and attitudes. For instance, Lesthaeghe and Meekers (1986) use scales that measure acceptability

of grounds for abortion and divorce, tolerance of non-conformist behaviour on marriage and procreation (whether marriage is an outdated institution, whether unmarried motherhood is acceptable), familism (necessity for parents to sacrifice for children) and the meaning attached to parenthood (whether children are necessary for life fulfilment, whether children need both parents, whether children are necessary for the success of marriage). Moors (1997) uses a panel study of German women to study the influence of traditional family values and autonomy in the transition to union status and to parenthood. He finds that women who were higher on values associated with autonomy were less likely to enter a union. Those more likely to make a transition to parenthood were high on traditional family values and low on values associated with autonomy. It was also found that values changed following on making these transitions, in ways that reinforced and rationalized the transitions.

Other studies have used attitudinal questions incorporated in family surveys. For instance, Thomson (2001) used the American National Survey of Families and Households to measure gender-role traditionalism, sexual conservatism, conjugal familism and extended familism. On the basis of these longitudinal data, she found that women's conjugal familism increased the likelihood of a first child, but neither women's or men's values affected the risk of a second child. There was also a small "values adaptation" effect, where first parenthood increased women's conjugal familism, and it increased the extended familism of both men and women.

Based on the Canadian 1995 General Social Survey on Families, Hall (2003) used indicators of secularism (church attendance), relationship egalitarianism (orientation to segregated or egalitarian gender roles) and union risk profile (acceptable grounds for separation). From the expected family sizes of young couples without children, he finds that those who were higher on relationship egalitarianism were more likely to expect fewer than two children, or they were uncertain on expected fertility. Also, those who were higher on the scale of union risk profile were less likely to expect three or more children.

Based on a 1999 British Survey, Hakim (2003) differentiates women on dimensions of work-centred and home-centred using an indicator of ideal family model (whether roles should be segregated) and work orientation (being a the sole earner, a joint main earner or a secondary earner in the couple; whether respondent would do paid work in the absence of economic necessity). She finds that average family sizes are twice as high for women who are home-centred compared to work-centred, with those who are "adaptive" being intermediate but closer to the home-centred in numbers of children.

As seen from this review, there is no agreed common set of indicators. The most relevant considerations seem to include the following: gender orientation: (traditionalism, segregated vs egalitarian, work vs home), individualism (autonomy), tolerance (acceptance of divorce, abortion and homosexuality), traditional family values (importance placed on family and children, normative obligation to marry and have children), sexual conservatism (child without marriage, acceptance of cohabitation).

There are not Canadian data which would permit a longitudinal analysis of how values affect

behaviour and how behaviour affects values. We build on the findings of others like Moors (1997) and Thomson (2001) to the effect that both processes operate: values adapt to life circumstances, and there are different likelihoods of given transitions (selectivity of behaviour) based on prior values. In effect, Moors (1997) suggests that the process produces an evolution in the direction of initial values which consolidates choices. For instance, those higher on autonomy are more likely to live on their own, and those who remain alone or in common law unions, rather than marrying, are more likely to evolve toward values that are higher on autonomy.

Rather than studying the processes of selectivity and adaptation, the purpose of the present study is to determine which values are most associated with given family sizes. That is, we are seeking to make a profile of the values that may be linked to given childbearing orientations. We expect to find the largest difference associated with the family size of zero, which is qualitatively different from other alternatives. Given the prevalence of “two or three” children, we expect to find few differentiations between these alternatives, which would correspond to a cultural orientation that one should not have too many nor too few children. We expect that family sizes of four or more are linked to more traditional family and gender values.

We first use the 2001 General Social Survey on Families. This is a large sample (24,310 respondents with a response rate of 79 percent), representing 98 percent of the resident Canadian population. Unfortunately, the 2001 version of this survey has very few attitudinal questions relating to the values under investigation. We extend the analysis by using a 2000 survey of orientations to marriage, relationships and childbearing that was taken in London, Ontario, and the surrounding region. This sample included all persons over 18 years of age in the selected households, based on census enumeration areas which had been stratified by income level as well as location (city, town, rural). The household response rate was 48.3 percent, and in these households 76.6 percent of eligible respondents completed the survey. The 1071 respondents included 124 who underwent a semi-directed interview. This qualitative survey sought to determine the prevalent rationales regarding given family questions (whether and when to marry, whether and when to have children, number of children, division of family work, etc.). Respondents were asked about their own orientation, and they were also treated as informants on the predominant culture through questions like “Why do you think people usually decide to have children? ... What is the best number of children to have, why not more, why not fewer ... When is it best to marry or start a relationship?”

### **Current, expected and ideal family size**

The Canadian total fertility rate has been rather stable, changing from 1.7 in 1981 to 1.5 in 2001. Parity progression ratios based on the 2001 General Social Survey show that, to age 39, the proportions with no children increased from 11.1 percent in the 1941-45 birth cohort, to 16.3 percent in the 1956-60 cohort (Table 1). Among those with one child, the progression to a second child declined only from 85.5 percent to 81.5 percent over these cohorts. However, the progression is much lower to third parity, at 52.2 percent in the 1941-45 cohort and 38.8 in the 1956-60 cohort. Nonetheless, by age 39, 26.5 percent of women in the 1956-60 cohort had at



least three children. Also, between 1986 and 2001, the proportion of births that were third or higher parity was rather stable at 21 to 20 percent (Statistics Canada, 1999: 27; Statistics Canada, 2003). While childlessness has increased, for the last available cohort, that is women born in 1951-55, only 13.6 percent had no children by age 44.

The most prevalent family sizes are now in the following order: two, three, one, zero, and four or more (Beaujot, 2000: 235). The fertility decline over cohorts has mostly involved lower proportions of third or higher order births and a greater concentration at the level of two births (Péron, Lapierre-Adamcyk and Morissette, 1987). Consequently, three-quarters of children are in families of size two or three. The proportion of women with one child has increased slightly, but it has remained under 15 percent, that is very similar to the proportion with no children.

In calculating total expected family size we have included adopted children, but not step-children. In the whole 2001 sample, there were 8.2 percent of men and 5.1 percent of women who did not declare an expected family size (Table 2). These figures are above 10 percent for men aged 15-39 and women aged 25-34. The proportion expecting no children is only 6 to 7 percent at ages 15-19, and rises to 12 to 14 percent for women at ages 40-54 and to 18 percent for men at ages 50-54. In each of the age-sex groups under age 60, two children comprises the largest proportion of expected family sizes, and the second most common expected family size is three children. Thus the average expected family size, ignoring those who have missing data, declines from 2.1 or 2.2 at ages 15-19, to 1.9 at ages 40-49.

The local survey in London, Ontario, and the surrounding region, shows broad similarity with the 2001 General Social Survey on expected family sizes, at least for ages under 55 (Table 3). That is, there is a concentration at size two, while size three is mostly the second most common alternative. However, the averages are slightly higher in the local survey, probably because the sample has under-represented persons with fewer children.

Ideal family size was not asked in the 2001 survey. Leaving aside the 9 percent with missing data, the local survey shows an average ideal family size that is consistently slightly more than two children over age-sex groups (Table 3). The concentration at two children is higher than for expected family size, and in each group three children is the next most common ideal family size. Responses of zero and one for ideal family size are very rare, representing under one percent of respondents for size zero and under two percent for size one. Respondents expecting zero or one child mostly give an ideal family size of two or more children (Table 4). Those expecting two children are the most likely to give two as the ideal family size. Given the small variation in ideal family size, we do not present further tables showing variation according to given attitudes. It is nonetheless worth noting that respondents who were interviewed often did not volunteer a numeric response on ideal family size. Some said that there was no ideal, while others said that it depended on the situation of the couple, in terms of things like finances, emotions and work situation. This suggests that many do not see a specific reproductive norm, and there is much tolerance for alternatives.

### **Importance of relationships, children and jobs for happiness**

The 2001 survey asked, “in order for you to be happy in life, is it very important, important, not very important or not important at all to have a lasting relationship as a couple ... to have at least one child ... to be able to take a paying job.” Placing positive and negative answers in two categories, a typology was created ranging from all three are important to all three are not important (Table 5). Given an adequate sample size, we will here concentrate on ages 25-44 for whom expected family size is typically still subject to decisions, and values may less be seen as rationalizations of past behaviour.

The largest differentiation found in this table is between those expecting zero children, for whom 58 percent of men and 63 percent of women said that happiness depended on a lasting relationship and a job but it did not depend on having a child. There is a broad similarity between those expecting 2, 3 or 4 or more children, for whom over 80 percent of men and 60 to 70 percent of women saw all three elements as being important to their happiness. Those expecting one child have some similarity to those expecting no children, but a greater similarity to those expecting two or more children. Those who did not give an expected family size also had some similarities with persons expecting no children. For women, the typology category where “happiness depends on relationship and child but not on having a job” increases from those who expect zero children, reaching 20 percent of those who expect three children and 27 percent at four or more children.

The same questions were asked in the qualitative survey and we find that the proportion intending not to have children varied considerably across the responses on whether happiness depends on relationships, children and jobs (see also Stobert and Kemeny, 2003). Compared to those expecting more children, those expecting zero or one child are less likely to see that having a lasting relationship as a couple is important to their happiness, they are especially less likely to see being married as important to happiness (Table 6). The measure of “happiness depending on having at least one child” especially distinguishes between zero and all other categories of expected family size. Over 90 percent of persons expecting zero children also saw having a job as important to their happiness, with the importance of a job declining with higher family sizes for women. The same applies to “pursuing interests outside family and work,” which is more important for those expecting zero children, and less important at higher family sizes.

### **Criteria of union stability and formation**

The 2001 General Social Survey asked persons in married or cohabiting relationships: “If you had young children (less than 15 years of age) and your marriage/ common law union was in trouble and the difficulty with your spouse could not be resolved, would you still remain in your relationship for the sake of your child(ren)?” There are significant variations by expected family size, with persons expecting more children giving more conservative responses (Table 7). For both women and men, those expecting zero children are least likely to be in favour of staying together for the sake of the children. For men, those who did not declare an expected family size are similar to those expecting zero children, with those expecting one child being intermediate between zero and two or more children. For women, who are generally less favourable to staying

together for the sake of children and there is less variation across categories, those expecting one or two children are intermediate between zero and three children.

The local survey asked various questions concerning what was important to the formation of a couple. There was little variation by expected family size on the importance of coming from the same socio-economic background as a couple, or coming from the same ethnic background, while having shared religious beliefs is slightly more important as expected family size increases (Table 8).

On attitudes to “it’s too easy to get a divorce in Canada today” and “marriage is an outdated institution,” there were some differences in patterns of attitudes that distinguish those not intending to have children, but little other differentiation by family size (Table 9). Those who intend not to have children are more likely to see marriage as an outdated institution, and disagree that divorce is too easy. For men, those with one child or four or more children are least likely to find it acceptable for a divorced person to be living with his or her children and a new partner without being married to that person. For women, it is those expecting one child who are most likely to find this acceptable.

### **Context for childbearing and values for children**

On the question, “when two people decide to have children, they should first get married,” there are small but systematic differences with those expecting more children being in more agreement, but the gradient is not different for the lowest category of family size, that is those intending to not have children (Table 10). The question “a single woman should never choose to have a child” receives disagreement by some two thirds of respondents, regardless of their family size intentions. On the question “a child needs a home with both a father and a mother to grow up happily,” women are more likely to disagree, while men are more likely to agree, but the differences across family size intentions are rather minor, except that women expecting no children have the highest disagreement.

While the differences are not large, both women and men who do not expect to have children are more likely to agree with the idea that “a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work outside the home.” On the question “if a mother of young children works outside the home, it should be only while the family needs the money” both women and men expecting four or more children are more likely to agree. Other differences on this question are small, but men expecting no children are also more likely to agree with this idea, while women expecting no children disagree. People who expect more children are more likely to agree with the idea that “it is much better for everyone if the man take the major responsibility for earning a living and the woman takes the major responsibility for the home and family,” here the greatest disagreement is for women who expect zero or one child. There is much agreement with the idea that “if a couple can afford it, one parent should stay home with the children,” but the differences across family sizes show an even gradient with strongest agreement among persons expecting the most children.

In terms of values to impart on children, there are no systematic differences on the proportion who choose “tolerance” or “obedience” among their five top values (Table 11).

### **Summary of survey responses by expected or completed family size**

On some attitudes there are very few differences across family size intentions: importance of partners coming from the same socio-economic status or ethnicity, acceptability of living with one’s children and an unmarried partner, acceptability of a single woman having a child, importance of values of tolerance and obedience for children, plus men’s attitudes on children needing both mother and father. On other attitudes there is progression along family sizes wherein those expecting not to have children are simply part of the gradient: importance of partners being from same religious background, importance of getting married if having children, acceptability of segregated roles, and of one parent staying home.

The most common pattern is that those expecting not to have children show important differences compared to those expecting children, suggesting a qualitative difference associated with the family size of zero children. This pattern applies to the following: whether happiness depends on relationships, children, jobs and other interests, staying together for the sake of the children, working mothers can establish warm relations, work only when family needs the money, divorce is too easy, marriage is outdated, plus women’s attitudes on children needing both mother and father. Some of these attitudes that distinguish those expecting not to have children relate to gender and work, but others relate to understandings about unions and criteria for union stability. In most cases, those expecting one child are simply part of the continuum, but on certain criteria they show closer resemblance to those not expecting children: importance of relationship to happiness, importance of marriage to happiness, acceptability of role segregation.

### **Expecting zero or one child**

Given the distinctiveness of those not expecting to have children, and the lesser differentiation associated with expecting one child, we looked systematically at the semi-structured interviews with these respondents. These interviews were based on a sample of the population in the local survey; that is, we did not seek to establish quotas on given criteria. In the 124 interviews, there were five who had an expected family size of zero, and three others where there are reasonable prospects that they would not have children. Another four respondents had one child; three of these are now beyond childbearing and the fourth is not likely to have more children..

As seen in the summary of these cases, they largely do not manifest negative attitudes toward children, nor distinctive family orientations (see Appendix A). Of the 12 cases, one man and four women are single: the man would like children but he has not managed to maintain a relationship, one woman is now beyond childbearing, another is 34 and sees her “clock ticking,” another is a lone-parent who would only have another child “if a very good man came around,” and one is 27 but very involved with her graduate studies. One married women has fecundity problems and may adopt, an another had serious pregnancy problems with a first child. The other five have step children: one man has no children of his own but his wife has four children, one woman’s first husband did not want children, but her now two step children visit, another

married late to a person who had one child, another has two step children in a second marriage, and in the last case she has one child and he has two. As seen from the transcripts, there is only one man (ID04410) who is negative about children and appears to regret his spouse's four children. The others have rather pro-natalist attitudes, but are expected to have zero or one child because of lack of partners, fecundity/pregnancy problems or the presence of step-children.

### **The common culture of childbearing**

Before taking a specific look at persons expecting zero or one child, the common element in the 124 interviews were summarized by de-briefing the eight interviewers and three transcribers, and by reading selective parts of the interviews.

We make the assumption that people have family strategies, that is, they have an orientation to family that carries a certain logic or makes sense to them. To theorize or make sense of things is part of the human condition, and the survey was seeking to capture this underlying logic, or the common sense under which they are operating. In effect, people often used words that reflected the idea that their family strategy had an underlying logic; for instance, they would say that some alternate behaviour was "crazy," that it did not make sense to them, or that they could not understand people who behaved in these ways. Judgmental terms like "fair" and "selfish" were also often used. In effect, part of the objective of the project was to uncover the behavioural norms, and the perceptions of individuals on the costs and benefits of given behaviours (Kohler, 1997; Hammel, 1990). These perceptions are partly a function of social learning, and the logic that people propose in explaining their rationale may be part of the mechanism through which these norms are diffused.

It is useful to treat the topic of childbearing within the context of **marriage or relationships**. The survey asked things like "what do you think it means to be married," how that might differ from living together, reasons for forming a union, the "advantages of having a partner compared to being single," and the advantages of being single (see Appendix B). Largely the advantages of being married or in an enduring relationship were seen in terms of companionship and having someone with whom to share life, and the advantages of being single were the freedom to make decisions without taking someone else into account. While some saw these as trade-offs, the vast majority felt that there were more advantages to being in a relationship, and for the most part this was to include marriage. A secure relationship was largely seen as an essential basis for childbearing. The ideal age for beginning this relationship was seen to be in the mid-20s, with questions of maturity and financial security being more important than age. Separation and divorce were also seen as very serious matters, but the majority thought that divorce was legitimate if one had done everything possible to make the relationship work.

People's orientations to **childbearing** were sought by asking "why do people have children," and what are the advantages and disadvantages of having children, and ideal number (Appendix C). Some simply saw it as natural to have children, and others were more likely to see it as a choice. The benefits were described in terms of reproducing oneself, the joys of children, and the special relationships with children. The costs were first described in financial terms, but ultimately they

involved especially time and energy, something that you have to give from yourself, and being tied down. While respondents could often say more about the disadvantages, the vast majority felt that the advantages outweighed the disadvantages.

These orientations to childbearing were further specified by asking under what conditions one should not have children, what was the ideal number of children to have, and why not more or less than this number. The conditions for not having children often started with serious things like physical or mental incapacity, but they typically included not being mature or responsible enough, the relationship being unstable, and many said that not wanting children was a sufficient basis to not have children. People who did not want to have children were often seen as missing out on something important in life, but if they did not want to have children it was best not to have children. Most respondents denied that they would in any way pressure people to have children, and argued that it was in children's best interest if those who do not want to have children would not have them.

The ideal number was often stated as two children, but many gave a range, especially two-to-three, or two-to-four, while others said there was no ideal number, it depends on the situation of the couple. In defending this number, people again spoke first of financial questions, but on further reflection they often said that if you wait for the finances you may never have children. When asked if they would have had more children if they had twice the income, most said not and that this was not the right way to make the decision. The reasons for not having more were often described in terms of the time and energy that children take from you, given other things that you also want to do, and given that you want to do the very best for each child. The reasons for not having fewer than two were rather uniformly described in terms of it not being good to be an only child. Without siblings, a child would lack the opportunity to experience close interpersonal relationships with someone of their own age, which was seen as an important life skill. It seemed that there was more prejudice against having one child than against having no children. When asked what couples should do if they disagreed on the number of children to have, most had some difficulty dealing with the question, some said it should be the one who will mostly look after them who should decide, but many said that they should not have children that they do not both want. This corresponds to conclusions on the basis of the 1987-88 to 1992-94 National Survey of Families and Households in the United States (Thomson, 1997). The likelihood of having a child was least if both did not want a child, but those who disagreed had lower than average births, and if they disagree each partner's intentions were shifted toward not having a child. Longitudinal research suggests that intentions regarding future fertility and the degree of certainty expressed by the respondent and spouse are strong predictors of the risk of having a birth in the next five years (Schoen et al., 1999).

The questions on the **timing of childbearing**, and first births in particular, produced similar answers to that of timing of marriages or relationships. Often people spoke of it being best to wait two-to-three years before having children. Financial stability was even more important than for marriage, but equally important was the emotional maturity to be able to carry the costs, and partnership stability. There were also advantages not to wait too long, and the most common norm was probably to have children before age 30 at least for a first child, or between 25 and 30,

or for some between 25 and early 30s. The advantage of earlier ages was seen partly in terms of fecundity questions, but more often in terms of having the necessary energy, and not being too old compared to children in order to be able to play with them when they were young and relate to them when they were older.

The survey also asked about the **division of work in the home**: what is best, what are common satisfactions and frustrations (Appendix D). While there were clearly cases where women were carrying the heavier burden, and others where women felt that their work was not appreciated, the majority of respondents said that they had established patterns which they found satisfactory. Older women often observed that men, especially younger men, have come to do more of the household work, especially in child care. When asked about accommodations between family and work, respondents mostly explained how they had worked this out, through leaves, part-time work, shifts, day care and help from their own parents, rather than focussing on the frustrations or calling for more accommodations at work. It was women who made most of the accommodations, while men were more likely to see family and work as two separate areas in life. While there are remaining difficulties, it would appear that accommodations both at work and at home largely make it possible to achieve satisfaction in family and work goals in ways that mostly include children; typically this meant two children.

## **Discussion**

The evidence that we have considered is more consistent with the view that there is a common culture of reproduction. There remains variation, but we do not see the strong heterogeneity of preferences that Hakim (2003) qualifies as ideal types. In response to attitudinal questions, we did find some evidence of differential values that distinguish those who expect zero children, suggesting that this is qualitatively different from expecting one, two, three, or four or more children. It may also be that our attitudinal measures did not properly capture the gender variation associated with being home-centred and work-centred.

At the same time, the specific respondents from a small local survey who do not intend to have children seem to subscribe to pro-natalist values. For most people, there are degrees of priority rather than clear alternatives. Most give priority to three things, living in an enduring relationship, having a rewarding job, and having children (Lapierre-Adamcyk, 1990). The problems occur when it is difficult to achieve all three goals. Sometimes the relationship is not forthcoming or is insufficiently stable to provide an adequate basis for childbearing. At other times, the relationship includes children from the new spouse, with step children taking the place of children. Small surveys of university students suggest that if all three priorities are not possible, about a quarter would give up on having children. Those who give the highest priority to achieving independence through a rewarding job are the most likely not to have children.

But for many, children represent an irreplaceable value, as also seen in the qualitative responses of most persons expecting zero or one child. Caldwell and Schindlmayr (2003) summarize that children provide a unique and different kind of fulfilment, they build up a network of relations, and they provide someone who will be there in old age. The high standards for the care of

children imply that too many children represent problems. Large families are viewed as inconsistent with good parenting, given that each child is unique and deserves substantial investment in parental time and energy (Morgan, 2003). There is a common view that having one child is not the best for the child, especially in terms of forming close family relationships with others of one's own age. At the same time, the culture appears to allow much openness not to have children, there is a prevalent view that people who do not want children should not have children, and many further state that there is no ideal family size. Also, when spousal preferences diverge, the common view is that one should not have a child unless both desire the child, and the relationship is considered to be stable.

It therefore makes sense that, before they experience the constraints associated with relationships and work, young people expect an average of more than two children, as applies to most countries (Livi Bacci, 2001). Sometimes it is the relationships that are not there, or not sufficiently stable to have children. At other times the constraints are associated with financial and employment insecurity. There are high expectations for consumption, clear interest to have two-income families, much awareness of risk in employment security, and a cultural context that makes it legitimate not to have children when the financial basis for childbearing is judged inadequate.

#### **Appendix A. Partial Transcripts of 12 Respondents Expecting Zero or One Child**

ID04023: This 30 year old single women who works full time has a son aged seven and expects not to have other children. The birth was not a planned pregnancy and she says that she doubts that she will ever have another child, unless she finds a very nice man. The father has no contact with the child, and the respondent has had other common-law relationships. She went back to school after the son was born. She emphasizes in the interview that children are expensive, and require much responsibility.

“You bring a child into the world because you want to teach somebody what you know ... you want to carry on the family name. I've always wanted to have kids. One thing I do believe in is that everything happens for a reason, and I am not a believer in abortion, generally. I would consider having another child under much different circumstances. I will be married if I have another one. I will not risk, well even being married, there is still the risk that you end up doing it alone. But I won't do it again. For me, I've also got medical issues that make me think twice about having another one. ... I don't think there is an ideal number [of children]. It depends on circumstances, the family environment, financial ability. Advantages to having children, I mean you watch them grow, hearing little things, he was famous for it – out of the blue, I love you mom. When you are having the worst day, that is the best thing you can hear. And watching them excel at the things that they want to do, I love all that stuff. There are disadvantages if it's not the right time. If you are not emotionally prepared to have one there are going to be a lot of disadvantages.”

ID06583: This 51 year old single woman has worked full-time and part-time as a nurse. She thinks that she would have liked to have children but it is too late now. She also values her time



for herself, and would not want to give that up for anyone. She is very active and independent. "People want to have children because it is just part of marriage, a continuation on of yourself. I think children bring a lot of pleasure to your life, a lot of joy. Its an extension of yourself, you see yourself growing up. For me, two would have been ideal. I think the ideal number is basically what you can afford without hardship. I think children should be treated equally [which is difficult when there are many]."

ID13331: This 41 year old woman is in her second marriage. She works full-time but her husband part-time because he has a disability. Both she and her husband would like to have children but they have experienced difficulties in conceiving. They are both hopeful they can have children. They may adopt children.

"My mom comes from a big family, and I just love the big family thing ... a lot of noise, interaction, activity. I think the desire to procreate is deep within us, from the Lord. The desire to share something with a bond of love between the two of you, whether it's adopting or bearing a child. It's a show of love for one another to carry on your family, enrich your family. [Disadvantages of having children:] No I don't for myself. Again if you don't feel that you are ready or that you want to have children, you should not allow yourself to be pressured into having children, based on someone else's opinion. I don't feel that I can judge [ideal family size] for other people. That's a thing that someone has to decide for themselves. What you can handle emotionally and financially."

ID24391: This 53 year old woman works full-time, is married with one child. When they got married, her new husband had custody of his two children from a previous marriage, and they now have a blended family with the youngest away at university.

"People have children because they want to have a child of their own, something of each other. I think you want something of each other, as a couple. Yes, an expression of love, definitely an expression of love. They add so much to your life. They give it richness that just isn't there before or after. You grow in your turmoil with them too and all the problems they have. They give you a joy and richness that you'd never have without them. [Why the number that you had?] Well, my husband already had two, and we decided to have one more ... three seemed to be fine, it worked out very well. The disadvantages is that you never have time for yourself, basically you sacrifice yourself. [The ideal number] I guess I look at population dynamics and think two. You might be happy with the household financially and have the means to have four. But I think responsibility wise it should be two."

ID04410: This man in his 40s works full time, is divorced and cohabiting. He has no children of his own but his partner has four children.

"[Does not expect to have children of his own] Because at my age now, if I had a child now when that child turned 16 the only way I'd be able to teach that child to drive or anything like that is to show the kid how to drive my wheelchair. Theoretically you should be a good bit younger. If you're going to have kids I'm guessing you should have them in your early 20s so that when they get to an age when you can actually do shit together you're still physically capable of doing those things together. [Why do people decide to have children?] Do they actually decide or is it a matter that they got caught? I don't honestly think that they decide."

There may be the odd case where they decide but I think in most cases you were having some fun and there arose a child and you kind of went why not? So I think it's not completely random but a matter of getting caught. [What about when they do plan? Why?] Cause they're stupid and they want to suffer. I'm not sure that's not the right answer, but I don't know. I imagine that people have kids for any number of reasons. Somebody to carry on the family name, someone to pass your wealth onto. Cause they felt they haven't suffered sufficiently in their life and they need a kid to add a bit more depth to their perspective.[Advantages of children?] A great financial loss. I'm not sure there actually is an advantage. Well not having had any kids, I'm sure if I had some my perspective would be completely different. But at this point, I don't know. [Conditions for not having children?] Yeah, if they're too young. If they don't have decent finances. I mean there's no point in having a kid or a dog or any other pet if you can't support it, feed it, take care of it. If you don't have whatever set of skills it is that's required and sufficient revenue to do it then it would be stupid to do so. [Ideal number of children?] Two. One you get a spoiled brat, two you get a little bit of sharing and coexistence. Three, four, five is awful damn expensive. If you can afford it."

ID02493: This single 34 year old woman works full-time She has never been married or lived with a man, but very much wants to do that, and knows that her biological clock is ticking. She met a man two weeks ago, and it seems that she is moving very quickly into a serious relationship, even though she very much wants to have children and he does not.

"I would like to have children, this is important to me. [How many?] At my age if I get married before I'm 40, one possibly two, after 40 only one. [Why not more?] Because I would want to be able to give them, have the option of going to university or continuing their education, it would be so expensive to do that with more. I mean my parents didn't have that for me, I had student loans and stuff, not that I think you should work for that. But I want them to have a somewhat of a better life than I had, not that I had a bad life in any way shape or form. But you always want more for them. [The largest advantage of having children?] I don't know, I'm not sure. It's something that I want but, I can't honestly say. [What do you see as disadvantages of having children?] I really don't see that many. I know that you get sticky fingers and stuff on the carpet and stuff like that, but you know what, that changes. That's nothing to me, those things can be remedied easily. [Is there an ideal number of children for most people?] They say that when you have one you spoil that one and I don't agree with that. A lot of people seem to think three seems to be the norm these days, not two. A lot of couples I know have three. [But you don't have an ideal] No."

ID09283: This 27 year old single woman is a graduate student. She is in a relationship, but not married or cohabiting with the person. She speaks of having a father who was not very involved in her family life; he was often working and did not expend much effort around the house.

"[Do you plan to have children?] [pause] Yeah I think so. [laughs] I think so. Oh one or two. Yeah. I just don't, I think one or two would be enough and I'd like to be able to give everything that I could to those children, financially and emotionally. And if I look at my life and how I've planned it out, I don't want to have kids soon, but I don't want to have kids too late. So I don't have that huge range of my left that I can have a lot of kids anyways. I just never wanted to have a huge family. Too much work I guess. I don't know. It's just too much. [Why not fewer?] Like

why would I not have any? I don't know. Cause I might not have any. I just spent the day with a 3 year old, and it was awful. I think I wouldn't have children because I felt, you know, successful on my own or there was stuff that my husband and I wanted to do and it didn't need to bring, I just didn't need to bring children into the world to feel that I was a good person. I'd want to possibly further my career and you know help others. Rather than have my own kids. I used to always think I'd have a lot of kids, but I don't know, it just doesn't seem that big of a priority anymore. [Why do people decide to have children?] I don't know. [pause] I think a lot of women feel pressured. I just know this from my own experience and from all my friends once they reach this certain age from mid-20s up. Pressure that if you're not married that's awful and if you don't have a kid by then. By the time you're married a couple of years they're asking when the kids are coming. So it's a lot of pressure. I think some people really want children and are really great for them and they want to be able to see, to be able to raise really good children. To be able to take part in themselves in a child. People just love children. To have them. To have their own. And others. I don't know. They think it's going to be fun. And I think when a lot of young girls have children they figure it's just going to be another friend they're having. They figure it's going to be someone who's going to love them eternally like a puppy dog. And obviously they have those for the wrong reasons. [Advantages of having children?] Probably to be able to raise a child up to be able to see how they'll be able to come, to have a little you, or a little of your partner. To be able to see that. To be able to have another person that relies so much on you. I think that's a great advantage. It's very emotional. I know sometimes children can really bring families together, whether it's both parents families, or whether it's the initial family. It can bring them together as well when there's a child there. You can see things through a child's eyes. It is really a unique experience. It kind of brings you right back down to their level, and all the little stuff that we worry about all the time, and you come back down to it, like a child looking through it and what's really important. And it can certainly help things. [The largest advantage?] The bond, that emotional bond. [Disadvantages to having children?] Not if it's the right time for them. Not if they're wanted and they've come into a good relationship and a good family. If everything was right then I don't see any disadvantages. [Ideal number for most people to have?] I think about two, two and a half to three, yeah. Two is what people seem to like now. Cause they always want a boy and a girl. And I don't know why, but they always want a boy and a girl so they can test each out. I think that's it. Two's enough. [why no more?] Because they just can't afford more. It's 'not now', and they don't. I think they always say that children that are only, that have no siblings, are spoiled, and they don't learn to share. And they don't grow up to be an ideal citizen or whatever."

ID10641: This 41 year old woman works full time and is cohabiting after a previous marriage. "[Do you expect to have any children?] We don't know, Um. I don't know. Im not sure about that one. [Is money a factor?] No. It's not money. I wanted to have, I did want very much to be a mom. But my ex-husband was absolutely during our courtship 'oh yes, we'll have children, and blah blah blah'. And then after we got married, I don't want kids, we're not having any kids. So, I didn't get to be a mom. And you know, I'm 41, so time's ticking. [It's still possible?] Yeah, yeah, I'm healthy. But, definitely it wasn't money, it was a power thing. [But it is something that you hope to do?] Yeah, yeah. [Why do you think people usually decide to have children?] Hum, that's a hard one for me to answer. Well I think it's partly something that is biological, an instinct

we all have inside of us to procreate. Carry on something of themselves, I don't know. I also think that as a responsible adult you need to make sure that you can provide for the children, not just because you have a biological urge and innate feeling to carry on your lineage. I still think you need to be responsible and make sure that there's money to pay for the child and provide for the child. [What do you think the advantages of having children are? What is good about having children?] I can only see through my eyes that I see when my partner's two children are here, and they're such precious lights. Such open books. What are the advantages? Oh, gosh. Just the rewards of watching them grow, and seeing what they are seeing for the first time all over again, and that they have that love thing, that unconditional love no matter what. [What makes children valuable in our society?] They're the ones, I mean their the stepping stones. They are the ones that will be there when we die, it is our job to teach them right from wrong, and make sure that society doesn't go bezerk. But their value is also immediate because they bring so many joys to the adults. So many little kisses and smiles and gifts. [Do you see any disadvantages of having children?] Disadvantages? No, I guess they don't. [Do you think there is any reason strong enough not to have children?] Um, yeah. I think, once again, if you couldn't provide properly and be responsible to them, or if your health is poor. Um, and you may not live a long life to be a parent to them. [Why do you say then that mid-twenties is an age which most people should have their first child?] Because I think that in that 18-19-20-21, you're stilling doing this and that, you're not there yet. I just think that you don't know yourself well enough yet. You're still relying on what you want to do with your friends, and what might be fun to try and I don't think you can be a responsible parent when your in that frame of mind. You need to settle and be settled before you can do that. [What do you think is the ideal number of children most people should have?] I'm right in the middle. I have an older brother and a younger sister. Which to me, you know, was perfect. I thought that was great. Like I had an older role model and a younger one to baby. It couldn't of gotten any better than that. So, I guess my ideal would be 3, just from the way I was brought up. I would have said okay to two as well. Four to me seems to be too many. Yeah, four and above is too many for me, isn't that funny, I don't even know why. Maybe it's a teacher thing, ah!!! too many children. But two-three seems right to me."

ID11032: This 42 year old single man works full-time and has no children. He has never been married, and is currently single and living alone in an apartment. In the past, he has had several serious (he called serious over four months) relationships, where he lived with the women he was dating. He has no children, but has seven nieces and nephews from his three younger sisters, who are all married. He seemed pensive on the marriage issue, and wasn't sure at this point if he would ever get married.

"[Do you want to have children?] I'd love to have kids.[How many?] I think a couple of kids. I don't have my own yet so like these are great, I want a couple more. Like the dog thing, unconditional love, there's no conditions to this. This is love. It's fun, good, makes me feel good, hopefully I have enough to share with all of them. But I'm talking more comfort zone too, not financially at all. Obviously it's something that's brought to bear. [Why do you think people have children?] Well it's go forth and prosper. It's what we're on this planet to do sort of. I don't know if it's more the female half, the need, obviously I'm not female so I can't explain that. The need to have kids maybe for some of us. But you don't do it just for the sake of having kids. You can't give them back. Again the shared love thing. A thing of accomplishment, I brought this person into this world. Kids are great, things happen along the way that maybe screw them up but ... it's

what you do, it's what you do in this world. But for me it's not a need, I don't need to continue my name on. [Why do you think people have children?] That's a really tough question. It's something we all do, they're wonderful little creatures, it's an absolutely totally rewarding thing to see them grow, watch them become individuals, I can only speak from my nieces as an example. They are some of the best entertainment you'll ever get. [Do you think there are advantages to having children?] Oh God yes. There's a growth thing, as a human being there's so much to experience in life. Smell the flowers but if you don't have any of your own you'd better get some. For me right now not having kids is ok, it's ok. If I ever have kids that will be ok too, but that's taken a long time for me to decide that myself. Just the value of it, to be honest, it's more conforming. [Are there disadvantages to having children?] Sure, if divorce comes along early, that's a definite disadvantage, a situational thing. Again commitment. Unfortunately in a lot of relationships if you are doing the divorce thing, kids could maybe be an issue in that ... structure ... that's again something to be expected. What do people say ... after she has two kids, there goes the sex ... is that what you got married for? I don't know, it's just something I was always told, and maybe you do lose interest, maybe it's a natural thing you do. But it's God's way or nature's way of saying, stop enough. [Do you think there is an ideal number of children?] No. Well I suppose there is but, no, who am I to judge."

ID17451: This 55 year old woman works full-time, she been divorced once and has a daughter from that marriage that lasted 6 years, and has now built a family with her present husband of many years and his daughter and son.

"[Why did you have one child?] Well the marriage wasn't working out, and I was leaving, we're stopping right here. [Did you want to have more originally?] Oh yeah, I planned for marriage ... like my mother had 13 kids, I didn't want 13 kids. But I didn't want just one, I thought it would have been nice to have two or three. And the reason I had a specific number, like most people today, is that I thought of the future. The kids are going to go to university and its going to cost lots of money. I just didn't want to have five or six kids and not be able to provide for them and give them the things that I think they should have. [Why do you think people usually decide to have children?] Well for me, because I love children. That's part of marriage. For me, yeah, I couldn't see my life without having children. Its not like that with everybody but it is to me. And I think as you get older, you have your grandchildren that you adore, you'd miss all that. That would be awful. [What do you think the advantages are of having children?] Basically what I already said. They fulfill my life. [Tell me about disadvantages of having children, do you see any?] Disadvantages, no. Of course you get ticked off with them, but that's everyday life. I guess there are disadvantages of having children for people. There are some women or men who are very abusive, they shouldn't have children, because in my opinion, bringing them into the world and abusing them. [Is there an ideal number?] There isn't any. It's what you and your husband want."

ID21423: This 75 year old woman is widowed with no children. She has been a widow for about 30 years. She married late; it was her only marriage. Her husband had custody of his daughter, whom she helped raise. She considers her step-daughter as her own.

"[Why do you think people usually decide to have children?] They just want to have children. I've just become a great grandmother to a little boy. They must love each other immensely and

want to bring a child into the world. I raised my husband's child and we got along very, very well and it does change the life between the three of us, but you consider all three. He was very devoted to her and one day he said if his daughter didn't like me or we didn't get along, we wouldn't have gotten married. So we worked together for all three of us. I don't know if I changed very much but I know I wanted the two of them so I did what had to be done. We are great together even now. She looks after me a lot. She's always calling me or coming out and seeing me a couple of times a week which is good. [What do you think the advantages of having children are?] I can't put words to it. All of us worked together a lot. I don't think there was a disadvantage to having her because after we got married we still did the things that we expected to do. We'd go to a show and bring her with us. If we went to a party, we would take her with us and put her to bed until we were ready to come home. It was doing things together. The only time I was disappointed was that I found out she had started to smoke at 15 and I didn't think it was right. I couldn't say too much because her father smoked. He quit smoking. They were good friends - they would play cards together. I really enjoyed dressing her and being with her. She was a clever kiddie. I took her to things, swimming ... we worked together. [What is the ideal number of children that most people should have?] I was one of 8 children. Two would be good. [How come?] I think you have better control to guide them if there's only a couple."

ID25333: This 80 year old widowed woman had one child who is now in her mid-50s. She observes that they were married and had her daughter during the war which made the first couple years of her marriage very difficult.

"[Tell me about your children] I have one daughter, she is the only one I had because we nearly lost our lives when she was born. My pelvic bone was too small and I had a cesarean operation that went too far and it was war time and all that. It was 5 weeks before I was out of hospital. She was delivered with forceps and I was badly infected but, we survived. [Would you have had more if you could have?] I'm not sure because some men would have said 'you' never gave me a son, but my husband never mentioned it. [Why do you think that people usually decide to have children?] I'd be surprised if anybody ever thinks of the reason for having children. Today it just seems to come along and they have far too many of them and they can't take care of them. That's the way I look at it. I don't see a lot of people that really do any planning for children. If it were me and I were planning for children I would think to myself, how many children can I afford to raise properly. There is no reason for anybody to have a pregnancy today if they don't want it and I'm talking about prevention. To me it's shameful to keep having them and not taking care of them. ... I think I would think to myself 'am I ready for children', and do I feel I'd be a good mother and how many can we afford. I think that families should be able to afford them and look after them then fine if they can't, then they should not bring them into the world, and forget them. [What do you think some advantages of having children are?] They're our future and the future of the world. I think too sometimes you live vicariously through them. And, you have great joy in seeing all the successes they have. Your child is always your child no matter how old they get. [Do you see any disadvantages of having children?] I guess there could be a lot of disadvantages. If you are somebody that wants to do a lot of travelling or going back to university or something like that. Children don't really fit in there. That should be considered before they have them. [Do you think there is an ideal number of children that most people should have?] People talk about a millionaires family where there is a boy and a girl. That

sounds like an ideal family doesn't it? [laugh]."

## **Appendix B. Orientations to unions, age at entry and dissolution**

After enquiring about their own relationships, respondents were asked things like "what do you think it means to be married," how that might differ from living together, reasons for forming a union, the "**advantages of having a partner compared to being single**," and the advantages of being single.

Mostly people see the advantages of being in a relationship, or being married, in terms of companionship, to have someone with whom to share life, to do things with, share everyday things, to have someone there for you, to ask you how your day was, to sleep together, sense of physical and emotional support, to have someone to go through the issues that life presents, a sense of closeness that you do not attain from mere friendship, to not be alone in life, or lonely. Some spoke of feeling a sense of responsibility by being in a relationship. The advantages of being single are seen in terms of freedom, independence, being able to do things without taking someone else into account, making your own decisions on use of time and money without thinking of others, less need to be responsible to other people, or reliable to them. Most see that there are trade-offs here, but the vast majority said there were more advantages to being married or in an enduring relationship. Some even said that the advantages of being single were just academic questions. Some others, especially if they had had a bad experience, found it easier to speak of the advantages of being single, at least it was better to have no partner than to have a destructive partner who made life difficult. But the majority see it as better to be in a relationship, at least for themselves. The orientations clearly support marriage or enduring relationships.

When asked about the **best time** to start a lifelong relationship, most spoke in terms of maturity rather than age; one needed to be responsible and ready for a relationship. They spoke of the need to be in a stable relationship with someone before making a commitment. It was important to have done certain things before starting the union, such as finishing education or being established, having lived on one's own, or having done some things on one's own, possibly having had other relationships. You should be mature, stable on your own, have financial stability, be an independent person. When pressed for an age, it was not to be before 20, most said the mid-20s, some said 20-25, others about 25, maybe 28, or that there was no negative to 35 or older. Some said "not too young so that you know who you are and what you want," but often there was no upper limit, "even 90 is not too old." Some observed that waiting to long to start a relationship may pose difficulties in terms of being set in one's ways, not able to compromise. Rather than age, being in a stable relationship and having the finances seemed most important to getting married. Some observed that you cannot necessarily plan to have the right time to get married, things happen in terms of the right person being there for you at the right time. It would appear to be ideal to start the union around the mid-20s.

Respondents were then asked what they thought were the main **reasons for divorce**, the advice they would give to people who are considering separating, and the reasons for staying in a

relationship. Clearly, this was taken seriously, especially if there are children. But for most, if the marriage is not working, the lifelong commitment does not apply; it is appropriate to leave a relationship if it is costing more than you are getting out of it over a long period of time. For most, there was no shame in leaving a relationship that was not working, as long as one had done everything that they could do to make it work. As with other surveys, there is much agreement with divorce in cases of abuse, violence, addictions, and infidelity. The 1995 General Social Survey finds that two-fifths would “stay together for the children” (Frederick and Hamel, 1998: 8). However, it matters how serious the situation is. Some say they would never separate, others say that staying in a destructive relationship is unfortunate for the children. Many people complain that “young people these days too easily divorce if things are not working,” but people take the ending of a relationship very seriously, especially if there are children. Nonetheless, there are different views on the extent of the commitment; the majority view was that it is legitimate to end a relationship if it is negative in terms of one’s own costs and benefits. Some said that they would separate but not divorce, for the sake of the children or in order not to have to divide the goods.

### **Appendix C. Why people have children, advantages and disadvantages, best timing and ideal number**

Asked “**why people have children**,” many respond that it is somehow natural, a normal part of life, expected, it simply made sense, was the right thing to do, a stage in life, to have another person to love, to create a family; it is a gift, bringing another life, bringing someone into your world. Some see themselves as pro-creating a family, re-developing its nucleus over a lineage. Others speak of somehow leaving someone who is like you in this world, another self, to continue the family and its special characteristics. Many answer in terms of the benefits of having children. These are often stated in terms of the uniqueness of relationships with children, when they are young, as they grow older, and even as they are adults. Respondents may add things concerning the enjoyment of being with children, it is fulfilling, there is nothing like the love a child gives, they bring joy, they remind you of the simple things, enjoying childhood again, watching them experience things, seeing them grow, and become their own personalities, moulding them. Some spoke in terms of the opportunity to be a kid again, play marbles, make things. Many people saw it as natural did not always appear to have made a conscious decision on childbearing, though they often decided on the timing and when to stop having children. Others saw it as a choice and they may have weighted the positives and negatives of having children.

Especially when asked about **advantages and disadvantages**, many respondents also said that there are strong time sacrifices, less time for oneself, being tied down. The negatives were mostly in terms of time and responsibility, the big work load when they were babies and the longer-term financial expenses, sometimes the difficulty of raising children. Others spoke of the compromises, lack of independence, you “lose your life,” the freedom to do things when you want, need to be responsible, it is a lifelong process, the difficulty of balancing roles such as mother, wife and worker. Life is changed enormously by having children, lack of freedom, expensive, fatigue, but most did not focus on the disadvantages, and almost without exception



they were very glad to have had children.

When asked about the best **timing for having a first birth**, most responded in terms of financial stability, to have a job, not necessarily two jobs in the couple but sufficient economic security, the income necessary to be able to support children, having things in place before taking on this additional responsibility. Some noted that money was not everything, because if you waited to have enough you may never have a child. When asked if they would have, or would have had, more children if they had twice the income, most said not. Many spoke in terms of being sufficiently mature to take on the responsibility, to carry the disadvantages, being both financially and emotionally ready. Many also spoke in terms of the importance of first being in a secure and established relationship, financial, emotional and partnership stability, which mostly included marriage; many said after some two years of marriage, or within three to five years of marriage. Respondents were more willing to speak in terms of ages, which they put at around 25, some said 20 to 25, others late 20s, some even said early 30s was fine. Many said that before 30 was best, though some said that after 30 was also acceptable, or even in your 40s, as long as you have the energy. In speaking of a minimum age, some said as long as they can provide for the children. Even if you marry before finishing school, you should certainly finish education before having children. In speaking of a maximum age, this related to having the necessary energy level, to be able to run around with them, enjoy their energy and their youth. They also spoke of biological questions, the odds are shifting after the early 30s. It would appear that one should be old enough to be emotionally and financially stable, to be able to absorb the various costs, but not too old to have the energy and disposition.

Before asking the ideal number of children, the interview asked about the **conditions under which one should not have children**. A number of respondents started with some rather extreme conditions, such as genetic deficiencies, or serious emotional problems, mental deficiencies, or not intellectually able to take care of them. Many also said it was best not to have children if one was not in a stable relationship. Many said that it was not fair to the children if one has children in a relationship that is not stable. It was seen as more acceptable to get married in an unstable relationship than to have children to try to fix the relationship. If someone is in a poor relationship or is not able to parent, it was best not to have children. Many said that financial questions should not be a block, as long as one can afford children, and most people should be able to afford children. But others said that you should have enough money or the conditions to raise children properly. Maturity was more important than finances. But especially on probing further, or asking if it was acceptable not to have children, most said that it was acceptable not to have children simply because one did not want children. Many saw it as selfish not to want to have children, and they should not be so selfish, but if they were selfish, it was best not to have children. Some thought there was no point in getting married if one did not want to have children. Those who saw it as natural to have children gave more extreme conditions under which one should not have children; those who saw it as a choice largely said that it was acceptable not to have children simply because one did not want children.

The **ideal number of children** was largely indicated in terms of a range, most often two-to-three, with some saying two, others two-to-four, with a few saying as many as you want to have.

In justifying this ideal, most started by talking about the expenses and costs, the limit on one's time, the desire to give everything that one could to each child. When asked, "why not less," the vast majority expressed disagreement with the idea of having one child, this was seen as not good for the child, or selfish on the part of parents. An only child was seen as spoiled, lonely, not fair to the child, not having siblings to play with, they will have poor socializing skills, not know how to cooperate, not able to deal with someone on a one-on-one basis every day, learning to share, which are life skills that one needs. Some said it was acceptable to have only one child, if that is all they can handle. There seemed to be even more disagreement to the idea of having one child than not having any children. As indicated in the previous paragraph, not having children was seen as acceptable, and people said that they did not pressure people to have children if they did not want children. If someone does not want children, it is best that they not have children. While agreeing with not having children, some said it was unfortunate, a shame, they were missing out on an important life experience. Having three-to-four was seen as a larger family atmosphere, but many said it was not realistic. The idea of having five-or-more was sometimes seen as fine if people could handle it, but most thought it was not realistic, some even thought it was "crazy," and they could not understand why someone might have that many. A 35 year old mother of four children under five spoke of being accosted by an elderly woman while grocery shopping who said "my child ... have you not hear of birth control."

Many found the number of two children to be the easiest to justify, it is financially feasible, reasonable as an infringement on one's time, the children have someone with whom to make friends, it is a real family. More than two involves various trade-offs in terms of time and other things that one wants to do, like holidays. But for some three was also a good number, a safe number, a real family especially in terms of more possible interactions among children. For many, four was rather difficult, given all the emotional and other things one wants to give to each child; there is simply a limit, not enough time and energy to maximize what each child needs to have.

When asked if they would have more children with twice the income, or with more government support, they largely indicated not. Most want some subsidies to help them out, but this would not be a basis for having more or fewer children (Appendix D). Many said that the government should not be involved in this sphere of life, it was in infringement on the privacy of personal lives, or people should be responsible for their own decisions, it may even create an incentive not to work so hard.

When asked what people should do if there was **disagreement between husband and wife** regarding the number of children to have, most found it difficult to handle the question, they should talk about it, the decision should be made equally, they should reach a compromise. Some said that the person who bears the child or who will spend the most time looking after the children should decide, and a few said that the person who is most aware of the finances should decide. But a good number said they should not have children that both do not want, and thus they should have the smaller number. Many said that they should have talked about this before getting married, implying that having a common ground in terms of understanding how children will fit into the relationship should be part of establishing relationships. Couples should have a

similar logic in this regard, otherwise there are probably other misunderstandings.

#### **Appendix D. Division of work, family and work, personal and social responsibilities**

The next part of the interview regarded the division of work, how they had worked this out, what is the best way, what are their satisfactions and frustrations in this regard. There were certainly cases where the division was seen as unfair, mostly with wife having an unfair burden, sometimes the husband, sometimes the husband agreed that the wife had an unfair burden and felt guilty. Some wives felt that they were not appreciated for the work that they did at home, taken for granted, isolated at home, or that it was simply not fair and thus had had much difficulties trying to have husbands understand this and change. Some had not discussed these things and felt frustrated. But most indicated that they had worked this out for themselves; the division of total work was not unfair, it was a team thing, we are in this together, it was a significant problem for others but not for themselves. It is what has to be done that counts, not fairness, or it was what you feel is fair that counts, not necessarily 50/50, but others said it was more fair if both contributed. Many saw that men were changing, especially younger men, but even retired men were looking for ways to make their contribution. Most had a traditional or neo-traditional arrangement, where women had more responsibility for things inside, and men for things outside. Some people, even women, felt that each had certain roles to fill, it was simply women's jobs to cook, that should not be taken away. Those who stayed home saw it as their responsibility to do the cooking, child care and housework. When women were working, the husbands helped especially with child care. Others put it in terms of the interests and ability of each person, and the other should be willing to help. Younger women who were not yet in a long-term relationship often said they would want to divide the housework 50/50, but also indicated that this may not be realistic.

When asked about difficulties in **balancing family and work responsibilities**, most explained the process of how they had worked this out, rather than talking about the frustrations. There was a predominant norm to the effect that it was best if the mother was at home with pre-school children, or work part time. Some women complained that all this fell on them, but others said that things had just naturally fallen into place, especially if they took a couple of years off. Some men said that they had not been able to balance things, that they were not the father that they wanted to be, yet felt good about their achievements at work.

In terms of things that would help, most focussed on flex-time, especially for times that children are sick, or there is a school holiday; that way they can make the arrangements needed at the various ages of children. But some said that if you have children, you should deal with it, it was not the employer's responsibility, even to have a longer leave was not fair to the employer. Day care was often as a given, with some demands for more funding and accessibility to day care. For instance, a single mother with two kids was working full-time, but had made arrangements, with day care on the way to work, the company was quite understanding and flexible, the parents were in the city for occasional help. Men spoke in terms of making accommodations like going to the children's games, seeking to ensure that the wife did not have the full burden. But it was clearly the women who made most of the accommodations, with some costs to their work status.

Men were more likely to see family and work as two separate things, while women hold both in their minds at the same time, and make much more of the accommodations, as an extension of their larger role when the children were babies. It would appear that the burden is both internally and externally imposed on women.

In introducing the section on programs and services, the respondents were asked what was described as a general question: "Some people take the attitude that having children is a personal choice and the people who choose to have children should take full responsibility for them; others say that society has some responsibility to ensure the well-being of children; overall, where would you stand on this question?" Many reacted rather strongly to the question, often saying that having children was a personal responsibility, people should not have children if they cannot care for them; people need to be aware of what it takes to be a parent, it was your responsibility to make it work. But they also often said that the society has a basic responsibility to ensure that children have an adequate minimum in terms of care, safety, and especially education and health. If the parents are not able, it becomes the society's responsibility to have a relatively high standard of basic responsibility for the children. Some said that children were not that expensive, and that most should be able to afford the necessities, often thinking of the out-of-pocket costs. Some said that if you have children, you should deal with it, everyday care was to be with parents, it was a personal decision and thus the need to be primarily responsible. But society should help those whose parents cannot care for them, certainly in the case of abuse or neglect. When asked specifically, most took it for granted that the society should provide education and health care, they often asked for more support with education (or they were against the cuts to education and health), and ensuring that the children are safe. Others spoke of making day care more affordable and accessible, more before and after school programs, or more extended leaves.

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**Tables**

Table 1. Parity Progression Ratios for the first three births by age 39 and 44, by birth cohorts of women born 1931-1960, Canada, 2001.

<b>Age and Parity Progression Ratio</b>	<b>Births Cohorts of Women</b>					
	1931-35	1936-40	1941-45	1946-50	1951-55	1956-60
			<b>Year of Reaching Age 20</b>			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80
			<b>Year of Reaching Age 39</b>			
	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1995-00
			<b>Year of Reaching Age 44</b>			
	1976-80	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	
			<b>Per 1000 Women</b>			
<b>By Age 39</b>						
a <sub>0</sub>	871	886	889	855	857	837
a <sub>1</sub>	885	901	855	837	828	815
a <sub>2</sub>	756	664	522	441	397	388
<b>By Age 44</b>						
a <sub>0</sub>	875	886	896	856	864	-
a <sub>1</sub>	886	907	856	845	835	-
a <sub>2</sub>	772	660	532	448	408	-

Source: General Social Survey (GSS) 2001.



Table 2. Expected births, and average expected family size, by age and sex, Canada, 2001

Sex and Age		Expected Birth (%)						Average*
		No Child	One Child	Two Children	Three Children	Four+ Children	Missing Data	
Male	15-19	6.3	5.9	51.9	18.8	3.4	13.7	2.12
	20-24	6.1	7.8	45.1	19.8	6.2	15.0	2.24
	25-29	6.0	8.3	47.3	17.6	6.6	14.1	2.16
	30-34	8.7	8.2	42.3	18.6	7.3	14.8	2.12
	35-39	12.4	12.7	40.0	16.5	6.5	11.9	1.94
	40-44	15.7	13.1	39.4	17.6	5.6	8.6	1.86
	45-49	15.3	15.2	39.0	16.5	7.6	6.5	1.90
	50-54	18.2	13.7	36.7	20.5	9.7	1.2	1.94
	55-59	13.2	14.1	38.3	23.4	10.4	.7	2.08
	60+	15.2	9.0	25.4	22.3	27.5	.7	2.70
	Total	12.1	10.7	39.1	19.2	10.7	8.2	
Female	15-19	6.9	6.8	50.5	20.4	6.7	8.7	2.18
	20-24	7.2	4.3	46.8	24.5	8.0	9.2	2.27
	25-29	6.5	7.4	46.1	20.3	7.8	12.0	2.20
	30-34	5.7	11.6	43.4	16.8	7.7	14.7	2.15
	35-39	8.8	14.9	43.3	19.0	6.4	7.6	2.01
	40-44	12.7	16.9	42.5	17.1	7.3	3.4	1.91
	45-49	11.7	17.5	42.3	18.6	8.3	1.5	1.97
	50-54	13.7	14.1	42.7	20.1	9.5	.0	2.03
	55-59	11.2	12.4	37.6	22.5	16.2	.0	2.29
	60+	11.7	10.2	23.6	20.5	33.7	.5	2.97
	Total	9.9	11.7	39.5	19.9	13.8	5.1	

\* Excludes those with missing data.

Note: Results are weighted; sample size is 24310 including 1540 cases of missing data on expected family size.

Source: Tabulations based on the General Social Survey, 2001.

Table 3 Expected and ideal births, and average expected and ideal family size, by age and sex, London and surrounding area, 2000

		Expected family size (%)						Expected family size (mean)	Sample size
		No Child	One Child	Two Children	Three Children	Four+ Children	Missing Data		
Male	15-24	13.2	2.6	44.7	18.4	10.5	10.5	2.18	38
	25-34	12.0	9.6	37.3	25.3	8.4	7.2	2.12	83
	35-44	11.7	14.4	41.4	19.8	9.9	2.7	2.12	111
	45-54	14.1	15.3	35.3	20.0	14.1	1.2	2.17	85
	55+	9.3	10.2	31.4	31.4	16.9	.8	2.54	118
	Total	11.7	11.5	37.0	23.9	12.4	3.4		
Sample size		4	8	255	96	32	40		435
Female	15-24	11.0	1.4	34.2	39.7	8.2	5.5	2.36	73
	25-34	7.2	9.6	39.2	24.8	9.6	9.6	2.26	125
	35-44	10.5	13.0	45.1	21.0	9.3	1.2	2.10	162
	45-54	7.1	15.0	44.2	22.1	11.5		2.27	113
	55+	8.6	6.1	31.3	27.6	23.3	3.1	2.73	163
	Total	8.8	9.6	39.0	25.8	13.2	3.6		
Sample size		4	8	372	153	42	57		636
		Ideal family size (%)						Ideal family size (mean)	Sample size
		No Child	One Child	Two Children	Three Children	Four+ Children	Missing Data		
Male	15-24	2.6	2.6	57.9	21.1	7.9	7.9	2.31	
	25-34		1.2	68.7	14.5	4.8	10.8	2.26	
	35-44	1.8	.9	65.8	18.9	8.1	4.5	2.32	
	45-54	1.2	3.5	57.6	23.5	2.4	11.8	2.25	
	55+		1.7	45.8	29.7	11.9	11.0	2.58	
	Total	.9	1.8	58.6	22.1	7.4	9.2		
Sample size		51	50	161	104	54	15		
Female	15-24	1.4		63.0	28.8	2.7	4.1	2.33	
	25-34	.8	1.6	62.4	22.4	3.2	9.6	2.28	
	35-44	.6	2.5	58.6	25.9	3.7	8.6	2.32	
	45-54	.9	.9	65.5	15.9	12.4	4.4	2.40	
	55+		.6	48.5	27.0	9.8	14.1	2.54	
	Total	.6	1.3	58.5	24.1	6.6	9.0		
Sample size		56	61	248	164	84	23		

Source: Author's survey on Orientations to Relationships and Childbearing over the Life Course.

Note: Data are self-weighted; Sample size is 1071.

Table 4. Ideal family size by sex and expected family size, London and surrounding area, 2000

Expected family size		Ideal family size (%)					Missing Data	Sample size
		No Child	One Child	Two Children	Three Children	Four+ Children		
Male	No child	3.9	5.9	66.7	17.6	2.0	3.9	51
	One child	2.0	10.0	70.0	12.0		6.0	50
	Two children	.6		70.8	16.1	3.1	9.3	161
	Three children			47.1	35.6	8.7	8.7	104
	Four+ children			29.6	27.8	31.5	11.1	54
	Missing data			46.7	20.0		33.3	15
	Total	.9	1.8	58.6	22.1	7.4	9.2	
Sample size		4	8	255	96	32	40	435
Female	No child	3.6	1.8	51.8	19.6	10.7	12.5	56
	One child	1.6	6.6	65.6	16.4	4.9	4.9	61
	Two children		1.2	73.4	17.3	2.0	6.0	248
	Three children	.6		50.0	34.1	4.9	10.4	164
	Four+ children			34.5	31.0	23.8	10.7	84
	Missing data			43.5	30.4		26.1	23
	Total	.6	1.3	58.5	24.1	6.6	9.0	
Sample size		4	8	372	153	42	57	636

Source: see Table 3.

Table 5. Typology of importance of lasting relationship, child(ren), and job to happiness by sex and expected family size, for persons aged 25-44, Canada, 2001

Expected family size		Importance of relationship, children and jobs to happiness (%)							
		All three Important	All but job	All but children	Only relationship	All but relationship	Only child(ren)	Only job	None of the three
Male	No Child	18.6	.3	57.9	4.6	1.2	.0	15.1	2.3
	One Child	78.3	2.8	10.9	1.4	3.7	.3	2.1	.5
	Two Children	84.3	2.0	9.0	1.2	2.0	.1	1.2	.1
	Three Children	86.6	3.6	7.2	1.7	.5	.1	.3	.0
	Four or more children	88.2	4.0	5.7	.0	1.2	.0	.8	.0
	Missing data	64.9	2.2	22.7	2.3	2.8	.1	4.7	.2
	Total	74.9	2.4	15.6	1.7	1.9	.1	3.0	.4
Sample size		3031	96	667	76	104	8	176	24
Female	No Child	13.5	1.2	63.3	6.0	1.0	.3	12.6	2.1
	One Child	69.0	8.5	11.6	2.0	7.4	.6	.8	.0
	Two Children	73.2	14.3	5.9	1.7	3.3	.3	1.1	.3
	Three Children	68.1	19.2	3.2	2.4	4.9	.3	1.7	.1
	Four or more children	61.6	27.0	3.7	1.0	4.5	1.1	1.1	.0
	Missing data	60.8	13.0	17.9	2.1	2.1	.0	4.2	.0
	Total	64.7	14.1	11.9	2.2	3.9	.4	2.4	.3
Sample size		3146	662	654	108	275	23	160	23

Note: Results are weighted; total sample is 9243 cases.

Source: See Table 2.

Table 6. Important of lasting relationship, marriage, children, jobs and other interest to happiness, by sex and expected family size, London and surrounding area, 2000

Expected family size	Lasting relationship as a couple (%)			To be married (%)			Have at least one child (%)			Have a paid job (%)			Pursue interests outside family and work (%)			Sample size
	Yes	No	Other	Yes	No	Other	Yes	No	Other	Yes	No	Other	Yes	No	Other	
Male No child	64.7	25.5	9.8	39.2	52.9	7.8	11.8	72.5	15.7	90.2	5.9	3.9	90.2	5.9	3.9	51
One child	86.0	8.0	6.0	70.0	26.0	4.0	78.0	18.0	4.0	96.0	2.0	2.0	84.0	10.0	6.0	50
Two children	92.5	4.3	3.1	79.5	17.4	3.1	82.6	12.4	5.0	91.9	3.7	4.3	82.0	13.7	4.3	161
Three children	94.2	3.8	1.9	79.8	13.5	6.7	78.8	12.5	8.7	91.3	1.9	6.7	84.6	8.7	6.7	104
Four+ children	88.9	5.6	5.6	83.3	9.3	7.4	83.3	5.6	11.1	92.6	1.9	5.6	74.1	22.2	3.7	54
Missing data	86.7	6.7	6.7	60.0	33.3	6.7	46.7	46.7	6.7	73.3	20.0	6.7	86.7	6.7	6.7	15
Total	88.3	7.4	4.4	73.6	21.1	5.3	71.7	20.5	7.8	91.5	3.7	4.8	83.0	12.0	5.1	
Sample size	384	32	19	320	92	23	312	89	34	398	16	21	361	52	22	435
Female No child	78.6	14.3	7.1	37.5	53.6	8.9	12.5	75.0	12.5	92.9		7.1	87.5	7.1	5.4	56
One child	83.6	14.8	1.6	62.3	29.5	8.2	75.4	14.8	9.8	88.5	4.9	6.6	85.2	6.6	8.2	61
Two children	89.9	4.4	5.6	75.0	19.4	5.6	81.9	8.5	9.7	82.3	8.9	8.9	79.8	14.1	6.0	248
Three children	93.3	1.8	4.9	82.9	11.6	5.5	86.6	6.7	6.7	82.3	12.2	5.5	87.8	6.7	5.5	164
Four+ children	89.3	4.8	6.0	81.0	10.7	8.3	76.2	11.9	11.9	70.2	21.4	8.3	72.6	22.6	4.8	84
Missing data	73.9	17.4	8.7	60.9	30.4	8.7	52.2	26.1	21.7	87.0	4.3	8.7	87.0		13.0	23
Total	88.5	6.1	5.3	72.8	20.6	6.6	74.5	15.6	9.9	82.4	10.1	7.5	82.4	11.5	6.1	
Sample size	563	39	34	463	131	42	474	99	63	524	64	48	524	73	39	636

Source: see Table 3.

Table 7. Proportion of respondents who say they would stay married or cohabiting for the sake of children, by sex and expected family size, for married or cohabiting persons aged 25-44, Canada, 2001

	Expected family size	Would stay married (%)		
		Yes	No	Other
Male	No Child	36.3	36.2	27.4
	One Child	43.0	40.8	16.2
	Two Children	53.4	28.8	17.7
	Three Children	50.7	32.8	16.5
	Four or more children	56.2	29.8	14.0
	Missing data	38.1	24.3	37.6
	Total	49.0	31.2	19.8
Sample size		991	1693	639
Female	No Child	20.8	57.1	22.1
	One Child	29.0	53.3	17.7
	Two Children	30.4	52.9	16.7
	Three Children	36.3	47.3	16.5
	Four or more children	32.9	44.5	22.5
	Missing data	31.5	37.7	30.8
	Total	31.0	50.3	18.7
Sample size		1284	844	550

Note: Results are weighted; total sample size is 6001.

Other includes don't know, not asked, and missing data.

Table 8. Importance that couples come from the same social-economic background, are of the same ethnicity, and have shared religious beliefs, by sex and expected family size, London and surrounding area, 2000

		Same socio-economic background (%)				Same ethnicity (%)				Share religious beliefs (%)			
		Very important	Rather important	Not very important	Missing data	Very important	Rather important	Not very important	Missing data	Very important	Rather important	Not very important	Missing data
Male	No Child	9.8	35.3	51.0	3.9	3.9	25.5	66.7	3.9	11.8	39.2	45.1	3.9
	One Child	2.0	46.0	48.0	4.0	6.0	34.0	60.0		8.0	46.0	44.0	2.0
	Two Children	3.7	42.2	52.2	1.9	7.5	21.7	68.9	1.9	13.0	39.8	44.7	2.5
	Three Children	6.7	41.3	50.0	1.9	4.8	23.1	68.3	3.8	20.2	41.3	35.6	2.9
	Four or more children	7.4	35.2	50.0	7.4	13.0	22.2	61.1	3.7	27.8	35.2	33.3	3.7
	Missing data	6.7	13.3	80.0			6.7	93.3			33.3	66.7	
Total		5.5	39.8	51.7	3.0	6.7	23.4	67.4	2.5	15.4	40.0	41.8	2.8
Sample size		24	173	225	13	29	102	293	11	67	174	182	12
Female	No Child	7.1	42.9	48.2	1.8	3.6	33.9	58.9	3.6	17.9	37.5	42.9	1.8
	One Child	4.9	45.9	49.2		6.6	36.1	57.4		16.4	34.4	49.2	
	Two Children	7.7	43.5	44.4	4.4	9.3	29.4	57.7	3.6	17.3	42.7	35.9	4.0
	Three Children	9.8	43.9	42.7	3.7	6.7	27.4	61.0	4.9	17.7	53.7	26.2	2.4
	Four or more children	14.3	47.6	36.9	1.2	15.5	32.1	50.0	2.4	33.3	39.3	25.0	2.4
	Missing data		30.4	60.9	8.7	4.3	8.7	78.3	8.7	30.4	39.1	17.4	13.0
Total		8.5	43.9	44.3	3.3	8.5	29.6	58.3	3.6	20.0	43.7	33.2	3.1
Sample size		54	279	282	21	54	188	371	23	127	278	211	20

Source: see Table 3.

Table 9. Attitudes to cohabitation, marriage and divorce, by sex and expected family size, London and surrounding area, 2000

Expected family size		Acceptable for a divorced person to live with his or her children and a new partner (%)			It is too easy to get a divorce in Canada today (%)			Marriage is a outdated institution (%)		
		Agree	Disagree	Other	Agree	Disagree	Other	Agree	Disagree	Other
Male	No Child	64.7	31.4	3.9	47.1	47.1	5.9	27.5	66.7	5.9
	One Child	46.0	50.0	4.0	64.0	32.0	4.0	8.0	88.0	4.0
	Two Children	61.5	34.2	4.3	59.6	33.5	6.8	15.5	82.0	2.5
	Three Children	55.8	38.5	5.8	59.6	29.8	10.6	17.3	75.0	7.7
	Four or more children	38.9	55.6	5.6	51.9	42.6	5.6	9.3	83.3	7.4
	Missing data	66.7	33.3		66.7	26.7	6.7	20.0	73.3	6.7
Total		56.1	39.3	4.6	57.9	34.9	7.1	15.9	79.1	5.1
Sample size		244	171	20	252	152	31	69	344	22
Female	No Child	50.0	42.9	7.1	50.0	42.9	7.1	19.6	76.8	3.6
	One Child	55.7	41.0	3.3	65.6	29.5	4.9	9.8	85.2	4.9
	Two Children	48.8	46.0	5.2	60.9	30.2	8.9	8.9	85.9	5.2
	Three Children	53.0	42.1	4.9	58.5	31.7	9.8	13.4	81.7	4.9
	Four or more children	36.9	60.7	2.4	64.3	26.2	9.5	7.1	90.5	2.4
	Missing data	52.2	39.1	8.7	60.9	30.4	8.7	13.0	82.6	4.3
Total		49.2	45.9	4.9	60.2	31.1	8.6	11.0	84.4	4.6
Sample size		313	292	31	383	198	55	70	537	29

Source: See Table 3.



Table 10. Attitudes to marriage and the division of work, by sex and expected family size, London and surrounding area, 2000

Expected family size		When two people decide to have children, they should first get married (%)			A single woman should never choose to have a child (%)			A child needs a home with both a father and a mother to grow up happily (%)			A working mother can establish just a warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work (%)		
		Agree	Disagree	Other	Agree	Disagree	Other	Agree	Disagree	Other	Agree	Disagree	Other
Male	No Child	60.8	33.3	5.9	35.3	58.8	5.9	51.0	43.1	5.9	70.6	23.5	5.9
	One Child	58.0	40.0	2.0	32.0	66.0	2.0	54.0	44.0	2.0	62.0	34.0	4.0
	Two Children	63.4	33.5	3.1	30.4	65.2	4.3	53.4	44.7	1.9	70.2	27.3	2.5
	Three Children	70.2	26.0	3.8	36.5	58.7	4.8	62.5	33.7	3.8	72.1	25.0	2.9
	Four or more children	72.2	22.2	5.6	37.0	57.4	5.6	59.3	37.0	3.7	55.6	40.7	3.7
	Missing data	53.3	40.0	6.7	26.7	60.0	13.3	26.7	66.7	6.7	73.3	13.3	13.3
Total		64.8	31.3	3.9	33.3	61.8	4.8	55.2	41.6	3.2	68.0	28.3	3.7
Sample size		282	136	17	145	269	21	240	181	14	296	123	16
Female	No Child	64.3	30.4	5.4	21.4	75.0	3.6	26.8	66.1	7.1	87.5	10.7	1.8
	One Child	67.2	32.8		23.0	77.0		45.9	54.1		80.3	19.7	
	Two Children	72.2	24.2	3.6	22.6	72.2	5.2	41.5	54.0	4.4	78.2	15.7	6.0
	Three Children	74.4	21.3	4.3	18.3	76.8	4.9	40.2	56.1	3.7	76.8	19.5	3.7
	Four or more children	84.5	14.3	1.2	29.8	69.0	1.2	48.8	50.0	1.2	72.6	26.2	1.2
	Missing data	65.2	21.7	13.0	26.1	69.6	4.3	39.1	56.5	4.3	73.9	13.0	13.0
Total		73.0	23.4	3.6	22.5	73.6	3.9	41.2	55.2	3.6	78.0	17.9	4.1
Sample size		464	149	23	143	468	25	262	351	23	496	114	26

Table 10. Continued

Expected family size		If a mother of young children works outside the home, it should be only while the family needs the money (%)			It is much better for everyone if the man takes the major responsibility for earning a living and the woman takes the major responsibility for the home and family (%)			If a couple can afford it, one parent should stay home with the children (%)		
		Agree	Disagree	Other	Agree	Disagree	Other	Agree	Disagree	Other
Male	No Child	52.9	41.2	5.9	41.2	52.9	5.9	72.5	21.6	5.9
	One Child	50.0	46.0	4.0	42.0	54.0	4.0	74.0	22.0	4.0
	Two Children	43.5	52.8	3.7	40.4	56.5	3.1	74.5	21.1	4.3
	Three Children	44.2	51.9	3.8	41.3	54.8	3.8	83.7	13.5	2.9
	Four or more children	55.6	38.9	5.6	59.3	35.2	5.6	85.2	11.1	3.7
	Missing data	33.3	60.0	6.7	6.7	80.0	13.3	60.0	26.7	13.3
Total		46.7	49.0	4.4	42.1	53.6	4.4	77.2	18.4	4.4
Sample size		203	213	19	183	233	19	336	80	19
Female	No Child	33.9	60.7	5.4	25.0	69.6	5.4	66.1	28.6	5.4
	One Child	45.9	52.5	1.6	26.2	72.1	1.6	72.1	26.2	1.6
	Two Children	39.5	54.0	6.5	31.0	62.9	6.0	73.8	21.0	5.2
	Three Children	40.9	54.3	4.9	40.9	54.9	4.3	77.4	18.3	4.3
	Four or more children	54.8	44.0	1.2	54.8	42.9	2.4	83.3	14.3	2.4
	Missing data	30.4	56.5	13.0	30.4	56.5	13.0	65.2	21.7	13.0
Total		41.7	53.3	5.0	35.7	59.4	4.9	74.8	20.6	4.6
Sample size		265	339	32	227	378	31	476	131	29

Source: See Table 3.

Table 11. Importance of tolerance and obedience for children, by sex and expected family size, London and surrounding area, 2000

Expected family size		Tolerance and respect for others (%)		Obedience (%)	
		Not chosen among five top qualities	Choose among five top qualities	Not chosen among five top qualities	Choose among five top qualities
Male	No Child	15.7	84.3	78.4	21.6
	One Child	14.0	86.0	78.0	22.0
	Two Children	23.6	76.4	78.9	21.1
	Three Children	21.2	78.8	83.7	16.3
	Four or more children	25.9	74.1	77.8	22.2
	Missing data	13.3	86.7	80.0	20.0
Total		20.9	79.1	79.8	20.2
Sample size		91	344	347	88
Female	No Child	8.9	91.1	87.5	12.5
	One Child	19.7	80.3	86.9	13.1
	Two Children	12.1	87.9	85.1	14.9
	Three Children	19.5	80.5	82.9	17.1
	Four or more children	20.2	79.8	71.4	28.6
	Missing data	17.4	82.6	73.9	26.1
Total		15.7	84.3	82.7	17.3
Sample size		100	536	526	110

Source: See Table 3.