Theoretical work on the career development of women has travelled a journey from critique to creation. Early work responded to and criticised a literature that focused on theorising male roles in a workplace that was conceptualised as providing vertical career paths primarily for middle class males. More recently theorists are creating new constructions and frameworks to enable a more holistic understanding of career, applicable to both women and men. These constructions include broadening the discussion from women’s careers to women’s working lives.

This is the fifth book in the Sense Publishers Career Development Series. It features the vibrant work of contributors from around the world writing in the field of women’s working lives. It emphasises the need to explore theoretical connections and understandings in order to facilitate a more holistic and inclusive understanding of women’s working lives. The writers in the current volume acknowledge the changing roles of women, in both public and private spheres. Women’s roles in paid work are changing both in their nature and type of engagement. In addition, with an ageing population, women’s roles in care work are increasingly being extended from child care to aged care.

This book provides a history of theorising about women’s careers, in addition to presenting a focus on current empirical and theoretical work which contributes to understandings of women’s working lives. Its contributions both map the current discourse and challenge future work to extend the boundaries of that discourse.

Conceptualising Women’s Working Lives
CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERIES
Connecting Theory and Practice
Volume 5

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Scope
Recent developments in the literature on career have begun to reflect a greater global reach and acknowledgement of an international/global understanding of career. These developments have demanded a more inclusive understanding of career as it is experienced by individuals around the world. Related issues within the career literature include the relationships within the career theory literature, or theory integration and convergence, and between theory and practice. The influence of constructivism is another influence which is receiving sustained attention within the field.

The series will be cutting edge in focusing on each of these areas, and will be truly global in its authorship and application. The primary focus of the series is the theory-practice nexus.
Conceptualising Women’s Working Lives

Moving the Boundaries of Discourse

Edited by

Wendy Patton
Queensland University of Technology, Australia
DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to David Gardiner AM, mentor and supporter of my career, and of many other women’s careers.
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This is the fifth and final book in the Sense Publishers Career Development Series. The present book features the vibrant work of contributors writing in the field of women’s working lives. It emphasises the need to explore theoretical connections and understandings in order to facilitate a holistic and inclusive understanding of women’s working lives. The writers in the current volume acknowledge the changing roles of women, in public and private spheres. Women’s roles in paid work are changing both in their nature and the type of engagement. In addition, with an ageing population, women’s roles in care work are increasingly being extended from child care to aged care. Thank you to all the contributors in this volume for your valuable chapters.

As Editor of this book, and of the Career Development Series, it is wonderful to see the connections from previous books in the Series being brought together in this work. It is also noteworthy, in relation to the connections between theories and particular areas of application, that a number of authors have contributed to more than one book in the Series. Finally when the Series was proposed in 2005 it was specifically targeted to showcase new (for example, integration between vocational psychological and organisational perspectives on career; social constructionism in vocational psychology) and generally underrepresented fields (for example children’s and young people’s career development and the working lives of women) in the career development literature. It is an honour to have worked with so many passionate contributors to the career development field during that time. I trust the five books serve as key volumes for many years to come.

Wendy Patton
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PART 1

CHALLENGE AND CHANGE
CHAPTER 1

WENDY PATTON

UNDERSTANDING WOMEN’S WORKING LIVES

INTRODUCTION

The last 50 years have produced multiple changes in our understanding of the place of paid and unpaid work in women’s lives. A growing theoretical, research and practical literature attests to the attention being directed to the broader understanding of women’s working lives. It is more than thirty years since the groundbreaking paper by Fitzgerald and Crites’ (1980) on the career psychology of women. Prior to that time women’s careers were seen as primarily home based or “in relation to” men’s careers. In 1975 Osipow had commented on the lack of usefulness of traditional theories of career behaviour for women in that several basic assumptions on which they were founded were not relevant. For example, traditional career theory is based on the assumption that an array of career choices is available to all individuals, who are in turn motivated to pursue their personal interests in making certain choices. A comment on the state of vocational psychology in relation to class made by Tyler in 1967 highlights the inadequacy of application to women: – “much of what we know about the stages through which an individual passes as he prepares to find his place in the world of work might appropriately be labelled the vocational development of white middle class males” [italics in original] (p. 62). Gilligan’s (1979) classic article entitled “woman’s place in man’s life cycle” emphasised the restriction of many theories of psychology in understanding women’s lives as they implicitly adopted male as norm and failed to account for the unique social and family situation of women and the related demands on them.

During the 1980s and 1990s theorists attempted to specifically consider women’s careers, albeit still within a traditional frame. However, criticisms remain about the failure of much career development theory to adequately account for the lives of women. Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) acknowledged that although the field had burgeoned in the past twenty years, much more work needs to be done to develop theoretical understandings which highlight the unique experience of women’s career development. Osipow and Fitzgerald (1996) continued to advocate the examination of variables not relevant to men as a “viable theoretical stance” for the future (p. 261). More recently, Blustein, (2001, 2006), Richardson (1993, 2000) and Schultheiss
(2003, 2009) have provided new frameworks for consideration of women’s working lives. In too many instances, scholars in the field have continued to develop an understanding of women’s working lives within the traditional framework of white male middle-class careers. Thus there remains considerable theoretical shortcoming about the nature and development of women’s careers despite consistent support in the literature for the assumption that meaningful work is central to women’s lives. This chapter will examine current understandings around women’s careers including the variables which inhibit or facilitate women’s career behaviour. The chapter will present a review of the current demographic information in relation to women in the workforce, and then provide a brief historical overview of theoretical approaches which have offered explanations of women’s career behaviour. It will conclude with questions for the future.

Women in the Workforce

It is clear that despite sociocultural changes in previous decades, which resulted in women having an increased presence in the workforce and in higher education, gender imbalances still exist. Women’s increased representation in the workforce and in undergraduate and postgraduate courses has not significantly changed their representation in the higher levels of both academic and corporate hierarchies.

Examining trends in women’s paid and unpaid work may offer some insight into the gender imbalance. There has been a well documented increase in the number of women in the workforce, from 40% of adult women employed in 1970 to more than 70% employed in 2007 in the US (US Census Bureau, 2011) and 48% to 55% between 1992 and 2006 in Australia (ABS, 2009a). Interestingly despite this increase in women’s engagement in the paid workforce, women still complete approximately two thirds of all household work (ABS, 2009a). An element of this household work is child care, an area which continues to impact on the career choices of women. Women spent more than two and a half times as long caring for children in 2006 when compared with men (ABS, 2009b). For example in Australia, in families with both parents in paid work, 67% of mothers felt pressed for time as a result of attempting to balance work and family responsibilities, whereas only 49% of fathers reported this perception (ABS, 2009b). With the growth in the aging population right across the world, the role of carers for the elderly will become increasingly important and it is this area that women again dominate. In Australia, in 2003, 17 per cent of women cared for someone who needed assistance due to a disability, a long term health condition, frailty or age (ABS, 2009c) compared to 14 per cent of men. Further, women were more likely to take on a caring role at an earlier age (ABS, 2009c).

More women now hold tertiary qualifications than men. In Australia in 1999, 16% of both males and females aged 15–64 years held a tertiary qualification of Bachelor degree or higher. These proportions had altered to 18% and 20% respectively by...
2004 and by mid-2009, further extended to 21% of males and 25% of females in 2010 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010). In the US in 2007 women graduated with 57% of Bachelors’ degrees and 58.5% of Masters’ degrees (Catalyst, 2007). The OECD Education at a Glance Report (2011) noted that across the 27 OECD countries, tertiary graduation rates for young women were notably higher than those for young men—the OECD average was 46% for young women and 31% for young men. In several countries, the difference was more than 25% age points.

However very few women are at the top of the managerial pipeline. Representation across and within fields is still disparate. Women remain under-represented in the powerful positions in the world’s top companies. The Australian Census of Women in Leadership (the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, 2010) reveals the lack of representation of women in the top 200 Australian companies by market capitalisation. In 2010, of the 200 companies, only five boards had a female Chair and only six had a female CEO (EOWA, 2010). This means women make up 2.5% of Chairs and 3% of CEOs. Women represent almost half of the workforce overall at 45%; comprise 48% of graduates from management and commerce study areas and are 45 per cent of managers and professionals (EOWA, 2010; DEEWR, 2010a). In the top 200 in Australia, for every female Board Director, there are ten males and for every female CEO, there are 32 male CEOs (EOWA, 2010). Women were 8.4% of the Board Directors in 2010, 8.3% in 2008, 8.7% in 2006 and 8.2% in 2004 (EOWA, 2010). This indicates that there has been very little change in the number of board seats held by women over the last six years. These data are reflected internationally, with the United States at 15.2 per cent, South Africa 16.6% and Canada 14% (EOWA, 2010).

**Summary**

Although women are more present in the workplace than in the past, their representation in senior levels of professional positions remains unequal. Women are enrolled in, and complete tertiary courses more than men. However, while the number of women in the workforce has increased, the nature of their participation continues to differ greatly from that of men (Betz, 2005; Burke & Vinnicombe, 2005). Women’s employment is more likely to be part-time than men’s, and concentrated in a small number of occupational categories. In addition, women tend to enter and remain in low paying, low status positions. These differences are suggestive of structural opportunity differences operating in relation with gender differences. In addition, women remain the primary carers in families, of children and the aged, and still complete the significant majority of household tasks. Indeed Fitzgerald and Harmon (2001) asserted that the ongoing role of women in unpaid care work in addition to their increased participation in market work is “one of the most intransigent conditions affecting women’s career development; that is the dramatic increase in their work participation implies that they are now expected to cope simultaneously with two full-time jobs” (p. 215). The next section contextualises these ostensible
differences in the workforce through an overview of the definition of career in the contemporary world.

CHANGING UNDERSTANDINGS AND DEFINITIONS OF CAREER

Definitions of career have until recently been separate for females and males, with males’ careers being assumed to be chosen during post-adolescence and remaining quite static throughout life. Females’ careers were expected to be chosen as a temporary measure, until the full-time “career” of motherhood and homemaking. Fitzgerald and Crites (1980) and Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) maintained that defining homemaking as a career choice, that is “equating of a nonstructured noncompensated set of activities (i.e., housekeeping, which has no requirements for entry, no structured standards for performance, nor even necessarily any broad agreement on the nature and extent of the tasks involved) with the standard notion of occupation appears to render the terminology scientifically useless” (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987, p. 89). While one of the arguments proffered for not accepting this definition is that women will continue to be undervalued in the paid workforce, other writers have suggested that valuing traditional women’s work only by the rituals of traditional notions of male employment is also a gross underestimation (Gallos, 1989; Marshall, 1989).

Empirical reports have shown consistently that the meaning of work is as potent for women as it is for men. Astin’s (1984) model was one of the major attempts to propose a comprehensive theory to explain the career development of women and men. She believed that her subsequent sociopsychological model (discussed later in this chapter) was able to explain the occupational behaviour of both women and men, maintaining that “work motivation is the same for men and women, but they make different choices because their early socialization experiences and structural opportunities are different” (p. 118). The scholarship of a number of authors (e.g., Betz, 1993, 1994a; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Cook, 1993) has more fully confirmed the notion that female aspiration “was not absent or deficient, but blocked” (Fitzgerald & Harmon, 2001, p. 218).

The broad and radical changes in the workforce generally have prompted changes in our understanding of the meaning of work in individuals’ lives. Parallel to the increasing focus on women’s career behaviour is the increasing reconceptualisation of the notion of career. The literature is consistent in emphasising that the nature of future careers will be increasingly nonlinear, indeed that a combination of a number of positions, projects and roles, or of jobs, may constitute a career (Hall, 1996). In this context, a career relates to the meaning an individual gives to this pattern of work and nonwork opportunities. Herr (1992) emphasised that careers need to be construed as the creations of individuals; the word career can no longer be regarded as synonymous with job or occupation. Individuals need to “regard themselves as being self-employed” (Collin & Watts, 1996, p. 391), as they are expected to “manage their own career” (Savickas, 1997a, p. 256). Collin and Watts (1996) also asserted
that “the concept of career needs to be reconstrued as the individual’s development in learning and work throughout life” (p. 393).

The current thinking about career is similar in many ways to the experience of many women. Traditional definitions of career have assumed male hierarchical careers, chosen during post adolescence and remaining quite continuous and static throughout life. Females’ careers were expected to be chosen as a temporary measure, until the full-time ‘career’ of motherhood and homemaking. Rather, many women’s career patterns can be conceptualised as a range of working positions interspersed with periods of child care. Women’s vocational behaviour is arguably more complex than men’s as it is frequently characterised by child-care responsibilities resulting in different employment patterns (Bimrose, 2001). Other careers such as motherhood, paid full-time and part-time employment, voluntary work, are then eligible to be included in the structure since these too provide opportunities for self-growth and may be viewed as potentially meaningful lifecareer experiences. Crompton and Harris (1998) proposed an alternative framework for explaining women’s career patterns which allows the possibility of women “desiring both ‘employment’ and ‘family’ careers” (p. 123), with their work commitment varying according both to the stage reached in their lifestyle and context, emphasising that women’s orientations to employment and family life were complex and variable (Crompton & Harris).

More recently, in a study of professional women who had left organisational life to develop portfolio careers, Cohen, Duberley and Mallon (2004) reported that while the majority of women “continued to describe a fundamental attachment to work and to vertical progression in their career … they framed the move to self-employment as a desire for independence, autonomy, personal growth, learning, and balance” (p. 418), not a last ditch effort to leave the complexity of conforming to prevailing male career norms within organisations.

Overall, it would seem then, that the traditional linear developmental and hierarchical conception of career in the vocational literature is not adequate to explain women’s perceptions of and experiences of their working life. It can be seen that the concept of career varies for women depending on their life context and life stage. New perspectives and construction of a career theory that takes into consideration life experiences and broader contexts are needed.

Fitzgerald and Weitzman (1992) have argued that “the career development of women, although not fundamentally different from that of men, is demonstrably more complex due to a socialization process that has emphasised the dichotomy of work and family since at least the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century” (p. 125). Another important issue is the heterogeneity of women; they also differ from each other. Fitzgerald et al. (1995) raised questions about the dearth of information we have about women of colour, lesbians, and poor women, and emphasised that in learning more about the career psychology of individual differences, we will also learn more about commonalities. Indeed in a response to a model depicting an ecological approach to the career development of women, Betz (2002) emphasised that “the concept of individual differences within, as well as between, the genders
must remain paramount in career theory and counselling approaches” (p. 335). The breadth and complexity of the definition of career for women needs to be emphasised within the framework of the competency and contribution of all women’s work, market and unpaid, as acknowledged and undertaken by each individual woman.

Blustein (2001, 2006) and Richardson (2000) emphasised the lack of consideration in much of the career literature of a focus on work experiences for individuals who are self-employed, who have broken careers and who engage in part-time or unskilled work. The inclusive psychology of working paradigm developed by Blustein emphasises inclusion of groups traditionally marginalised in discussions about “career”, including women, people of colour and non-middle class individuals. Blustein asserted the need to reconceptualise our notion of work and to emphasise its interconnections to other domains of human experience – noting that doing this “would go a long way to contextualising the psychological study of working, which is consistent with its integrative location in contemporary life” (2001, p. 178). Richardson (2012) proposed an extension of her work and relationship perspective (Richardson, 1993, 1996, 2000), suggesting that there are two major contexts of work, market work and unpaid care work, and that these exist in addition to relationship contexts. Within this perspective, women’s working lives are not measured or defined within the traditional notion of a linear career and Richardson emphasises the imperative that we embrace a much more flexible way to define and propose the meaning of career which also acknowledges women’s diversity. Richardson proposes that the key question which should guide our thinking is “How do women construct lives of meaning through work and relationship?” (Richardson, personal communication, June 10, 2010).

However, Richardson (2000) cautions that the new career ideology leads to a greater potential for placing individuals, many of whom will be women, at risk of not succeeding—that is, the emphasis on the “new career entrepreneur” represents another opportunity for the strong to prosper and the weak (e.g., poorer, less educated, unskilled) to be additionally disadvantaged. She emphasises that “workers, more than ever, are on their own” (p. 203) and asserts that “the world is changing and people need to be empowered to adapt to this world and to influence the world to adapt to their needs, desires, and goals” (p. 206).

THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN UNDERSTANDING WOMEN’S WORKING LIVES

Not all writers are convinced that a separate theory for women’s career behaviour is necessary. Osipow (1983) concluded that “substantial differences exist to warrant attempts to develop distinctive theories for each gender” (p. 263). Similarly, Gallos (1989) emphasised that women’s distinctively different voice and needs lead to a different perspective on career, and different choices, priorities and patterns, all of which need to be recognised and understood. This section of the chapter will present an overview of the theoretical literature.
Early Theorists

Early theorists focused on women’s careers as being connected to marriage and childrearing (Psathas, 1968; Zytowski, 1969) and indeed as a “fill-in” between education and these roles. These limited theoretical discussions have been criticised for the limited roles afforded to women, for the suggestion that work role and home role are mutually exclusive, and for the suggestion that career roles for women are less important than home roles. However it needs to be acknowledged that these theories are a product of their time and context where powerful influences reinforced gender based socialisation in limiting choices for women, both in the choice between career and homemaker, and within the range of available occupations.

Major Post-War Theories

Both of the major theoretical formulations of the post-war period, the work of Super and Holland, made some attempt to recognise career behaviour of and for women (see Patton & McMahon, 2006 for a more detailed discussion). The 1957 original theory formulation of Super acknowledged the central role of homemaking in women’s lives and the post-war increase of women entering the workforce. Super identified seven categories for explaining women’s career patterns. These included the stable homemaking pattern (women who married early into full time homemaking); the conventional career pattern (work until marriage and then homemaking); the stable working pattern (work in the paid workforce for life); the double track career pattern (ongoing combination of career and homemaking roles); the interrupted career pattern (a return to work, usually following children leaving home); the unstable career pattern (irregular movement in and out of the workforce); and the multiple-trial career pattern, indicating a multiple change in work life. While these patterns have changed since their first formulation, they were an important early attempt to illustrate the relationship between work and family throughout women’s lives.

Super also proposed specific developmental stages through which an individual passes in formulating career decisions. Each of these stages required the completion of developmental tasks prior to their successful completion. Later statements (e.g., Super, 1980) acknowledged that these stages may be encountered at more than one time in life. The stage approach was less than satisfactory in understanding women’s work behaviour as they were based on male career planning uninterrupted by marriage and childrearing. Osipow (1983) noted that the exploration stage, for example, was often not truly engaged in by most women as career plans were made pending marriage plans; rather, women often engaged in exploration and career planning following childrearing if they were entering or re-entering the paid work force.

In 1980 Super proposed a reformulation of his work. Within this modification he suggested the notion of a life-space, in which the many varied roles which contribute to a broad notion of career (child, student, leisurite, worker, citizen, homemaker)
could be acknowledged. These additional classifications served to offer a useful way of understanding the complexity of women’s career patterns. However explaining women’s career motivation posed some questions. Super’s empirical work suggested the importance of self-concept and work importance, however Perun and Bielby (1981) suggested that women’s self-concept may be affected by the work-family decision and subsequent role conflict. Although Super and Nevill (1984) indicated that importance of work as a major life role is more significant in relation to career maturity than either gender or social class, Fitzgerald and Weitzman (1992) have reiterated that “traditional socialization processes do not prepare women for the complex nature of the choices they will make or the life roles they will face” (p. 135).

Holland’s theory (1985, 1992, 1997) of vocational choice posited that an individual’s knowledge of self and the world of work interact to facilitate career choice. The individual engages in a complex process during which elements of personality are related to specific occupational frameworks. The theory proposed a hexagonal model of individual and workplace personalities (Realistic, Individual, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional [RIASEC]). Holland (1996) described his theory as a “one-size-fits-all-groups approach” (p. 9). While he suggested that research supported this proposition, he acknowledged somewhat provocatively that “some people, including some well-educated middle-class White women, disagree” (p. 9). It is indisputable that the pervasiveness of gender role socialisation continues to concentrate women in low level jobs, and out of jobs that require, in particular, thorough grounding in Mathematics and Science. Further, Fitzgerald and Weitzman (1992) pointed out that certain occupational environments essentially remain closed to women, in particular the Realistic and Investigative environments, while women are found in large numbers in clerical and service occupations. These authors also raised questions about the notion of congruence between personality and occupational characteristics for many women. For example, personal preference may be compromised because of family or financial security demands. Fitzgerald and Weitzman referred to the concepts of satisficing and optimization to explain the compromise between choosing a job which is not wholly congruent with career interests on the basis of congruence with other role (e.g., family) demands.

The major theoretical basis of stereotypes in formulating decisions about occupational interests remains a major limitation in applying Holland’s theory to women. While his 1985 work attempted to illustrate the application of the typology to distinguish between women who became homemakers and those who became career women, it remains limited in failing to acknowledge the powerful restrictive impact of gender socialisation. A large body of research (see Betz, 1994a) has emphasised the impact of early socialisation of girls into certain occupational fields.

Theories for Women and Men

During the 1980s a number of attempts to develop theories applicable to both men and women were made. Both attempts (Astin, 1984; Gottfredson, 1981, 1996)
also reflected early attempts to integrate individual and environmental influences in explaining career behaviour. Astin’s (1984) model was based on an invitation to prepare “a comprehensive yet parsimonious theoretical statement” (p. 117) on women’s career development. She believed that her subsequent sociopsychological model was able to be used to explain the occupational behaviour of women and men, maintaining that “work motivation is the same for men and women, but they make different choices because their early socialization experiences and structural opportunities are different” (p. 118). Astin’s model incorporates four major constructs: motivation, work expectations, sex role socialisation, and the structure of opportunity. She proposed that an individual’s motivation for work behaviour is related to the need for survival, pleasure and the making of a societal contribution. Career choices therefore are related to accessibility of various occupations, and the expectation of the individual that these three needs will be met. She acknowledges that these expectations are related to early gendered socialisation, and the structure of opportunity, each of which interact with the other. Factors incorporated within the structure of opportunity include distribution of jobs, sex typing of jobs, discrimination, job requirements, the economy, family structure, and reproductive technology. Astin emphasised that changes in the structure of opportunity (for example in reproductive technology) can lead to considerable change in women’s career expectations.

Although Astin’s work introduced new concepts into the women’s career behaviour field (e.g., structure of opportunity), it drew mixed responses. Gilbert (1984) suggested that any discussion of women’s careers needed to move away from a male model as the starting point; while in a similar vein Farmer raised the need for “caring values” to be incorporated into the career domain “rather than [be] at odds with it” (Farmer, 1984, p. 142). Kahn (1984) lamented the reduction in importance of the family role at the expense of the work role.

Very little empirical work has attempted to test Astin’s model (Brown & Brooks, 1990; Hackett & Lent, 1992). Poole, Langan-Fox, Ciavarella and Omodei (1991) noted support for Astin’s model in confirming the importance of socialisation, structure of opportunity and expectations, and in supporting the need to consider gender differences in socialisation and structure of opportunity. These authors recommended refinement of Astin’s model and suggested a contextualist framework which links individual development to location in historical time. Fitzgerald et al. (1995) noted that there is a general difficulty in operationalising the theory’s constructs, in particular structure of opportunity, and suggested that it may be more useful to view it as a general conceptual framework rather than a theory.

The second model to be discussed, that proposed by Gottfredson (1981, 1996, 2002, 2005), focused on processes of circumscription and compromise relevant to women and men. Gottfredson developed self-concept theory further, and also extended the integration between psychological and environmental variables, by proposing that self-concept is a merger between the psychological variables and environmental variables involved in career choice. She proposed that self-concept (being derived from and related to gender, social class, intelligence, interests and
values) interacts with occupational images (sex type, prestige, and field of work) to determine an individual’s occupational preferences. Together with perceptions of job accessibility which incorporate perceptions of opportunities and barriers, a range of acceptable alternatives is formulated. Her model highlights the relevance of sex role socialisation of women and men, whereby individuals make decisions based on sex type of occupations and perceptions of opportunities and barriers. Gender type, for example, influences career choice because individuals narrow their perceived appropriate occupational alternatives based on societal notions of gender appropriate careers. In addition, Gottfredson asserted that the age at which individuals will narrow their occupational alternatives is between 6 and 8, and that once this circumscription (narrowing) is set, individuals will rarely consider outside it. Gottfredson also maintained that individuals make compromises between preferences and employment realities, and that when these compromises are made, individuals sacrifice first their interests (field of work), then their desired prestige levels, and last their preferred sex type. This proposition reinforces the perceived importance of gender role stereotypes in career choice.

**Individual Differences Models**

The 1980s also saw a number of models which were attempting to develop explanations about women’s career behaviour through a focus on individual differences between women and men on specific variables. These include the work of Farmer (1985), and Betz, Fitzgerald and Fassinger (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Fassinger, 1985, 1990). Farmer (1985) proposed that background characteristics and personal variables interact to foster achievement and career motivation. Background variables (e.g., gender, race, social class, school location, age), interact with personal psychological variables (e.g., self-esteem, values, homemaking attitude and commitment, success attributions), and environmental variables (e.g., societal attitude to women working, support from teachers and parents). These variables in turn are hypothesised to influence three motivational factors: level of aspirations, mastery strivings, and career commitment. Research testing this model has generally supported the salience of background factors such as gender-based attitudes, support, and commitment to career and family in career aspirations and choices. Farmer (1997) reported data that found that many women do not consider career as either/or in relation to family, but plan careers mindful of integrating them with home and family.

In their major review of career psychology of women, Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) summarised the literature and identified four sets of factors which influence women’s career choices. These authors believed that theoretical models needed to be specifically focused on women’s issues so as not to neglect any important variables. The factors deemed to be particularly crucial in promoting realism of career choice included individual variables (e.g., self-concept, ability, liberated sex role values); background variables (e.g., parental support, parents’ education level and occupational status, work experience); educational variables (e.g., women’s schools,
higher education, continuation in Mathematics); and adult lifestyle variables (e.g.,
timing of marriage, number of children). These variables were hypothesised to be
causally ordered.

Fassinger (1985, 1990) tested the Betz and Fitzgerald model and proposed several
refinements. Her 1985 study found ability, achievement orientation, and feminist
orientation to be independent variables influencing family and career orientation
and career choice. In her 1990 study, higher ability levels interacting with aspects
of personal agency (e.g., instrumentality and self-efficacy) and sex role attitudes,
specifically a feminist orientation, influenced career orientation and career choice.

Extensions from Existing Theories

A number of other theoretical discussions have attempted to either draw from existing
theories (e.g., Hackett and Betz, 1981; Betz & Hackett, 1981) and Bandura’s (1977)
sociocognitive theory, or have attempted to draw from ecological or systems models
to develop explanations of women’s career behaviour. A more recent theoretical
formulation, social cognitive theory of careers (Lent et al, 1994, 1996, 2002) has
drawn on the revised work of Bandura (1986). Each one has direct application to our
understanding of the career behaviour of women.

Self-efficacy theory refers to the belief or expectation that one can successfully
perform a certain task or behaviour. Hackett and Betz (1981) recognised that women’s
socialisation mediates the cognitive processes which are crucial in career decision-
making – “(Women) lack strong expectations of personal efficacy in relationship
to many career related behaviors and thus fail to fully realize their capabilities and
talents in career pursuits” (p. 326). Betz (1994b) continued in this vein in describing
the importance of self-efficacy in career behaviour – “Because many behaviors or
behavior domains are important in educational and career development, efficacy
expectations are postulated to influence choice, performance, and persistence in
career related domains” (p. 35).

Hackett and Betz (1981) attempted to explain the process of influence between
socialisation and career behaviour using the four sources of self-efficacy developed
by Bandura (1977). These sources include performance accomplishments, vicarious
experiences (e.g., through role models), verbal persuasion, or the support and
encourage of others, and emotional arousal with reference to a behaviour or domain
of behaviour (the higher the arousal or anxiety, the reduction in self-efficacy). As
an example specifically related to women’s educational and career behaviour, if a
woman had a level of success in mathematics, was aware of other women successful
in mathematics related fields, received support and encouragement from others and
had a low level of mathematics anxiety, she would be expected to develop high self-
efficacy expectations in relation to mathematics.

In formulating their theory, Hackett and Betz (1981) reviewed evidence which
showed the differences in relation to the efficacy information received by women
and men. This information difference resulted in a broader variety of career options
exposed to men than to women, for example, significant gender differences were found in occupational self-efficacy expectations when traditionality of occupation was taken into account. Men’s occupational self-efficacy was equivalent for both traditionally male and female dominated occupations, whereas women’s occupational self-efficacy was lower than men’s for traditional men’s occupations and higher than men’s for traditional female occupations. In addition, these gender differences were predictive of the range of occupations considered. Research reviewed in Betz and Hackett (1997) has supported the original contention that women’s lower self-efficacy expectations with respect to a number of career variables serve as a relevant barrier to career choice and development. A considerable number of studies have supported these findings (see Betz, 1999, 2001), emphasising the theoretical and empirical support for the role of perceived self-efficacy as a mediator of gender differences in career and educational behaviours. In particular, Betz (1999) presented a theoretical and empirical argument for the mediation of self-efficacy expectations in the development and/or exploration of interests; that is that interest may be increased through success at related tasks.

Lent and Hackett (1994; Lent et al, 1994, 1996, 2002) have formulated a social cognitive theory of career to explain how academic and career interests develop, how individuals make and enact career-related choices, and how the construct of personal agency operates in terms of career outcomes. Drawn from Bandura (1986), this theory focuses on self-efficacy, expected outcome, and goal mechanisms, and how these reciprocally interact in an ongoing manner with individual factors (such as cognition), environment factors (such as support structures), and behavioural and learning factors.

**Ecological or Systems Theories**

A number of theoretical frameworks have been derived from ecological or systems theories and have tried to be encompassing in the what and how of women’s career behaviour. The development of the Systems Theory Framework (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006) has enabled a coherence to be given to the myriad of influences on the career development of all individuals. In addition, drawing on tenets of constructivism, this framework ensures that each individual’s life construction is at the centre of the career development process, not a body of theory. The potential for this theoretical framework to fully enhance the usefulness of all theory in relation to women’s career development continues to be explored.

Following the exploration of the utility of systems approaches to explaining the complexity of career development, Cook, Heppner and O’Brien (2002) developed an ecological model of women’s career development. In focusing on women’s multiple life roles and responsibilities, and the notion that many women may define themselves within a relational or collective context, as opposed to an individualistic perspective, these authors asserted the need for career development theorists to focus more on the contribution of individual and contextual influences to women’s career behaviour.
Understand Women’s Working Lives

Relational Theories

A focus on relational identity in understanding women’s career behaviour has been derived from the notion of relational from the work of Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1977, 1982), and Lyons (1983). Forrest and Mikolaitis (1986) noted that “women reflect their sense of identity primarily in terms of their connection to others” (p. 80); men on the other hand describe their sense of self by “differentiating themselves from others in terms of abilities and attributes” (p. 80). Because this construct is central to the self for both women and men, Forrest and Mikolaitis emphasised the importance of its incorporation into existing theories of career development. They offered an example by studying the theory of Holland, noting that women and men whose self-descriptions were connected or separate would be likely to choose related occupational fields. For example, women and men who would describe themselves as “connected”, or who view relating to people as important, would be likely to choose occupations within the service area, for example teaching or nursing. However, the imbalance of women and men within these occupations may be explained by the greater support for women to be connected in their self-descriptions and for men to be separate. Such differences may go some way toward explaining some of the differences in the numbers of women and men in various occupations. In a similar vein, a mismatch between self-identity and work environment may also explain job dissatisfaction for females and for males.

More recently, a number of authors have extended our understanding of relationships and career development (Blustein, 2001, 2006; Blustein, Schultheiss & Flum, 2004; Schultheiss, 2003, 2009), emphasising that their theoretical ideas have been derived from a number of theoretical perspectives. The term relational is largely associated with the assumption that human beings are relational beings for whom developing and sustaining meaningful connections with others is a core activity. Theorists who adhere to these ideas “typically endorse the view that many aspects of interpersonal and intrapersonal struggles reflect human strivings for connection, affirmation, support, and attachment” (Schultheiss, 2007, p. 170). Blustein (2001) emphasised that relationships are central to human functioning and that relational systems are crucial throughout our lives. This focus on relational aspects in understanding women’s work behaviour is evident in fields outside the psychology of working field. In a model which is reminiscent of the early work of Astin and Gottfredson, Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) developed the kaleidoscope career model (KCM) to provide a framework to understand women’s career choices. This model emphasises that women make holistic choices which consider relationships, constraints and opportunities and that any understanding of women’s careers needs to understand that women’s relational lives and working lives are interconnected.

A number of new perspectives which provide insight into understanding women’s working lives are also relevant in this discussion. The psychology of working paradigm (discussed earlier in this chapter: Blustein, 2006; Richardson, 1993, 1996, 2000, 2012) emphasises a more inclusive approach to understanding
work in individuals’ lives. These authors argue for the refocusing of career theory, research and practice on all work and thereby addressing the lives of those ignored with a focus on a limited notion of career. Viewing work in this broader way can address the limited way existing careers literature has addressed gender, social class, family background and cultural characteristics. Richardson has argued that career is a limited and irrelevant concept subject to a middle class bias; she proposes that theoreticians and practitioners explore the meaning of work individuals make for themselves. Richardson (1993) defined work as human activity that is initiated “for individual success and satisfaction, to express achievement and strivings, to earn a living... to further ambitions and self-assertions... and to link individuals to a larger social good” (p. 428). Within this framework voluntary and unpaid work, and new understandings of care work, are included in individuals’ understandings or work and career. More recently Richardson has extended our understanding of the discourse of care work (2012; Richardson & Schaeffer, 2013) to propose a broad model of working for both women and for men.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

It is evident that the construction of a unified theoretical understanding of women’s working lives and careers remains incomplete – and perhaps it always will. The above discussion presents a field that remains complex, disparate and evolving, with existing theorists continuing to incorporate women’s issues into their frameworks or rejecting the value of doing so, and individual differences models addressing different dimensions. For example, Farmer (1985) focused on three dimensions of achievement motivation, Astin (1984) elaborated a more broad sociopsychological model, and Betz and Fitzgerald’s (1987) factors relevant to the realism of women’s career choices continue to be refined (Fassinger, 1990). Richardson’s recent work reconceptualises how we view “career” and “work” (2012; Richardson & Schaeffer, 2013). The frameworks discussed in this chapter have highlighted the importance of relevant background factors such as gender, ethnicity, educational and occupational level of parents, and socioeconomic status to women’s career related behaviour. Similarly, they have addressed in different ways the importance of socialisation processes. While internal traits and attitudes have also been shown to be important in women’s career related behaviour, the interaction of these with processes of socialisation has not been adequately addressed. For example, if relational identity is socially constructed, can it be incorporated within a male identity? How do women learn gender role attitudes which are career positive, family positive, or amenable to a balance of both with minimal conflict? Betz (2002) expressed caution about the traditional expectation that work/family conflict is a reality for all women, noting that not all women are relationally oriented and that for some women there is no conflict between career and family – “career is [italics in original] the top and in some cases the only priority” (p. 338). Within the same framework, Fitzgerald et al. (1995) cited research which continued.
to show an inverse relationship between being married and number of children with every known criterion of career involvement and achievement and that “this continues to be the main difference between women’s career development and that of men” (p. 73).

Much existing work includes “point in time” descriptions and explanations. Hackett and Lent (1992) discussed this succinctly when they reminded us that “social changes impact social roles generally, and women’s roles in particular. These shifts may shorten the shelf life of past research findings; they also highlight the need for researchers to attend to current social realities and their interaction with career development processes” (p. 439). The world continues to undergo repeated and ongoing change and the importance of the inclusion of change in theorising about career and individuals’ lives is crucial.

Despite these issues, theoretical work in the career psychology of women has drawn attention to variables which were previously unspecified. An important contribution of this work has also been the increased understanding of issues relevant to the career development of men. In focusing on gender as a group variable, theorists have also identified the importance of the heterogeneity of each gender group, and indeed of individuals generally. Fitzgerald et al. (1995) presented this important development as follows:

Thus from a focus on the ways in which women are different from and similar to men, the question arises, How are we different from – and similar to – one another? And what implications does this have for our relationship to work and family? (p. 102).

In addition to focusing on gender as a variable, recently theorists have argued for a broader conceptualisation of career development. Noting the demise of the recognition of care work with the industrial revolution, and the increasing focus on career development as relevant to paid work only, these authors have suggested that we need to emphasise the public and private spheres of work and re-emphasise the importance of care work and market work (Richardson, 2012, Richardson & Schaeffer, 2013; Schultheiss, 2003, 2009, 2013). For example, in this volume, Richardson and Schaeffer (2013) propose a dual model of working for women’s and men’s lives. Similarly, Schultheiss (2013) affirms the need for career development to include a broadening recognition of women’s work than paid work alone, describing a relational cultural paradigm to set a framework for this broader discussion.

To enable full recognition of women’s contribution to work, and to facilitate full choice for women in the future, it is evident that career theory needs to broaden its definitions and its conceptualisation of variables. It is also imperative that adaptability to change and a less restricted worldview of women’s place in and contribution to public and private spheres needs to be incorporated into the discourse of career theory and practice. These developments in our field will be ongoing; indeed, the current volume contributes to these broader discussions.
REFERENCES


UNDERSTANDING WOMEN’S WORKING LIVES


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CHAPTER 2

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EXPANDING THE DISCOURSE: A DUAL MODEL OF WORKING FOR WOMEN’S (AND MEN’S) LIVES

In this chapter we propose a dual model of working as a conceptual lens through which to examine women’s (and men’s) working lives (Richardson & Schaeffer, in press). This dual model encompasses market or paid work in the market economy and unpaid care work in personal lives that includes care of persons (including the self), of relationships, of communities and organisations, and of the physical world (Tronto, 2009). This dual model of working expands the traditional meaning of work beyond work that is paid. It represents an extension of the counselling for work and relationship perspective that posits two major contexts of work, market work and unpaid care work, in addition to relationship contexts through which people co-construct their lives (Richardson, 2012a, 2012b). We propose this dual model of working in the spirit of advancing gender equity. That is, we hope that a dual model of working will facilitate the emergence of working practices across both market and unpaid care work that reduce gender differences and inequities.

The danger in proposing a dual model of working for women that includes care work, the traditional domain of women, is that it can be seen as potentially contributing to, reinforcing, or redoing traditional gender roles. Our aim is not to redo gender but to undo gender, that is, to degender working practices across both domains of working (Deutsch, 2007; Risman, 2009). Although working practices in market work contexts have been significantly degendered, this is not the case with respect to unpaid care work that continues to be done mostly by women. The success of this project to undo gender in working practices depends upon the engagement by men in care work (Connell, 2011).

Our proposal for a dual model of working begins with a discussion of the power of discourse followed by a historical and social analysis of the forces that have led to the crisis of care. The crisis of care, in turn, is associated with the emergence of the discourse of care. We then describe contemporary meanings of care that provide the basis for expanding the single model of working in market work contexts to a dual model of working in both market work and unpaid care work contexts. Following this discussion, we situate the dual model of working within the holistic counseling for work and relationship perspective as a template useful for counsellors and
psychologists engaged in the process of helping both women and men co-construct their lives going forward. Finally, we conclude with some thoughts about the potential for a dual model of working to advance gender equity and social justice.

THE POWER OF DISCOURSE

The use of the term *discourse* signals that a social constructionist understanding of the ways that prevailing power structures are embedded in and conveyed by language is in play. Social constructionism is a philosophical perspective and position that has had a major impact on the social sciences, including psychology and counselling (Rorty, 1999; Gergen, 1994, 1999, 2001). While there is a range of positions within this philosophical perspective, social constructionism basically posits that subjective experience, our own visceral and embodied experience of the world we live in, is a product of selves interacting in social worlds. That is, experience does not arise primarily from within us: rather, experience is co-constructed as we engage with the social contexts in which we are embedded and in which we participate. This engagement in social contexts produces our experiential worlds.

Language, in turn, is a major aspect of this social context (Harre, 1994; Harre & Gillett, 1994; Henrique, Holloway, Unwin, & Venn, 1998; Shotter, 1993). We typically don’t think about the language we use in our interactions with others or in the private conversations we have within ourselves. Most people naively think that language or the words we use are, more or less, representations of what exists in the world. For example, the word *tree* represents a tree: We would not think of referring to a chair as a tree. When we get to more complex constructs, however, what we call things or objects in the world is not so much a representation of what exists in the world, but how we have been led to talk and think about this world. In other words, our experience of the world is socially constructed through language. Our habitual ways of talking and thinking, in turn, are responsive to how power operates through language (Foucault, 1980; Parker, 1992, 2002, 2007). For example, the dictator trying to hold onto power in the face of street protests will label the protesters an *unruly mob*. Those who are protesting, in contrast, will see themselves and label themselves accordingly *freedom fighters*.

In relation to this chapter, many people, in the Western world at least, talk about and experience the work they do for pay as a career. As we will see, this terminology is a historical artefact of the rise of capitalism in the 20th century (Richardson, 2012). Conversely, no one really talked about care work until relatively recently. It is a term that is suffused with meanings that challenge a capitalist hegemony regarding central social values. It is a term that calls into question the univocal or unbridled power of markets and insists on equal attention to values having to do with care and connectedness. Thus, in proposing a dual model of working that addresses both market work and unpaid care work, we are proposing a language that posits, first, that there are two kinds of work and second, considers both kinds of work equally important. The language of the dual model of working reflects and encourages acceptance of and adherence to two competing sets of values, both of which are
EXPANDING THE DISCOURSE

important. Thus, this model is not anti-capitalistic; rather, it broadens the value base of what we consider to be progressive capitalistic economies.

The new model we propose is not a model that simply stitches together prevailing ways of talking and thinking about work and career into some kind of new arrangement or organisational structure. Instead, this new model challenges the prevailing discourse regarding how most people talk about and experience the work in their lives, that is, as career, and proposes that they talk about and experience this part of their lives as market work instead of career. It also proposes a second domain of work, that is, unpaid care work that most people, at least at this point, are not likely to talk about or experience as work at all. What we are proposing then is a radical reconfiguration of how people talk about and experience essential components of their lives having to do with the work they do.

A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CRISIS OF CARE

Discourse about care work does not exist in a vacuum. The only reason that we can propose a dual model of working that encompasses market work and unpaid care work is that it is a conversation that is timely. Historical and social conditions are such that the issue of care work can be construed as a crisis in contemporary societies across the world (Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg, & Kalleberg, 2002; Heymann, 2006; Lewis, 2001; Moen & Roehling, 2005; Perucci & Perucci, 2009). This crisis of care is associated with the emergence of a discourse about care work. How we respond to the crisis can be viewed as central to social progress in the 21st century. Although gender equity is a primary concern of ours, the significance of issues of care work, deeply intertwined with gender equity, transcends gender equity. We propose that a dual model of working encompassing market work and unpaid care work for both women and men can make a significant contribution to the degenderisation of working practices, the revaluation of care work, and an improvement in the lives of all.

This review of the historical and social conditions that have given rise to the crisis of care and the emergence of care work discourse begins with a discussion of the ways that career, and work and family discourse mirrored changes in the capitalist and industrialising economies of the western world in the 20th century that led to the disappearance of care work as work. A brief history of the revolution in women’s roles and the recognition of the interdependence of work and family in the latter part of the 20th Century follow. We then turn to an examination of two major social factors, social policy and the commodification of care work that affect this interdependence. We conclude this section with a discussion of several contemporary social changes that contribute to the crisis of care.

The Rise of Career and Work and Family Discourse

The language and discourse of career emerged in the 20th century as capitalist economies developed, industrialised, and matured, characterised by a vast expansion
in the kinds of paid work that needed to be done. Although Frank Parsons (2009) can be credited with introducing the term *vocational choice* in response to the earlier stages of industrialisation and the need to find ways to sort people into new occupations, Donald Super (1957) appropriated the term *career* from the extant sociological literature to describe the developmental progression of people’s paid work pathways over time (Barley, 1989). The normative pattern of careers that he proposed encompassed progression over the course of a lifetime from early entry to later establishment and finally decline in post-retirement years. While Super (1980) later nested this vision of paid work over a lifetime in a broader and more holistic conception of career, the common usage of *career* in vocational psychology and various career-related fields has continued to reference paid work. The career development literature, including that for women’s career development, mirrors this emphasis on paid work.

At the same time as career discourse became ensconced in professional practices having to do with vocational psychology and diverse career-related fields that evolved in the westernised world, and in the everyday parlance of many people throughout the world, the discourse of work and family evolved as a way to understand the social world that resulted when pre-industrial household economies were torn asunder as capitalist economies industrialised (Boris & Lewis, 2006). This discourse, in turn, has powerfully shaped our experience of the social structure. Industrialising economies required people to leave their homes and farms to work in the rapidly proliferating jobs and occupations that became available. The reigning ideology was that men left home to go to work, leaving women at home to care for families. The world of work was gendered male: Home and family were gendered female. Work became equated with paid work. Instead of work, caregiving was considered to be an expression of love and nurturance. In short, care, as work, disappeared. While, in fact, many women, especially women who were young or poor, and women of color had to work in jobs and occupations for pay, this reality was shrouded in the cult of domesticity that enshrined women in “non-working” family roles (Boylston, 1990; Cott, 1977). Sociologists such as Parsons and colleagues (Parsons, 1994; Parsons & Bales, 1955) legitimised this social and economic model as one comprised of mutually enhancing instrumental (male work) and expressive (female family) domains. It came to be known in the social science literature as the male breadwinner/female caregiver model.

What is most important about this narrative for our purposes is the extent to which work became equated with jobs in the market economy and disappeared in families while work and family became embedded in our minds and experience as two separate spheres of life. Career discourse added to this the designation of work as career that further enhanced the value placed on work for pay (Richardson, 2012).

Just as career discourse gave rise to a substantial scholarly literature and a wide range of related professional practices, work and family discourse also spawned a vast scholarly literature that encompassed such fields as developmental, social, and industrial-organisational psychology, history, anthropology, sociology, occupational
health, economics, and social work (Barnett, 1998; Pitt-Catsoupes, Kossek, & Sweet, 2006). What is most interesting here is that the scholarship in career-related fields has always been associated, in theory if not always in practice, with interventions designed to help people choose and progress in their careers (Brown & Lent, 2005; Savickas & Walsh, 1996). Work and family literature, situated in a more multidisciplinary location, does not have a comparable direct intervention focus. As social science, however, it has had a significant impact on people’s lives in areas such as the design of workplace family-friendly policies.

The Revolution in Women’s Roles

The revolution in women’s roles refers to the movement of women into market work through the second half of the 20th century. This is a story that is well known. Although England (2010) suggests that this revolution has stalled in recent years, she provides a chart that depicts the dramatic increase in women’s employment from approximately 40% of adult women employed in 1962 to over 70% employed in 2007. According to Wharton (2006) the majority of both men and women across racial groups are now employed full-time, including 60.5% of the mothers of children under 3. Moreover, the overall pay gap between men and women has diminished over time as women have moved into male-dominated occupations, professions, and college majors (England & Folbre, 2005; Cotter, Hermens & Vanneman, 2004; England & Li, 2006). It is noteworthy, however, that the gender desegregation of middle class and professional occupations is not matched by a comparable desegregation of working class jobs, a pattern that holds across international comparisons (Charles & Grusky, 2004). Although such a radical social change undoubtedly is due to many factors, three stand out. First is the drive for gender equity. The women’s movement countered the economic dependence of women on men in the male worker/female caregiver model and encouraged women to fully participate in the waged economy (Collins, 2009). The literature on women’s career development in vocational psychology mirrored this feminist pushback on patriarchal structures and made great progress in tracking and trying to explain the kinds of patterns that characterised women’s movement into the market economy (Betz, 2006; Cook, Heppner, & O’Brien, 2002; Heppner & Fu, 2011; Walsh & Heppner, 2006; Walsh & Osipow, 1994). Central to this literature was investigation of women’s choices of traditional (female stereotyped) and non-traditional (male stereotyped) positions. This literature continues to investigate critical issues in women’s employment patterns. Most recently the research on women and STEM professions (science, technology, engineering, math) is making important progress in exploring the reasons behind the continued underrepresentation of women in these fields and what might be done about it (Fassinger & Asay, 2006).

A second major factor that influenced the move of women into paid employment that is less frequently acknowledged is the erosion of the living wage in most developed economies (Casper & Bianchi, 2002; Warren & Tyagi, 2006; Wharton, 2006). Whereas a single salary was sufficient to support a family in a basic
middle-class lifestyle in mid-century America, by the latter decades of the 20th century this was no longer true across the economic spectrum. This deterioration in the wage structure is part of a more pervasive and radical restructuring of employment that we will address more fully later in this chapter. What is important here is to note that the idea that women “chose” to go to work in the market economy is something of a myth. Most women across the world had to get jobs that paid in order to support themselves and their families.

A third factor is the shift in the political climate and social policy towards support of the adult worker model in which all adults are expected to participate in paid work (Lewis, 2001, 2002; Duncan, Edwards, Reynolds, & Alldred, 2004). The shift towards this model was instrumental in U.S. welfare reform in the 1990’s in which economic support for mothers with dependent children was replaced with a demand that all women, including women with young children, be economically independent. Consequently, many poor women in the United States were forced into the ranks of the employed (Boris & Lewis, 2006). While welfare reform is specific to the United States, the adult worker model is endorsed internationally. The difference is that in other developed countries there is more support for the care work of poor women.

The Interdependence of Work and Family

As this radical change in the nature and extent of women’s participation in the waged economy was taking place, it became increasingly clear that work and family as enshrined in work and family discourse were not separate spheres. Most scholars credit Rosabeth Moss Kanter’s paper published in 1977 as marking a critical shift in the recognition of the extent to which work and family were, in fact, interdependent and interpenetrating domains (Barnett, 1998). This issue most clearly coalesced in the focus on the care of children. If women are participating in market work, increasingly on a full-time basis and increasingly including the mothers of young children, who is caring for the children? On a broader level, the issue is who is doing the care work formerly relegated to women at home?

One of the ways to address this problem is to think about it as a conflict between work and family roles, especially for women. With this question in mind, a burgeoning literature on conflict and strain between work and family roles developed with more recent theoretical models attempting to understand the ways in which work and family might be enhancing for some and in conflict for others (Barnett, 1998; Barnet & Gareis, 2006; Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Byron, 2005; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Voydanoff, 2002; Voydanoff, 2005). Interestingly, issues of care work are marginal in this literature, perhaps due to the ways in which work and family discourse relegates work to the market economy. Rather, the emphasis in this literature is on more general family roles within which care work is embedded. For example, simply knowing if a couple has children or not, does little to address the issue of who is doing the work of caring. A major work-family scholar in this
area notes that this is a major measurement problem in the work-family literature (Voyandoff, 2007). This body of research also tends to address issues for families with two heterosexual parents with or without children. As we shall see, this family form is increasingly uncommon, at least in the United States.

In contrast to the literature on work-family role conflict and balance that largely ignores the problem of who is doing the care work in the family, another body of literature focuses on time-study analyses that measures who actually is doing unpaid work in families. For example, one notable research program in the United States has tracked the unpaid activities and tasks of “working parents” for the past forty years, with “working parents” defined as mothers and fathers with young children who also have paid jobs (Bianchi, Casper, & King, 2005; Bianchi, Milkie, & Sayer, 2000; Bianchi, Robinson, & Milkie, 2006). The language here is interesting. It implies that parents who do not have market jobs are not working. Although this research program does not specifically address unpaid care work, the activities and tasks it measures, including care of children, housework, personal care, educational and community involvements, entertainment, and recreation is roughly comparable to a broad definition of unpaid care work. These researchers found that the gender differential between fathers and mothers has moderated somewhat as men are doing more of the unpaid work in the home including care of children and housework. However, women continue to do more of this unpaid work than men.

Other research in this area, more clearly influenced by the discourse of care work, examines who is doing unpaid care work, not just unpaid work. For example, Budlender (2010), defining unpaid care work as housework, care of persons, and volunteer work in home, neighbourhoods and communities, found patterns similar to Bianchi, Robinson, and Milkie (2006) in a sample of five developing and two developed Asian countries. Similar findings have been reported for Australia and other developed countries (Bittman, Craig, & Folbre, 2004; Pacholok & Gauthier, 2004). In other words, although there are differences in the extent to which this body of research consciously attempts to document gender disparities in unpaid care work per se, the gender differences they reveal are fairly comparable worldwide across both developed and developing countries. As women have moved into paid market work, they continue to do the bulk of unpaid care work.

Boris and Lewis (2006) label the social and economic model described by this research the dual breadwinner/female caregiver model. It is a model in which the revolution in women’s role in the world of market work is not matched by a comparable revolution in men’s roles in unpaid care work. Although England (2010) proposes a number of cogent rationales for what has stalled the gender revolution in market work, it seems likely that gender inequity in unpaid care work is a major factor limiting the further degendering of market work.

Before turning to one of the major adaptive strategies contemporary capitalist economies have evolved to deal with the issue of care work, that is, the commodification of care work, we first address the ways that social policy has or has not addressed the problem of care work.
Social Policy on Work and Family

Public policy is a powerful instrument that countries can use to try to respond to the problem of care work and different countries have responded in very different ways. In an overview of the field, Kelly (2006) describes three critical public policy levers and provides an overview of the differences between the uses of these levers in the United States as compared to other industrialised Western countries. The three major policy levers she addresses are family leaves, childcare support, and the regulation of working time. In the United States, workers, both male and female, who are employed in fairly large firms or organisations are entitled to unpaid family leaves to care for self or relatives. In contrast, European countries provide more generous paid family leaves, typically for both men and women. She reports similar findings with respect to policies for child care support. There is no commitment to child care support as a public service in the United States. Instead, the state provides some limited support for childcare for poorer families and some limited tax breaks. In contrast, childcare for children over the age of three is a public service throughout Western Europe. Similar differences between the United States and Western Europe exist with respect to the regulation of working hours by the state. Working hours are more fully regulated in Western Europe than in the United States where there is no cap of the number of hours that can be worked in a week, and where overtime protections do not cover many workers (Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg, & Kalleberg, 2002).

In contrast to the more developed public sector policies in Western Europe, the United States has focused more on the provision of policies to help with the problem of care work through the workplace and the private sector (Kelly, 2006). As a result there is a proliferation of different kinds of family-friendly policies available through employers in the United States. However, these policies mostly affect more affluent workers and are not available to workers in the lower echelon of jobs. The major point here is that social policies have a great deal of power to affect how people can manage to do both their market work and their care work. The kinds of stresses and strains individuals experience in their working practices are either ameliorated or exacerbated by these policies.

The Commodification of Care Work

While the work-family conflict or balance literature addresses how individuals adapt, a wider lens is needed to understand how the social system has adapted to the problem of care work in the dual breadwinner/female caregiver model. This wider lens requires an examination of care work that is both unpaid and paid. What this wider lens reveals is that capitalist economies, as one might expect, have responded to the problem of care work with a market solution that involves the expansion of paid care work in both the formal and the informal economy (Jacoby, 2006; Razavi, 2007). In the formal economy, positions of home health aides, licensed practical
nurses, and nursing aids and orderlies, all paid care work positions, are included in the list of ten occupations expected to show the most significant growth in the United States in the next decade (Hacker, 2011). In addition to these kinds of paid care positions, there are legions of positions in the informal economy where people work in families as nannies, babysitters, and housecleaners (Razavi, 2007). The people who work in the paid care economy, both formal and informal, are predominantly women, many of them women of colour, poor women, and immigrant women (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2002; Gerstel & Sarkisian, 2006; Helburn & Bergmann, 2002; Hochschild, 2003). To some extent, this feminised labour force has been augmented in recent years with men due to problems of unemployment (Cobble, 2007).

One problem with the paid care economy is that these positions are poorly paid and generally lacking in benefits and worker rights and protections. The devaluation of care work in personal lives extends to its devaluation in the market (Jacoby, 2006; Razavi, 2007). These problems are exacerbated in the informal sector of this economy where employers and employees have a range of informal working arrangements that are rife with opportunities for exploitation of paid care workers (Abel & Nelson, 1990; Razavi, 2007). The problem of poorly paid work with minimal benefits and protections has significant international ramifications in that the paid care work sector is a major factor driving immigration, resulting in global care chains that cross continents, leading to care deficits in the countries that provide the immigrant labour. As women migrate to do care work, they, in turn, are not available to help with the care work for their loved ones and families (Hochschild, 2000, 2003; Parrenas, 2001, 2005). According to Tronto (2006, 2009), the paid care work economy, both domestic and international, results in “vicious circles of unequal care” in which the poorly paid positions in this economy do not enable workers to pay for the care of those in their families who need care. Thus, they are doubly disempowered, by poorly paid market work and by a lack of economic resources to arrange for their unpaid care responsibilities.

A second problem with care work is that it does not lend itself well to capitalist approaches to commodification that value increasing efficiency and economies of scale (Razavi, 2007; Tronto, 2009). Caring for infants, for the elderly, and for the sick is time-intensive and not very amenable to the kinds of labour saving technologies that have revolutionised the market work place. Care work, frequently though not always, involves relationships and affectional ties. It is expensive. Some have argued that it is possible to marketise care work rather than commodify it, meaning that it possible to develop care work jobs that are affordable, are reasonably paid, and have built in ladders to upward mobility (Folbre, 2006; Folbre & Nelson, 2000; Razavi, 2007). Although these are efforts to be encouraged, the bottom line is that care work is fundamentally different from other kinds of market work that are more amenable to efforts to increase productivity (Tronto, 2009).

With respect to gender equity, the commodification of care work has led to a situation in which more educated and professional women are able, to some extent,
to purchase care work to help with their unpaid care work responsibilities. Less educated women with fewer economic resources in an unforgiving labour market, as well as increasing numbers of less educated and resourced men, are then forced to take jobs as paid care workers, a sector of the economy that contributes to the problem of growing inequality that is affecting social systems across the world. The commodification of care is a market-based solution to the problem of care work that is, in turn, contributing to serious gender, socioeconomic, and racial/ethnic inequities.

Before turning to a discussion of the ways in which the discourse of care work is responsive to these issues, we turn briefly to additional factors that are exacerbating the crisis of care.

**Other Social Forces Contributing to a Crisis in Care**

Three additional factors contribute to the crisis in care. These include the adoption of the adult worker model for most developed economies in the context of a radically restructured labour market that we referred to earlier in this chapter, the ageing of the population, and changes in the composition and meaning of family.

Most analysts of developed economies suggest that policy makers have moved from the underlying model of dual breadwinner/female caregiver model to an adult worker model in which all adults, who are able, are expected to work most of their adult lives, regardless of gender (Lewis, 2001, 2002; Duncan, Edwards, Reynolds, & Alldred, 2004). Social insurance is increasingly tied to paid employment with paid full-time employment in hostage to the myth of the unencumbered worker, that is, someone who is free to devote himself or herself to his or her paid market position. The fact that many workers are, in fact, encumbered with care work responsibilities is ignored in this model.

At the same time as this adult worker model is increasingly endorsed, the labour market itself has undergone radical structural changes (Jacobs & Gerson 2004; Wharton, 2006). First, is the disappearance of the employment contract between workers and employees in which loyalty and hard work translated into job security (Storey, 2000). In a highly competitive, globalised market place, dominated by the concerns of investors and consumers searching for profits and low cost goods, workers’ salaries are a cost that can too easily be cut (Reich, 2007). Downsizing and outsourcing have become common corporate strategies that are radically reshaping traditional labour markets and the ways that people think about and experience their employment. This trend coexists with the erosion of labour unions that have long protected workers’ wages and jobs. The bottom line for many across the economy is insecurity.

This insecure labour market is further characterised by an erosion of good jobs for average workers, or, in the current political mantra in the United States, an erosion of middle class jobs. This, in turn, contributes to conditions of inequality that, although particularly acute in the United States and United Kingdom, are affecting economies across the world (Judt, 2010; Peck, 2011; Reich, 2007). The insecurity
and inequality of the labour market are further exacerbated by its bifurcation into two different markets (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004; Wharton, 2006). One market, predominantly for full-time, better-paying jobs requiring higher level education and skills and sometimes referred to as the primary labour market, is characterised by long hours and overwork. Workers who are insecure about their jobs have little recourse when pressed by employers to work harder and for longer hours, especially in the United States where there is no legislation setting a limit to the number of hours that can be required of a worker. The result is a new work ethic in which high value and supposedly unencumbered workers are highly committed to their jobs and frequently work many more than 40 hours per week (Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg, & Kalleberg, 2002).

On the other hand, the secondary labour market is characterised by the loss of jobs in their full-time manifestation and includes all who work part-time, seasonal employees, adjunct workers, and those who work on a contract or project basis (Kalleberg & Schmidt, 1996). For these workers, there frequently is not enough work, requiring some to work one or more part-time jobs and to spend considerable effort on the process of getting enough paid work. Problems resulting from not enough time to attend to their care work responsibilities are frequently exacerbated by inadequate or inconsistent wages. It is hard to do necessary care work when incomes are highly volatile (Gosselin, 2007; Piketty & Saez, 2002). The bottom line is that both poles of the bifurcated work force have to respond to what can be onerous time demands by their paid market work, leaving them insufficient time and/or money to do the care work that is needed in their homes, families, and communities.

A second major factor affecting the crisis of care is the ageing of the population in most developed countries. Whereas the age structure of the population used to resemble a pyramid with more people in the younger generations than in the older generation, Riche (2006) now describes it as a rectangle, with as many old people as young people. Some countries may soon face a demographic transition in which the number of older people will outnumber younger people. On the one hand, this demographic profile suggests that problems of care will be mitigated because the care needed to raise and educate children will affect increasingly smaller proportions of the population. On the other hand, the more compelling argument is that problems of care will be vastly increased due to the demands of care for the elderly. In an analysis of this demographic transition, Keyes (2007) notes that medical care has focused on problems of cure with little comparative attention paid to the problems of caring for people who are living longer, many with chronic conditions and many who can be expected to develop various kinds of dementia in older age. Thus, the problem of who is going to do the necessary care work is magnified by these population figures.

Finally, the notion that all workers have a family in their private life that supports them and enables necessary care work to get done is called into question by data on what is happening to families. Marks (2006) proposes that the “‘average family’ is most accurately seen as an ideological trope that hides rather than reflects empirical diversity” (p. 42). In the United States, the traditional nuclear family with
parents and their children living in a single household constitutes less than 25% of households. Single parent households are on the rise as are households comprised of single adults. More recent survey data documents that whereas 72% of adults in the United States in 1960 were married, only 52% were married in 2008 (Taylor, 2011). Complementing these statistics are analyses by scholars such as Gonzalez-Lopez (2002), who describe not so much a decline of families across the Western world, but the emergence of alternate and more complex ways of organising personal and intimate relationships throughout the life span. However it is that people are constructing and organising their personal lives, all are experiencing the demands of market work and the struggle to do necessary and desired care work. The automatic support system that was provided by women in the era of the male breadwinner/female caregiver model with a preponderance of traditional family structures has disappeared.

In the light of these changes in men’s and women’s roles through the 20th and into the 21st century, changes in the market work economy and family structures, and looming demographic changes, there is a dawning awareness that a crisis has developed in providing the care needed by people and by communities. We now turn to a discussion of how the discourse of care has emerged in relation to this developing crisis.

THE EVOLUTION OF CARE DISCOURSE

While most credit the early second wave feminist scholars with noting the extent to which the unpaid work done by women was being masked and marginalised by the rush of women into market work (Gerstel & Gross, 1987; Glazer, 1993; Lopato, 1971), there are essentially two meanings of care that have emerged recently, one having to do with the social value of care and one having to do with the ethic of care (Mahon & Robinson, 2011). These two meanings of care are the foundation for the meaning of care work in our proposed dual model of working. In the following section, we discuss each of these two meanings of care and how each contributes to the meaning of unpaid care work in the dual model of working we propose.

The Social Value of Care

Turning first to the social value of care, the work of the economist, Nancy Folbre and her colleagues (2001; Folbre & Nelson, 2000; England & Folbre, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2007), is central. Folbre focuses on care for dependent others and radically challenges the split between public and private worlds. She makes the case that the work of caring for dependent others has a significant social value and is not just a matter for private lives. She argues that the care and raising of children benefits society, above and beyond its benefits to parents, in many ways. For example, children are the workers and taxpayers of the next generation. Parenting, according to this perspective, is not solely a personal choice; it is also a commitment that
carries important social ramifications and is a social contribution. Most recently, Folbre (2008) has extended this argument beyond the care of children to the care of the sick, disabled, and elderly. The argument that care activities are a social contribution and benefit the public good is the fundamental rationale for considering these activities to be work.

Folbre’s (2001) central thesis is that the invisible hand of the market cannot function without the invisible heart of care work. This meaning of care work is most clearly articulated in the conceptualisation of a mutually interdependent relationship between economic production and social reproduction (Razavi, 2007) with social reproduction referring to the production of people by people (Folbre, 2001). Economic production and social reproduction are each necessary to the other. Without sufficient high quality social reproduction, economic production will fail. Without sufficient high quality economic production, social reproduction will be impaired.

What is crucial in Folbre’s (2001) argument about the social value of care work is the challenge to the false split between public and private that was enshrined in social theory in the 20th century. Contemporary scholars of work in general, as well as scholars of care, are developing more complex and nuanced conceptions of the shifting terrain of what is public and what is private (Armstrong & Armstrong, 2005; Glucksmann, 2005; McCarthy & Edwards, 2002; Pettinger, Parry, Taylor, & Glucksmann, 2005; Robinson, 2011). Moving unpaid care work out of a strictly private domain is necessary for it to receive the attention of policy makers. At the same time, bringing unpaid care work into the public domain, as work that has significant social value, requires attention to the interrelationship of paid and unpaid care work.

A further reason to support the extension of the meaning of work to include caring activities is for purposes of social inclusion. To label unpaid caring activities as work that has social value, in addition to whatever personal relevance it might have, is to support the construction of the experience of doing care work as part and parcel of citizenship that contributes to the general social welfare (Standing, 2001). As Sevenhuijsen (2002) notes, social theory has focused solely on paid market work as critical for social inclusion. The designation of caring activities as work enables care work to be another route to social inclusion. In conjunction with the adult worker model, referring to caring activities as work does not absolve anyone of the rights and responsibilities to engage in market work. It does, however, provide a more flexible understanding of pathways to social inclusion that is more in tune with the contemporary vagaries of market work and the demands of care work that can wax and wane over the life course. According to Standing (2001), care work needs to be adequately recognised to be “part of a total person as a working being” (p. 42).

The Ethic of Care

The focus on the care of dependent others by scholars who adhere to the first meaning of care (Himmelweit, 2007; Kittay, Jennings, & Wasunna, 2005; Meyer
Harrington, 2000) is challenged by others who espouse a far more ambitious goal of developing an ethic of care that counters the individualised person making moral decisions based on abstract principles of right and wrong and a related market ethic of individual competition rooted in self-interest (Daly, 2002; Daly & Standing, 2001; Lewis, 2001; Robinson, 2011; Sevenhuijsen, 2002, 2003; Tronto, 1993, 2006, 2009). The roots of this ethic of care can be traced to the work of Gilligan (1982) who describes a situation-based and contextualised ethic of care centred on relationships with others in which the goal is to maximise the provision of care across relationships.

Closely correlated with this relational version of ethics is a conception of human beings existing in relational webs of interconnectedness. Rather than a model of an individualised and autonomous adult who has grown out of dependency, this conception of a person considers autonomy to only be possible in the context of interdependence. A relational conception of human beings clearly challenges a split between autonomous adults and dependent others. If all human beings are interdependent, we all need care, more or less, throughout our lives. Dependency is a condition of our lives. The relational conception of human beings provides the basis for the expanded definition of care used in this chapter. Care is not just for dependent others: It is also for self, for relationships, for communities and organisations, and for the physical world (Tronto, 1993, 2006, 2009). This definition of care, in turn, is derived from Berenice Fisher and Joan Tronto’s (1990) evocative description of care. In their words, care work is

a species activity that includes everything we do to maintain, continue, and repair our ‘world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web (p. 103).

The meaning of social reproduction in the ethic of care, thus, extends beyond the care of children, the sick, the disabled, and the elderly, to encompass the care of all aspects of the social world that need care and that are critical for the ongoing social reproduction of the society as a whole. It is not just the reproduction of people that is at issue; it is the reproduction of a social world characterised by interdependent interconnectedness.

To posit an ethic of care is to posit an ethic of moral responsibility that accrues to all. If all people need to abide by ethical principles based on rights and responsibilities, then all people also are responsible for the care work required for social reproduction in its most global sense. The ethic of care shifts care from the responsibility of women to a generalised social responsibility encompassing all men and all women. Furthermore, an ethic of care posits that all have responsibilities for providing care as well as the right to receive care when needed. From the perspective of an ethic of care, caring is an important and deeply human practice (Daly, 2002; Daly and Standing, 2001; Robinson, 2011).
This expansion of the meaning of and the responsibility for care is well illustrated by Sevenhuijsen (2003) who describes the ways in which care has been relocated in social systems across the world along three dimensions. With respect to gender, care is in the process of shifting from women to include men as well as women. Care is also shifting from inside to outside with outside referring to the provision of market or paid care work outside of personal realms of life along with its continued provision in personal lives. She also notes a very important shift in care having to do with health care. Health care increasingly is focused on care and not on cure as chronic illnesses proliferate in aging populations. This broader umbrella of care more easily encompasses those who do care work for pay and those who do unpaid care work in their personal lives and begins to break down rigid distinctions between paid and unpaid care work. At the same time, the ethic of care respects the difference between paid care work and unpaid care work in personal domains of life.

Developing an ethic of care relevant to all provides a platform for espousing a continued social commitment to care and connectedness that has been most associated with the political label of family values. As women struggle for gender equity in market work (England, 2010), the meaning of family is reconstructed (Marks, 2006), and new ways of establishing households and networks of personal relationships and interconnections emerge (Gonzalez-Lopez, 2002), some have worried about the erosion of a sense of personal responsibility and what Lewis (2001) refers to as the “hollowing out” of basic building blocks of social cohesion. An ethic of care seeks to establish a new basis for these essential social building blocks. An ethic of care proposes to replace support for family values with support for the values of care.

The Meaning of Unpaid Care Work

In endorsing Tronto’s (1993, 2006, 2009) broad definition and ethic of care and Folbre’s (2001) argument that care activities should be considered socially valued work, we encompass both of the contemporary definitions of care in the dual model of working proposed in this chapter. Although our focus in this model is on unpaid care work, or the care work that people do in their personal lives, we acknowledge the importance of and the interconnections between paid and unpaid care work. This is especially important with respect to issues of social justice. Revaluing care as work has significant implications for improving the status and conditions of paid care work.

We also situate this dual model of working in relation to social theorists and political movements who are working to expand an understanding of the ways to assess how well a country or social system is functioning (Halpern, Drago, & Boyle, 2005). Rather than reliance on economic productivity or growth as the sole indicator of progress, there are international efforts to develop a range of indicators that assess broader conceptions of well-being that take into account issues having to do, for example, with health and education in addition to growth (Gertner, 2010). These efforts expand on the work of Amartya Sen (1999) who considered encouragement...
of human capabilities to be a social good and a way to assess human progress. A broader set of indicators that assess national well-being along dimensions associated with both paid and unpaid care work in addition to economic productivity will be more reflective of a social theory that posits the mutual interdependence of economic production and social reproduction.

THE COUNSELLING FOR WORK AND RELATIONSHIP PERSPECTIVE: A CONTEXT FOR A DUAL MODEL OF WORKING

For counsellors and psychologists, the dual model of working is an extension of the counselling for work and relationship perspective that specifies an approach that can organise our talking and our thinking about how people co-construct their lives going forward (Richardson, 2012). In this section, we describe this perspective, specifically focusing on the four major contexts of development it proposes, the implications of contextualism, and the centrality of narrative theory. Our aim here is to encourage counsellors and psychologists who work in vocational and career practices to frame the dual model of working we are proposing within this broader repositioning of their work. It is also our aim to encourage all counsellors and psychologists to consider the counselling for work and relationship perspective and the dual model of working as a way of talking and thinking that may be helpful in facilitating the co-construction of clients’ lives going forward. It is our belief that issues of work, having to do with both market work and unpaid care work, increasingly impact people across the world, frequently in disruptive and discontinuous ways, and are likely to be relevant across all counselling practices. Although we focus on the implications of the counselling for work and relationship perspective for counselling practice in this chapter, it is important to note that this perspective has significant research implications as well (Richardson, 2012).

Four Major Developmental Contexts

The counselling for work and relationship perspective posits that there are four major social contexts through which most people co-construct their lives across the life span. These contexts are market work, unpaid care work, personal relationships, and market work relationships. The dual model of working described in this chapter corresponds to the contexts of market work and unpaid care work and reflects a contemporary rendition of the historic commitment of vocational and career fields across the world to the importance of work in people’s lives (Blustein, 2006). However, this model encourages counsellors to embed this historical commitment to helping people with their work in a more holistic frame that is about helping people co-construct their lives, in general, rather than a more narrow focus on their work lives.

That relationships, in addition to work, are major contexts through which people construct their lives reflects relational theory in contemporary clinical practice that has so well described the significance of relationships in emotional and social
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development (Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991; Jordan & Hartling, 2002; Mitchell, 2000; Wachtel, 2008). To include market work relationships as well as personal relationships as a major relationship context is responsive to current theory and research on the importance of all kinds of relationships and social connections in the domain of market work (Arnold & Cohen, 2008). For example, mentoring is a kind of market work relationship that has been the focus of research and theory in the vocational fields. What is important to note here, is that the labelling of two major relationship contexts is a deviation from the more traditional practice and discourse that collapses relationships into family. Personal relationships may certainly include family relationships, but is more inclusive of the complex web of intimate relationships that people co-construct across their life spans as described by Gonzalez-Lopez (2002). It is also important to note that these four categories of contexts have permeable and shifting boundaries. Parenting is a personal relationship and an important unpaid care work commitment. Market work relationships may become personal relationships, and vice versa.

Within these four major contexts, people may pursue and evolve multiple pathways of development at the same time and over time. Rather than the discourse of career, the counselling for work and relationship perspective uses the discourse of pathways to describe how work commitments evolve over time. For example, a person might have several different kinds of market work jobs and multiple unpaid care work commitments at home and in the community, each of which constitutes a developmental context and each of which can be described as a pathway. Certainly people have multiple personal relationships and market work relationships, each of which can also be described as a developmental pathway. Finally, it is most important to acknowledge that work and relationship pathways are interdependent. The course of a person’s market work pathways is likely to have a major impact on their personal relationships. Conversely, personal relationships significantly affect the evolution of market work pathways. The interdependence of work and relationship pathways is a particularly rich and important area of theory and research in contemporary vocational psychology (Blustein, 2001, 2011; Blustein, Schultheiss, & Flum, 2004; Motulsky, 2011; Phillips, Christopher-Sisk, & Gravino, 2001; Schultheiss, 2003, 2006, 2007).

Implications of Contextualism

In contrast to Super’s (1980) holistic model of life development that was influenced by role theory and focused on the development of lives structured around diverse life roles, the counselling for work and relationship perspective is based on contextualism. Contextualism conceives of development as evolving and emerging through transactions between people and the social contexts in which they participate. Basic tenets of contextualism are that development can proceed in any direction depending on the nature of the interactions and transactions that occur between people and context, change is more likely to be continuous than episodic, and what is most important to the change that occurs is what is happening in the moment.
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(Lewis, 1997; Pepper, 1942). It is an understanding of change that is radically different from more traditional developmental paradigms (Lerner, 2006).

One of the advantages of contextualism for counsellors and psychologists attuned to the radical changes in the social context of work and relationship considered earlier in this chapter is that it allows for constant change and promotes the flexibility that is needed to respond to these changes. It also supports the understanding of identity as transactional, that is, as a product of the interactions of persons in contexts as opposed to a psychologised identity considered to be a property of the self or the person. This is especially important for market work contexts given the instability of market work and the need that many may have to develop and redevelop market work identities in relation to changing market work contexts. Further, the designation of two work contexts broadens the scope of possible work identities, again an advantage in the face of insecure and inequitable labour markets. A person who loses a job may still have important work commitments in their personal lives. A person whose job provides little in the way of meaning or satisfaction may find greater meaning and satisfaction in his or her unpaid care work (Byars-Winston, 2012).

As counselling theories and models have responded to the collapse of developmental regularities in people’s lives and constructivist positions, we have become accustomed to the language of construction in which it is acknowledged that people don’t just develop; they construct their lives in relation to opportunities and constraints they encounter. In the vocational field, this is exemplified in Savickas’ (2005) model of career construction. Contextualism pushes this notion of construction one step further. According to contextualism, it is more accurate to describe lives as co-constructed by both the people and the social contexts in which they participate. Both are equally important. For example, a market work pathway is a co-construction of the efforts of a person and of what they encounter in that specific market work context. Similarly, we are constructed by our relationships just as much as we construct them. In other words, contextualism decentres us as the primary locus of change in our lives. We do not have control over what happens to us: We can have some control over how we respond to what happens to us. This decentring of responsibility mitigates the credit we can take for our successes and the blame for the failures we might experience in the social contexts in which we participate. This may be particularly important again for helping people to cope with the instability and insecurity of market work. Contextualism also promotes greater attention on the part of counsellors and psychologists to the impact of the work and relationships in which people participate on their developmental pathways and on the overall course of their development.

Centrality of Narrative Theory

The counselling for work and relationship perspective posits that time has always been an implicit and central dimension of vocational theory and practice. That is, the traditional emphasis in the field on vocational choice and career development,
helping people make vocational and career choices and develop their careers, is essentially future-oriented. It is about helping people figure out what they are going to do with their market work in their future lives. The counselling for work and relationship perspective takes this future orientation, makes it explicit, and extends it holistically to other major contexts of development beyond market work. In other words, the counselling for work and relationship perspective is about helping people co-construct their lives going forward through work and relationship contexts.

Narrative theory is foundational to the counselling for work and relationship perspective because it is about lives lived in time. Although there is tendency to think about narrative as stories told about what has already happened, both past and future are central to narrative theory, especially as formulated by Crites (1986), Ricouer (1980), and Polkinghorne (1988). According to these theorists, it is in the construction and reconstruction of the stories of the past in the present that the story lines of the future emerge. Conversely, as the story lines of the future evolve and emerge in the present, they will stimulate the construction and reconstruction of the stories of the past. This understanding of narrative theory is in line with other work that has espoused the use of narrative in vocational and career counselling (Brott, 2001; Cochran, 1997; Cochran & Laub, 1994; Jepsen, 1993; McIlveen & Patton, 2007a, 2007b; Savickas, 2005).

Closely associated with narrative theory is the significance of agentic action. Action is behaviour infused with intentional states on both conscious and unconscious levels (Brandstätter, 1999; Young & Valach, 2004). Action also is behaviour infused with the meanings of culture and the multitudinous ways that culture shapes intentions to act in the world (Bruner, 1990). Agentic action is action that has a specific quality. “It is action characterised by purpose in which people pursue their aims in response to the circumstances of their lives….It is about having and using some level of personal power to influence the course of one’s life” (Richardson, 2012, p. 215). It is through action that people co-construct their lives going forward. It is through taking action that the story lines of the future emerge. It is through taking agentic action that the story lines we desire are most likely to come to evolve.

Agentic action, frequently referred to simply as agency, has long been a primary concern of social theorists in that it epitomises a nondeterministic view of human beings. It is a conception of human beings that endorses the possibility of creativity and innovation in human affairs. While acknowledging the influence of power from both the sociocultural milieu and from personal history as a constraint on human action (Richardson, 2012), the counselling for work and relationship perspective follows those who argue for the capacity of human beings to struggle against the constraints of power to pursue agentic aims (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Chodorow, 1999; Martin & Sugarman, 1999).

The centrality of narrative theory for the counselling for work and relationship perspective encourages counsellors and psychologists who are working to help people co-construct their lives going forward to engage with their clients in a deep narrative process, attentive to needs to reconstruct stories of the past, as well as, and
in order to stimulate the emergence of the agentic actions that constitute the story lines of the future. It is an approach to counselling that mitigates against a split between vocational counselling and psychotherapy or personal counselling. In this deep narrative process, both therapeutic aims regarding problems from the past and aims having to do with co-constructing future lives are intertwined.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, we situate this proposal for a dual model of working in relation to the call for activist social science and feminist theory espoused by the feminist theorist, Barbara Risman (2004). She argues that social science needs to be concerned not only with understanding structures of inequity, but also with helping to transform these structures. Gender is one of these basic structures of inequity. The collapse and disappearance of care work into the female gender role following the industrial revolution and the relegation of women to caregiving as a labour of love and not of work set up a stark situation of female economic dependence and gender inequity. As women have moved into market work and economic independence, the values of caring and connectedness and the importance and meaning of care that were equated with the feminine have come into focus as central social values relevant to men as well as women. Following Tronto’s (2009) evocative language, the “making of livable lives” (p. 3) requires social valuation of both market work and care work and the full participation of both women and men in the complex and shifting contexts of market and unpaid care work that occur over a lifetime.

Proposing a dual model of working for both men and women is an attempt to reduce the genderisation and devaluation of care work across the board, including both paid and unpaid versions. The degenderisation and revaluation of care work positions care work as an important human practice, critical to the well-being of contemporary societies, that is relevant to all as opposed to sequestering it in the feminine. Because of the historic and powerful linking of theory and practice in vocational and career fields, a dual model of working has the potential to transform practices of vocational and career counselling that, in turn, will affect the lives of many across the world. While social policies supportive of both market and care work are certainly needed and are, in fact, a very active focus of social policy analysis across the world, the dual model of working we propose is another route to social justice and the effort to improve lives for all.

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