

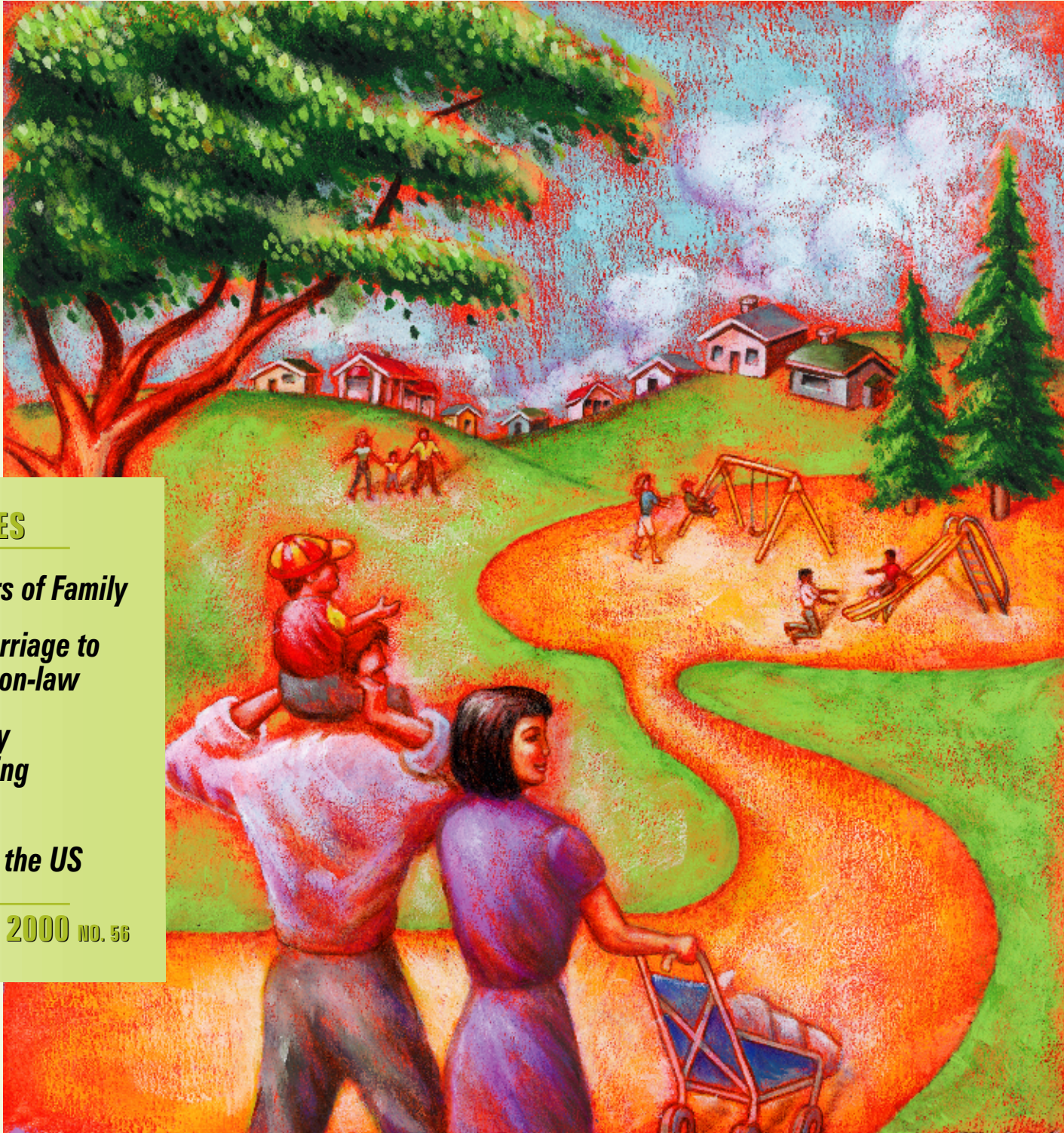
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SOCIAL TRENDS



FEATURES

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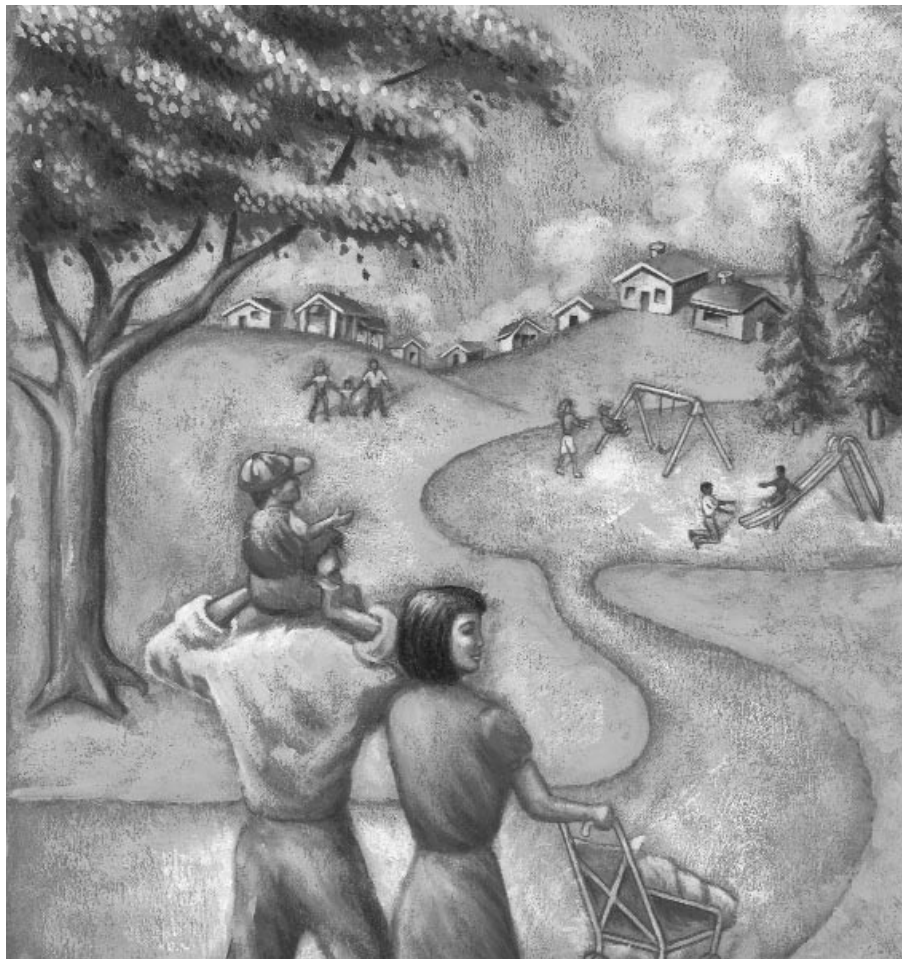
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One hundred years of families

by Anne Milan

During most, and certainly the early part, of the past century, marriage was seen as a lifetime commitment, and the “traditional” family, consisting of husband, wife and children, was considered the norm. Early 20th century families were often flexible, expanding and contracting as the need arose. It was not unusual for them to take in older relatives, orphans or newlyweds with limited financial resources, as well as boarders.¹ Having many children was commonplace, and women could spend many decades engaged in childbearing and childrearing, often still caring for infants or young children after the oldest children had already left home.²

Exceptions to the traditional family unit — men and women who never married, lone parents, childless couples and couples living common-law³ — always existed, but they were less likely the result of individual choice than of uncontrollable circumstances, such as the death of a spouse, obligations to aging parents, or poverty. As the 21st century dawns, people have



acquired more choice, which has resulted in later marriages, delayed parenthood and smaller families, as well as higher rates of divorce, remarriage and blended families. This article briefly follows Canadian families throughout the course of the 20th century, and identifies some of the social, legal and economic conditions that have affected them.

1. Nett, E. M. 1993. *Canadian Families: Past and Present* (2nd ed.). Toronto: Harcourt, Brace Canada.
2. Ibid.
3. While common-law marriages may have existed in frontier areas where clergy were often unavailable, it is believed that common-law unions were rare. Larson, L. E., J. W. Goltz and C. W. Hobart. 1994. *Families in Canada: Social Context, Continuities and Changes*. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall and Statistics Canada, Catalogue 91-534E.

Data in this article come from several Statistics Canada surveys. The primary sources, however, were the Censuses of Population and Vital Statistics.

Crude marriage rate: number of marriages per 1,000 population aged 15 and over.

Crude divorce rate: number of divorces per 100,000 population aged 15 and over.

Total fertility rate: the average number of births per woman aged 15 and over that would occur during their childbearing years if they survived through their reproductive years and bore children in accordance with the age-specific fertility rates observed in a given year.

Blended families: blended families combine children who have different relationships with their parents. It consists of a married or common-law couple living with at least two children, one of whom does not share the same natural and/or adoptive parents as the other child(ren).

The complete bibliography for this article is available on the CST webpage on Statistics Canada's website:
<http://www.statcan.ca/english/ads/11-008-XIE/index.htm>

Late marriage and large families the norm at the turn of the 20th century

The cultural heritage of Canada's northern and western European settlers dictated that people establish an independent household when they married. Because this usually required a large financial investment, young men often worked for many years in order to save enough money to provide a suitable home for a wife. As a result, the age at which both men and women got

married was relatively old: 28 years on average for men and nearly 25 years for women in 1921.⁴

Although important for both social and economic reasons (especially for women), at no time was marriage a universal phenomenon. Religious vocation and financial difficulty in establishing a new household were two common reasons for not marrying.⁵ And in fact, the proportion of people in their mid- to late 40s who had never married reached levels of 12% for women and 15% for men during the early 1900s.⁶

When families were still primarily living on the farm, it was advantageous for couples to have large families. Children were expected to share in daily chores and other farm labour, adding directly to the family's output. This, coupled with religious doctrine and lack of effective contraception, resulted in women giving birth to an average of 6.6 children in 1851. In the late 19th century, families

began moving to the cities, attracted by the economic opportunities offered by growing industrialization. Many children were among the family members who found jobs, often working long hours in unsafe conditions.⁷ By 1920, however, the implementation of child labour laws, and of mandatory school-attendance until age 16, freed children from the factory. These changes accelerated the decline in family size. In 1901, women had given birth to an average of 4.6 children, but by 1921, the average had fallen to 3.5.

It was rarely done, but couples could end their marriage through legal separation, annulment or divorce. Given that existing laws were restrictive, and divorce was only granted with proof of adultery, there were only three divorces per 10,000 marriages in 1901 and the divorce rate remained low throughout the early 1900s. The low rate of formal marital dissolution does not mean that families did not break up. Although no data exist on the extent of family abandonment, some spouses (usually the husband) who wanted to end their responsibilities simply deserted their families.

The most common reason for lone-parenthood or remarriage in the early 20th century was the death of a spouse. Poor health conditions, limited medical knowledge and frequent disease meant that mortality was high during the early 1900s. The "empty nest" stage of the family life cycle — when a couple lives alone after their grown children leave home — was rare, and it was not uncommon for spouses to die when they were relatively young. Widows and widowers often remarried because they needed help with young children, domestic labour or financial support. In 1921, for example,

4. 1921 is the first year for which vital statistics are available.
5. Gee, E. M. 1982. "Marriage in nineteenth-century Canada." *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 19:311-325.
6. Gee, E. M. 1987. "Historical change in the family life course of Canadian men and women." Victor Marshall (ed.) *Aging in Canada: Social perspective*. Markham: Fitzhenry and Whiteside.
7. Ward, M. 1998. *The Family Dynamic: A Canadian Perspective* (2nd ed.). Toronto: ITP Nelson.

17% of marriages involved at least one spouse who had been married before.

People less likely to marry and have children during the Depression

During the Depression of the 1930s — a period of high unemployment and severe deprivation for many Canadians and their families — people were reluctant or unable to take on the financial and social responsibilities of marriage. Consequently, marriage rates decreased dramatically — from 7.5 marriages per 1,000 population in 1928 to 5.9 in 1932 — and the number of children born declined.

For most of the 1930s, the birth rate stayed at fewer than three children per woman on average; in fact, as many as 20% of women (mostly those with higher levels of education and household income) had no children. By 1937, the total fertility rate had fallen to only 2.6 children per woman.

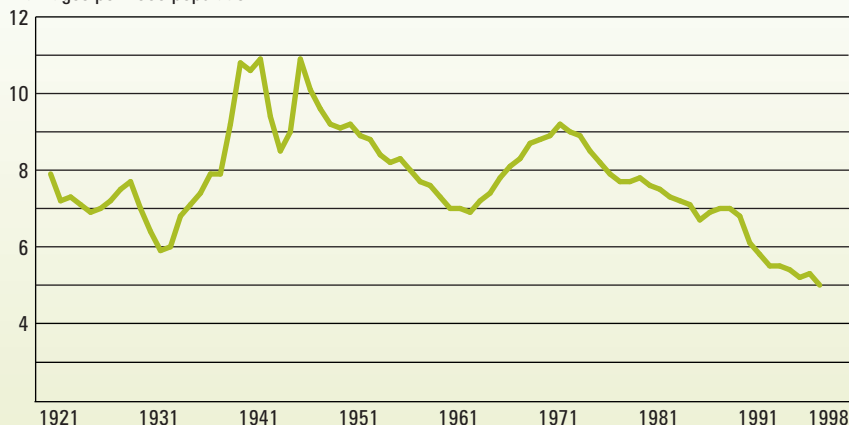
World War II accompanied by surge of marriages and the baby boom

The Depression reached its lowest point in 1933. By the mid-1930s, economic conditions began to improve, but recovery was slow. In 1939, Canada entered the Second World War, and government spending on the war effort further stimulated employment in several sectors of the economy.⁸ The uncertainties of war and the fear that conscription might be introduced (in which case single men would be more likely than married men to be conscripted) caused many couples to rush to the altar. All in all, by 1942, the crude marriage rate had peaked at 10.9 marriages per 1,000 population. During the next few years, while men were away at war, the rate dropped to 8.5 per 1,000 in



The current marriage rate is now even lower than in 1931 but for different reasons

Marriages per 1000 population¹



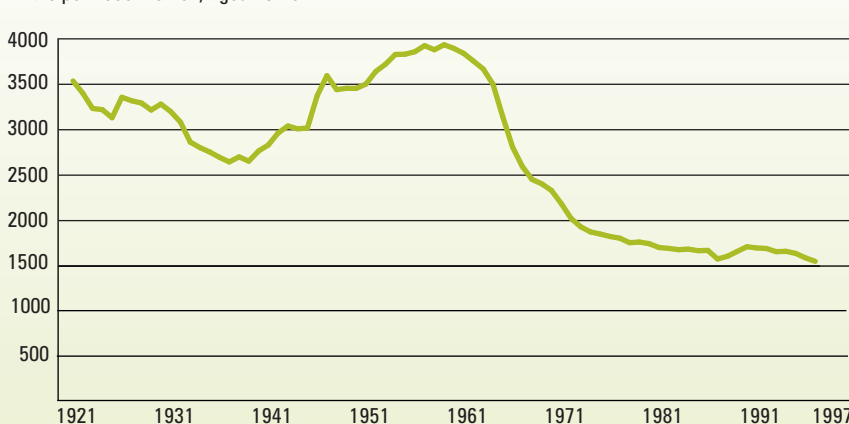
1. Excluding the Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories, 1921-1923.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 11-516-XIE, 84-212-XPB, CANSIM Matrices 6, 7 and 6367-6379, and author's calculations.



Fertility rates have declined over the past century, except for the baby boom

Births per 1000 women, aged 15-49¹



1. Excluding Newfoundland 1921-1990, and Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories 1921-1949.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 91-535E, 84-210-XPB and 11-001-XPE (*The Daily*, July 8, 1998 and June 16, 1999).

1944, only to return to its previous peak in 1946 as couples united after prolonged wartime absences.⁹

These high marriage rates led to the phenomenon known as the baby boom. During the early 1940s, women were having on average three children, a small number compared with the early 1900s. But the number of children born to

8. During World War II, Canada became a major producer of ships, cargo carriers, aircraft, tanks and other military vehicles. Foot, D. K. and D. Stoffman. 1998. *Boom, Bust & Echo 2000: Profiting from the demographic shift in the new millenium*. Toronto: Macfarlane, W. and R. p. 24.

9. McVey, W. W. Jr. and W. E. Kalbach. 1995. *Canadian Population*. Toronto: Nelson.

Families as important as ever

Despite much debate about the declining importance of families and the fragmentation of traditional values, Canadians remain fiercely loyal to the idea of family. In a 1994 Angus Reid opinion survey, two-thirds of Canadian adults strongly agreed with the statement that their families are the greatest joy in their lives.¹ Regardless of age, income, or family structure, most Canadians feel that their families are stable and satisfying, and three-quarters describe their family lives as “happy” and “full of love”.² Most young adults plan to get married, have children, and stay married.³ However, 40% of Canadians strongly agree that families are in crisis.

The 1995 General Social Survey has found similar results. Almost all people both in legal marriages (98%) and common-law unions (96%) feel that a long-term relationship is important for their happiness. While the younger generation (aged 18 to 29) may be accepting of non-traditional unions, such as common-law relationships, they still believe strongly in the institution of the family. In 1995, nearly half of Canadians aged 20 to 39 intended to have two children and one-quarter expected to have three or more; few planned to have only one or no children. Married people — both men and women — wanted more children than those who were unmarried, but education influenced the number of children they wanted. Women in their thirties with a university degree intended to have fewer children than women with less education; by contrast, men with high education wanted more children than men with lower levels of schooling.

Religion also appears to play an important part in how people perceive relationships and family life. Canadians who attended religious services every week reported having happier relationships with their partners than those who did not attend services at all. Being married and having children was also more important to the personal happiness of weekly attendees than to those who did not attend.

- For more information, see “Attitudes Toward Women, Work and Family,” *Canadian Social Trends*, Autumn 1997; “What influences people’s plans to have children?” *Canadian Social Trends*, Spring 1998; “Religious Observance, Marriage and Family,” *Canadian Social Trends*, Autumn 1998.

1. Angus Reid Group. 1994. *The State of the family in Canada: Summary Notes*.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

families was already on the rise, reversing a century-long decline in fertility. It continued to climb, reaching a peak in 1959, when the total fertility rate rose to 3.9 births per woman. According to researchers, this phenomenon, which has driven so many social and political trends since the 1950s, had several causes. For many people

who had postponed having children because of the Depression, the biological clock was ticking. After the war, the economy continued to grow, employment increased, incomes improved and the prosperity and stability of the times were conducive to raising families.¹⁰

As one might expect from the increase in post-war marriage and fertility rates, people were starting their families sooner than they had in the 1930s. During the two decades following World War II, the average age at first marriage

declined steadily. For men, it fell by more than two years, from 27.5 years in 1945 to 25.2 in 1962, while for women, it dropped by just under two years, from 24.4 to 22.5.

The post-war period also saw the living arrangements of families change, with fewer relatives and extended family members attached to the household. By about the 1950s, most families consisted of parents and dependant children, and they lived in a “breadwinner-homemaker” relationship in which the husband was employed outside the home while the wife cared for the children at home.¹¹

Of course, the war had taken its toll on families as well. In the years following the war, 14% of marriages were remarriages, in large part reflecting war widows putting their lives back together. However, the divorce rate also grew sharply, but temporarily, to 66 divorces per 100,000 population, probably as many impulsive wartime marriages were dissolved.¹² After this “correction,” the rate remained low throughout the 1950s, generally staying below 40 divorces per 100,000 population.

Post-war marriage rates revisit early 1900s patterns

The high marriage rates of the immediate post-war period began to drop off in the late 1940s and continued to fall during the early 1960s. By 1963, the marriage rate had fallen to a 30-year low of 6.9 marriages per 1,000 population. This was partly due to the “marriage squeeze” Canadian women faced in these years. Women generally marry men who are older than themselves, and the low birth rates of the Depression and World War II had resulted, two decades later, in a shortage of eligible older partners. The economic slowdown from 1957 to 1961 may also have contributed

10. Foot and Stoffman. op.cit. 1998.

11. McVey and Kalbach. op.cit. 1995. p. 310.

12. Larson et al. op.cit. 1994.

to fewer marriages as young couples postponed “tying the knot” until a more favourable time. Indeed, by the mid-1960s, when economic conditions had improved and the baby boomers were old enough to marry, the marriage rates began to climb once again.

After reaching a high of 9.2 marriages per 1,000 population in 1972, marriage rates began a steady decline that continued for the next 25 years. By the early 1990s, they had declined to the point where they matched the lows recorded in the Great Depression. And they continued to fall. In 1998, the marriage rate reached an all-time low of 5 marriages per 1,000 population.

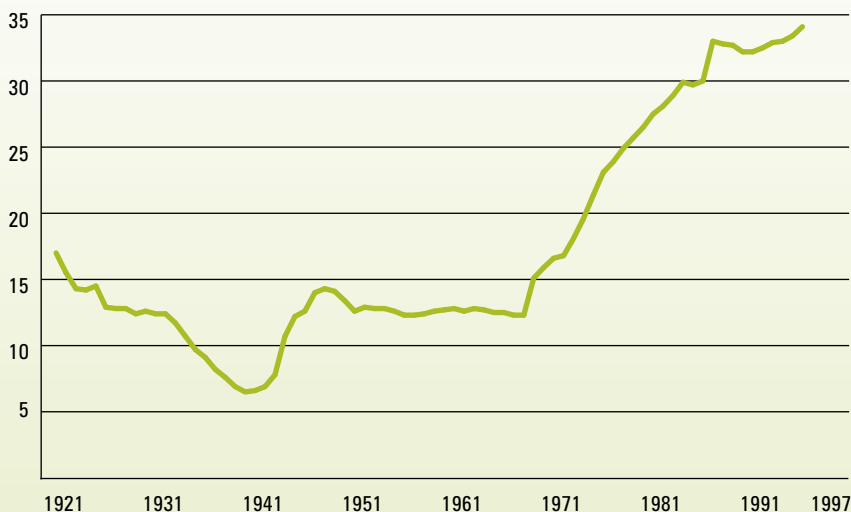
The decline in marriage was accompanied by a corresponding increase in the proportion of single people. Over the last 100 years, the proportion of younger adults who have never married has fluctuated: it was relatively high at the beginning and at the end of the century and lower in the middle. This “U-shaped” pattern is evident for both men and women. In 1996, 67% of men aged 25 to 29 had never been married compared to 35% in 1951 and 55% in 1911; the corresponding figures for women are 51%, 21%, and 32%. In recent decades, the decline in marriage has also been accompanied by a steadily rising number of couples who live together in a common-law arrangement.

As the marriage rate plummeted, the average age at first marriage started to rise again — to 29.5 years for men and 27.4 for women in 1997 — and the age difference between men and women decreased. This shrinking gap in ages points to potentially significant social changes. Younger ages at marriage are associated with less education and fewer employment opportunities and, generally, less



The proportion of remarriages reflects social changes

Remarriage as % of total marriages

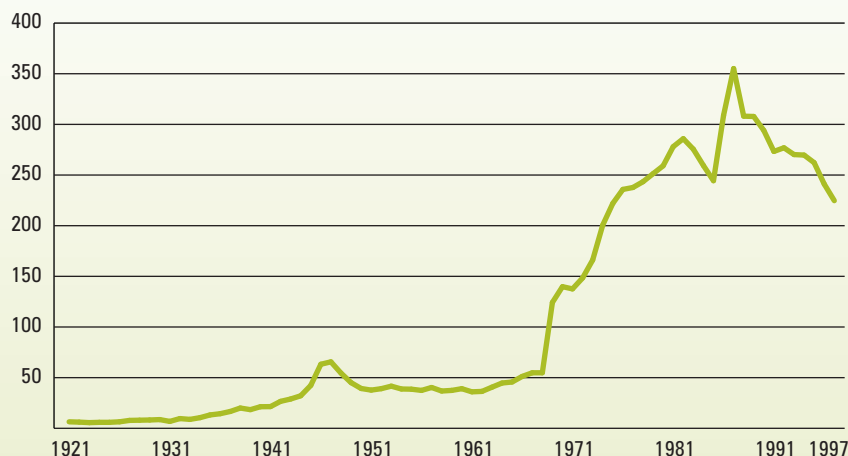


Sources: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 91-534E and 91-209-XPE.



The divorce rate was fairly low until the introduction of the Divorce Act in 1968

Number of divorces per 100,000 population



Sources: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 11-516-XIE, 89-523E, 84-213-XPB and 11-001-XPE (*The Daily*, May 18, 1999).

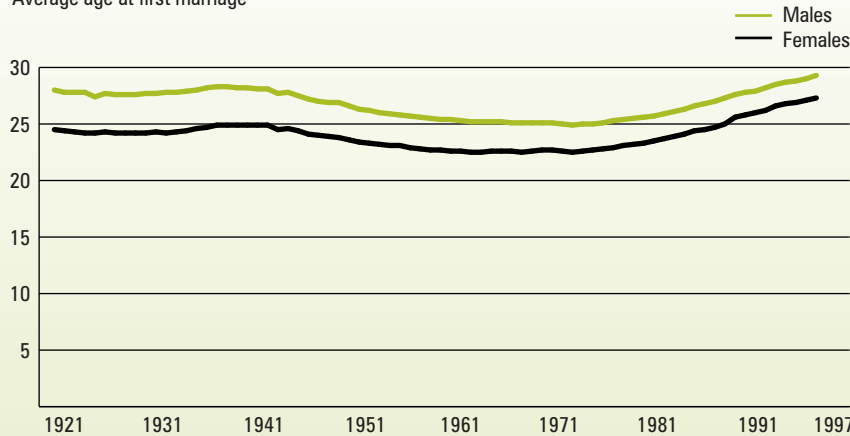
life experience. The fact that men and women are closer in age at the time of their first marriage suggests greater parity between women’s and men’s relative status in society.¹³

While the figures for average age at marriage and rates of marriage are

similar to those early in the century, the reasons behind them are quite different. In the early 1900s, financial or family difficulty and religious

13. McVey and Kalbach. op.cit. 1995. p. 224.

Average age at first marriage



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 91-534E, 84-212-XPB and 11-001-XPE (*The Daily*, January 29, 1998).

vocation probably influenced most decisions not to marry; decisions today are more likely to reflect a personal choice. Recently, social changes have eroded many traditional attitudes and practices; improved economic opportunities, especially for women, and the growing acceptance of non-marriage alternatives, such as common-law relationships, have reduced the tendency toward marrying early, and in some cases marrying at all.

Divorce Act: The end of “forever”
 Before 1968, a marriage, whether good or bad, was “till death us do part” for most couples. Terminating it was difficult and frowned upon.¹⁴ The Divorce Act, introduced in 1968, changed all that. It extended the grounds for divorce to include “no-fault” divorce based on separation for at least three years. Less than two decades later, in 1986, an amendment reduced the minimum separation period to one year. These less restrictive divorce laws, combined with other social changes, created a significant shift in the way people perceived marriage, as divorce became a socially acceptable

choice for someone whose marriage did not live up to expectations.

Within a decade of the introduction of the Divorce Act in 1968, the divorce rate had jumped nearly six-fold. It rose again after the 1986 amendment, perhaps because people had postponed filing for divorce until it came into effect. Since then, however, the divorce rate has declined steadily, from a record high of 362 divorces per 100,000 population in 1987, to 223 one decade later. Some of this decline may be related to the fact that many people are reluctant to legally marry in the first place. In addition, some marriage breakdowns may be settled by a separation agreement that need not be followed by a legal divorce unless one of the spouses wants to remarry.

Baby boom gives way to baby bust

The two post-war decades of increasing birth rates reversed abruptly in the 1960s when fertility rates began a decline that continues to this day. In fact, in 1997, each woman had an average of 1.6 children, marking the lowest recorded fertility rate in

Canada’s history. Several reasons account for this baby bust: for instance, contraception became more effective so that couples were better able to limit the number and plan the timing of their children; and women entered the labour force in unprecedented numbers, thereby increasing the opportunity cost of having children.

Despite the drop in the number of children women are having, the percentage of women who do not have children is really no higher than it was earlier in the 20th century. While some women choose to postpone parenthood in order to pursue education or employment opportunities, there is no evidence of a widespread rejection of parenthood. However, data do show that increasing numbers of women are having their first child at older ages. Almost one-third (31%) of first births in 1997 were to mothers aged 30 and over, compared with 19% one decade earlier. Also, births to teenage mothers have been falling for the last 20 years. The proportion of mothers under age 20 has dropped by almost half, from 11% of all births in the early 1970s to 6% throughout most of the 1990s. Delayed childbearing means that parents may be better established financially, but it may also mean that they have less time and energy for their children.¹⁵

Divorce replaces death as main cause of lone parenthood

Children born outside a union, divorce, and the death of a spouse all create lone-parent families. Although this family type makes up only a slightly higher proportion of all families today than it

14. The Vanier Institute of the Family. 1994. *Profiling Canada's Families*. Ottawa. p. 45.

15. Ibid. p. 41.

did early in the century — 12% in 1931 versus 15% in 1996 — the causes behind it have changed dramatically. While in 1931, three-quarters of all lone-parent families had lost a parent because of death, by 1996 only one-fifth were in this situation. In 1996, divorce was behind the formation of 58% of lone-parent families, compared with less than 24% in 1931. And because most mothers retain custody following a divorce, lone-parent families headed by women currently outnumber those headed by men by more than four to one.¹⁶

The growing number of births outside a union is also increasingly contributing to the creation of lone-parent families. In 1931 less than 0.5% of lone-parent families resulted from births to women without a partner; by 1996, 22% were in this situation. This may be partly due to the growing economic independence of women, some of whom can afford to raise children alone, but the decreased stigma attached to births outside marriage is probably also a contributing factor.¹⁷ Despite the growing acceptance of lone mothers, many of these women and their children face a life of economic disadvantage. Lone mothers who are young, have low levels of education and few job skills are at even greater risk of having a low income.

Remarriage leads to new family forms

Rising rates of divorce have increased dramatically the size of the population able to remarry. Being widowed renders one person eligible to remarry; being divorced theoretically returns two people to the marriage pool. As well, those who divorce are more likely than widows and widowers to remarry, because divorce tends to occur

Children in low-income families at a disadvantage

Living in a low-income environment exposes children to greater difficulties throughout their formative years. Lower-income women are more likely to have babies with low birth weight, which is associated with a greater risk of health problems later in life. Living in substandard or crowded housing might expose infants and children to more illnesses, and more frequent absences from school due to illness can cause a child to fall behind academically.¹ School performance may be further affected by living conditions at home, if there is no quiet place to do homework. A poor diet, often associated with living in a low-income situation, may make concentrating on school work more difficult.

Data from the National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth (NLSCY) show that most families move into a low-income situation primarily as a result of family breakdown. Between 1994 and 1996, families with children were four times more likely to move into the lowest income quartile if the parents separated or divorced than if they did not break up (26% versus 6%). Movements out of low-income are associated with a parent's remarriage or with one or more parents finding employment. However, the data also suggest that exits out of low income are not rapid: seven in 10 children living in low-income families in 1994 were still living in a low-income environment in 1996.

Based on both 1994 and 1996 NLSCY data, 15% of children in low-income families had a behavioural problem, compared with 9% for children in families that were not low income in either year. Similarly, children of low-income families were more likely to have relationship problems with their parents, friends or teachers. Children in the lowest income quartile are more likely to repeat a grade than children in higher income families, and their parents and teachers are less likely to expect them to attend university. Low-income children may also be excluded from sporting or cultural activities because of a lack of funds, while adolescents may also feel pressure to seek employment in order to contribute economically to the family.

Growing up in a low-income family may increase the probability that an individual encounters low income as an adult. Analysis of tax data suggests that low income in one generation is associated with low income in the next, with children of very low-income families most likely to end up in the bottom income groups. Thus, families with low-income may produce a new generation of individuals at high risk of exposure to a low-income situation.

- For more information, see "National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 1996-97," *The Daily*, October 28, 1998; "Getting ahead in life: Does your parents' income count?" *Canadian Social Trends*, Summer 1998.

1. Clarke, M. 1988. *Wasting our future: The effects of poverty on child development*. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Children and Youth.

younger in life when people may be more eager to start a new relationship. Since the 1970s, remarriage has become a relatively important factor in the formation of new relationships. In 1997, 34% of marriages involved at least one spouse who had been previously married; in almost half of these, both spouses had already been married at least once.

16. Although mothers still retain custody in the majority of cases, over time more and more fathers have become custodial parents. In 1978, almost 79% of divorces involving custody decisions granted custody to mothers, compared with 16% for fathers. By 1997, about 61% of children were awarded to mothers, 11% to fathers and almost 28% were joint custody decisions.

17. The Vanier Institute of the Family. op.cit. 1994. p. 59.

Unpaid work: What we do for our families

Without the unpaid work that Canadians do every day in support of their families and communities, things would run much less smoothly than they do now. Statistics Canada has estimated that unpaid work — activities such as childcare, home maintenance, volunteer work, helping friends, relatives and others — was worth about \$235 billion in 1992. This was about one-third the dollar value of the Gross Domestic Product, which measures the total value of goods and services produced for the market economy.

Work in the home accounts for the lion's share of unpaid work. And in most homes, women take care of most housework. In 1998, women spent almost twice as much time on unpaid housework per week (15.2 hours) as did men (8.3 hours). Although the time spent on childcare may overlap with housework, women reported devoting 18.9 hours per week to childcare, while men spent 8.3 hours on this task.¹

Another aspect of unpaid work that has been much discussed in recent years is providing care for the elderly. According to the 1996 General Social Survey, 2.1 million Canadians aged 15 and over provided some care to a senior with a long-term health problem. These care-givers devoted an average of 4.2 hours of their time per week to help with chores, assist with personal care and similar tasks. Women were more likely to be providing eldercare (61% or 1.3 million) and they also dedicated more time to this activity — an average of 5 hours per week compared with 3 hours for men.

- For more information, see "Measuring and valuing households' unpaid work," *Canadian Social Trends*, Autumn 1996; "Eldercare in Canada: Who does how much?" *Canadian Social Trends*, Autumn 1999.

1. The hours spent on unpaid housework and childcare can overlap (e.g., a respondent who spent one hour on housework and child care at the same time would be expected to report that hour as both housework and child care). Consequently, the hours cannot be summed for a total number of hours spent on unpaid work.

Men are more likely than women to remarry. Following a divorce, women tend to get custody of children which may, among other reasons, reduce the likelihood of finding another spouse. In addition, men's tendency to marry younger women creates a larger marriage pool for men; in fact, the age differential between brides and grooms is often larger in second than in first marriages. In recent years, however, the remarriage rate has fallen, largely due to the increase in common-law unions and women's greater economic independence.

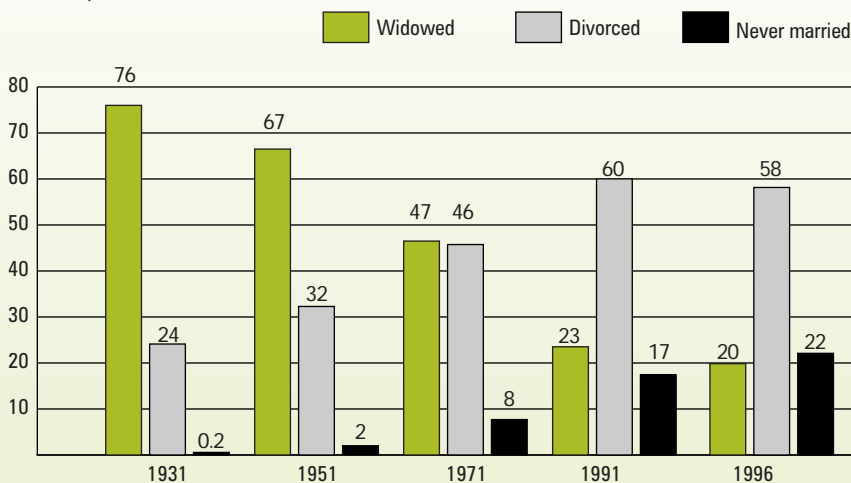
Many couples in a new marriage or common-law union have children from previous relationships. In 1994-95, nearly 9% of Canadian children under the age of 12 were living in a stepfamily. The majority of these children lived in a blended family, which most often included the couple's biological children and the wife's children from a previous relationship.

Given the complicated nature of stepfamilies, it is not surprising that many 10- and 11-year-old children in stepfamilies do not have a favourable view of their interactions with their parents. They were more likely than children from intact families to say they lack emotional support from their parents (33% compared with 27%) and to report difficulty in getting along with parents and siblings in the previous six months (44% and 28%, respectively). While parent-child relationships in stepfamilies seem more problematic than those in intact families, it is not clear if this is because of the way adults behave or the way children perceive them. Although children in stepfamilies showed more dissatisfaction with their family relationships, the majority did report that they have moderate to good experiences with their parents.



Until 1971, the majority of lone parents were widowed

% of lone parents



Note: Divorced includes the category "married, spouse absent".
Sources: Statistics Canada, Censuses of Canada, Catalogues 91-535E and 94-009-XDP.

Kids testing the limits

Testing the rules and boundaries of acceptable behaviour is generally associated with adolescence. According to the 1996-97 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY), 15% of 12- and 13-year-olds reported belonging to a group that "did risky things" (such as running away from home, vandalism, stealing, fighting) during the previous 12 months, although most had done so only once or twice. Close to 31% reported that they had stolen from a store, their school or their parents at least once, and 41%, particularly boys, reported having threatened to beat someone up or having been in a fight.

Interestingly, 12- and 13-year-olds who smoked cigarettes, and/or had smoking friends, were much more likely to steal, fight, skip school, attach low importance to school grades, engage in physically aggressive behaviours and have difficult relations with their parents.

Although many young people will test the limits of acceptable behaviour, these activities do not often translate into criminal activity. In fact, less than 5% of 12- to 17-year-olds were charged with a criminal offence in 1997. About half of young people that year were charged with a property crime, most often theft, and break and enter. Violent offences, including assault and robbery, were much less frequent, accounting for about 18% of young people charged.

- For more information, see "National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth: Transition into Adolescence," *The Daily*, July 6, 1999; "Youth and crime," *Canadian Social Trends*, Summer 1999.

Common-law relationships becoming a new norm, especially among the young

The proportion of people who choose to live in common-law arrangements is, without doubt, on the rise. According to the 1981 Census (the first time data on common-law arrangements were collected), 6% of all couples lived common-law that year. By 1996, the proportion had increased to 12%, or about one in eight couples. If the current growth rates continue, by the year 2020, there will be as many people living in common-law relationships as in marriages.

Although common-law is most popular among the young, it is also becoming more acceptable among the older generations. In 1996, 39% of 20- to 29-year-olds who lived as a couple were in a common-law union compared with 10% of those 50 years or over. Both mark an increase from a decade before, when 22% of couples in their 20s and 5%

of those 50 years or over lived in a common-law arrangement.

In the last two decades, it has become more acceptable to bring up children in a common-law relationship. Although childbearing in common-law unions is still less frequent than in marriages, almost half of common-law families (47%) in 1996 included children, whether born in the current union or in a previous relationship. In comparison, in 1981 34% of common-law families had had children. Across Canada, over one-tenth of all children under the age of 14 were living in a common-law family in 1996.

Although common-law unions are on the rise, they continue to be less stable than marriages. If a common-law union does not turn into a legal marriage, about half dissolve within five years. And if people in common-law unions eventually marry, they are still more likely to separate than people who married without living common-law.

Family forms change and new life cycle stages emerge

Families continue to be affected by changes occurring outside the home. The patterns of recent decades suggest a return to the malleable family forms experienced early in the century. Now, as then, family members move into and out of households as old relationships shift and new family units are created. For example, since the 1960s, the expansion of postsecondary institutions, along with a decline in social pressure to marry, has extended the period of adolescence. Although the proportion of young adults who lived with their parents decreased between 1971 and 1981, the 1996 Census shows that young adults are now once again more likely to live in the family home. Between 1981 and 1996, the proportion of 20- to 24-year-old single women who lived with their parents rose from 60% to 67%. The corresponding figures for men were 69% and 74%, respectively. Much of the growth in this age group may be explained by children's continued attendance at university or college (that is, extended adolescence). What is more notable is the increase in the percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds living at home: 33% of women and 40% of men in 1996, up from 23% and 28% in 1986. The recession of the early 1990s, and the slow recovery that followed, likely played a part in their decision to live at home.

Lower fertility and mortality rates as well as higher life expectancy have created other new stages in the family life cycle. In addition to an extended period of adolescence, the empty-nest stage between the last child's departure from the family home and the death of one of the spouses is now common. Whereas this stage was virtually non-existent for the average couple in the mid-

nineteenth century, a woman born between 1951 and 1960 can expect to share an empty nest with her spouse for about 24 years.¹⁸

Recently, Canada has seen a growth in the number of three generation households. Certainly nuclear families are still most common — grandparents, parents, and grandchildren living together represent less than 3% of all family households — but the number of three-generation households in Canada grew from about 150,000 in 1986 to more than 208,000 in 1996. Although the number is not high, these types of households grew twice as fast as the number of all family households. Nearly half of all three-generation households in 1996 were headed by immigrants. With longer life expectancy, an aging population, and high levels of immigration, three-generation households may become more common.

Future trends

Most Canadians will continue to marry and have children in the 21st century. However, marital histories are becoming more complex. Common-law unions, delayed marriages or no marriage at all will probably increase, especially with the pursuit of higher education and employment by both men and women. Divorce will likely remain an option when relationships no longer fulfill the expectations of one or both partners. But if people continue to marry at older ages, the divorce rate may drop, as younger age at marriage is associated with a higher risk of divorce. Meanwhile, people in same-sex unions are gradually winning social recognition for their unions and legal rights similar to those of heterosexual couples.

The family-related trends of those aged 65 and over are of par-

18. Gee. op.cit. 1987.

Parenting styles make a difference

Parenting style refers to the way parents interact physically and emotionally with their children. An effective parenting style nurtures and disciplines children while supporting their emotional, physical, social, and psychological development. Successful parents can produce an environment in which children regard themselves positively, believe in their own competence, and feel that they are worthy of giving and receiving love.¹

Analysis of the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth shows that poor parenting practices are strongly associated with relationship and behavioural problems in children. Children who did not have positive interaction with their parents were twice as likely to show persistent behavioural problems as children who did have positive interaction. Similarly, children whose parents employed ineffective parenting techniques were nine times more likely to exhibit behavioural problems than children who were not exposed to this type of parenting.

Children who were “at risk” — ones who lived in lone-parent families, in families with low income or low parental education, in dysfunctional families, or who had experienced prenatal problems — generally had lower developmental scores and more behavioural problems than those who were not at risk. Good parenting, however, can make a difference in these difficult circumstances. Children who were at risk but had positive parenting scored at least as high as children in more favourable circumstances who received negative parenting. Clearly, many things can affect a child’s outcomes, but good parenting can counterbalance the negative effects of certain risk factors.

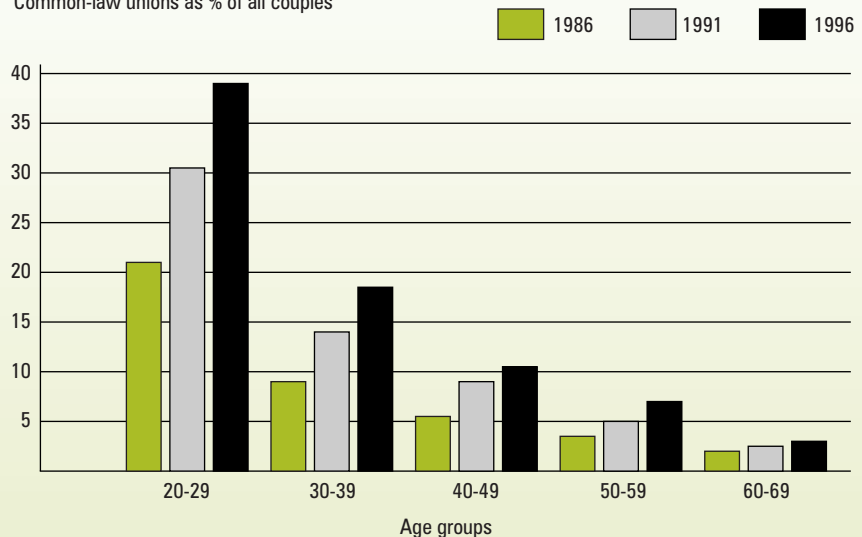
• For more information, see “National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, Cycle 2, 1996-97,” *The Daily*, October 28, 1998.

1. Cassidy, J., R. Parke, L. Butkovsky and K. Braungart. 1992. “Family-Peer Connections: The Roles of Emotional Expressiveness within the Family and Children’s Understanding of Emotions.” *Child Development*. 63: 603-618.



Common-law unions are increasing for all age groups but still are most frequent among the young

Common-law unions as % of all couples



Sources: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 92-353XPB and author’s calculations.

Family violence

Violence in the family affects everyone in the family, even if they themselves are not the victims. Parents assault children, both men and women assault their spouses, and the elderly may be victimized by their adult children.

Women were more likely to be victimized by a spouse, either married or common-law, than were men.¹ In 1997, 88% of victims of spousal assault (19,575) were women. During the four years between 1993 and 1997, the number of women assaulted by their spouse decreased 8%, while the number of male victims increased 18%. When an assault becomes murderous, though, women are still more likely to be the victims: between 1978 and 1997, over three times as many wives (1,485) as husbands (442) were killed by their spouses.

Children are among the most vulnerable family members and violence often has the most substantial effect on their lives. In 1997, 5,300 children under 18 years were victimized within families. Most were assaulted by their own parents, who accounted for 65% of family members charged with physical assault and 44% of those charged with sexual assault. Fathers committed almost all sexual assaults (97%) and most (71%) physical assaults. Parents were also responsible for nearly eight in 10 homicides of children under age 18. The number of parents charged with killing their children (more than one-half of whom were under age three) has risen over the past decade. In 1997, fathers were implicated in 37 homicides and mothers, in 25.

Violence against seniors represents another, little-recognized, aspect of family violence. In 1997, 2,300 men and women over age 64 were victims of violent crimes, representing 2% of the total. Despite most seniors' fear of being mugged by a stranger, once again, family members were implicated in 29% of all violent incidents against senior women and 17% of those against senior men. Senior men were more likely to be victimized by their adult children (41%) than by a spouse (28%), while older women were equally likely to have been victimized by their adult children or their spouse (40% each).

- For more information, see *Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile 1999*. Statistics Canada Catalogue 85-224-XIE. pp. 23 and 28.

1. 179 police forces provided data, representing only 48% of the national volume of reported crime. Consequently, the information is not nationally representative.

ticular significance, given that life expectancy is increasing and the proportion of elderly in the population is rising. Growing up in an era in which alternative options were scarce, most seniors today adopted the "traditional" family approach to marriage and childbearing that was expected of them. However, the changes affecting younger generations — the general acceptance of common-law unions, non-marital childbearing and divorce — are

likely to create a future generation of seniors with more diverse family characteristics.

Immigration patterns in recent decades are also contributing to the variety of family forms.¹⁹ Immigrants coming from Asia, the Caribbean, and Central and South America have increased in number, bringing with them different family traditions, such as a greater reliance on the extended family for social, emotional and financial support.

Summary

Canadian families have both changed and remained the same during the past century. While most people still marry and have children, marriages are less apt to last for a lifetime. People also marry later in life and have fewer children than ever before. Perhaps most striking over the past century is the dynamic between the size and composition of family and social and economic conditions. In periods of financial difficulties — for example, during the Depression — both marriage and fertility rates decreased. In times of prosperity, such as the era following World War II, the popularity of marriage and large families increased. The impact of legislative changes is evident in the increased divorce rates following the 1968 and 1986 Divorce Acts. The last decades of the 20th century have brought greater individualism and more choice, giving rise to new living arrangements. This pattern of both change and continuity is likely to be a defining characteristic of families into the 21st century.



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19. Ward. op.cit. 1998.

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The changing face of conjugal relationships

by *Céline Le Bourdais, Ghyslaine Neill and Pierre Turcotte*
with the collaboration of *Nathalie Vachon and Julie Archambault*

The vast majority of Canadian women form conjugal relationships at some point in their lives. Whether born in the 1920s, the mid-1960s or any decade in between, nearly all women have been in a marriage or common-law relationship at least once; in 1995, over 94% of women ranging in age from 30 to 69 reported that they had entered at least one such union. Although the proportion was somewhat lower for the 20- to 29-year-old group (87%), it is likely to rise for these women as they grow older.

While the tendency for women to form unions has remained consistently high over the years, the nature of these unions has changed fundamentally. Although marriage still accounts for the majority of relationships, its one-time near-universal appeal has given way to ever more popular common-law unions. Using data from the 1995 General Social Survey (GSS), this article examines how the types of conjugal unions women enter have changed over time. It also asks if starting life together in a common-law union as

CST What you should know about this study

Data in this article come from the 1995 General Social Survey (GSS), which interviewed nearly 11,000 respondents aged 15 years and over living in private households in the 10 provinces. The survey collected data on all marital and common-law unions, on separation, divorce and the death of a partner, along with a broad range of background characteristics. This study uses a sample of 4,656 female respondents aged 20 to 69 years.

Life tables were used to analyze the probability of transitions in and out of unions. All women were assumed to be single at age 15; after that, they were assumed to be exposed to the possibility of entering a union, either marital or common-law. Each transition (first marriage, first common-law arrangement, first separation, second marriage, etc.) was analyzed according to the past conjugal history of each woman. For example, the likelihood of experiencing a separation for the first time was measured separately for women who married directly and for those who started their conjugal life through common-law. This method acknowledged that a woman's propensity to part from her partner may be affected by her previous conjugal experience.

Separation: in this article the word separation has no legal standing. It is used simply to define the end of a relationship resulting from causes other than death.

Common-law union: all common-law relationships are self-reported and could refer to unions of any duration.



While almost all women once started their conjugal life in a marriage, just over one-third choose marriage now

Proportion of all women experiencing	Age in 1995				
	60-69	50-59	40-49	30-39	20-29
	Born in				
	1926-1935	1936-1945	1946-1955	1956-1965	1966-1975
At least one union	96	97	96	94	87
At least one marriage	96	95	92	84	66
First union starts with marriage	95	91	78	56	35
At least one common-law union	8	22	35	49	59
First union starts with common-law union	1	6	18	38	52
At least one separation	25	32	40	43	--
At least two unions	14	27	34	39	--
At least two separations	8	13	16	--	--

-- Sample too small to produce reliable estimate.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1995.

opposed to a marriage influences the chances of the relationship breaking up or predicts the types of relationships that may follow. Although this article focuses on women, its results generally apply to men as well.

Increasingly, women choose to live common-law

The proportion of women who started their first conjugal union in a marriage fell from 95% of those in their 60s to 56% of women in their 30s and to a still lower 35% of those in their 20s. Clearly, common-law has become younger people’s favoured arrangement for a first conjugal relationship. While only 1% of women aged 60 to 69 lived common-law in their first union, 38% of 30- to 39-year-olds and 52% of 20- to 29-year-olds started conjugal life with this option.

Of course, having chosen one type of arrangement for a first union does not preclude the even-

tual possibility of the other. Many women who started their relationship through common-law have subsequently married, while those who married first and then separated are increasingly deciding to live in a common-law relationship in their subsequent unions. However, compared with their older counterparts, young women are less inclined to marry their first partner and, instead, are more likely to continue living common-law, thus increasing the average duration of these common-law unions.

Women enter common-law arrangements at different stages in their lives, depending on the generation they belong to. The vast majority of women aged 20 to 29 who lived common-law did so in their first conjugal union. These women grew up in times when living together without marriage had been accepted by most people as a legitimate way of settling into a relationship. In contrast, women in

the 50- to 59-year-old group — most of whom came of age in an era when common-law relationships were frowned upon — were nearly three times as likely to enter a common-law relationship after their first marriage ended than for their first conjugal union. For younger generations, then, common-law serves mostly as a prelude or an alternative to marriage, while for older women it is a prelude or an alternative to remarriage.

Starting conjugal life through common-law nearly doubles likelihood of separation

Over the years, the likelihood of a first relationship ending in divorce or separation has increased significantly. Whereas 25% of women aged 60 to 69 had experienced a break-up at some point in their lives, over 40% of those in their 30s and 40s had already gone through one. The fact that the percentage of women in their 30s who separated (43%) is higher than the percentage in their 40s (40%) suggests that break-downs of first unions are happening earlier in life. Furthermore, their frequency is also on the rise: the percentage of women who have gone through at least two separations has increased from 8% of 60- to 69-year-olds to 16% of those in their 40s.

Starting conjugal life in a common-law relationship, as opposed to a marriage, sharply increases the probability of this first union ending in separation. And whether the common-law partners eventually marry or not makes little difference: the risk of separation is just as high. In the 30- to 39-year group, for example, almost two-thirds (63%) of those whose first relationship was common-law had separated by 1995, compared with one-third (33%) of women who had married first. A similar pattern appears

among women in their 40s: those who lived common-law at first were much more likely to separate than those who married first (60% versus 36%).

Second relationships very common

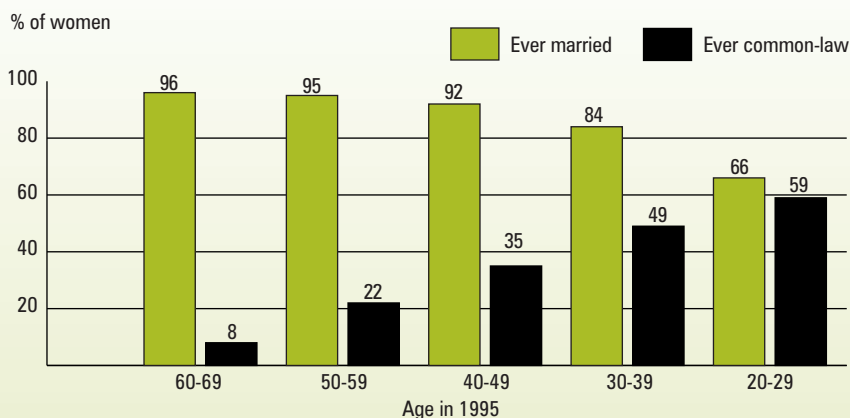
The increase in the break-up of couples has resulted in more women being potentially available to enter a second relationship. Indeed, the proportion of women who had experienced at least two unions (marital or common-law) nearly tripled from the older to the younger generations, rising from 14% among those in their 60s to 39% among those in their 30s. It appears that separation, followed by subsequent conjugal relationships, has become a common experience for many women in the last three decades of the 20th century.

Women whose first marriage had dissolved were very likely to form another union: in the 30- to 39-year age group, for example, nearly nine in 10 women entered a new relationship after their first had ended. Women in the oldest generation were least likely to form a new union after the collapse of their first marriage, but more than half still did so. In all age groups, previously-married women were more likely to choose to live common-law in their second relationship than to remarry. And if they were in their 30s or 40s, they were twice as likely to do so.

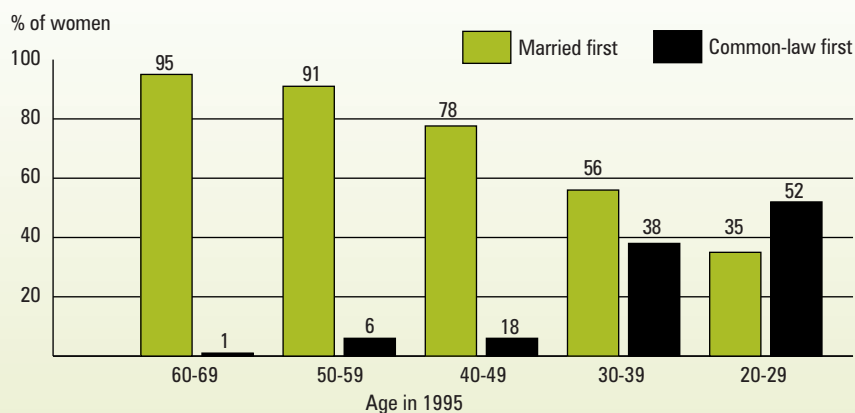
Women who had started their conjugal life in a common-law relationship were just as likely to form new relationships if their union collapsed as those who had married first. However, they were substantially more likely to prefer common-law for their second relationship than were married-first women. While married-first women in their 30s were twice as likely to choose common-law as marriage for



While a common-law union is increasingly common among women in all age groups ...



... twenty-something women are most likely to start off common-law



Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1995



Women whose first conjugal union was common-law were nearly twice as likely to separate

	Age in 1995			
	60-69	50-59	40-49	30-39
Proportion of women separating if	Born in			
	1926-1935	1936-1945	1946-1955	1956-1965
Married first	25	30	36	33
Common-law first (including those separated after marrying their partner)	--	77	60	63

-- Sample too small to produce reliable estimate.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1995.

Recent research into the nature of common-law relationships and the role that economic circumstances play in their dissolution — whether through marriage or separation — reveal some interesting results. In general, these studies show that common-law relationships tend to be temporary and transitory, that more often than not they transform into marriage, and that men are more likely than women to end them through separation.

More specifically, researchers have found a strong association between the economic circumstances of the couple and the chance that their union will end or transform into marriage. They have also discovered that men and women react in different ways in similar situations.

The better a woman's economic position is, the less likely she is to marry her common-law partner and the more likely she is to leave the union. Greater financial independence may reduce women's dependence on men and hence the desirability of marriage. Indeed, data show that the common-law unions of semi-professional and skilled women are more likely to end in separation than in marriage. In contrast, professional and semi-professional men are more likely to marry their common-law partners.

- For more information, see W. Zheng and M. Pollard. July 1998. *Economic Circumstances and the Stability of Nonmarital Cohabitation*. The Income and Labour Dynamics Working Paper Series (Statistics Canada Catalogue 98-10).

their second union, women whose first relationship was common-law were six times more likely to do so.

Summary

In Canada, the last few decades have seen a decrease in marriages, a rise in common-law relationships, and an increase in the break-up of all unions. People today have more options in choosing the types of conjugal relationships they wish to have. While women born in the 1920s and 1930s had little choice but to marry, common-law unions are now accepted and they have become increasingly popular with young Canadians. However, the instability of many common-law arrangements, and the rising rate of dissolution of all unions, suggest

that more people may spend more time living alone or, alternatively, may be involved in more short-term relationships.

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Traffic report: Weekday commuting patterns

by Warren Clark

Travel patterns for the typical Canadian have become more diverse, precipitated by urban development patterns, changing family structures, two-wage earner families and a work-day world that increasingly spans 24 hours. So, if you feel like you've been spending more time in traffic tie-ups, you've got company. Across Canada, traffic congestion is increasing.

Between 1985 and 1997 passenger vehicle registrations grew by 21%, outstripping the growth in the road system.¹ Not only are more Canadians driving cars, they are driving longer distances.² Thus, according to Statistics Canada's 1998 General Social Survey (GSS), on an average weekday Canadians spent 6 more minutes travelling by car or 12 minutes more by public transit than they did in 1986. The result is traffic jams.

CST What you should know about this study

During 1998, Statistics Canada interviewed about 10,700 people aged 15 and over living in households in the 10 provinces in the General Social Survey to discover how they used their time. Respondents indicated what activities they performed, where, and with whom they interacted during these activities and at what times over a 24-hour period. Interviewing occurred between February and December 1998. The results presented in this article reflect what people did on a typical day. Because paid work is usually concentrated on weekdays, most of the results shown in this article refer to activities on an average weekday. Travel times on particular days may be better or worse than the averages presented here.

As used in this article, "commuting" refers to all travel on the way to and from work, including the travel time of side trips for shopping or other errands.

Many other factors also contribute to traffic congestion. Road construction, bad weather and traffic accidents cause short-term slow-downs. But long-term trends in society result in lasting additions to traffic congestion. These trends include the desire to live in low-density neighbourhoods, thereby spreading housing over wider areas; more intensive use of automobiles, which allows commuters to work and live where they choose; and

1. The road system, measured in lane-kilometres, grew by 7% between 1985 and 1995. Transportation Association of Canada, *Transportation in Canada: A Statistical Overview — 1995*. Ottawa: Transport Canada, 1997.
2. Between 1987 and 1996 the average annual distance traveled by private cars and mini-vans increased by 5.7%. Automobile mobility data compendium, *info data: mobility environment safety*. Québec: Laval University February 1999, Volume 4, No. 1, <http://www.grimes.ulaval.ca/cdma>.



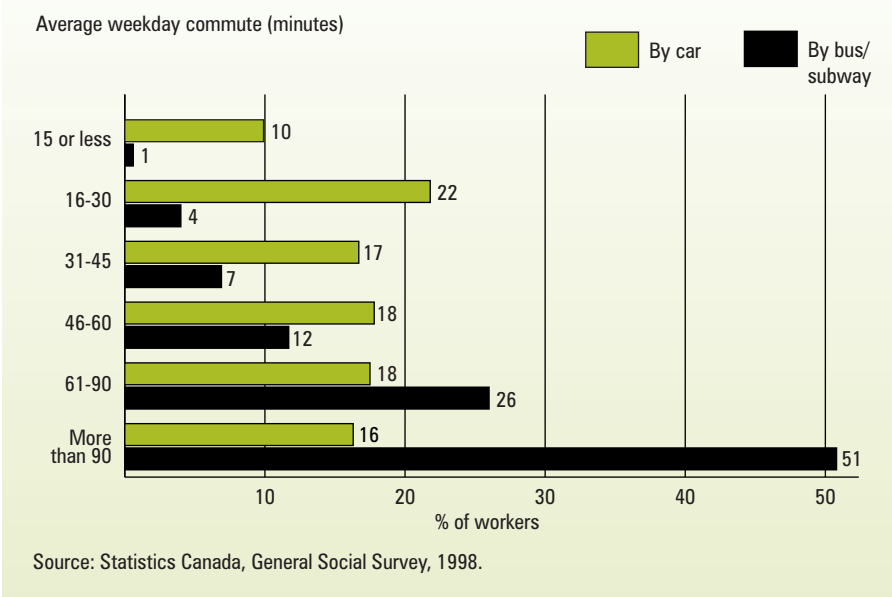
Commuting was the most common reason for travel on an average weekday

Reason for travel	Participants (% of population)	Average time spent travelling by participants (Minutes)
Commuting	47	62
Shopping	34	39
Entertainment or socializing	23	44
Personal care or meals	13	25
To provide care	10	47
Participation in hobbies and sports	9	57
Education	8	53
Volunteer or religious activities	6	42

Note: Includes car, bus, subway, walking, bicycle and other modes of transportation.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998.



Over a third of car-using commuters spent more than an hour to get to and from work



concentration of commuting at particular times of the day.³ These issues present special challenges to transportation planners trying to satisfy the needs of a time-stressed workforce.

This article examines travel times on an average weekday. It focuses on why people travel, what mode of transportation is most popular and how our work patterns contribute to congestion.

Commuting largest flow of weekday traffic

The most common reason for weekday travel was commuting to and from work, which was done by 11.4 million Canadians (47% of the adult population) and averaged 62 minutes per day, concentrated around peak travel times. Other popular trips were for shopping (34%) and entertainment or socializing (23%). These trips tended to

be shorter and less concentrated at particular times than commuting, thus contributing less to traffic congestion. Trips to school, university or college are the most common weekday travel activity for younger adults and are just as long as commutes to work.

Car is king

On a typical weekday in 1998, 75% of the adult population went somewhere by car, compared with 70% in 1986. Many reasons account for the car's popularity. Drivers are freed from the constraints of fixed routes and schedules of public transit. They can choose more destinations, select their companions (if any), carry a greater load, never have to stand, and stop for refreshment whenever they want.⁴ For this convenience, automobile owners trade off costs in maintenance, insurance, fuel and depreciation costs for their vehicle.

The extreme popularity of travel by car would not be a problem if everyone chose different times to travel, but our work schedules dictate that most people travel during the morning and afternoon rush hours. Furthermore, people who use automobiles are increasingly driving alone. According to the 1998 GSS, 77% of commuters were alone, up from 69% in 1986.

Travel is not uniform throughout the day

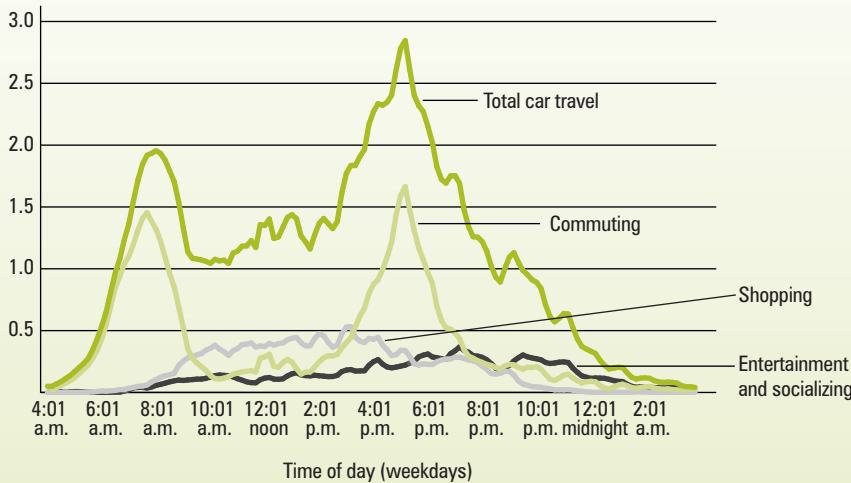
Weekday car travel peaks at around 8 a.m. and again just after 5:00 p.m.:

3. Downs, A. 1992. *Stuck in Traffic — Coping with Peak Hour Traffic Congestion*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.

4. Dunn, J. A. Jr. 1998. *Driving Forces — the automobile, its enemies, and the politics of mobility*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.

Weekday car travel peaks at 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Millions of adults aged 15 and over



Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998

Average travel time going to and from work has risen for most commuters

People living in	1986	1998
	(Minutes)	
Traveling by car		
Canada	56	58
Montréal	63	60
Toronto	67	70
Vancouver	58	70
Mid-size CMAs ¹	61	57
Small CMAs ²	48	49
Other cities and towns	48	54
Rural	50	56
Travelling by bus or subway		
Canada	85	100

1. Includes Ottawa-Hull, Edmonton, Calgary, Quebec City, Winnipeg, Hamilton, London and Kitchener.

2. Includes St. Catharines-Niagara, Halifax, Victoria, Windsor, Oshawa, Saskatoon, Regina, St. John's, Chicoutimi, Sudbury, Sherbrooke, Trois Rivières, Thunder Bay and Saint John.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998.

8% (2.0 million) and 12% (2.8 million) of the adult population are on the move by car at these times, respectively. These peaks in car travel occur during prime commuting time as people go to and from work. At the morning peak,

two-thirds of car users are commuters but during the afternoon rush only 58% are commuters. Many people who made other types of trips during the day are returning home at the same time of day as commuters.

Side trips add to commuting times

On an average weekday in 1998, Canadians spent 58 minutes traveling to and from work by car. About one-third of car commuters made side trips on their way. This added 37 minutes to the travel time of those who stopped to pick up groceries, drop off or pick up a child or run other errands on their way to or from work. Such side trips, most of which occur during peak travel hours, also contribute to traffic congestion.

Women have different household responsibilities compared with men, and their use of the car during their daily commute reflects this division of labour. Men typically travel more in the context of earning a living, while women commuters balance work-related travel with travel for family and personal matters. Consequently, women juggling child-related responsibilities and household management obligations often link trips together and make more stops on the way home from work. According to the 1998 GSS, on an average weekday, 41% of women made at least one stop on the way home from work, compared with 28% of men. If they had children under age 5, however, two-thirds of women made a stop compared with about one-third of men (30%).

Big cities mean long commutes

The 1996 Census showed that Canadian workers commute a median distance of 7.0 kilometers to work.⁵ Yet for people working in Canada's biggest cities where traffic congestion is a problem (Toronto,

5. The median represents the one-way straight-line distance between the place of work and place of residence where half of the population travels further and half travels less than that distance.

Public transit ridership declined between 1990 and 1996, from 1.53 billion to 1.37 billion passenger trips, a loss of nearly 160 million trips. Ridership recovered marginally, to 1.43 billion passenger-trips, in 1998.¹ Declining passenger use during the early 1990s may have been related to high levels of unemployment during the recession, when fewer commuters were travelling to work. The recent improvement could be due to higher employment levels; it may also be related to demographic shifts as the baby boom echo children enter their peak transit riding years.²

The heaviest adult users of public transit are 15- to 24-year-olds: on an average weekday in 1998, 22% of them used it. Even in this age group, though, driving, riding in a car or simply walking were more common than public transit use. Transit use generally decreases with rising age; by the time they reach age 55 to 64, only 4% of the population uses public transit.

Public transit authorities are attempting to increase ridership by attracting car drivers with park and ride facilities. These facilities are located at main transit "gateways" where drivers can park their cars (free or at reduced cost) and continue their journey by bus, subway or commuter rail. It is argued that these arrangements may reduce commuters' total

travel time. However, on a typical weekday in 1998, only 1% of people who drove their cars also used public transit.

Although some people may find public transit less strenuous than stop-and-go driving, it is unlikely to be viewed as a way of relieving time-stress by busy workers. More and more Canadian workers are feeling time crunched — full-time workers experiencing high levels of time stress increased from 19% in 1992 to 25% in 1998 — and the convenience of car travel is apparent when comparing commuting times. On a typical weekday, car drivers spent an average of 58 minutes on the road compared to 100 minutes for bus/subway riders.

Urban sprawl is increasing pressure on public transit authorities to service a wider geographic area. Yet public transit works best when large numbers of people need to be moved to a few destinations. With the urban model we have now in many cities, it may become increasingly costly to try to provide adequate service to far-flung suburbs.

1. Statistics Canada Catalogue 53-215-XPB, *Passenger Bus and Urban Transit Statistics*.
2. Foot, D. K. and D. Stoffman. 1998. *Boom, Bust & Echo 2000: Profiting from the demographic shift in the new millenium*. Toronto: Macfarlane, Walter & Ross. p.186

Montréal and Vancouver), one in six workers commuted 20 kilometers or more. In Toronto and Vancouver, car drivers spent an average of about 70 minutes on the road travelling to and from work on an average weekday, while Montrealers spent 60 minutes. However, one in five car drivers living in these three large cities spent more than 90 minutes driving to and from work. Since about 6% of people who work in the Toronto, Montréal or Vancouver census metropolitan areas (CMAs) actually live in the surrounding cities, towns and rural areas, they are likely to have even longer commutes. Not only must they contend with longer distances,

but also with the traffic congestion of these large cities. Commuting in mid-sized CMAs takes almost as long as in the large cities, though. And while smaller cities and rural areas do not experience the same level of congestion as Canada's metropolises, commuting times in these centres increased between 1986 and 1998.

Can telecommunications reduce gridlock?

Telecommunications technologies offer the promise of reducing the need to travel by allowing people to substitute a fax, telephone or modem link for their physical presence. Telework, which substitutes working at

home for commuting to the workplace, is probably the best known. For time-pressed people with many work and household responsibilities, telecommunications technologies offer the opportunity to work, shop or bank at home.⁶ Time saved in these ways is time available for family, professional development or leisure activities.

6. In 1998, only 3% of households purchased something over the Internet from their home and 5% used electronic banking from their home. Dickenson, P and J. Ellison. 1999. "Getting connected or staying unplugged: The growing use of computer communications services," *Service Indicators* 1st Quarter 1999. Statistics Canada Catalogue 63-016-XIB.

However, paid work at home remains uncommon among Canadians so far. According to the 1998 GSS, 16% of workers had worked at home during the previous week for an average of 17 hours. As these hours suggest, most still go in to their place of work: on an average weekday, 60% of people who sometimes worked at home went in to work. Furthermore, home workers spent more time commuting when they did go to work — an average of 62 minutes compared with 50 minutes for people who didn't work at home — probably because they live in more remote locations. The GSS data show that people who work at home do not cease to go to the office: they simply travel there less frequently.

Summary

Canadians are spending more time on the road and are increasingly driving alone. Although one might

expect that flexible work hours, work-at-home strategies and multi-passenger vehicle use would reduce traffic during peak hours, traffic patterns still show that 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. are the busiest times on the road. With their crowded schedules, many people, especially women, make multiple stops on the way to and from work to complete family errands. These additional activities save time for drivers by chaining trips together, but they also contribute to traffic congestion.



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Steward bound

by Jeff Frank and Éric Bélair

Concern over the movement of skilled workers to the United States is not a new development in Canada's history. But the "brain drain" has received greater attention in the late 1990s for a number of reasons. These reasons include the growth of the knowledge economy and the rocketing demand for highly educated and skilled workers on both sides of the border. This demand may be higher in the United States where the economy has been thriving and where many knowledge-based industries are located. The competition for workers has probably been made more fierce by the North American Free Trade Agreement, which makes it easier for Canadians in a range of occupations to enter the United States as temporary workers.

This article describes one group of Canadian postsecondary graduates, the Class of '95, who relocated to the United States between the time they graduated in 1995 and the summer of 1997. It explores why these graduates left for the United States and what they were doing there, and estimates how many returned to Canada between the summer of 1997 and March 1999.

This study is adapted from *South of the Border: Graduates from the Class of '95 who moved to the United States*, Statistics Canada and Human Resources Development Canada, Statistics Canada Catalogue 81-587-XPB.

The most highly qualified leave

About 4,600 of the 300,000 people who graduated from a Canadian postsecondary institution in 1995 (1.5%) moved to the United States between their graduation and the summer of 1997. The most talented graduates were most likely to leave — about 44% of movers had been in the top 10% of their graduating class¹ and 12% held Ph.D.s.

University graduates with degrees in the health professions, engineering and applied sciences were most likely to emigrate. For example, 20% of university graduates who moved to the States were from the health professions compared with only 8% of those who remained in Canada. Similarly, 54% of college graduates who moved to the States were from health-related fields, primarily nursing, while only 15% of those who stayed were from that field. This over-representation of health professionals among graduates who relocated is likely related to the health care reforms in Canada that significantly reduced the number of nursing jobs.

Most move to work

"Work" was the most common reason graduates gave for moving to the United States. Over half (57%) moved south mainly for work, while 23% moved to go to college or university and another 17% moved mainly for marriage or relationship reasons. Men and women were equally likely to move for work-related reasons while most who moved for education reasons were men.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of all the graduates who moved to the United States had a job already waiting for them. Not surprisingly, 89% of those who moved for work-related reasons had already arranged for a job before moving; however, 32% of those who moved for other reasons had also managed to line one up. Of these 3,000 graduates with jobs, most had found employment through their own initiative: by responding to job advertisements, using personal contacts or by sending out résumés and applications on their own. Very few graduates were contacted directly by an American employer or head-hunter. Thus the popular perception that large numbers of recent graduates are being aggressively recruited by American employers did not apply to the Class of '95; in fact, most grads found work in the United States using traditional job search methods.

Graduates who moved for work-related reasons also reported what work-related factors had attracted them to the United States. The most common factors shared the theme of "opportunity." Greater availability of jobs, both in particular fields and in general; better chances to gain or develop skills; and better career advancement opportunities: all were among the most common responses. Higher salaries was also a common factor encouraging graduates to emigrate to the States.

1. Self-reported rank in graduating class in graduate's field of study.

Data in this article were collected through the Survey of 1995 Graduates Who Moved to the United States (SGMUS) and the National Survey of 1995 Graduates (NGS). The SGMUS was commissioned by Human Resources Development Canada and conducted by Statistics Canada in March 1999. The survey interviewed university and college graduates from the Class of '95 who were living in the United States as of the summer of 1997. The NGS was conducted in the summer of 1997. Graduates who were found to be living in the United States at that time and who were not interviewed for the NGS formed the sample for the SGMUS. American citizens who graduated from Canadian universities and colleges and returned home to the United States are not included in this analysis.

Comparisons of education-job match and annual earnings of graduates who stayed in Canada with those who moved to the United States are imperfect because of differences in the two surveys' reference dates. Graduates who moved to the United States did so at various times between graduation in 1995 and the summer of 1997. They provided information about the job they took upon arriving in the United States. In contrast, graduates who remained in Canada were asked about their job in summer 1997. This difference favours those who remained in Canada because they may have had more time (potentially as much as two years) in which to gain promotions or seniority by the time they were interviewed.

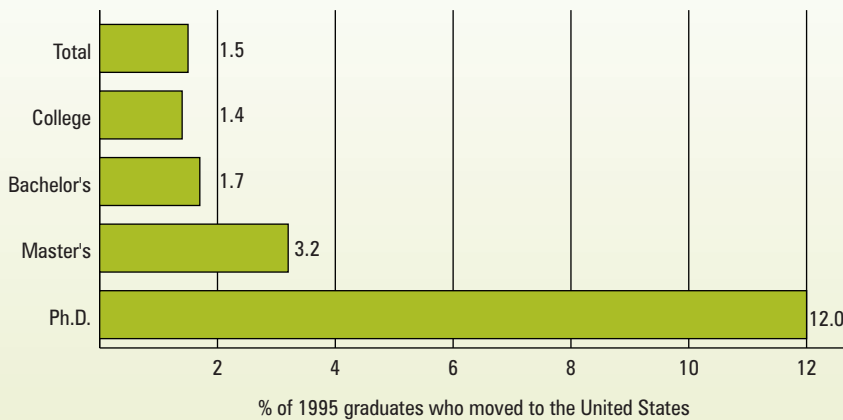
lower taxes may have been implicit in identifying higher salaries. Also, differences between Canadian and American personal income tax rates tend to be smaller at the lower income levels common in entry level jobs, and graduates may have been more concerned about finding work in their field than in the level of taxation.

Did they get what they wanted?

Graduates who moved to work in the United States did so to find better work opportunities and higher salaries. For the most part, they were successful. Graduates who moved south acquired jobs more closely matched to their education than those graduates who remained in Canada. For example, 85% of engineering and applied sciences graduates who moved to the United States reported having a job "closely related" to their education compared with 58% of their counterparts who remained in Canada. The gap for graduates from the health field was about the same: 98% of graduates who moved to the U.S. versus 72% of those who remained in Canada.

Graduates working in the United States also had higher earnings. The difference was greatest among college graduates where the median annual salary upon arrival in the United States was 76% higher (\$42,600 in 1999 Canadian dollars) than those who remained in Canada (\$24,200). At the bachelor's degree level, the median salary of movers was 42% higher (\$43,400 versus \$30,500).

However, movers to the United States were concentrated in the high-earning engineering and health fields and they were often at the top of their class academically. A comparison of bachelor's degree graduates by occupational group reveals a narrower gap. For instance,

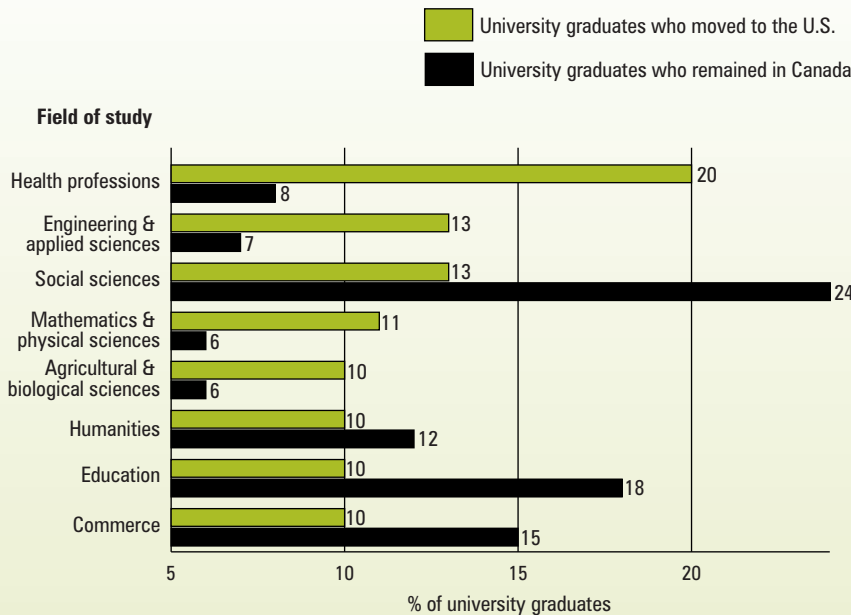


Sources: Statistics Canada, Survey of 1995 Graduates Who Moved to the United States, 1999 and National Survey of 1995 Graduates, 1997.

Surprisingly, given the volume of the debate and the extensive media coverage of this issue, an insignificant proportion of graduates

explicitly said that lower income taxes in the United States were a significant factor in their decision to work there. For some, however,

One-third of university graduates who moved to the U.S. had studied health or engineering



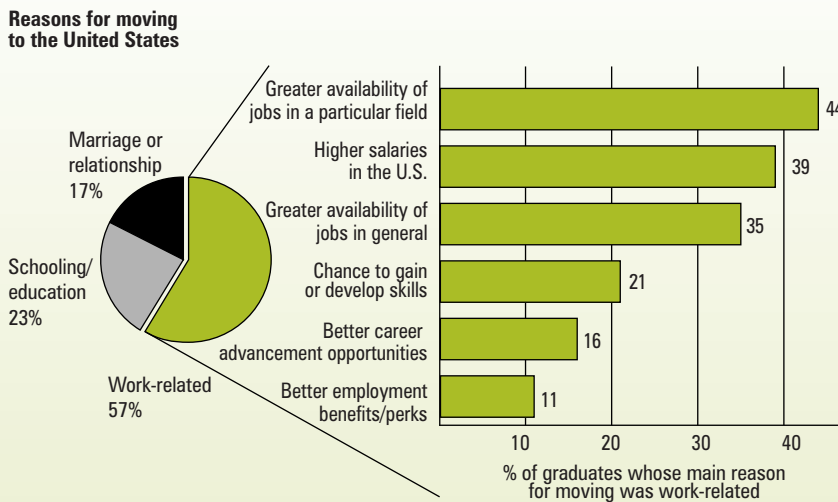
Sources: Statistics Canada, Survey of 1995 Graduates Who Moved to the United States, 1999 and National Survey of 1995 Graduates, 1997.

Plans for the future

The vast majority (82%) of the Class of '95 who had moved to the United States between graduation in 1995 and summer 1997 were still living there as of March 1999. Of these, 85% were working and 10% were going to school. Over half (56%) continued to live there as temporary residents. About 800 people who had originally arrived in the United States as temporary residents had obtained permanent residence or "green card" status.

By March 1999, more than one-third (36%) of the graduates still living in the United States were non-citizen permanent residents. Many others (44%) planned to seek permanent residence there within the next two years. At the same time, about 43% of those who still lived in the U.S. in 1999 planned to return to Canada. In some cases, the same people expressed apparently contradictory intentions. These findings, however, might be expected of a highly skilled and mobile population who may be trying to keep their options open while retaining access to the United States labour market.

Graduates who moved for work-related reasons cited better job opportunities and higher salaries



Note: Multiple responses were allowed. Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of 1995 Graduates Who Moved to the United States, 1999.



Jeff Frank, formerly a senior analyst with the Centre for Education Statistics at Statistics Canada, is now with the Policy Research Secretariat. **Éric Bélair**, formerly a research officer with the Applied Research Branch of Human Resources Development Canada, is now a project officer with Strategy and Co-ordination, Human Resources Development Canada.

in the natural and applied science occupations, those who moved to the United States earned a median \$47,400 while those who remained

in Canada earned a median of \$38,400, or 19% less. A gap of similar size existed between graduates in health occupations.



Religious marriages remain popular

Three-quarters (76%) of marriage ceremonies in 1997 were conducted by a member of the clergy; the remainder were solemnized by civil officials such as judges, justices of the peace and clerks of the court. Ontario had the highest level of religious marriages, with nearly all marriage ceremonies (94%) conducted by clergy of various faiths. Religious ceremonies were also common throughout the Maritime provinces, ranging between 80% and 86%. In contrast, civil marriages were most popular in the Yukon (71%) and British Columbia (56%). Previous marital status influenced whether couples sought a religious marriage or not; 82% of weddings in which both spouses were marrying for the first time, were conducted by clergy, whereas this was the case in only 58% of marriages where both spouses had been previously divorced.

Health Statistics Division

Marriages, 1997

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Statistics Canada Catalogue

84F0212-XPB



Most women return to work after childbirth

Almost nine out of 10 (86%) working women who gave birth in 1993 or 1994 were back on the job within a year of giving birth. The average amount of time taken off work was a little more than six months, but one in five of these women (21%) were back to work by the end of the first month. Among the women who returned within the first month, 60% received no Employment Insurance benefits, compared with just 9% of women who returned later; and roughly one-third (34%) were self-employed, compared with just 2% of those who returned later. The 7% of women who had not returned to paid work within two years after childbirth were more likely to have left a non-unionized, non-professional, lower-paid job; in addition, they were more likely to be unmarried and younger than those who did return.

Perspectives on Labour and Income Vol. 11, No.3

Employment after childbirth
Statistics Canada Catalogues
75-001-XPE; 75-001-XIE (available from www.statcan.ca)



Canadian youth literacy surpasses US, but behind Europe

In a study of youth literacy in Canada, the US and five European countries, Canadian youth aged 16 to 25 outscored Americans by the equivalent of about two years of schooling. However, a typical Canadian youth fared less well compared with their European counterpart. The study examined literacy skills in relation to the ability to effectively interpret prose text such as newspaper articles, documents such as transportation schedules and the mathematical information found in texts such as loan charts. The Canadians scored behind all of the European countries except Poland in numeracy skills; they scored about the same as youth from Germany and Switzerland on the prose and document tests, but were considerably behind those from Sweden and the Netherlands.

Inequalities in literacy skills among youth in Canada and the United States

Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics

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Statistics Canada Catalogues

89-552-MPE, (No. 6); 89-552-MIE (available at www.statcan.ca)



Infants at greatest murder risk, most killed by parents

Set against a national homicide rate that was at its lowest point in 30 years, infants (children under the age of one) were the age group at the greatest risk of being murdered in 1998. The number of infants murdered in Canada nearly doubled from 13 in 1997 to 23 in 1998. Infants accounted for nearly half (43%) of the children under the age of 12 whose deaths were ruled as homicides. Parents were charged in more than three-quarters of the infant homicides (78%), compared

with less than two-thirds (62%) the year before. Only one child was killed by a stranger, another by a babysitter and in three other cases the assailants were unknown. Some of the increase in the reported rate of infant homicides may be due to more accurate reporting by police and legislated requirements for mandatory coroner inquests into the deaths of young children introduced in most provinces in recent years. It is believed that some infant killings in the past were mis-identified as accidental falls or "sudden infant deaths".

Juristat, Vol. 19, No. 10

Statistics Canada Catalogues
85-002-XPE; 85-002-XIE (available at www.statcan.ca)



Importance of senior travellers will grow in the next century

As baby-boomers enter their golden years in the upcoming years, attention to the travel patterns of seniors will be of increasing importance to the travel and tourism industry. Canada has one of the fastest growing senior populations in the world; by the time the youngest baby-boomers turn 66 in 2031, the proportion of Canada's population aged 65 and over is projected to almost double, rising from 12% in 1998 to 22%. The growth in domestic and international travel by seniors over the last decade has outpaced that of most other age groups. And although the number of trips that seniors take declines with age, the trips that they do take tend to be longer. Senior travellers are most likely to travel in pairs, with the majority of travellers to all destinations accompanied by one companion. They are also more likely to be women — between 53% and 58%, depending on the destination. And almost nine in 10 travellers to all destinations (more than 86%), travel for pleasure or to visit friends or relatives. More than half (52%) of the travellers in Canada were visiting friends or relatives, whereas nearly two-thirds (62%) of pleasure trips were to foreign destinations.

Travel-Log, Vol. 18, No.4

Statistics Canada Catalogues 87-003-XPB; 87-003-XIB (available at www.statcan.ca)



Immigration decline slows population growth

In 1998-99 Canada's population grew by less than one percent (0.9%), according to population estimates. The growth in the size of Canada's population was at its lowest rate since 1971, and only half the rate of 1.8% recorded during the most recent peak year of 1988-89. The major factor cited for this slower growth was a decline in the number of immigrants coming to Canada (173,011); about 21,400 fewer newcomers were admitted to Canada in 1998-99 than in the previous year (194,451). Also, the rate of natural increase (the difference between the number of births and deaths) continued its steady decade-long decline. Nationwide, there were about 4,800 fewer births and 4,400 more deaths in 1998-99 than the previous year.

Demography Division

Lise Champagne

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Causes of urban growth vary by region

In 1997-98, approximately 1.2 million individuals moved from one place in Canada to another. Of these, 300,000 changed provinces while 900,000 people moved between census divisions within their province. Inter-provincial migration was most important on the Prairies, accounting for 58% of all people who moved to Calgary and 50% of the inflow to Edmonton; in contrast, only about 16% of migrants to Toronto came from other provinces. International migration was greatest in the largest cities, accounting for about 56% of new arrivals to Toronto, 48% to Vancouver and 35% of those who moved to Montreal.

Small Area and Administrative Data Division

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S O C I A L I N D I C A T O R S

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
INCOME*									
<i>Average total money income</i>									
All	19,875	19,310	19,450	18,997	19,351	19,425	19,515	19,528	--
Families	58,942	57,537	57,222	56,045	57,095	56,997	57,544	57,146	--
Unattached individuals	26,262	24,918	25,273	24,823	25,036	24,931	24,828	25,005	--
<i>Percent of income from transfer payments</i>									
All	11.8	13.2	13.8	14.3	14.1	13.5	13.3	12.9	--
Families	10.6	11.9	12.5	12.9	12.5	12.1	11.7	11.3	--
Unattached individuals	17.7	19.7	20.0	20.9	21.7	20.2	20.8	20.5	--
<i>Average income of families, by quintiles</i>									
Lowest quintile	18,871	18,391	18,010	17,884	18,360	18,284	17,729	17,781	--
2nd	36,821	35,180	34,914	33,886	35,011	34,545	34,402	34,399	--
3rd	52,874	50,692	50,878	49,453	50,914	49,856	50,366	50,548	--
4th	70,881	68,861	68,923	67,630	68,710	68,319	69,292	69,059	--
Highest quintile	115,291	114,560	113,399	111,371	112,491	113,964	115,938	113,948	--
Dual-earner couples as % of husband-wife families	62.2	61.5	61.2	60.3	60.4	60.5	60.5	61.3	--
Women's earning as % of men's full-time full-year workers	67.7	69.9	71.9	72.2	69.8	73.1	73.4	72.5	--
% of persons below Low Income									
Cut-offs (LICOs)	15.4	16.5	17.0	18.0	17.1	17.8	17.9	17.5	--
Families with head aged 65 and over	7.6	8.2	8.7	9.7	7.1	7.8	8.7	6.8	--
Families with head less than age 65	13.1	13.8	14.4	15.5	14.6	15.4	15.5	15.3	--
Two-parent families with children	9.8	10.8	10.6	12.2	11.5	12.8	11.8	12.0	--
Lone-parent families	54.4	55.4	52.3	55.0	53.0	53.0	56.8	51.1	--
Unattached individuals aged 65 and over	50.7	50.9	49.2	51.9	47.6	45.1	47.9	45.0	--
Unattached individuals less than age 65	32.5	35.2	36.3	36.2	38.0	37.2	37.1	37.5	--
FAMILIES**									
<i>Marriages and divorces</i>									
Number of marriages ('000)	188	172	165	159	160	160	157	153	--
Marriage rate (per 1,000 population)	6.8	6.1	5.8	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.3	5.1	--
Number of divorces ('000)	78	77	79	78	79	78	72	67	--
Crude divorce rate (per 1,000 population)	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.2	--
FAMILY COMPOSITION**									
Total number of families ('000)	7,359	7,482	7,581	7,679	7,778	7,876	7,975	8,047	8,117
Husband-wife families (% of all families)	87.1	87.0	86.7	86.4	86.1	85.8	85.5	85.2	84.9
without children (% of all families)	34.6	35.1	35.1	35.0	35.0	34.9	34.9	34.8	34.7
with children (% of all families)	52.5	51.9	51.7	51.4	51.1	50.9	50.6	50.4	50.1
with children									
(% of husband-wife families)	60.2	59.7	59.6	59.5	60.2	60.2	59.2	59.1	60.2
all children under 18 (% of all families)	35.3	35.0	34.6	34.2	33.9	33.5	33.1	32.8	32.4
all children under 18									
(% of husband-wife with children)	67.3	67.4	67.0	66.6	66.2	65.8	65.4	65.0	64.6
Male lone parents (% of all families)	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5
Female lone parents (% of all families)	10.6	10.7	11.0	11.2	11.5	11.8	12.1	12.3	12.6
female lone parents (% of lone parents)	82.4	82.4	82.6	82.7	82.8	83.0	83.1	83.2	83.3

* All income data in 1997 dollars; families are economic families.

** Family data from Statistics Canada Catalogue 91-213-XPB, *Annual Demographic Statistics*, 1998. Families are census families.

EDUCATORS' NOTEBOOK

Suggestions for using Canadian Social Trends in the classroom

Lesson plan for "Traffic report: Weekday commuting patterns"

Objectives

- ❑ To discuss reasons for traffic congestion and explore the possible impact on the quality of life of Canadians.

Method

1. Take a quick poll of the class to find out how they got to school this morning (what mode of transportation, e.g., walk, bike, car driver, car passenger, school bus, public transit). How long did it take them to get to school? Why do some people travel long distances to school? How many experienced a traffic jam on the way to school?
2. Discuss why more people are driving cars now than in the past and why public transit use has not increased.
3. A "balanced" community is generally thought of as a self-contained, self-reliant one, within which people live, work, shop and pursue recreational activities. Is your community balanced? Discuss the repercussions of living in a community that is not balanced.
4. Survey students to determine if parents work in the neighborhood where they live or if they have to travel far to work. Discuss some of the reasons why traffic jams occur. How can traffic congestion be alleviated?
5. Discuss the pros and cons of living in a compact city. Does suburbanization contribute to traffic congestion?

Using other resources

- ❑ For your next social studies project visit the Education Resources section of the Statistics Canada website at <http://www.statcan.ca/english/kits>. There are several teaching activities that can help you and your class further explore environmental issues, including automobile use and traffic congestion. In particular, the "Household Environment Survey - School Edition" (at <http://statcan.ca/english/kits/houenv.htm>) lets you compare your students' environmental practices with those of other Canadians and the "Enviro-Quiz" (at <http://www.statcan.ca/english/kits/envir1.htm>) introduces environmental data, including global warming trends.

Share your ideas!

Do you have lessons using **CST** that you would like to share with other educators? Share your ideas and we will send you lessons using **CST** received from other educators. For further information, contact Joel Yan, Education Resources Team, Dissemination Division, Statistics Canada, Ottawa K1A 0T6, 1 800 465-1222; fax: (613) 951-4513 or Internet e-mail: yanjoel@statcan.ca.

Educators

You may photocopy "Educators' Notebook" and any item or article in *Canadian Social Trends* for use in your classroom.

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