



The research focuses on the joint satisfaction with careers and families for a cohort of mid-career sociologists. A plurality, but not a majority are very satisfied with both.

# PhDs at Mid-Career: Satisfaction with Work and Family<sup>1</sup>

by Roberta Spalter-Roth and Nicole VanVooren

This Research Brief follows in the footsteps of prior research that uses the concept of “greedy institutions” to understand the conflict between participation in two powerful institutions—academic and family—each of which demands the undivided commitment of the participant (Coser 1974; Hochschild 1975; Grant, Kennelly, and Ward 2000; Sarkisian and Gerstel 2008; Wright et al. 2004). The research focuses on work and family activities that affect satisfaction with careers and families for a cohort of mid-career sociologists who are mothers and fathers or childless. The data are from the PhD + 10 wave of a longitudinal study of a cohort of sociology PhDs who received their degrees between July 1, 1996 and August 31, 1997.

Prior research suggests that motherhood and successful scholarly careers are not easily integrated. Because of the full-time demands of each, these careers require elaborate juggling, a cooperative spouse or partner, healthy children, and a supportive workplace milieu for a chance to be maximally satisfied. This is an often-difficult-to-achieve combination. Without help, mothers may be less able to meet the requirements of both greedy institutions (Armenti 2004; Grant, Kennelly and

Ward 2000; Spalter-Roth and Erskine 2005; Spalter-Roth, Kennelly, and Erskine 2004). If they accept help, such as family leave or reduced schedules, mothers may face being stigmatized as uncommitted or unproductive scholars (Drago and Colebeck 2005; Ward and Wendel-Wolfe 2004). Mary Ann Mason and Marc Goulden’s (2002) now-famous study of a nationally representative sample of PhD recipients between 1973 and 1999 found that raising children, especially early in an academic career, had a negative effect on women’s, but not men’s, career trajectories. Some respondents to the current study appear to agree with this analysis. For example, one respondent wrote:

*Don't get me wrong, I think that being a parent has made me a better sociologist and a better person. I think that I made the right choices for me and I am not bitter about it. But, I think that there are still tremendous structural constraints for women in Academic Positions, particularly at research universities. I see this with my female colleagues. It may be the 21st century, but on average male assistant professors can have babies and it doesn't hurt (may even help) their careers and it slows women down.*

Despite what may be “tremendous structural constraints,” we find high rates of satisfaction with both families and

<sup>1</sup> We owe a debt of gratitude to the Workplace, Work Force and Working Families Project, Kathleen Christensen, Program Director, of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation for partial funding of this project.

For mothers who remained in the longitudinal survey, parenthood did not have negative effects on their career trajectories in terms of tenure or scholarly productivity when compared to fathers or childless men or women.

careers among academic sociologists. Mothers who remained in the longitudinal survey throughout the 10 years have successful and productive careers although they work somewhat fewer hours per week and earn less money than fathers and childless men and women (although the differences are not statistically significant). Nonetheless, many mothers and fathers report substantial juggling is necessary to fill the demands of both greedy institutions. Thus, parents report less joint work/family satisfaction than do non-parents.

In this research brief we discuss the following significant findings:

- For mothers who remained in the longitudinal survey since it began in 1998, parenthood did not have negative effects on their career trajectories in terms of tenure or productivity when compared to fathers, childless women and childless men. This does not mean that balancing responsibilities caused no dissatisfaction. There is some evidence that mothers receive somewhat lower salaries than the other groups, although the differences were not significant.
- Parents who remained in the survey report lower levels of satisfaction on a joint work and family scale than non-parents, holding other factors constant, although this finding was only marginally significant ( $p < .10$ ).
- The relationship between work activities and family well-being are difficult to disentangle although specific aspects of

careers affect satisfaction with family life and specific aspects of family life affect satisfaction with work life.

- Mothers who are still on the tenure track are the most likely group to report using work/family policies. However, the use of work/family policies does not have significant positive effects on work/family satisfaction, when controlling for other factors, although earlier research suggested that use of this policy by mothers had a positive affect on their publication productivity.

Over 10 years that the American Sociological Association (ASA) has followed this 1996-7 cohort of PhDs we found differences in patterns of family formation and career experiences within the cohort, but we found few statistically significant differences by gender except for differences in living arrangements.<sup>2</sup> While there were some differences over-time among mothers and fathers, childless men, and childless women, they were not statistically significant possibly because of the small cell sizes in this latest survey wave.

Since 1998, about half of the members of the 1996-1997 cohort dropped out of the survey. In 2007, there were 304 survey respondents (48% of the original cohort of 634 new PhDs), despite multiple efforts to find former participants. Women, had a higher response rate than men, and members of the original cohort who received their PhDs from Research I Universities had a higher response rate than those from other doctoral-granting

<sup>2</sup> Another significant difference by gender was that women were less likely to be mentored in graduate school to publish articles in peer-reviewed journals. See *Gender in the Early stages of a Sociological Career* (Spalter-Roth and Lee 2000) at <http://www.asanet.org/galleries/default-file/RBGender.pdf>

As with PhDs in other disciplines, women are less likely than men to be married or have children.

institutions. Therefore, there may be potential biases resulting from the who responded to the survey. A future research brief will explore the characteristics of those who dropped out of the cohort compared to those who stayed in.

In 2007, nearly 8 out of 10 respondents were employed by institutions of higher education so we focus our analyses on the mid-career experiences of academics, including work/family satisfaction, family practices, work history, scholarly productivity, and professional activities. In addition to the closed and open-ended questions on the survey we have included some comments from the in-depth interviews completed as part of a larger study.<sup>3</sup>

## CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILY AND WORK

### Family Practices

Three-quarters of respondents ten years post PhD are married or living with a partner, 14 percent are separated or divorced, and 12 percent had not married or lived with a partner. As with PhDs in other disciplines, there are significant differences by sex, with women less likely than men to be married or have children (e.g., The American Chemical Society 2002; Wolfinger, Mason, and Gouldner 2008). Men were significantly more likely than women to be married or living with a partner (83% compared to 68% of women). Women were significantly more likely to be divorced or separated than men, including women with children (21% of mothers compared to 92% of

fathers). Of those who were married or living with a partner, half had been so prior to obtaining their PhDs and half waited to form families until after obtaining their doctorate.

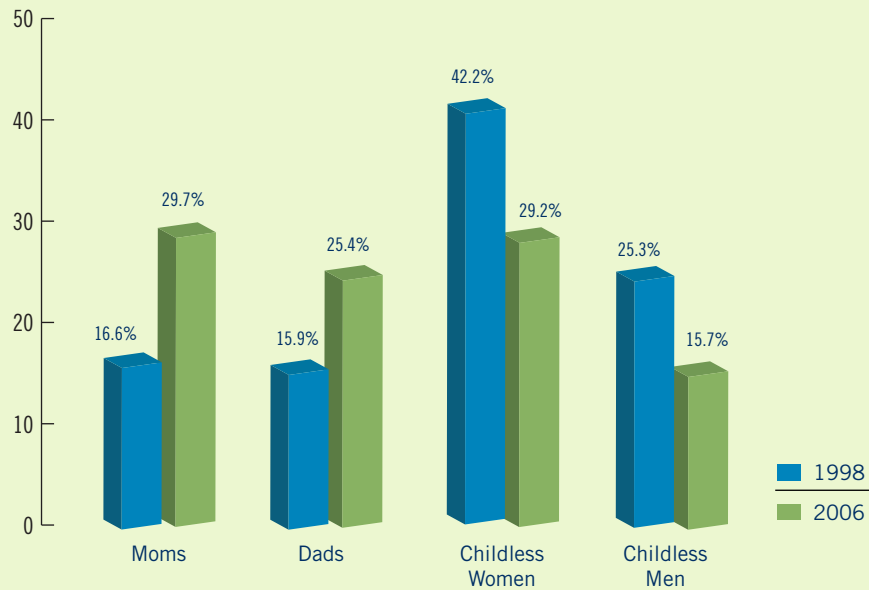
More than half (54 %) of all respondents have children living with them 10 years after their PhDs with men more likely than women to be parents (62% and 50% respectively). The largest group (13%) had their first child 3 to 4 years after their degrees, the next largest group (8%) had their first 5 to 6 years later. But 7 percent had their first child just before or just after receiving their doctorate. The modal year for second children was about seven to eight years after the PhD.

This childbirth pattern suggests that the many respondents did not wait until after they received tenure to have a first child, but did wait until after tenure to have a second child, although there were significant differences by gender. Women were almost twice as likely as men (18% compared to 10%) to have another child seven years after obtaining their PhDs.

Throughout the remainder of this analysis we compare four groups: (1) mothers; (2) fathers; (3) childless women; and (4) childless men. This four-fold division allows us to simultaneously compare gender effects and the differential effect of having children. The two largest groups are mothers (30%) and childless women (29%). Almost one-quarter of the respondents are fathers, while childless men are the smallest group at less than 15 percent. These figures represent a dramatic

<sup>3</sup> These in-depth interviews were conducted by Linda Grant, PhD, University of Georgia and Kimberly Kelly, Heather Macpherson Parrott and Erin Winter, graduate students working on this project at the University of Georgia. A future report will integrate the findings from the PhD +10 survey and the in-depth interviews.

**Figure 1: Percentage of Respondents who were Mothers and Fathers, 1998 & 2006**



Source: American Sociological Association, Research and Development Department, *PhD+6 Follow-Up Survey*, January 2004 and *PhD+10: A Follow-Up Survey on Career and Family Transitions In and Out of the Academic Sector*, 2007 (Washington, DC: ASA).

change from our first set of interviews with this cohort in 1998 when 14 percent were mothers, 45 percent were childless women, 12 percent were dads, and 29 percent were childless men. These changes suggest patterns of family formation, over the 10 year period with cohort members setting up households and having children (Figure 1). However, given the drop-out rate, the current distribution of the respondents may not be representative of the changes in the family patterns of the original cohort.

Much of the literature on work/family issues among academics suggests that combining the responsibilities of work and family is more of a burden for academic women than for academic men, because they assume greater family responsibilities along with equal career responsibilities. Some avoid this potential conflict by

postponing or eschewing childbirth and having fewer children than they would like (Armenti 2004; Drago and Colbeck 2005; Spalter-Roth and Erskine 2006; Spalter-Roth and Kennelly 2007; Spalter-Roth, Kennelly, and Erskine 2004; Wolfinger, Mason, and Goulden 2008). In the current study we find that a small minority of respondents (13 %) are hoping to have a child or an additional child with fathers the least likely to have this wish (9 %), followed by mothers and childless women (14 %). We find that childless men are the most likely to want children (18%) In the words of one academic mother:

*Being in a tenure-track position at a research university right out of doctoral program was great, but it significantly influenced my decisions about child-bearing. I did not feel that it was in my best interest to get pregnant*

...these findings suggest progress along the traditional career trajectory for the majority of respondents...

*or go on maternity leave before tenure. Thus, I chose to wait until the tenure process was underway before starting trying to get pregnant. My daughter was born approximately 6 months after I received tenure. My decision to have only one child (now 2 and 1/2) is influenced by both the fact that I am now 40 and feel that window of opportunity for additional childbearing has passed me by and awful maternity policy in my college/university. In addition, I feel that if I chose to have another child, I would be giving up any hope of every becoming[a] full [professor].*

### Work Patterns

Virtually all respondents are currently employed full or part-time. Fewer than 1 in 10 (9 %) experienced one or more periods of unemployment lasting six months or more during the 10 years post PhD. Most of this unemployment was in the year after being awarded a doctorate, and most were “looking for a suitable job.”

Full-time employment is the typical pattern for this cohort. Almost all indicate they were working full-time (35 hours per week or more) with no significant differences by sex or by gendered parental status. However, childless women work the most hours on average (47.4 hours), followed by fathers (46.8 hours) and childless men (44.9 hours). Mothers work the fewest hours (42.6 hours), about 5 hours less per week than childless women and fathers. While there are relatively large standard deviations around the mean, showing variation in work patterns within each group, the differences in hours worked suggest that these employed mothers may not have fully accepted the ‘ideal worker’ image that pervades professional workplaces. Described by legal scholar Joan Williams (2001), this ideal worker enters a profession immediately upon receiving the relevant academic

credential, works his or her way up the career ladder by putting in long hours without interruptions beyond short vacations, and continues in this fashion until retirement age. Our findings do not suggest that sociologist mothers have created an alternative work pattern, but rather suggest that they may try to moderate the typical academic work load to accommodate parental roles. Other studies have found similar results (Jacobs and Winslow 2004).

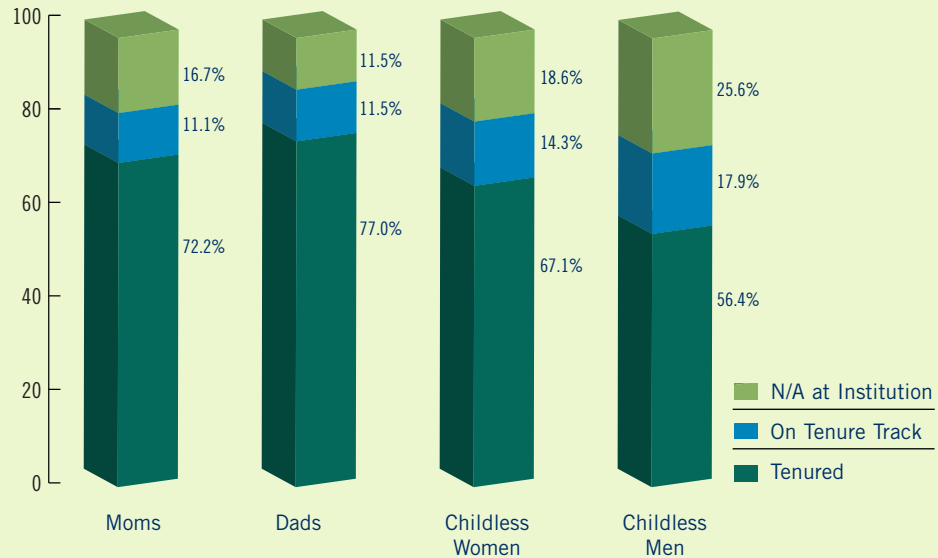
The relatively high percentage of women with children who report having tenure suggests that tenure can be obtained working fewer hours per week than the average (Figure 2). For example, one mother explains that her weekends and weeknights, when her daughter is not in daycare and before she goes to bed, are considered ‘family time’ as opposed to ‘work time’:

*...my kind of philosophy is she's in paid care 40 hours a week and I try to get as much of my work done during that kind of 40 hours a week while she's in daycare. And when she's not I try to think of it as family time. And if I've got more work I need to do that can't get done during the 9 to 5 then I'm working after she goes to bed. That's generally been my philosophy.*

### Career Trajectories

The career trajectories appear to follow normative academic patterns of tenure and promotion, especially for parents. Almost 70 percent of the responding members of the PhD+10 cohort are tenured, with an additional 11 percent still on the tenure track. Fathers were most likely to be tenured (77% with 12% on the tenure track), followed by mothers (72% with 12% on the tenure track). While not statistically significant, childless women are almost twice as likely as fathers to be

**Figure 2: Percent of Respondents with Tenure**  
(by Gendered Parental Status)



Source: American Sociological Association, Research and Development Department PhD+10: A Follow-Up Survey on Career and Family Transitions In and Out of the Academic Sector, 2007 (Washington, DC: ASA).

employed in positions for which there was no tenure.

Respondents employed as academics in institutions of higher education reported that they are full professors (10%), associate professors (57%), assistant professors (15%), or in positions for which there is no faculty rank (11%). Mothers and fathers are most likely to be associate professors (69% and 64% respectively) (Table 1). More childless men have the rank of either assistant or full professor than their colleagues although the differences were not statistically significant.

Overall, these findings suggest progress along the traditional career trajectory for the majority of respondents to the PhD +10 survey—achieving tenure and

promotion to associate or full professors, with few, if any, periods of unemployment. One respondent remarked with delight:

*I just found out that I have been recommended for promotion to full professor, effective July 1, 2007.*

And another:

*I have been well-compensated the last few years and am currently up for full professor.*

Yet there are also other stories that indicate a more difficult and spotty career trajectory for some in the cohort.

*Tenure is not meaningful in a research, soft money environment. There are few options outside the traditional academic department position that allow for tenure, and within the academic department there is not enough opportunity for research. I work essentially as a free agent--employed as long as I can maintain my own funding and funding for my staff.*

*I have not held a tenure track position since finishing my PhD. I have only held contract positions, and am now unemployed because I gave birth to a beautiful little boy. I am also trying to build up my publication record, which was severely limited with my contract employment.*

*I went through two visiting full-time positions before securing a tenure-track job, and while this does not seem ideal, it meant that when I began on the tenure-track, I had a number of classes under my belt, and I think this was beneficial.*

*Since receiving my doctorate, I have taught adjunct at that university, and adjunct at another state university until 2004, when my position at the second school became a full-time instructor level (non-tenure track) position.*

According to the in-depth interviews conducted as part of this project, those who specifically chose nonacademic jobs are generally satisfied with them, while those who would have preferred an academic job are not as satisfied. These alternative trajectories are not representative of the majority of the PhD+10 respondents, who received tenure and academic promotions. Those who did not respond to the survey may have had more difficult and spotty careers than those who did respond.

### Publications Productivity

The respondents to this survey appear to be productive scholars. The median number of papers presented at professional meetings was 12 with only one respondent not presenting any papers. About 8 out of 10 respondents published articles in peer reviewed journals, the “gold standard” of productivity for the discipline (Frank Fox 1985; 1992; 2005). There were no significant differences by sex or by gendered parental status, with fathers and mothers reporting an average of 10.0 refereed journal publications since obtaining their PhDs, childless men and women reported close to that level at 9.5 articles on average. About two-thirds of respondents published chapters in books with an additional one-third publishing a monograph. Along with these more traditional publishing venues, about half published technical papers, reports, and research briefs. The findings appear to be contrary to the gender differences found in scholarship in other disciplines (Ginther and Kahn 2004; Mathews and Andersen 2001; Thilmann 2000). It suggests the high productivity of PhD career mothers in sociology despite the difficulties of tending to both greedy institutions. It also suggests the higher

**Table 1: Faculty Rank of Mothers and Fathers, 2006**

(in percents)

	Dads	Moms	Childless Women	Childless Men
Full Professor	8.2	8.1	9.6	10.3
Associate Professor	73.8	68.9	57.5	46.2
Assistant Professor	9.8	13.5	17.8	20.5
Other, Instructor, Lecturer	8.2	8.1	8.2	7.7
Not Applicable	0.0	1.4	6.8	15.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: American Sociological Association, Research and Development Department PhD+10: A Follow-Up Survey on Career and Family Transitions In and Out of the Academic Sector, 2007 (Washington, DC: ASA).

productivity of (and/or higher demands for tenure on) newer cohorts of mothers in sociology compared to earlier cohorts (compare these findings with Xie and Shauman 1998).

**Professional Activities**

This cohort is professionally-involved, with mothers possibly more involved in the discipline than others. Almost six out of 10 (58%) respondents are ASA members and 44 percent of them attended the previous ASA Annual Meeting. Academic mothers reported belonging to an average of three professional societies, compared to the other groups that averaged about 2.6 societies. In another brief about normative versus alternative careers we will present data indicating that sociologists in this cohort who are mothers are more likely to have aspirations to be leaders of their professional associations than the other gendered-parental groups. Professional involvement is not possible

for all of the academic mothers in the cohort. In one of the in-depth interviews by Grant and her colleagues, a mother described the difficulties of attending and presenting her research at professional meetings due to her family obligations. Preparation for the meeting as well as special arrangements at such meetings proved to be too stressful and hindered her from attending and building necessary networks to advance her career as an assistant professor.

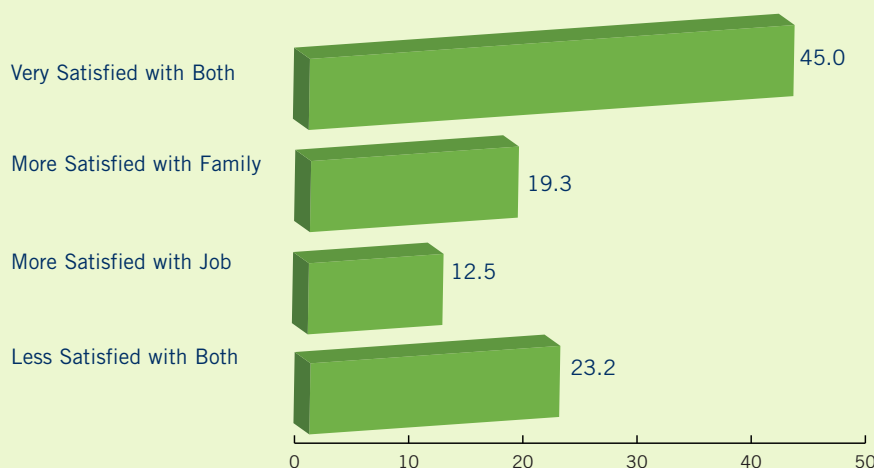
**Income**

*It's very difficult to have a family and get tenure, and then later to get merit raises. Since we are pitted against each other, those who are childless will always make more money.*

This comment reflects a common assumption about the rewards of being an “ideal professional worker”, and it is at least partially correct, according to the results of this survey. Ten years after

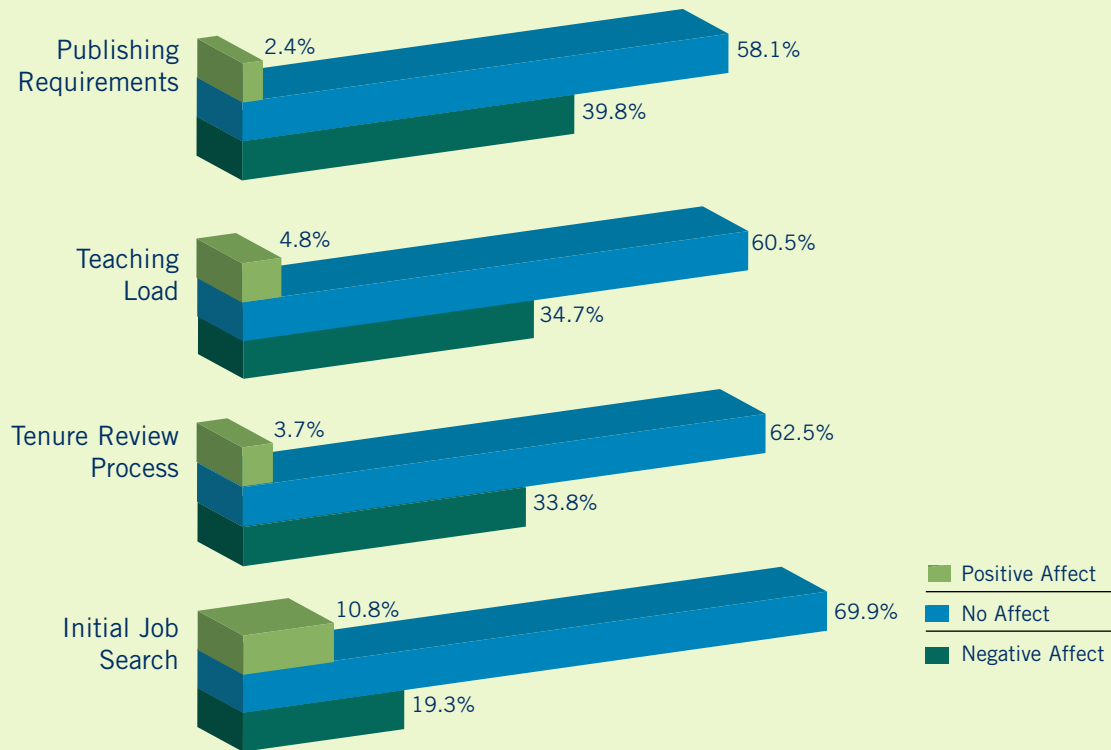
**Figure 3: Job and Family Satisfaction in 2006**

(in percents)



Source: American Sociological Association, Research and Development Department, PhD+10: A Follow-Up Survey on Career and Family Transitions In and Out of the Academic Sector (Washington, DC: ASA, 2007).

**Figure 4: Percentage Agreeing that Job Characteristics Affected Family Life in 2006**  
 (Percentage of Affected Respondents)



Source: American Sociological Association, Research and Development Department, *PhD+10: A Follow-Up Survey on Career and Family Transitions In and Out of the Academic Sector* (Washington, DC: ASA, 2007).

obtaining their PhDs, the median income for sociologist fathers, childless men and childless women was between \$70,000 and \$99,000 (income data was categorical not continuous), while the median income for sociologist mothers was between \$50,000 and \$59,000. Although mothers earned lower salaries, on average, compared to the other groups, the differences were not significant. These findings suggest that there may be a wage penalty for mothers (Budig and England 2001) who were employed for as many years and were as productive as the higher paid groups. Alternatively, these differences may be explained by a differential distribution of these groups across types of institutions of

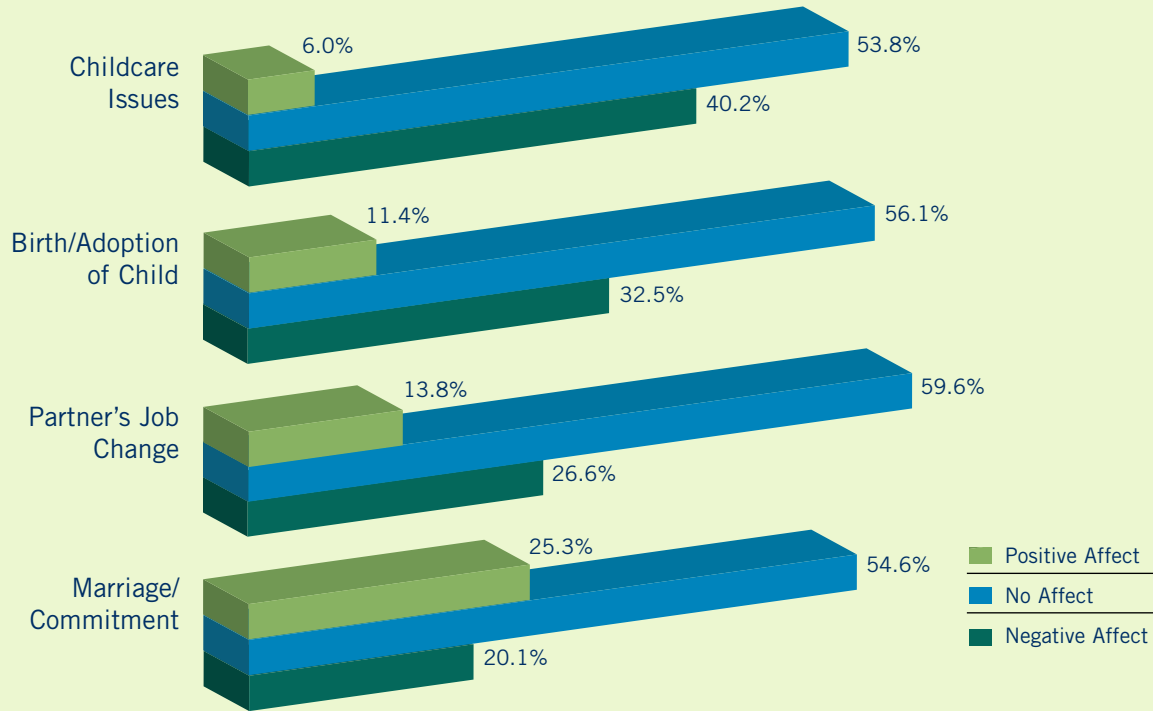
higher education. A future research brief will address this issue.

### WORK AND FAMILY SATISFACTION

On average, more than 7 out of 10 respondents are very satisfied with their careers and about the same percentage were very satisfied with their family situation. But when we examine joint satisfaction, (based on a scale that ranged from 2 to 20) we find that a plurality, but not a majority of respondents (45 %), were very satisfied with both simultaneously. Almost a third (32 %) was

**Figure 5: Percentage Agreeing that Key Family Issues Affected Career in 2006**

(Percentage of Affected Respondents)



Source: American Sociological Association, Research and Development Department, *PhD+10: A Follow-Up Survey on Career and Family Transitions In and Out of the Academic Sector* (Washington, DC: ASA, 2007).

satisfied with one but not the other. Of those with mixed satisfaction, 61 percent were very satisfied with family life but less than satisfied with their careers, and 39.3 percent were less satisfied with their family life but very satisfied with their careers. The smallest group (23%) was not very satisfied with either their careers or their family situation (Figure 3).

**Effects of Family on Work and Work on-Family**

The factors that impact work and family activities in the daily lives of these academics are difficult to disentangle. To better understand these relations, we asked a series of questions to find out if there

were positive, negative, or no effects of work activities for family satisfaction and vice versa and how satisfied they were with each (Figures 4 and 5). A typical question was “Did the publishing requirements of your job have an effect on your family or family formation?” Or, “Did childcare issues have an effect on your job?” Although a majority respond “no effect” to all questions, a substantial minority report strongly or modestly negative effects; a smaller group say each activity had both a negative and positive effect, and the smallest group report that family or work activities had a positive effect. In other words, work activities are not seen by the majority as having an effect on

family satisfaction, but if they do have an effect, this effect is usually negative. Similarly, family situations are not seen to have an effect on careers, but if they do, this effect was usually negative.

The first set of questions concern the consequences of job characteristics and activities for family life. About two-thirds of all respondents (including those with no immediate families) answer that job activities had no effect on their families. However, more than a third of the respondents report that publishing requirements, teaching loads, and the tenure review process negatively affected family life (Figure 4). Fewer respondents express negative effects for other academic activities. About one in five said that their initial job search had a negative effect on family life, fewer respondents had spouses or children during their post-PhD job search. These findings suggest that major events in the PhD career trajectory (the tenure review process and two major responsibilities of the profession, teaching and publishing) are not seen as being “family friendly.” Perhaps as a result, three-quarters of respondents do not wish to have additional children, although current mothers and childless women and men are more likely than fathers to maintain this hope. These differences in the desire for an additional child were marginally significant ( $p < .08$ ).

As a potential mirror for the effect of work activities on families or family formation, we asked a series of questions about the effect on careers of family situations such as marriage, birth or adoption of a child, child care, or spouse’s change of employment. For each question a substantial minority said the family

situations had a negative effect for their careers (Figure 5). The only exception to this rule is the effect of marriage or partnership on careers, with 25 percent saying that this activity had a positive effect. In contrast, about one-third of respondents report that the birth or adoption of a child had a negative effect on their career. About one-quarter of respondents said that a partner or spouse’s job change had a negative effect on their own career. The highest negatives were responses about childcare and personal illness. About 4 out of 10 of those responding said that childcare issues had a negative effect of their careers. Of the 40 percent who said they experienced a personal illness, 45 percent said that it had a negative effect on their career. As a mirror to the negative effects of work activities on families, these findings suggest that illness, childbirth, and difficulties in obtaining childcare had negative effects of careers. Data gathered in the in-depth interviews support these findings. Family related issues that interviewees report also included personal or family illness and spouse’s job situation.

### **Work Family Policies**

In spite of the negative effects of family activities for work lives, the vast majority of respondents do not report using work/family policies even if they are available. About the same percentage of respondents report having used policies in the PhD +10 wave of the study as in the earlier PhD+6 wave. We expected an increase in usage during the additional years since members of the cohort had or adopted babies, experienced illnesses, and needed to care for spouses and children. A possible explanation for the lack of growth may be the design of the questionnaire.

There were only two questions about work/family policies<sup>4</sup> on the PhD +10 survey, but many more on the earlier survey asking about usage of specific kinds of policies. As a result, fewer people may have responded that they used a policy. Another possibility is the selection bias as respondents dropped out between the PhD +6 and the PhD +10 waves of the survey. Although faculty mothers are significantly more likely to use work/family policy than the other groups, a smaller percentage of them reported using any in the PhD +10 survey compared to the PhD +6 survey (38% compared to 40%, respectively). Those mothers with tenure are significantly less likely to report policy use than those mothers still on the tenure track (48%).<sup>5</sup> This finding may reinforce previous studies that suggest that use of leave policy is considered a sign of uncommitted scholars (Drago and Colebeck 2005; Ward and Wendel-Wolfe 2004).

Work/family policies may not be the only alternative for ameliorating conflict between the two greedy institutions. Several of the in-depth interviewees made informal arrangements due to the unavailability of formal policies or simply because these policies were more cumbersome and even stigmatizing. These academic parents comment on their family friendly departments:

*My university is actually in the process of getting a more formal leave policy.... But my direct supervisor was very family-friendly. And my mother was very ill and actually died during that time period and he made*

*arrangements for someone to come in and sort of work for me but that's because he did that informally. It's nothing that the university required him to do.*

*When my son was born I sat down with my HR person and said I intend to take family leave when he was born. And basically the discussion was do I want to do that within the formal guidelines of (his university system employer) or do I want to sort of do that more informally and just come up within a written agreement that's signed off by me and my director and decided to go the latter route. So there were formal policies available but I didn't use them because they were just seen as bureaucratically awkward, whereas we could do it this other way which is more informal but where there was still a commitment.*

### Relative Importance of Factors Related to Family/Work Satisfaction

What factors affect joint work and family satisfaction relative to one another?

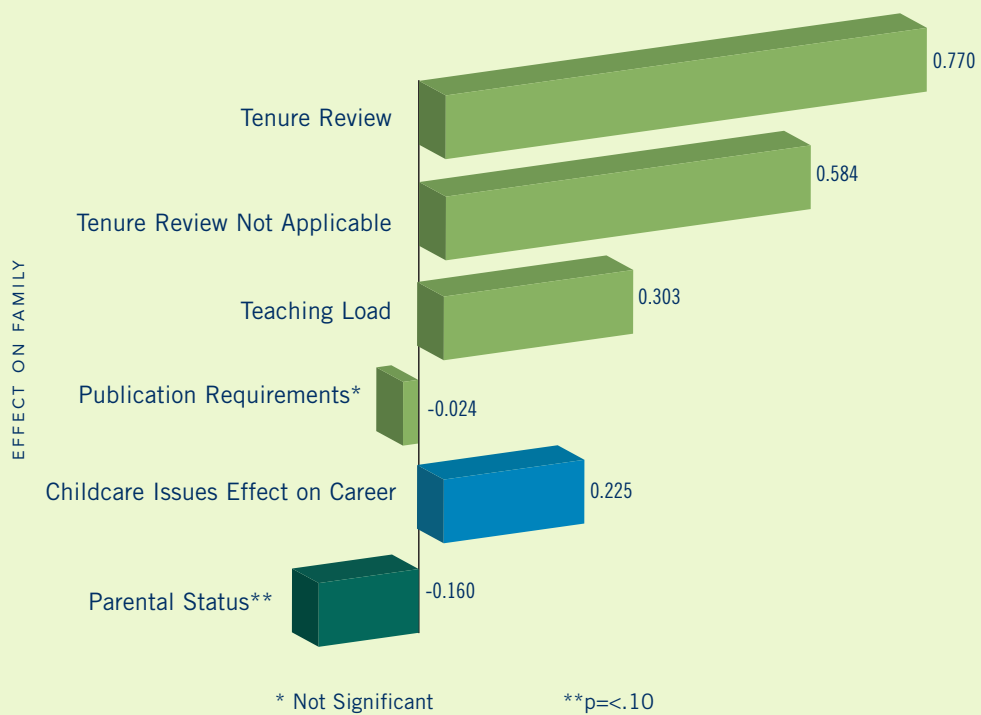
We developed an additive scale (from 2 through 20) that ranked joint satisfaction with work and family jointly. This was the dependent variable in an OLS regression model with work and family activities as independent variables along with a series of control variables. The control variables include the following measures:

- Faculty member or not;
- Prestige of graduate university (From PhD+1 survey);
- Rank;
- Imputed departmental resources (from the PhD +6 survey) including travel money, teaching support, time off, use of family policy;

<sup>4</sup> Since the majority of PhD +6 users responded that they used family leave policies rather than policies that held back the tenure clock or reduced teaching loads, we did not list the specific types of policies on the PhD +10 questionnaire.

<sup>5</sup> Recall that only 11 percent of mothers are still on the tenure track.

**Figure 6: Factors Affecting Satisfaction with Job and Family**  
(Standardized Regression Coefficients)



Source: American Sociological Association, Research and Development Department, *PhD+10: A Follow-Up Survey on Career and Family Transitions In and Out of the Academic Sector* (Washington, DC: ASA, 2007).

- Use of work/family policy; and
- Gendered parental status.<sup>6</sup>

We find that none of these control variables are significant (although parental status was marginally significant) and factors describing the effect of work activities on families are more likely to be significant than factors describing the effects of family activities on careers (See Appendix Table 1). Some of the independent variables measuring the reported effect of work on family and the effect of family on careers, are strongly related to each other. This multicollinearity

suggests that the variables in the model may be measuring an underlying phenomenon that we have not captured. For example, satisfaction with publications is not significantly related to joint work/family satisfaction when satisfaction with child care is included in the model. However, satisfaction with publications is significantly related to work/family satisfaction when childcare is not included in the model. Publications and childcare may be interactive and difficult to disentangle, so that meeting publication requirements is especially difficult without satisfactory childcare.

<sup>6</sup> Not all of these variables were in the final model shown in Appendix Table 1 but were tested in previous regression models.

Figure 6 shows that for every 1 point increase the effect of childcare on careers there is a .225 increase in reported joint work/family satisfaction and that this result is significant. The effect of publications is not significant and falls out of the model when child care is included.

Tenure is significantly related to reported work/family satisfaction in two ways. First, work/family satisfaction increases significantly for those respondents who reported that there was no tenure process for their position. For every 1 point increase in satisfaction with the effect of having a non-tenure position there was a .584 percent increase in reported joint work/family satisfaction. This positive relation between not being on the tenure track and work/family satisfaction seems out of keeping with the comments cited earlier by some in this situation, cited earlier. Another comment reinforces this view.

*I'm just working myself to death. I have no real job security or power. I feel I have little or no control over my internship program or my own future. I can't even vote in my own department... I definitely feel marginalized and devalued. While I still love much of what I do, I've found the situation to be increasingly frustrating... I think graduate students need to be told that "non tenure track" positions are demoralizing and difficult in many ways.*

Another type of relationship between tenure and reported joint work/ family satisfaction is that: the more satisfied respondents were with the effects of the tenure process on their family, the greater their work/family satisfaction. For every 1 point increase in satisfaction with the effect of tenure on the family there is a

.770 increase in reported joint work/family satisfaction.

The effect of the number of courses respondents taught on family satisfaction is also significantly related to joint work/family satisfaction. Fewer courses mean increased satisfaction. For every 1 point increase in the effect of teaching loads on family satisfaction there is a .303 increase in joint work/family satisfaction, relative to other factors.

Other measures of the effect of career or family activities on joint work/family satisfaction are not significant. These include mentoring students, service obligations, obtaining grants, marriage, birth or adoption of a child, and personal illness. Gendered parental status does not have a significant effect on joint work/family satisfaction. Parental status, however, had a small but close to significant effect ( $p < .10$ ), with parents reporting less satisfaction than non-parents, when other factors were held constant. This finding suggests that if the greedy institution of raising children is avoided respondents report greater joint work/family satisfaction because of greater ability to meet the demands of the greedy institution of the academic career.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A substantial majority of respondents to the PhD+10 survey have gained tenure and been promoted to the rank of associate professor. This is especially true for respondents who are mothers and fathers. The PhD +10 data suggest that those mothers who remained in the

The findings suggest that childcare issues, the tenure process, and teaching loads cast a shadow over mothers and fathers satisfaction with their academic careers.

sample have successful and productive careers, contrary to other studies (Mason and Goulden 2002) although not without juggling and conflict, given the pressures of the two greedy institutions. If these findings are reliable and do not suffer from response bias, they suggest that earlier findings showing that women's academic careers are held back by motherhood may not be universal.

More than 7 out of 10 respondents are satisfied with their family lives and slightly fewer are satisfied with their careers. This does not mean that sociologists are untroubled by the conflicting demands of two greedy institutions. A plurality, but not a majority, of respondents to this latest wave of the survey is satisfied with both their careers and their family situations. The regression analysis suggests that the effects of work and family activities are highly interrelated, suggesting tensions between powerful commitments to academic and to family life. The majority report that varying career and family activities such as gaining tenure, teaching loads, publishing requirements, and childcare did not have a negative effect on work or family satisfaction, but a substantial minority did report negative effects.

As one mother put it:

*Stress of tenure - including publishing, grants, etc - coupled with demands of the job (teaching, service) made it difficult to spend time with my family, and made me fairly stressed out at home.*

And another:

*Finding and accepting academic positions disrupted my husband's career. I was afraid I would not get tenure if I had children, so I*

*delayed childbearing until after tenure, at which point I was no longer fertile, causing stress at home. Fortunately, I have adopted a beautiful baby.*

But another mother reported positive effects:

*As a single parent, I was motivated to work hard for financial reasons. But I found ways to include my son and use the flexibility of my schedule so that I could feel very involved in family. The pressure of work helped me focus, and provide a hard-working yet balanced role model for my son and my students.*

The study findings suggest that parents, regardless of gender, may be more dissatisfied than non-parents perhaps because of conflict between the greedy institutions. This finding, if reliable, may mean that the dissatisfaction with juggling and conflict results in a shadow on the satisfaction with a successful and productive career.

Gender differences among non academic parents are evident in the in depth interviews, in which one woman claimed that she was essentially demoted when she was about to become a parent while a new father at a similar organization reported that he was taken more seriously after his first child was born.

### **What are the Problems that Policy May Need to Address?**

The findings suggest that childcare issues, the tenure process, and teaching loads cast a shadow over mothers and fathers satisfaction with their academic careers and family lives. This is consistent with new research on parenthood and academic careers (Pudner 2008; Simon 2008; Wolfinger, Mason, and Gouldner 2008). Do the data suggest policies that might

work to dispel this shadow? Although many faculty members, human resources personnel, and program officers in foundations have worked for family-friendly or work/family policies in higher education, the results from the PhD+10 do not find these policies to be significantly related to work/family satisfaction. Gaining tenure may mean not using policies that could mitigate conflicts between greedy institutions. Our previous research about this cohort suggested that leave policies contributed to increased scholarly productivity, although not to tenure (Spalter-Roth and Erskine 2006). The positive effects of these policies in increasing mother's productivity point to the need for stronger policy support by chairs, deans, and other administrators. Alternatively these policies may need to be recast as one of a variety of resource policies to assist academics in their work lives, especially because the PhD+6 research suggested that some of these resources are significant for tenure. Also, as suggested in the in-depth interviews, family stresses can be informally relieved with the help of coworkers willing to cooperate with each other as people begin to start families. This type of environment can be fostered by the support of department chairs and academic deans.

The trend towards rising publication requirements to receive tenure is a source of anxiety and complaint, especially when combined with heavy teaching loads,

service requirements, and intensifying expectations for fund raising. Expectations may need to become more realistic. By definition, not all schools can be in the top 10, the top 50, or even the top 100. As one faculty member reported:

*I have found it more difficult to advance in my research in order to get promoted to full professor. Although I am at a teaching institution, publications are required for promotion. With a 4 yr old child, and spending much time as president of our faculty union, as well as doing service work (e.g. supporting faculty of color and helping get a day care started on our campus), it's been easy to neglect my research to my own detriment. I'm noticing many of my fellow faculty with small children are facing a similar situation, where research is put aside as teaching and service responsibilities increase. [This is] an interesting new trend among those of us who wait to have kids till our late 30s and early 40s. I wish you did not stop following the cohorts after 10 years. We are still facing important challenges we should document.*

Finally, the lack of affordable and consistent childcare is a major source of dissatisfaction. The strong demand for childcare from the federal government, the state, and from workplaces, including the academy, has been heard but not heeded for more than 30 years. If implemented these changes may ameliorate some of the conflicts stemming from the commitments required by two greedy institutions. ■

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### APPENDIX I: SATISFACTION WITH JOB AND FAMILY REGRESSION

\*Coefficients and statistical significance will vary from the model in Figure 7 because all variables are included in this model

Variable	Standardized Coefficient	S.E.	Categories
Academic Position	-0.053	0.167	Dean or Department Chair Research Faculty Teaching Faculty Adjunct Faculty Post Doc Other
Academic Rank	-0.081	0.454	Not Applicable Other, Instructor, Lecturer Assistant Professor Associate Professor Professor
Tenure Status	0.152	0.573	Not Applicable On Tenure Track, but not Tenured Denied Tenure
Job Relation to Sociology	0.102	1.120	Not Related Closely Related
DEPARTMENT RESOURCES	Teaching support	0.001	No Yes
	Computers	0.028	0.428
**Tenure Review	0.615	0.340	Not Applicable
Publication Requirements	0.017	0.346	Yes- strongly negative effect
**Teaching Load	0.306	0.305	Yes- modestly negative effect
Mentoring Undergrads	0.047	0.426	Yes- equally positive and negative effect
**Childcare Issues	0.549	0.309	Yes- strongly positive effect
Personal Illness	-0.095	0.538	
*N/A Tenure Review	0.517	1.666	
N/A Publishing	0.242	1.824	All other
N/A Mentoring	-0.098	2.310	Not Applicable
N/A Childcare	0.402	1.537	
FUTURE PLANS	Professional Society Leadership	0.094	No
	More Children	-0.036	Yes
PUBLICATIONS	Journal	0.004	No
	Book	0.069	Yes
Eligibility for Family Policy	0.071	0.292	Not Eligible for Family Policy Eligible, but did not Use Eligible and Used
Gender	-0.003	0.427	Male Female
Parental Status	-0.088	0.686	Parent Non Parent

N= 218

Adjusted R Squared= .232

Largest Condition Index= 64.942

\*\* Chi Square Sig < .01

\* Chi Square Sig < .05



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